

My Husband Chose Her Over Me

Novel Chapter 31

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“Where is the veil?” Kaela’s voice rang sharp through the dressing chamber. “Someone tell me how a royal bride misplaces her veil on the most important day of her life!”

“I took it off,” I said calmly, smoothing my hands down the silk of my gown. “It itched.”

Kaela spun around to look at me, scandalized. “It’s hand-woven from moon-thread and lavender silk. Royal House tradition—”

“I know,” I interrupted gently. “But today isn’t just about tradition. It’s about us. Caden and me.”

She exhaled loudly, but didn’t argue. Instead, she placed her hands on her hips and scanned me from head to toe. “Well, even without it, you look... stunning. Glowing, really.”

I looked at myself in the mirror. The gown shimmered like starlight, a masterpiece of ivory and silver threads woven into the shapes of the Verdanan sigil. My little bump peeked gently through the fabric, not hidden, not flaunted. Just... there. A quiet promise of life to come.

Caden and I were renewing our vows in Verdana.

The door creaked open.

“May I come in?” a familiar voice asked, soft as a breeze.

I turned to see my mother-in-law, the Queen standing at the threshold, dressed in royal lilac with a single orchid pinned to her chest. Her eyes glistened, not with disdain or distance, but something far deeper. Regret. Hope.

I nodded. “Of course.”

She stepped inside slowly, her movements unsure. “I didn’t want to intrude. I just... I needed a moment with you before you walk out there.”

I turned fully to her. “You’re not intruding.”

For a second, she simply looked at me. Her gaze fell to my bump, then returned to my face. She took a breath.

“I came to ask your forgiveness.”

My brows lifted, but I said nothing.

She continued, voice tight with emotion. “When you first came here, I treated you like an outsider. I didn’t protect you from the court’s judgment... or from my own coldness. I saw your strength as a threat, not a gift. And I’m so deeply sorry, Elara.”

My throat tightened. So many years had passed between us with words unsaid. And now, finally, the ones that mattered had arrived.

“I’ve already forgiven you,” I said softly.

She blinked, stunned. “You have?”

I stepped toward her. “Long ago. I don’t carry the weight of the past anymore. I’m building a future... and I want you to be part of it.”

A tear slipped down her cheek as she stepped forward and pulled me into a gentle embrace. I felt her arms tighten around me, not with hesitation, but with warmth. For the first time, it felt real.

She whispered, “You’re going to be an incredible mother. Just as you’ve become an extraordinary queen.”

I smiled against her shoulder. “Thank you.”

A loud throat-clearing broke the silence.

Kaela stood by the door, tapping her wrist. “Not to ruin the moment, ladies, but Verdana awaits. We need the bride now.”

We all laughed—Amara and I pulling apart just enough to smile at each other.

“Shall we?” I asked.

The doors opened to a breathtaking view.

The courtyard of the Verdanan palace had been transformed. Blooms of violet, gold, and white wrapped around marble columns. Long silken drapes fluttered in the breeze like banners of peace. Dignitaries, lords, soldiers, and villagers alike filled the space in rows, all turned toward the arched altar at the front.

And there, standing beneath a canopy of silverleaf trees and royal standards, was him.

Caden.

He looked every bit the prince—but more than that, he looked like *mine*. His smile lit across the distance as soon as he saw me. No trace of nerves. Just joy. And a love that hadn’t dulled in all the chaos we’d survived.

I stepped forward. The music swelled, and people rose to their feet.

But all I saw only him.

As I walked the aisle, I caught the proud glint in my father's eyes. The gentle smile of Queen and the King of Verloren. The soft weeping of half the court, and the absolute silence of the rest. They weren't watching a political marriage anymore. They were witnessing something real.

When I reached Caden, he took my hands without hesitation. His fingers curled over mine like a vow already made.

"Hi," I whispered.

"Hi," he whispered back. "You're glowing."

I smiled. The priest began speaking, but my attention remained on Caden's eyes. The words floated around us like music, but my heart anchored only to him.

"Do you, Prince Caden of House Verloren, vow once again to honor and protect Elara of Verdana as your wife, queen, and partner for all your days?"

"I do," he said without missing a beat. "With everything I am."

"And do you, Elara of Verdana, vow to stand beside Caden, in loyalty and love, in peace and in storm, until the end of your days?"

"I do," I said. "And beyond."

The priest smiled. "Then by the power vested in me by the crown and by the people—let your union be renewed, and your path be blessed."

Caden leaned in and kissed me, like it was the first time all over again. The courtyard erupted in applause. As we turned to face the people, hands still linked, I felt the shift. I was no longer the forgotten wife locked behind palace doors. I was no longer the bargaining piece, or the pawn.

I was the queen of Verdana, while Verloren's future lived inside me.

Caden leaned in again and whispered into my ear, "I love you."

I turned to him, eyes shining. "Till eternity, Caden. Even if the world crumbles, it's you. Always you."

He smiled, brushing a hand gently over the curve of my belly. I kissed him again, the crowd forgotten, the world momentarily distant.

THE END