

## Chapter 47

Violet

I stretched my arms, yawning as I opened my eyes, squinting at the bright morning light. Looking beside me, I noticed the bed was empty—Nate was gone.

We'd stayed up late, laughing, talking, and watching movies, but it had all been worth it. I felt a calm I hadn't felt in a long time.

The clock read 7 AM, which meant I had to move quickly if I didn't want anyone seeing me. I sat up straight, hearing a soft rumbling noise coming from the bathroom.

"Nate?" I called out, my voice still groggy. The noise kept going, and there was no answer. I got up and walked to the bathroom door, which was slightly ajar.

"Nate?" I said again, louder this time, but still nothing. I reached for the doorknob, and just as my hand touched it, he swung the door open, startling me.

"Good morning, Vivi!" he said, standing in the doorway. He seemed to be in a good mood, but something about it felt off. Nate was always happy, but now he seemed a bit too energetic.

"Hi," I replied, watching him as he closed the door and walked past me.

"Did you sleep well?" he asked, but all I could focus on were his bloodshot eyes. I hummed, nodding with a smile as I pieced together what I already suspected.

The sound I'd heard in the bathroom earlier had to be those Lunaris pills—that was the only reason for his unusual energy. I wanted to say something, but if he wasn't ready to talk, there wasn't much I could do but worry.

"You're up early," I spoke.

"So are you," he said.

"Yes," I took another glance at the clock. "I should probably head back to my dorm. I don't want anyone to see me."

"That's cute," Nate grinned. "You know how many girls would kill for the chance to walk out of my room in the morning?"

I shot him a sarcastic smile as he picked up my clothes from yesterday, holding them out. "Aren't you going to change?"

I grabbed the clothes, shaking my head. "No, I'm fine."

"You might want to," a smirk reached Nate's lips. "Everyone knows I—"

"No," I interrupted, pulling the hoodie closer. If this was his way of trying to get it back, it wasn't going to work. "Your hoodie feels nice—and I know you said it's your favorite, but I'm not giving it back."

"But—" he started, but before he could finish, I pulled him into a hug.

"Don't make me walk these cold halls in a dress. I'll give it back later, okay?" I pouted, pulling back. "I'll see you around?"

Nate huffed, opening his arms as if he wanted to argue against it, but then he dropped his shoulders. "Sure," he smirked instead. "Whatever you want, beautiful."

I turned and headed to the door.

"Bye, Vivi," Nate called out, teasingly.

"Bye, Natey," I whispered back in the same playful tone, then closed the door behind me.

Now I knew I had to move fast. Strangely enough, Starlight's students all happened to be early birds, and walking the halls at this time was definitely a risk. Maybe it would've been better to wait until the afternoon.

"Shit," I muttered, hearing one of the doors creak open down the hall. I lowered my head as I quickened my pace, almost speed-walking down the stairs, across campus—and finally toward the Lunar hall.

As I walked through the building, a few of the girls were already awake. They eyed me up and down, whispering as I passed—but I kept my gaze forward, ignoring the murmurs as I headed to my room.

I certainly knew I wasn't the only one doing a walk of shame, so there was no need for them to be hypocrites now.

Once I reached my dorm, I shut the door behind me and leaned against it, catching my breath. I closed my eyes, finally feeling at ease.

"So...where were you?"

My eyes flew open to find Amy standing right in front of me, a curious smirk on her face.

I gasped, "I-I w-was uh...I was..."

She tilted her head, letting out a laugh. "Must've been some really good dick if it left you stuttering like that," she commented. "Hope it was worth it."

Amy, who had solidified her position as Chrystal's sidekick, rarely spoke to me—and, of course, the one time she did, it had to be about this. Her gaze dropped to the oversized hoodie, and her brows knitted together in surprise. She chuckled before looking back up, barely hiding her grin.

"That's a really unique hoodie," she swallowed her lips, "And you're wearing leggings."

