



Chapter 71

After Brian left, Riley finally exited the car again. As she climbed up the stairs, Clint and Zia made their way to her from another exit within the chapel, both panicking.

"Riley, why are you taking so long?" Zia's voice was filled with concern as she asked.

"Um, the boss sent me," Clint revealed.

"Oh." Riley made a face and answered, "Um. I saw Brian come by the gate. I did not want him to see me." She squinted at Zia, asking, "You did not tell him, did you?"

"No, you told me not to," Zia replied.

"I'll check on it, Miss Allen," Clint offered. "Don't worry. The security guards had been instructed not to let anyone in."

Zia guided Riley and the wedding coordinator to the door. After adjusting her elegant gown, Riley braced herself. She placed her hand over her heart, realizing that in a few short moments, she would be... Mrs. King, embarking on a new chapter of her life.

From the door, Riley could hear the familiar strains of the music playing in the background. A smile tugged at her lips as she recalled her conversation with Adrian about choosing the song together.

Back then, Adrian said, "I'm not a vampire, but it sure felt like I waited a thousand years for you."

The band was playing A Thousand Years by Christina Perri.



Slowly, the doors opened, and the lyrics to the song echoed in her head.

~ "Heart beats fast

Colors and promises

How to be brave?

How can I love when I'm afraid to fall?

But watching you stand alone

All of my doubt suddenly goes away somehow" ~

Was she afraid to enter this new marriage? Riley remembered her apprehensions days before, but just as the lyrics said, Adrian erased all her doubts.

In the short time she and Adrian were together, he had proven his love for her was unwavering.

Through her veil, Riley saw Adrian at the center of the altar, waiting for her in his wheelchair. His body appeared tense, as if he were holding back his emotions, but his eyes were filled with tenderness for her.

~ "I have died everyday waiting for you

Darling, don't be afraid, I have loved you for a thousand years

I'll love you for a thousand more" ~

When those parts of the lyrics were sung, Riley caught Adrian wiping the corners of his eyes. She badly wanted to hasten her steps and embraced him.



Riley ended up crying too. Her chest felt so heavy that she struggled to keep it together. Zia had to come forward and help wipe the tears on her face. Knowing she and Adrian missed earlier chances to be together, it was hard not to be emotional. The timing may have been wrong in the past. But finally, they were there; after taking many wrong turns and overcoming the challenges in their lives, their time had finally come.

Around Riley, she could hear people whimpering too, as if they were affected by the scene that unfolded before them. However, while Riley heard them, her gaze was fixed on the man at the altar.

She and Adrian did not have time for a grand wedding. They had chosen a small chapel with no more than thirty guests. Of course, because Adrian could afford it, they had the city's best florist, wedding planner, car rentals, etc., but at the same time, there were limitations on what the wedding suppliers could cater for their nuptials.

Adrian had promised her they would have another wedding, but it did not matter to Riley. Her wedding with Adrian was undoubtedly very moving and meaningful compared to her first marriage.

The song was coming to an end when Riley stood before Adrian. Then, he surprised her by getting up. Clint handed him a cane for support. Adrian took two steps forward and unexpectedly embraced Riley, and she hugged him back.

She could feel Adrian's chest rise and fall as the vocalist continued to sing the last part of the song.

~"And all along I believed I would find you

Time has brought your heart to me



I have loved you for a thousand years

I'll love you for a thousand more" ~

The violin's completion of the song echoed loudly in the venue, and when it finally ended, Riley felt goosebumps all over.

Adrian pressed his lips against her ear and said, "Thank you, Riley, for marrying me. I don't know about a thousand more years, but I promise to love you until my last breath."

Riley could not help but sob again because she knew Adrian was crying too. She wished she could hold him longer, but unfortunately, the wedding had to go on. Everyone was waiting for them, including the priest, who was also touched by their moment.

The priest wiped his tear-stained face and said, "What a beautiful couple. Shall we begin?"

It took a moment to settle their feelings, but eventually, Adrian and Riley let go of each other. Adrian returned to his wheelchair, and Riley moved to the seat beside him. Then, the preacher started with his speech.

"Dearly beloved, today I want to speak to you about the virtue of patience, especially when it comes to love." The priest said. "In our fast-paced world, we often desire instant gratification, but true love requires time to grow and flourish. 'Love is patient, love is kind.' This patience means waiting for the right person, moment, and circumstances planned for us."

The preacher told the story of a man who sacrificed much to be with the woman he loved. It resembled so much with Adrian's character. After the story, he suggested, "Waiting for love is not a passive act but an active



journey of faith and personal growth. It is about becoming the best version of yourself so that when the right person enters your life, you are ready to love fully and selflessly. During this waiting period, you are molding yourself, teaching yourself, and preparing your heart." 1

"So, I encourage you all, whether single or in a relationship, to embrace patience. Remember, the best things in life are worth waiting for." The priest smiled at Adrian, asking, "Isn't that right, Mister King?"

Beside Riley, Adrian chuckled. While he was amused, he was teary-eyed. Yet again, he wiped the corners of his eyes and responded, "Yes, Father. I can attest to that."

The ceremony continued. Riley and Adrian exchanged vows, promising to love each other until the last days of their lives.

It started with Adrian. He was naturally reluctant to express himself in front of the crowd. Being vocal about his thoughts simply wasn't like him. However, Riley knew he was doing it for her. He said, "Riley, I never thought this day would come when I would have you as my wife. I was contented watching you from afar, living a happy life, because that is what love is. Loving means being happy for the one you love."

As if the words were stuck in his throat, he gasped. He massaged his jaws and said, "But finally, the heavens took pity on me and gave me a chance to be with you. So, Riley, from today onwards, I promise to love and cherish you, to give you the world served on a golden platter."

He nodded and confirmed, "That's right. Golden. I won't settle for silver."

The guests had to give it to Adrian. It was a sweet and funny line, and it tickled everyone's bones. Adrian smiled before resuming, "I promise to stay by your side, in sickness and health, for better and for worse, till

death do us part."



LiLhyz

Author

June 19, 2024. Chapter 2-3. Thank you for patiently waiting. Don't forget to send your lovely gems on Adrian's vows. The third chapter will be in the evening, around six hours or so. Have to run an errand

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