



Chapter 565

Violet

The sun had already set by the time we were close to the Starlight gates. My eyes searched for the empty spot where the bus had been when we first left, and when I found it, I couldn't look away.

My thoughts immediately went to that innocent bus driver who had been caught in the middle of all of this. I was sure Principal Sterling handled the matter respectfully, but there was still this sense of guilt deep within me.

What if I had lost the race?

What if I had decided not to go to the palace?

I walked at the back with Kylan while the others walked ahead of us. My legs ached, and my eyes stung from the long day I'd had, even though most of it had been spent in Mom and Dad's cabin.

Regardless, something within me had finally settled. My head wasn't spinning with everything I still didn't have an answer to because I knew exactly what to do now. The plan was whole.

"I never thought I'd be happy to see these gates again."

Kylan hummed in agreement.

Well...happy was a big word. Strangely enough, I couldn't wait to get back tomorrow and get straight to preparing to enter the realm. Ten days felt like both far too long and no time at all.

So I had this silly idea in my head that if I kept looking forward to the



next day, it would all be over soon.

My attention shifted as the gates creaked open, pushed from the other side. It was Rochwall. He hadn't even changed out of his Elite gear yet, and dark bags sat under his tired eyes.

His eyes went straight past the rest of us and landed on Jorn, who was leading the group. A small laugh escaped him as he took a small step forward.

"You're..." he started, but Jorn cut him off by throwing an arm over his shoulder. He laughed and dragged him along with him.

"So, who were you crying over again?" Jorn called, loud enough for all of us to hear.

"I felt bad for you, but I didn't shed a single tear," Rochwall shot back. "Let's talk about me having to carry you to those caves like a baby."

I laughed softly under my breath as I watched the two of them walk away. Jorn really was back to his old self again. He'd probably talk that poor man's ear off. I was sure he had plenty to say, including everything that had happened while Rochwall was away.

A moment of silence hung in the air as we all looked at each other. I was the one to break it with a quiet breath. "I think Trinity and I should head to bed," I announced. "If I'm going to keep my promise about working twice as hard tomorrow...I'm going to need a lot of sleep."

Who knew what Aelius had planned for tomorrow? He had taken a step back to train my eyes, and I knew he would still do it.

"I should go too." Nate let out a quiet laugh, his eyes sparkling as he spoke. "Kaelis should be here by morning."



My legs had already begun to move toward the dorms, but a tug on my hand stopped me. I looked down at Kylan's grip, then up into those confused brown eyes. "You're not coming with me?" he asked.

I blinked at him. "You will see me tomorrow," I said, my lips curving into a smile. "I don't want to sound like Aelius, but I think we can survive one night in our own beds," I teased.

Kylan grew a slight pout. I reached up and patted his cheek with two light slaps. "It's just a few hours."

He released a breath, then caught my wrist and pressed a soft kiss to my palm before letting me go. This time, I really took off, locking arms with Trinity.

"I honestly can't wait to get back tomorrow," she beamed after a short while. She leaned into me. "Jason taught me so much today. I always just focused on healing because I didn't feel like doing anything else, but there's a whole different side to healing I never even knew existed."

"How was it?" I wondered. "Training with him?"

Trinity tilted her head, her brows knitting as we entered the building. "Good?" It came out more like a question. "Really good, if I ignore the part where he's very obviously into me, and Dylan, who is supposed to notice things, cannot see it to save his life."

I couldn't help but laugh. "Maybe Jason is just being nice."

Trinity gave an unconvinced shrug as we walked up the stairs. "No...I know when someone is into me."

I cracked another laugh at her confidence, bumping shoulders with her as we walked the halls. By the time our laughter died down, we were

almost at the dorm.

We both stood in front of the door, refusing to open it, and shot each other a look.

"Are you really going to let them go...I mean," Trinity lowered her voice, glancing around like someone might hear. "Gloria and Kian?"

A small breath slipped past my lips. Those names were enough to make the hair on my body stand up, and definitely not something I wanted to think about before bed.

"Trin," I chuckled. "I love you, but I've spent the whole day thinking about whatever is inside that realm," I said. "Can we please, please just talk about something normal for the last few hours of the day?"

Trinity let out a relieved laugh. "Oh thank the Goddess," she said. "I was only asking to be polite, but I feel the same!" She gasped. "If I hear the word realm one more time tonight, I might actually scream."

Something in my chest eased. At the start of our school year, we used to talk about classes, mates, and whatever else. After everything, it'd be nice to go back to that again.

Trinity was the first to reach for the door. She unlocked it, and we entered, immediately met with the mess I hadn't even noticed had been there before. Both of us stopped after one step and looked with open mouths.

"It's a mess," Trinity said.

"It's a mess," I agreed.

There were clothes over the backs of chairs, empty cups, papers, shoes.



We had both neglected our dorm, and this was the result of it.

The door closed shut behind us. I slowly glanced at her and caught her doing the same, then both of us started laughing. "Okay," I said, wiping my eye. "We can tidy up a little now, at least," I told her. "So we're not waking up to...this."

Trinity gave a quick nod and immediately started moving. "I wonder if any of the girls are going to room with us," Trinity said, picking up items from the floor.

"No idea." I bent and started gathering up the empty bottles on the counter.

We had been so busy with our own problems that we truly had no idea what majors the girls had picked. And after all we had gone through these past days, it felt almost funny to be worrying about who slept where.

I dropped the bottles into the recycling bin.

"I'm guessing Kaelis and Lian go combat," I said, thinking out loud. "Both of them seem the type, but Sora..."

I trailed off, thinking it through. "Definitely healing," Trinity finished. "And with two empty rooms, there's plenty of space for whoever wants in."

A burst of uncomfortable laughter escaped her. She was referring to Chrystal and Amy, both of whom weren't here for obvious reasons. When she realized I wasn't laughing with her, her eyes widened and she stopped.

"Too soon?" I said.



I pressed my lips together and shook my head, smiling. Still, my eyes kept wandering to those doors, and my mind traveled back to the beginning.

"Let's just finish this," I breathed, shaking it off. Thinking about it now wouldn't do any good.

We continued tidying up until we physically couldn't anymore and gave up soon after. Then we both went our separate ways and headed for bed, completely drained.

By the time I was finally settled under the covers, it was past midnight. My head had barely touched the pillow before my eyes fell shut and I dropped straight into sleep.

~

"Violet?"

I heard someone whisper my name. My body stirred, and my eyes cracked open. They felt groggy and heavy as a cold wave swept past me. That's when I realized I wasn't in my room anymore and cautiously opened my eyes.

That strange wind had already warned me, so when I looked at the cluster of trees, I wasn't surprised anymore. The air seemed familiar. Like I had been here before.

"Violet?" a desperate voice called out to me again. I gasped, turning my head in every direction, but I couldn't see where it was coming from.

I swallowed, looking down at my hands. One of them was clenched into a fist. When I opened it, a soft blue petal rested in my palm. My lips parted as I realized.

Chapter 555



Marrowrose...

I was inside the realm.

Another prophecy?

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