

Chapter 56

Violet

Nate shrugged, “We watched a movie and went to bed. I gave her my hoodie because I didn’t want her to freeze to death, but somehow this rumor—”

“Good for you two,” Kylan cut him off, his voice cold.

I felt a pain in my heart, accepting he had no desire to hear more. He was so confusing. If he really didn’t care, then why were we not allowed to talk about it? And why did I even care?

Before I could dwell on it too much, Rochwall entered the room.

“My children!” his voice was full of energy. “I missed you!”

Several cheered, thrilled to see him back. I could promise that if Commander Jorn had walked through that door, no one would’ve been smiling.

Rochwall wasn’t alone. He had brought his wife, Jane, along with him. I watched as she took a seat at the back and greeted her with a smile—but she turned her head away, pretending not to notice.

My smile vanished as I tried to think of a reason. Had I done something to upset her?

No, of course not. I barely knew the woman.

It was probably because she didn’t want to steal the spotlight from Rochwall or distract any students from training.

“James, please spare us,” one of the girls pleaded, calling him by his first name. “Commander Jorn nearly killed us last week.”

Rochwall chuckled warmly. “Don’t worry, we’re just going to do some light exercises today.”

There were sighs of relief here and there as all the tension fully disappeared.

Luckily, Rochwall kept his word. He led us through some simple duo exercises, nothing too difficult. I was paired with Nate, while Kylan was partnered with Dylan somewhere all the way in the back.

We did some resistance exercises, then moved to balance technique, and after the embarrassment of last week, I was really supposed to focus—but for some reason, I occasionally found myself glancing over at Kylan.

I definitely didn’t want to, but it felt as if my eyes moved on their own. He was too focused on his exercises to notice, while I was still busy trying to make sense of his stubborn attitude.

Even when Nate told him the truth, he still refused to listen.

“Maybe he really doesn’t care,” I muttered under my breath. I didn’t mean to say it out loud, but Nate heard.

He laughed softly. “What?”

I shrugged, feeling a bit stupid. “Never mind.”

Nate shook his head, smirking. “You really don’t know him, do you?”

I frowned. “What do you mean?”

“When Kylan says he doesn’t want to talk or hear about it, it means he cares,” Nate explained, as if I was supposed to know already.

However, I almost wished he hadn’t brought it up, because now my head was spinning again, wondering if maybe it wasn’t disinterest—but something else.

“He’s even taken it upon himself to train you,” Nate added.

“Only b-because he’s captain—that’s all.”

“No offense,” Nate laughed, “but if you’d been anyone else, he’d have used that same authority to step to the school board and get you removed from the team. That’s the kind of person he really is.”

I stared at him, conflicted whether I wanted to punch him for implying the obvious, that I wasn’t as strong—or for the fact that he was trying to make sense of Kylan’s intentions.

Could he actually care, even a little?

“Do you really think he cares?” I asked softly.

Nate sighed. “Do you care?”

“Huh?” I snapped my head to look at him as if what he’d said was the absolute worst—because it was. I couldn’t care about Kylan.

“Do you care about him, Vivi?” Nate spoke calmly, patiently waiting for an answer.

My mind raced. Did I care about Kylan?

In some strange way I cared for his validation, but that was only normal because whether I liked it or not, he was my mate.

But would I care about something as stupid as that, even if we weren’t mates?

Nate lifted a brow. “Well?”

I bit my lip, feeling frustrated. Maybe it was just pride—not wanting him to dismiss me so easily. But if that was truly the case, then why did it bother me so much? Why did he keep taking up space in my mind, even when I swore he didn’t matter?

The thought I had been trying to avoid, hit me quietly. Maybe I cared more than I wanted to admit.

I glanced at Kylan again, and this time, a warmth spread through my body before I could even think about pushing it away.

“I think...I think—”

“Training is over—thank you, everyone!” Rochwall called out just in time.

I blinked, pulling myself back to reality. What the hell was I just about to say? Was I crazy?

Flustered, I looked at Nate who carried a playful grin on his lips. “You think,” he chuckled. “Keep thinking, and give me an answer next time?”

He walked off, leaving me alone with my thoughts.

I couldn’t possibly like that idiot, right?

I hated him, I hated everything about him—and now Nate expected an answer next time, but that was my final answer. I despised him.

Speaking of next time...

My gaze wandered to Jane as I remembered she had promised to tell me more about the secret weapon Adelaide possessed.

I knew I said I would focus on my training, but that bit of the mystery was too tempting to leave unsolved.

As I walked toward Jane, her eyes met mine, and her hand quickly reached for her bag as she got up as if she was planning some sort of escape. My heart sank. Was she running from me?

“Professor Jane?” I called out, stopping her from walking away.

I saw Jane’s back move into a deep breath before she turned around, looking at me with a small, forced smile. “Yes, Violet?”

“I’m sorry for cutting off our talk so abruptly last time—”

“It’s okay. Don’t worry about it,” she brushed it off, eager to leave.

The uncomfortable expression on her face was supposed to make me hesitate, but it didn’t—because I just had to know. “You were going to tell me about that secret weapon Adelaide possessed?”

Her face went pale as she stared into my eyes. That comfortable warmth she had held in them the last time, was nowhere to be seen. Instead, her eyes seemed dull and distant.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she said dryly.

This was confusing. She was acting just like Esther and Rochwall, trying to make it seem like I was crazy for even bringing up Adelaide—and I couldn’t understand why. She had been so open before. I stood there, speechless.

She shook her head. “Just let it go, Violet,” she whispered. “It’s for the best.”

What did that even mean?

“I won’t bother you anymore, but I just want to know—”

“Hey, Violet!” I suddenly felt a firm hand on my shoulder. I turned, seeing Rochwall.

“Good work today!” he smiled. “I can see your condition has gotten a bit better, but there’s still a lot to be done.”

Although he was talking to me, his eyes were fixed on Jane. It was a look that said, ‘don’t say anything you’re not supposed to,’ and I couldn’t help but wonder if he had warned her not to talk about Adelaide.

“Was my wife bothering you with all that boring professor talk?” he asked, nodding in Jane’s direction.

I quickly shook my head. “N-No, not at all.”

“Good,” he released my shoulder and turned back to Jane. “Are you coming, babe?”

Jane nodded, giving me one last look before linking her arm with Rochwall and walking off with him.

Frustrated, I watched them walk out the door. I felt lost, confused—and it was all because everyone refused to talk about the situation.

Just when I thought I’d be able to close this chapter and focus on myself, the mystery of Adelaide seemed to pull me right back in.

What were they hiding that I wasn’t allowed to know?

“Move it, Puppy!”

My eyes followed the direction of the ‘lovely’ sound of Kylan’s voice. He had his arms crossed, watching me from a distance, and his words brought back memories.

‘Move it, Four Eyes.’

Those were the first words he had ever spoken to me, and I had never forgotten them. It was the day he had bumped into me, and pushed me to the ground.

My cheeks began to glow. I couldn’t possibly be falling for that monster—that would be humiliating on my part.

Other than bringing me down, what did he ever do to deserve my affection?

“Let’s go, move it!” he gestured his arms to the door. His gaze was sharp, almost just as intense as Commander Jorn.

Something told me that this private training session wouldn’t be anything like yesterday.