

SPELLBOUND

Chapter 8: You're late

The poor little bunny moved and peeked at him through her silver-blond locks but the moment their eyes met, she flinched and buried her face again.

Gavriel's eyebrows twitched from the realization that the bunny was scared of him, not at the dead beasts that were scattered around him. He shut his eyes and when he opened them again, his eyes were no longer red. He ran his fingers through his hair and patiently, he tried to coax the bunny once more.

Slowly, he climbed inside the carriage, moving very carefully as he approached and squatted before her.

"The beasts are dead. You're safe now. No one can hurt you," he said, but the girl still didn't move. Gavriel knew that there was no way it would be easy for this little terrified bunny to crawl back to him again after what she saw. However, he could see that she was on the verge of freezing herself to death. Glancing at the crumpled blanket on the carriage floor, Gavriel picked it up. "At least take this blanket, Evielyn."

"Y-y-your eyes," she finally uttered between her trembling teeth without looking at him, her voice barely a whisper.

Gavriel brows momentarily creased but he immediately realized what she was trying to say. "They are not red anymore. Why don't you have a look and see?"

Unexpectedly, she lifted her face and looked at him much quicker than he would have thought.

She stared at him and then suddenly, her body swayed as if she was about to faint. Gavriel caught her shoulder as she began to sway and he held her steady. He settled himself next to where she was sitting and then picked her up and placed her on his lap. He removed his cloak and the blanket before he pressed her against his chest. He realized just how cold her body had become as he wrapped his arms around her and gave her back a quick rub to get some heat into her. She was warm and fine when he had left her. His forehead creased with worry as he quickly wrapped her up with the blanket and then his cloak. He grabbed her hands, which had turned ice cold, and began to rub them in an effort to warm them up.

He never thought she would easily become this icy in such a short period of time. He knew humans, especially women, were frail creatures but it seemed this bunny was way weaker than he expected; so weak that it seemed even such a short exposure to the cold temperature was enough to beat her up.

After some time, the girl in his arms finally started to warm up again. She had lost consciousness shortly after he placed her on his lap and he didn't know if it was because of the cold or the shock or both. He felt her steady breathing and he let out a sigh of relief but then, his eyes became as sharp as his blade the moment the carriage door was opened.

A huge, long haired man, wearing a black cloak identical to his, stood by the door. He looked like he was about to speak but was immediately silenced by Gavriel's deadly gaze.

"You're late, Samuel," Gavriel said in a low and calm voice that made not just the huge man called Samuel, but the other four men outside the carriage, flinch from obvious fear.

"Apologies, Your Highness." The huge man bowed in apology when someone butted in from behind Samuel.

"Please don't blame Samuel, Your Highness. I was the one who insisted that the human lady would still be resting in that inn. But it turned out my prediction was wrong," said the lean and brown-haired, intelligent looking man, named Zolan.

Gavriel sighed. He understood why his men would think that way because even he was surprised when Evielyn insisted on continuing the journey after only a couple of hours' rest. He thought his wife would delay the journey as much as she could since it was obvious enough that she was scared. But, she did the opposite of what he had expected.

"Enough." Gavriel lifted his free hand, ignoring the curious and surprised look in his men's eyes as they looked at the way he was holding his wife. "Do you think this carriage can still cross the valley?"

Samuel shook his head. "I'm afraid our only option now is to carry her."

"She won't withstand the cold," Gavriel said.

Seeing their prince's expression as he said those words, the men set a quick glance at each other.

"Then, shall I and Levy go to the village to fetch a new carriage?" suggested Zolan.

"No." Gavriel rejected his suggestion and then fell silent as he stared at the woman wrapped in his arms. After a while, he lifted his face back to his men and commanded. "Remove all your cloaks."