

Chapter 74

~MAYA~

I don't know what just happened to me. One minute I was watching Kane speaking to everyone that had come to help him, and the next, I was falling to the ground. All I know is that something happened to me when I saw the vehicles pull up and the people that exited them. I felt this intense emotion that I had no idea how to describe. Everything about them seemed familiar to me. But none of them even looked my way, not once. I don't know why I keep feeling a connection with people who don't seem to know me. It happened with Kane, and now it was happening with these strangers that I knew nothing about. My heart felt heavy, and tears threatened to fall. Why was I hurting on the inside?

"I think you're still weak from earlier," Kane tells me. "You should rest here for a little. You don't need to listen to everything that's happening around you."

I immediately shake my head, "I want to listen to everything. Giselle is finally going to get what she deserves. I'm not about to miss even a second of this."

Kane doesn't look convinced, "are you sure that is what you want?"

I nod, "I'm positive. I just had a moment of weakness. I will be fine now. I promise."

Kane nods and helps me to get down from the vehicle. The moment that we step out together, all eyes are on us. I feel nervous under all their stares. They don't look unfriendly at all; they may even be concerned about me. That would be understandable since I'd just blacked out in front of all of them.

"How is she doing?" The girl from earlier asks. The one that looks like Kane.

"She says that she's fine."

"Do you need anything at all?" Lucy asks me. I believe that she was the mate of Austin. And also the sister of Ermanno and the rest of his brothers. At least that's what I've picked up from everything they have said so far.

"No, but thank you for asking."

Austin watches me, and again, I feel an unmistakable pull toward him. Not like the pull, I felt for Kane, but it was still a strong one. "Who are you? Why did Giselle try to kill you?"

Kane walks in front of me in a protective stance, "I don't think now is the time to ask her any questions. She's been through enough already. She can't give an introduction because she doesn't remember her name. She was forced to be a maid for Giselle. She had nowhere to go because she'd lost all her memories. She still can't remember them. I think we can all agree that now is not the time to ask her any questions."

"Now may not be the time for that, but I think that we can still at least introduce ourselves to the kind girl," Lucy says. "How uncomfortable would it be for her if she didn't know our names or who we were? We have time for at least that much."

Kane didn't refuse this time and instead moved from in front of me so that they could all introduce themselves.

One by one, they did just as they said they would; they gave me their names and explained who they were to Kane or Maya and even each other. Maya wasn't just lucky to have Kane; she was also fortunate to have people who loved her. I could see how much she meant to almost everyone here.

She was loved.

I, on the other hand, had no idea if anyone loved me at all. So far, there is no one that has shown up asking for me. No one recognized my face, and if they did, they didn't bother trying to get into contact with me.

After all the introductions, I stood at the back and watched as everyone continued their discussions.

It was clear to me that everyone here was familiar with battles. The way they spoke and their properly laid out plans were something that only professionals could do. This definitely wasn't the first time for either one of them. I had faith that they knew what they were doing. This meant that Giselle would surely get the punishment that she deserved.

It was almost time for the invasion to take place. After watching Kane suffer day after day, it was finally happening. I knew that Giselle would not be expecting this before her wedding day. I believe that Kane did the right thing by making her think that he was really going to marry her. It definitely kept her busy enough not to realize that she was being played. Soon enough, she would learn the mistake that she'd made. I couldn't wait to see the look on her face. Not only would she realize that her plan to kill me had failed, but she would also see that Kane would never marry her. She would never get to have the one man she was desperate to trap.

Giselle tried every way possible to force him to marry her even though she already knew about his mate and the love he had for her. She was an incredibly selfish woman. Even though I also felt strong feelings for Kane and hated the idea of him loving another woman, it wouldn't make me act as crazy as Giselle did. I would not force him to be with me if he didn't want that. I knew that my heart would break if he ever found Maya, but I was willing to accept it because I knew that she was the only person that could make him happy again. And I've wanted that since the beginning. For Kane to be happy again. I wanted to repay him for all of the times he's saved me.

I watched him as he walked from one person to the next, discussing everything about their plan. He was trying his best to ensure that everything went smoothly without any bumps. He was what I would imagine any good leader would be like.

"I can't believe you're forcing me to help," Austin says to his wife, Lucy.

"You know that this is what Maya would have wanted you to do as well." She tells him. "She wouldn't want to see her mate marry someone other than her. If you don't want to do this for Kane, at least you know that you're doing this for your sister. Believe me; she will love you even more for doing this for her."

I'm surprised that she would say something like that. I think I know now why Austin was head over heels in love with her. She was an intelligent and warm-hearted young lady.

