

Chapter 593 A Long Time Ago

Elliana nodded, her whisper barely audible as it reached Cole's ears. "If you weren't lying, then it's true that we both have feelings for each other. You claimed your affection for me exceeded my imagination, and I confess the same depths within my heart."

Cole felt those words pierce straight through to his soul—the sweetest melody he'd ever encountered. Romance possessed such devastating power when wielded with sincerity. The world around him seemed lifted by invisible wings, weightless and shimmering.

His gaze traced her rose-petal lips while desire deepened in his eyes, his voice dropping to gravel. "Since we like each other, shall we be together?"

"Alright," Elliana breathed.

Her immediate surrender surprised him. Euphoria crashed over him like a tidal wave as he drew closer, stopping mere heartbeats from her lips. His question emerged as lovers' intimate whisper, "Could I kiss you?"

The question had burned in him for countless moments. Desperate hunger consumed him—he craved her kiss above all else.

Her lips beckoned with perfect shape and that precise shade that haunted his dreams. From their first meeting, this primal need had clawed at his restraint. Sleep had brought him visions of claiming her mouth with wild abandon. In those fevered dreams, her lips had carried the essence of ripe peaches, their sweetness branding itself upon his memory.

Now, in reality, he was finally close to her lips. Anticipation blazed through him—would she taste as exquisite as his imagination had painted?

His striking features filled Elliana's vision at this proximity, details blurring into the beloved whole. Only his familiar, intoxicating scent registered clearly, flooding her senses.

It was a scent she remembered. During their cruel separation, she had

conjured this fragrance in desperate moments, aching for what lay beyond her reach.

Now it surrounded her again, awakening every nerve ending until her entire being yearned to wrap around him like morning glory claiming sunlight. How could she deny what her soul demanded? She craved his kiss with equal fervor.

When he sought permission, she offered her lips like a sacred gift. "Of course, you can."

Cole descended, claiming her mouth with reverent hunger.

Though his mind bore no memory of her, his body held perfect recall. Muscle memory guided him as he circled her waist, lifting her from the driver's seat with practiced ease. She settled onto his lap like she belonged there, pulled tight against his chest while their mouths fused in desperate communion.

The seamless choreography left him momentarily shaken. His memory insisted he'd never loved, never held a woman close, yet his body moved with the fluidity of countless rehearsals, as if he'd performed this dance through eternity.

No time remained for deeper contemplation—her warmth demanded his complete attention. Her form molded against him like silk, her waist fitting his hands as if crafted for his touch. Holding her erased every restless ache, filling the hollow spaces within his chest.

Her lips delivered exactly what his dreams had promised—succulent peach sweetness, fresh and tender beyond imagination.

He gathered her closer, exploring and savoring, drowning in sensation, wishing this moment could stretch into forever.

When she challenged him, fire blazed in her eyes, sharp wit cutting like polished steel, even flirting with others to stoke his jealousy. In battle, she transformed into something fierce and merciless, reducing black-clad thugs to broken shadows. But kissing him, she became pure tenderness—soft and yielding, overflowing with devotion.

Fortune had smiled upon him beyond measure. Such exquisite rarity—one might traverse continents without encountering her equal. Yet, she was

his, had chosen him willingly.

Joy curved Cole's lips against hers, spurring him to deeper possession.

Only when her breathing grew shallow did he reluctantly release her mouth, granting space for air while keeping their faces close, sharing each exhale.

Elliana made no move to escape, melting into his embrace, soft gasps mingling with the thunder of his heartbeat beneath her palm. Cole belonged to her once more. Though he carried no memory of their shared past—a bitter void in her heart—they remained lovers bound by invisible threads. Pure happiness suffused her being.

"Lilah?" Cole murmured.

This made Elliana's muscles tense involuntarily. Something jarring lived in that particular address—she infinitely preferred the way Elliana rolled off his tongue. But adaptation was necessary now. She'd adopted the new identity as Lilah.

With that thought, she softly replied, "Yes?"

Cole buried his face in her fragrant hair, pressing tender kisses to her closed eyelids, his voice silk over steel. "When did desire for me first take root in your heart?"

When had attraction first sparked? Of course, it was when he went to the Jones family's estate to marry Paige. That moment had branded itself into her memory—their first glimpse of each other across a crowded room.

Yet, truth remained impossible now, so she offered carefully vague honesty. "A long time ago."

Delight colored Cole's features, spurring another question. "If you've carried this feeling through so much time, why didn't you seek me out sooner? Had you come to me earlier, Wanda never would have entered the picture."

Wanda's name struck Elliana like ice water, jealousy surging through her veins with vicious intensity.