

Chapter 10 Hugs and Kisses

Freya had made her decision. She resolved not to sleep tonight and just stay awake.

"Really?" Matilda quickly dried her tears and smiled.

Ashton sensed Freya's hesitation and reluctance. He knew she wouldn't agree to these terms if it weren't for Matilda. He didn't want Freya to accept him solely because of their daughter.

Just as he was thinking this, his phone rang urgently. He glanced at it and saw it was Harold.

"Dad," Ashton answered quickly.

"Heidi and Klaus are getting engaged tomorrow. Do you have time to attend?" Harold's voice came through.

Ashton was surprised that Heidi and Klaus were getting engaged so soon. Still, he nodded. "Sure. Send me the address, and I'll be there."

Even though they hadn't seen each other in six years and weren't as close as before, Ashton had always considered Heidi like a sister and harbored no grudges.

After hanging up, he turned to Matilda. "Grandpa needs me for something, so I can't stay with you today or maybe even see you tomorrow."

Her eyes welled up again upon hearing that.

His heart ached. "But I promise to spend the day with you the day after tomorrow, okay?" He glanced at Freya and hoped to give her time to think things through.

Freya caught Ashton's meaning and gave him a grateful look.

"Really? You won't lie to me?" Matilda held back her tears.

"Of course not. When have I ever lied to you?" He extended his pinky. "Let's pinky promise."

She hooked her pinky with his, and their thumbs pressed together. Finally, a smile lit up her face.

Freya breathed a sigh of relief.

But then Matilda said, "Daddy, you should give both me and Mommy a hug and kiss goodbye."

Freya's expression froze, and her mouth twitched uncontrollably. She thought, She really knows how to put me in a tough spot.

Seeing Freya's stiff expression, Ashton couldn't help but chuckle. "You're such a good girl. I'll see you the day after tomorrow." He scooped up Matilda and planted a kiss on her cheek.

Freya was annoyed and glared at Ashton and Matilda. She had been raising Matilda all this time. But within just two days, Matilda was already taking his side. She muttered, "Stay calm. She's my daughter, after all," trying to soothe her growing irritation.

When he set Matilda down, she promptly pointed at her mother. "Okay. It's Mommy's turn now."

Freya shot Ashton a warning look, but he remained unfazed. He smiled and pulled her into a gentle hug. Then, with a mischievous grin, he leaned in toward her lips.

"Don't push it too far!" Freya's face changed as she gritted her teeth and issued a low warning. Her eyes squeezed shut, and her body trembled slightly. She silently vowed that if he dared to overstep, she'd find a way to deal with him later. Despite her resolve, a bit of nervousness lingered in her heart.

Suddenly, she felt a warm touch on her forehead, followed by a gentle voice in her ear. "See you the day after tomorrow!"

Startled, Freya opened her eyes and looked at Ashton in surprise. She hadn't expected that he would kiss her forehead when he could have done more.

He chuckled. "Are you disappointed?"

"I..." Her face flushed. "What nonsense are you talking about? Of course not!" She turned away quickly, her cheeks red. "Don't you have things to do? Why aren't you leaving?"

Ashton laughed heartily. He bid Matilda farewell and then departed.

As he walked toward Ivanna's car waiting nearby, a figure slipped into the building where Freya lived.

"Here are the items you requested, my Lord." She handed him two boxes as he settled into the car. The boxes clearly held something valuable. He opened them to reveal two pendants he'd seen earlier at the jewelry exhibition: the Radiant Lotus and the Meteor Tears.

Ashton had instructed Ivanna to purchase these pieces. Freya liked the Meteor Tears, so he planned to give it to her for her birthday. As for the Radiant Lotus, he figured it would make a perfect engagement gift for Heidi.

Ivanna spoke again. "Hans just entered the building. He might be looking for Freya. Should I warn him?"

"Hans?" A cold glint appeared in Ashton's eyes. "Follow him. If he tries anything inappropriate, make sure he doesn't see tomorrow's sunrise."

"Understood, she responded promptly and got out of the car.

With that, Ashton drove back to the Universum.

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The doorbell rang, and Matilda perked up. "That must be Daddy." She rushed to open the door.

Freya was puzzled and wondered why Ashton would return so soon. "Did you forget something..." Her words trailed off when she saw who was standing outside. It wasn't Ashton.