



63 Fidelity –a tough promise.

"You confuse me sometimes." Arwen suddenly spoke softly, searching for something in his eyes. "The things happening between us are too confusing. I don't know how should I take it." 1

"Am I making it unbearable for you? Are you uncomfortable?" Aiden knew he had been losing his control around her too often. He knew that it might scare her away, but he couldn't help it. Maybe he underestimated the effect she had on him or overestimated his self-control because there seems no way he could hold back. 1

Arwen might have been unsure of many things, but she was very sure that she wasn't uncomfortable with any of them –neither with him nor the proximity they shared, and definitely not the kisses they have come to share so far.

"Not uncomfortable, but it often overwhelms me. Your words sound more and more like promises and I don't know if it's me overreading them."

"It's not making you uncomfortable, Moon, and that's all that matters," Aiden smiled as her



words washed his worries away. Cupping the side of her face, he added, "It's still too early, and I won't ask you to believe me just yet. Give it time. The overwhelming feelings will wear off, and you will realize you never misread anything."

Arwen leaned in to his touch subconsciously. Looking into his eyes, she nodded. "Fine. I will let time decide it for me," she said, her voice a tone softer as she met Aiden's gaze. After a brief pause, she asked, "But before that there is something that I have been meaning to ask all this while. Why did you marry me? What do you expect from me... and this marriage of ours?"

"Everything," Aiden said, without any hesitation.

The word landed heavily between them. Arwen's breath hitched as she tried to process its meaning. "Everything?" she echoed, a note of uncertainty in her voice.

Aiden nodded, his eyes never leaving hers. "Yes, everything," he repeated, his tone came steady but not overwhelming. "I thought I made this very clear on the day when we signed the certificate. I want all of you –your heart, your trust, your passion. And I will give you the same.

Nothing less."

Taking a step closer, he lowered his voice as he continued, "I know this might not be easy, and if you need time to accept it, take all the time you need. But know this –there would be no pretend play between us, Moon. No hiding. What we have will be real, raw and undeniable." 2

Arwen felt her heart race. The intensity of his words was overwhelming, but then the gentleness with which he spoke calmed her nerves. For the first time in her life, she felt the depths of someone's intentions –which was firm, but not forceful.

Swallowing the lump she felt in her throat, she pushed him slightly and sidestepped before turning away from him. "Has it always been like that? Your thoughts towards me?"

Once again, Aiden didn't hesitate. "Always," he said simply, making Arwen turn back to face him.

She opened her mouth to say something but then closed it without, not finding anything quite appropriate. She had always thought of asking him what he wanted from the deal of marriage

they had made, but she never realized that when she would get the answer from him, she would be left nothing but speechless.

"I never thought to keep us a secret. But I do need some time. Before letting the world know about us, I want to tell my parents about it. But even before that, I want to confirm something with you." Arwen spoke, adding, "I don't doubt your words, but I want to ask again. Is that really me that you want?"

"Why do you ask that?"

"Because I remember you saying that there has always been one woman in your heart—the muse of all your emotions. If it's her you want, you can't possibly have me. Neither can I promise you all that you have asked for. If I give you my heart, trust and my passion, I just don't want these three things back. I also want something else—something that's even greater than those three," she said, and Aiden raised a brow at her.

"And what is that?" Aiden asked, intrigued. As long as she asks for it, she would have it—even if it was his life she asked for.

Arwen stepped closer, locking her gaze with Aiden. "I want you ... and your fidelity," she began, her voice firm yet laced with vulnerability. "I know loyalty is tough to promise but it's what matters most to me now. If I am giving you everything, I wouldn't tolerate the thought of you even thinking about someone else. I just couldn't."

Her words hung between them, a little heavy with unspoken fears. What if he couldn't give her what she was asking for? The uncertainty gnawed at her — what if the woman who once held his heart was too hard for him to forget? Wouldn't she lose the chance she might have had with him?

Yet, after everything she had endured, she wasn't willing to gamble her heart on someone who couldn't give her everything in return.

Before Arwen could dwell over it further, Aiden pulled her close, tilting her chin so their eyes met. She hadn't realized she had been avoiding his gaze until now.

'As always, so brave in her words, yet unsure in her heart,' Aiden thought to himself as he



internally shook his head. If this had been the past, he might have teased her, flicked her forehead for even daring to think he wouldn't accept such an easy request. But knowing that she had forgotten him, he couldn't bring himself to tease her. The weight of forgotten memories still stung deeply, but if she was by his side for the future, he could bear it.

"Moon," Aiden began, his voice steady and reassuring, "fidelity is not tough to promise—it's basic. If a man can't even offer his loyalty to his woman, how could he ever be worthy of her?" He gave her a gentle smile while his thumb moved to brush her cheek. Aiden said, "If that's the one thing you want from me, Arwen, you don't need to worry. It's already yours." 12