Austin sighs and pulls her close to him, "I don't know what I'll ever do without you, Lucy. Somehow you always make me do what's right."

She smiles and kisses him, "it goes both ways. You need me just as much as I need you."

All of the couples present today are just like those two. They were all deeply in love. It was a beautiful sight to see. So this is what true love looked like. I was happy for all of them.

The plan was originally to attack Giselle tomorrow on the wedding day, but they all decided that it was best to catch her off guard tonight instead.

After listening to all their points, I also thought it was best to attack her when she least expected it. If they waited for tomorrow, Kane would have to go back there and be with her, pretending to truly want to marry her. From what I've seen so far, he wasn't the best at showing affection towards Giselle. I wasn't sure how he got her to believe that he was willing to marry her.

"It's set then," Austin says. "We have the layout of the castle. And we know which side each of us will be attacking from. The main goal is to get to the dungeons and free everyone. We don't want to have any of us injured during this fight. After we free those people, we can leave. And that's when we will start our search for Maya."

My heartbeat stopped for a second after they mentioned searching for Maya. This meant that Kane was closer than ever to find out what had happened to her. I'm not sure how I feel about this. When she was back in his life, he would completely forget about me.

I sighed; it didn't matter if he forgot about me. His happiness was all that I had to be concerned about.

Kane walks over to Maya's brothers, and I can see how eager he is to learn more of what Austin knows, "Ermanno told me that you've been looking into the list. And that you've gone through half of it already. How much more people do we need to question?"

This is what he's wanted all along. This is what Giselle has prevented him from doing. She's stopped him from searching for Maya.

"There is only one person left on the list," Austin answers him. "She has to be the one responsible for Maya's disappearance. She also happens to be a damn witch."

"I'm sure it's her," James adds. "We are so f****g close to finding Maya. I can feel it. I hope she knows how much we love her and that we are coming for her. I hope she knows that we will never give up on finding out what happened to her."

Eden hugs her mate as he shows signs of emotional trauma. This must have been hard on everyone, not only Kane. They've all been grieving for Maya. She was so loved that when she left, everyone felt it. It tells me the kind of person that she was. Kane wasn't lying when he said she was a ray of sunshine. She had to be for so many people to love her.

I can see the look of hope that crosses Kane's face at their words. For the first time in forever, there is happiness on his face. He's looking forward to seeing her again, just like he told me earlier. This is what he was so desperate to achieve.

Kane's eyes fall on me, and I feel my body come alive under his gaze. I don't know how to hide the pain I feel, knowing that we are about to go our separate ways as soon as this battle is over. That was it for us. I would be free from Giselle. Which meant I would have to learn to survive on my own. I didn't have any family or friends.

I turn away from his penetrating gaze and walk over to the jeep. I didn't want to look at him. I was scared that I would begin to cry. I didn't realize how attached I was to Kane until now. I always knew it would hurt like hell when we had to separate, but I didn't think that it would feel like I was drowning in my sorrow.

"Hey!" A feminine voice calls out to me.

I turn and find myself face to face with Gabriella.

"Hi." I smile.

"How are you feeling?" she asks me. She genuinely looks like she wants to know.

"A lot better."

She smiles, "I'm happy to hear that. Kane looks as though he cares for you plenty."

I'm surprised that she brought that up; I didn't think anyone would notice the relationship between us. It was also very random. Was she implying something?

"Um," I try to search for the right words to say. "I'm not sure that I agree with that. I think that he has a good heart. He knows how much Giselle put me through, and I know how much she also tortured him. We share common enemies. Or shall I say, one common enemy?"

She nods, "He has a good heart, doesn't he? I'm surprised that you noticed that. Not many people see that in him."

I study her closely, and like before, I notice how much she resembles Kane. She also looks like she cares for him. Austin and his family are tied to Kane because of Maya but Gabriella has no reason to help him. But still, here she is, putting everything behind her to help him. She even asked Maya's brothers to join in and somehow found a way for them to agree.

"Are you related to him?" I find myself asking.

Her eyes look startled by my question. Her reaction seems weird to me. It wasn't a difficult question, and I don't think that I've overstepped any boundaries. So then, why does she seem so surprised by my question?

"I . . ." she pauses and looks at Kane before looking back at me. "I think I should get back. I'm sure there is plenty for us to discuss still. But it was a pleasure speaking to you. I hope that one day you'll regain your memories, and I'll be able to get a proper introduction."

If I was unsure before, I'm positive now that she is hiding something.