"Oh, I wasn't-" I started, but cut myself off, realizing it wouldn't matter. She had already made up her mind.

Since Amy was the only one here, I assumed Trinity was still with Dylan, and Chrystal wasn't around either, which meant she was probably still at Kylan's...again.

"Do you mind?" Amy raised an eyebrow.

"D-Do I mind?"

"You're blocking the door."

"Oh!" I quickly stepped aside, feeling my cheeks heat up.

Amy looked me up and down, chuckling. "You're so fucking odd, yet you..." she shook her head in disbelief. "I don't know how you did it."

With one last giggle, she walked out.

Did what?

What did I do?

~

After an hour passed and still no one had returned, I decided to take a shower and get ready. Luckily, I had the day off since yesterday had been family day.

I folded Nate's hoodie and placed it in my closet. Even after wearing it, it still smelled like him. A small smile crept onto my face as I thought about how much fun I had with Nate, but then the corner of my mouth twitched as Kylan slipped into my thoughts again.

It was ridiculous. I could look at something as simple as a pencil and somehow, that thought would go back to Kylan—it was pathetic.

Watching him kiss Chrystal in front of me really got under my skin, and knowing she'd stayed in his room only made it worse.

But like Nate said, Kylan wasn't always a good person.

He had called Nate a 'Lunaris-sniffing son' and his 'servant' and something told me that was probably just the beginning of what he was capable of saying.

In a twisted way, I realized he'd actually been quite mild with me.

Deciding to grab some breakfast, I sent Trinity a quick text and headed out again.

Walking through campus by myself felt a little strange. I had spent most of my life used to being on my own, but ever since Trinity became someone I leaned on, it just felt off.

Especially now, as a nearby group of girls glanced in my direction and broke into giggles. Thinking about it, I realized they weren't the only ones today giving me strange looks.

Feeling a bit anxious, I quickly pulled a small mirror from my bag to check my reflection. No smudges, no eye-boogers—just me, Violet.

If it wasn't my face, then maybe it was my clothes?

I knew I was probably overthinking, but I couldn't help it.

Shaking off the feeling, I kept my pace until I reached the café, but as soon as I stepped inside, it felt like eyes were on me again. The students in line, the ones sitting at the tables—even a few who seemed to be laughing. Were they laughing at me? Or was I just imagining it?

No, I was probably just overthinking things. I didn't even know these people.

I approached an empty counter where a girl behind the register was scrolling through her phone, smirking.

"Good morning," she put down her phone, looking up. "You're Violet, right?"

I glanced around the room, wondering if there was perhaps another Violet here—but no, she meant me.

"Uh, yeah," I replied, giving a small smile. She must have recognized me from class. The girl raised her brow, waiting for me to order.

"One cookies & cream cookie and a flat white, please," I said.

She giggled, punching in my order. "A flat white and one coochie & cream, coming right up."

"What?" I blinked.

"Oh, excuse me," she chuckled, placing a hand over her chest. "I meant cookies & cream."

I gave the girl a strange look but handed over the money anyway, deciding to ignore her slip-up. Yet as I waited for my order, I found myself wondering over the meaning behind that punline.

My eyes widened. Was it possible one of the girls had spread a rumor about me doing a walk of shame?

No, that didn't make sense. Nearly half the girls did the same walk every morning. It had practically become a routine, and it was surprising no one had even gotten a strike over it.

Besides, it wasn't like this was my first time leaving a guy's dorm...

"Here you go, Violet."

I grabbed the tray from the counter and gave the girl a small smile. "Thanks."

With my tray in hand, I scanned the room for a place to sit.

"Violet!" someone called out.

I turned, seeing a familiar face waving with a warm smile. It was Jane, Rochwall's wife, sitting alone at a small table.

"Come sit here," she said, motioning for me to join her.

I hesitated for a moment but quickly realized this might be my best chance to get answers. Jane had been on the Elite team, and unless anyone had told her to keep quiet about Adelaide, there was a good chance she would answer some questions—especially since she was alone.