Chapter 583

Violet

We sat on a bench at one of the tables outside. I sat beside Kylan, Kaelis on the opposite side beside Nate.

The wind brushed through my hair in the silence of the courtyard. I should've been taking a shower right now. Probably all three of us should've been, but not a word had been said yet, which was strange, considering Kaelis was the one who had dragged us all out here in the first place.

An enormous grin was plastered across her face. One that had been there for a while now as she looked between the three of us, preparing herself for the big reveal. Kylan had been frowning at her for some time now.

"So," Kaelis finally said, leaning forward. "I'm going to tell you all something. But I need you not to freak out, okay?"

"Okay?" I answered.

"Just...let me get through it. Listen first."

Her eyes drifted over to me. "And I think that you might already feel what I'm about to say. I think you get me."

I blinked. "Do I?"

"Does she?" Kylan said at the same time, glancing between us.

Kaelis nodded slowly, her head turning to Nate. He rubbed his chin, shooting her a confused smile.

"Well," Kaelis began, taking the deepest breath. "I think I might be adopted...possibly half witch."

There were three sighs in total. One came from Kylan, one from Nate and the other one from me. All for different reasons. Still, no one really knew what to do with it.

Poor Kaelis...

She had spent her whole life feeling different with no one to explain why, and this was the best she had been able to come up with on her own. A witch...

Kylan let out another breath through his nose, his frown deepening. " Kaelis—"

"No." She held up a hand. "I told you not to freak out."

"You can't be adopted," he said flatly. "What about Vayla?" he argued. " Vayla is not just—"

"Okay, you might have a point about that." Kaelis tilted her head, considering it. "But Vayla does seem to be tangled up in all of this somehow, even though she keeps denying it," she said.

"I just don't know how yet, but I might also be cursed," she decided. "I haven't worked out all the details yet."

Then she looked at me. "I always wondered why you got me so well," she said. "You, of everyone...and now I know. It's because we're the same, aren't we?"

I stayed quiet, though it might've been one of the hardest things I had ever done.

"What?" Her face fell a little. "You don't believe me either?"

That wasn't it at all. The only reason I couldn't say anything was because I did know what she was talking about, and what might've been going through her head. Kylan had already made it painfully clear where he stood on his sister being anywhere near any of this, and as much as part of me wanted to tell her...I fought so hard not to.

"Kaelis—" Nate started.

"No." She shook her head, holding up a hand to stop him mid-word. Then she turned back to me. Her voice dropped. "Do you think we should tell Kylan about the purple crack I saw in the sky?"

Shit...

Nate and Kylan both frowned at the same time.

"What crack?" Kylan asked, his voice low.

But Kaelis was already talking again. "It's not just that, either," she went on. "It's been happening my whole life, and everyone always told me I had a wild imagination, that I was just being...Kaelis." She picked at the edge of the table. "But now I know it isn't like that."

Kylan's jaw tightened. I inspected him with my gaze, and without meaning to, I reached out with the Life Sense. The same way Aelius had spent all day teaching me.

Now that I had it under control, I could immediately sense his heartbeat, hearing it thud in my own ears. I knew the difference, and this wasn't anger...but fear.

He was scared. Underneath that hard face, he was scared because he

didn't want this for her. He didn't want her to be what she was. Would it have been like that for Cecilia too?

I snapped out of it, and when I looked ahead again, Kaelis was still looking at me. It was like I was the only person in the entire world who might finally look her in the eye and tell her she wasn't crazy.

Nate had also gone quiet, but for different reasons. He was probably staying out of it because he felt like he had crossed Kylan enough for the week.

I let out a frustrated breath. Ultimately, this was Cecilia's mess. For keeping her own daughter in the dark all these years. Now it was Kylan's too. For trying to keep that door shut too.

But if there was one thing I couldn't do, as much as I would force myself to, it was lie to her.

Not when I knew better than anyone alive what she must feel like. "You're not imagining it."

The words had barely left my mouth before Kylan's hand slammed down hard against the table. He gripped the edge, his head whipping toward me.

His eyes were wide, asking me whether I was being serious right now. I was.

I just blinked at him, then I turned back to Kaelis.

"You're not imagining it," I said again. I watched as that desperate look in her eyes turned into relief.

"You're not a witch, though," I went on gently. "What you truly are is

something else. Rare, but so special—"

"Stop talking."

Kylan's voice cut through, so cold I couldn't finish my words. My lips were still parted, but I couldn't get a single word of it out.

"No, keep talking," Kaelis asked, her voice shaking. Her eyes were not on Kylan, but on me, begging me to keep going.

"Tomorrow," I said. "Come with us to where I'm taking the team." I held her gaze. "I promise you'll get all of your answers."

Her brows shot up. "Really?"

A loud scoff came from my left, and I glanced at Kylan for a split second, then back at her. "I know someone who would love to explain all of this to you," I told her.

Aelius would tell her everything she wanted to know, and Varius was already fond of her. They could clear everything up.

"And honestly..." I began. "I might need your help too."

I was really doing this for her, and I wasn't being selfish...but there was no denying that her help would be appreciated. She was powerful enough to hold the portal to the realm for us, and I couldn't just let it go without trying.

"She isn't going anywhere," Kylan stated. He did not raise his voice, but his tone was final.

Kaelis's face dropped. "I am going."

"You're not."

"You can't tell me what to do."

"I can, and I said no—"

"Hey!"

All three of us looked at Nate. He had barely said a word this whole time, but he seemed to have had enough. His eyes were fixed on Kylan, brows drawn together. "Don't talk to her like that."

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