"Is everyone ready?" Ermanno asks. "I think it's time we get ready for battle."

They all agree and return to their vehicles. I'm not sure where that leaves me. But I know that I'm not saying goodbye to Kane this soon. I had to see him win. I had to see Giselle pay. And I wanted to see the look on her face when she realized that she'd lost.

Kane approaches me, and he seems to be concerned about something. I'm not sure what he's worried about, but I want to assure him that everything will be okay.

"I need you to stay back," he says, surprising me. "You can't be in the middle of that battlefield. Do you understand me?"

This wasn't what I expected him to say. Why would I stay back?

I shake my head at him, "I want to be there by your side. You saved me from dying, Kane. Do you understand how much I owe you? I owe you my life. That may mean nothing to you, but I don't take things like that lightly. I want to be able to fight for you."

A muscle ticks in his jaw, and it looks like he's trying hard to control what he wants to say or do to me, "the problem is that you don't know how to fight. If you can't fight, how do you expect to be on the battlefield? Do you remember that you're not only fighting to protect your life but that of your unborn children as well? If you don't want to listen to my plea, at least think about them. No one else should matter but them. I know you think that you owe me something for saving your life but believe me, you don't. I did something that I thought Maya would be proud of. It was the only reason why I did it."

"I don't care why you did it," I whisper as I just trying to do the same for you. I know how important this battle is for you. I know that you can't afford to lose. I know all of these things, and I know how much Giselle has made you suffer. When you should have been out there searching for your mate, you were forced to stay back with her because of her selfish reasons. I want to help you get the justice that you deserve."

"Did you forget everything that I told you?" He asks in a broken tone. "I'm not a saint. I'm not a good person. I'm far from it. I've done wrong to the people closest to me, especially my mate Maya. Everything that has been happening to me is what I deserve. I've done this to myself. This is my punishment for hurting the one person I should have held close to my heart, protecting her, loving her. Giving her everything that this world has to offer. Don't ever think that I never deserved any of this."

"I know what you told me," I answer him. "It still does not affect my decision. Just because you made some mistakes in your past, it doesn't make you a bad person, Kane. You had your reasons for whatever you did, I'm sure of it. It doesn't excuse your behavior but what matters is that you realize that you were wrong, and you're willing to correct it. If you were a bad person, you would not have recognized the bad you did, and you definitely wouldn't have tried to change it. You wouldn't waste your time trying to convince me that you were evil either. You're far from a bad person. It's time that you saw that yourself as well."

Someone clears their throat, and I see the man Kane had introduced as Hunter earlier. His tongue seemed pressed against his cheek as he took in how close we were standing. He doesn't give much of his feelings away, but I can tell that he isn't pleased with how close we are. I can understand his reaction since these people were all Maya's friends and families. No one would want to see Kane this close to a woman that wasn't her. Especially not when she was missing.

"Please, for my sake, stay here where it is safe. If you want to do something for me, this will make me happy." He tells me before walking toward Hunter.

The man looks at me one more time before the two of them walk away. I'm not sure what they are discussing, and at this point, I don't think that I care. I'm too lost in Kane's words to think of anything else.

How can he convince me that he has no feelings for me when he says something like that? He acts like he's desperate to keep me away from any harm, and that's not something that you would do for someone you didn't care about.

I can understand why he would want me to believe that he didn't have feelings for me, however. He knew that the moment he confessed to it, that would change everything between us. Things were already awkward after we almost made love. What had started as him trying to keep me warm and wishes my body from freezing to death had turned into something different—my body shivered at the reminder of that day. Part of me wishes that he didn't stop it from happening, but I'm still happy that I at least got to feel more than a kiss from him. These were memories that I never wanted to forget for the rest of my life.

I wasn't sure if I should listen to him or do the opposite of what he was asking of me. Even if I were to stay back, where exactly would I seek shelter? I knew no one.

"What are you still doing standing here?" Lucy asks me. "Come join us. You can stay with the girls while the men start the battle. We will only interfere if they need our help."

Gabriella rolls her eyes, "that's quite unfair. I don't know why they're always so damn overprotective."

Isabella rubs her belly, "I don't know how we handle them. Hunter doesn't leave my side for even a second."

Hunter walks towards us and places his hand on her stomach, "are you okay? I saw you rubbing your belly? Is our baby fine?"

Isabella gives us a look as if to prove her point. Lucy covers her mouth to keep from laughing, and so does Eden. I can't help but smile either. Their relationships were so pure and beautiful. How wonderful would it be to be a part of this family?

I don't think I will ever have the chance to know.