

Chapter 518

Violet

I was forced to look at the startled expression on Kylan's face, but could not answer as Jorn started speaking.

"Eyes on me, please!" he called out sharply.

I snapped my face forward, as did everyone else. Except for Kylan. I could still feel him staring at me. I could only imagine he was trying to figure out whether I had been serious or only messing with him.

Jorn turned around and started walking backward while Rochwall released something that sounded like a scoff, especially meant for Jorn.

"Rule one." Jorn lifted a single finger into the air, pointing at no one in particular. "You stay where I can see you. From the moment we step onto that bridge until the moment we step off it on the other side, you do not leave my line of sight," he stated. "If I cannot see you, the trip is over for you right there. I will personally walk you back to this bus and have the driver take you home. Do not test me on that one."

His eyes went so big they almost popped out, and everyone knew he was serious. But I was also serious. I would do whatever I had to do to find something out about my parents, and if he was really planning to punish me for breaking the rules, so be it. At least it would be worth it.

He stretched out a second finger. "Rule two!" he exclaimed. "You do not touch a single thing inside the palace, Nate!"

His eyes landed on him, and Nate let out a gasp. Everyone laughed. I also couldn't help but chuckle under my breath. He had always been the curious type.

But he would not be the problem today. That would be me. I would put my hands on something eventually. I didn't know what, only that the urge was already there. How could I enter the palace Dad grew up in and possibly not?

And if Jorn truly knew my identity, how could he expect me not to wonder? How could he, of all people, resist the temptation?

"You kids will not touch the walls, the curtains, or even the dust. I mean it!"

Trinity whispered something into Dylan's ear. Possibly asking if he was always like this.

"Rule three." Jorn lifted a third finger. "You do not speak unless spoken to, and you will show respect. You will represent Starlight and Principal Sterling with class!"

A yawn slipped out of me. He just kept going and going, and I was fairly certain Principal Sterling hadn't even asked him to give us this lecture.

"You will not bother anyone with meaningless questions. You will not cause trouble, and while we're on the bridge, you will definitely not try to get the Merfolk's attention. They do not want to see you."

The faintest smile tugged at my lips when he mentioned the Merfolk, and my thoughts drifted to the story Rochwall had told me about Mom trying to do exactly that.

Rochwall glanced back over his shoulder. Our eyes met, and we shared a quiet chuckle before he turned forward again.

"And last." He looked over the group, his jaw set. "Please keep in mind that we might encounter rogues. If something goes wrong out there,



"I have met people more closely related to you than him," he remarked. "Just a thought."

A chill ran down my spine. They were bound to find out sooner or later, but I would much rather it happen after Mom and Dad were free so they could see for themselves that everything about her being a monster had been a lie. Hear it from the Alpha Prince's own mouth.

Suddenly a thought hit me. "Do you think all of this means...the flower is almost finished draining Mom's power?"

Kylan's mouth tightened. "Probably," he said honestly.

My throat bobbed. He didn't even try to lie about it because we both knew the truth. Kylan squeezed my hand.

"Hey, Pup. Look at me."

I lifted my eyes to his. His gaze went soft as I felt his warm breath against my skin. "I told you I would get them back," he spoke, determined. "You will be with your parents again, and they will be fine. I am serious about that."

I nodded my head slowly, tightening my fingers around his. "I know."

It still felt strange that the very thing I hated might be the thing that saved my parents. But the closer we got, the more desperate I became.

A high-pitched yelp rang out from the front, followed by the cry of a bird. My gaze snapped in that direction as a bird flew past. It was Trinity who had made the sound, and she was waving a hand through the air in front of her.

"Why is it so foggy?"



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I looked around. She was right. The fog had thickened, and it all happened suddenly. Everything around us disappeared. The trees, the sky, the bus. The only things still visible were the dark shape of the palace in the distance and the long bridge that led toward it.

"We are almost at the bridge!" Sterling announced, his voice coming through the fog.

"Violet?" I recognized Dylan's voice. He had been letting me do my own thing without playing into the overprotective brother role up until this very point. "Where are you?"

"She's with me. She's good," Kylan answered. His grip slipped from my hand to my waist instead so he could get a better hold of me.

"Everyone stick close to each other," Rochwall instructed.

As I took another step, my boot sank into something that felt like mud. At least, I thought it was, but I couldn't be too sure. I could hardly see anything, and just as fast as my foot went down, it came back up as Kylan pulled me forward.

We kept going.

"What was that?" Kylan asked.

"I don't know. Why don't you go check for us?" I said sarcastically.

Kylan chuckled in response, but the conversations between the others had already thinned out moments ago. They had all gone quiet. That was who they were. They could joke around and tease each other, but when it was time to be serious, they didn't need to be told. They simply were.

Just then, a familiar voice that had been too quiet crept in.

'Witchey?'

It was Lumia.

'Can you feel it?'

Kylan's grip on my waist loosened slightly, and I slowed my pace.

'Feel what?'

'Him.'

Before I could process anything she had just told me, the whispers started. A shiver ran down my spine. They were the whispers of the ancients witches. Way too many of them, but this time they were so low I couldn't make out a single word.

But I was certain it was them.

I turned my head and looked into the trees behind us.

"Do you hear that?"

A soft groan came from beside me, and I instantly turned back. Through the fog, I caught one of Kylan's hands pressed against the side of his head. Then another low groan escaped him.

"Kylan...are you okay?" My stomach sank with worry.

"I can feel him," Kylan breathed. "I don't know how...but he is close. I can feel it."

I went lightheaded for a moment, nearly losing my balance as panic crashed over me. "B-Baelor?"

The sound of Kylan's gritted teeth filled my ear.



"His other half..."

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