

Forgotten Wife : Let the Traitors Kneel Down Novel

Chapter 241

Ethan felt the weight of the truth pressing down on him. The horsemen regarded him with a mix of disdain and curiosity, their gazes heavy with unspoken judgments. "Did you want to reschedule something for me?" he asked, trying to mask his unease. "They're bothered by you; they think they're meant to protect you," Dantriel replied, his tone laced with frustration. "It's my fault I was locked up in the dungeons," Ethan admitted, his voice low. "That's not my problem. You did something unnecessary," Dantriel shot back. "If I save you, you should be grateful." "Nobody asked you to do anything."

"Now it's your fault," Ethan retorted, his irritation flaring. Dantriel sighed, the tension between them palpable. "The queen soon discovered your existence, and with my help, she will never decide that your sacrifice would have changed anything." "I want to leave Arkala. Help me cross the barrier," Ethan pleaded, desperation creeping into his voice. "The queen has prohibited you from doing so. I don't think you should disobey her," Dantriel warned. "I need to help Abril fulfill her promise to Sophia," Ethan insisted, determination hardening his resolve.

"I see that you are more than determined, so I will help you. But I warn you, if you are caught, I will flatly deny having helped you." "That seems fair. Any idea on how to do this without anyone noticing?" Ethan asked, his mind racing. "Yes, follow me. She has a lover she visits sometimes, and there's a secret exit that only the royal family knows about." Ethan nodded, his heart pounding with anticipation. --- "Don't deny the truth," Dantriel said, his voice steady. "Is that what makes you think you helped me?" Ethan shot back. "Because she never agrees with the decisions your mother makes."

I'm sure she's no exception; she's just trying to protect her daughter, Abril." "You believe she will help me return to the girl if she knows?" Ethan asked, skepticism coloring his tone. "I don't think so. Even though she sometimes rebels against the queen's decisions, she won't do anything so drastic. If she did, the queen would disinherit her. She wouldn't risk being the hereditary princess." "The guards didn't let me enter the palace," Ethan said, frustration evident. "Don't worry about that. I'll take care of it."

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Come in; I'll wait for you at midnight in the west tower of the palace." "Understood," Ethan replied, steeling himself for what lay ahead. As midnight approached, Ethan returned home, anxiety gnawing at him. He was alone with the questions Dantriel had left him with when suddenly, Dantriel emerged from the shadows. "Come, follow me," he urged. Ethan trailed him to a high wall. Dantriel inserted something into a small crevice, and the tiles shifted, revealing an entrance. "How do you know about this passage?" Ethan asked, astonished. "I used it to visit the queen's dormitory at night."

Forget it; that's in the past," Dantriel replied, crossing first as the tiles began to move, the door threatening to close. "Get through quickly, or the door will shut!" Dantriel called. Ethan hurried through the secret door, finding himself in the northern garden. Dantriel had said they would be safe here, away from the guards. "Let's go; the princess is in the north wing," Dantriel instructed. "Is your affair with the queen over?" Ethan inquired, a hint of curiosity in his voice. "I don't know," Dantriel replied, his expression unreadable.

"It seems you're still enjoying it; otherwise, we would be dead." "We've only stopped living because I'm one of her best generals," Dantriel continued, a note of pride in his voice. "Is that true? Do you believe it? You have many generals, but few like you," Ethan remarked. "Shut up. If someone hears you insult the queen, it will be your end," Dantriel warned. "You can decide what you want, but I won't comfort you with her death," Ethan replied defiantly. "My relationship with your majesty is not up for discussion," Dantriel shot back.

"There will always be something between you and the queen," Ethan insisted. Dantriel halted, casting a glance at Ethan. "You would be silenced if I forgot that you were my friend." "Call me what you want, but don't dismiss me like that," Ethan retorted. Just then, they heard footsteps approaching, and Dantriel whispered, "Someone comes." They both hid behind a column as Enora entered, sensing an unusual presence in the palace. "Who's there?" she called out, her voice steady. "Dantriel, your majesty," he replied smoothly, stepping forward to show he bore no weapons.

"What are you doing here?" Enora asked, her brow furrowing. "I came to see your majesty," Dantriel said, his tone respectful. "This is not my palace, and I have not summoned you. What are you doing here?" she pressed, her gaze sharp. "I wanted to see your majesty, but I didn't know if you would allow me," Dantriel said, moving closer, his warm breath mingling with the sweet scent of her perfume. Enora paused, captivated by the tension between them. "You remain grateful before my eyes, but I also see that I bother you," she teased.

Dantriel stepped closer, wrapping an arm around her waist, closing the distance between them. "Does this mean I can't be near your majesty?" Enora smiled slightly, her eyes sparkling. "Yes, of course!" Dantriel leaned in to kiss her, but Enora pulled back. "We should go somewhere else; I won't settle for just a simple kiss." As she turned to leave, Dantriel hesitated, watching her go. "Why don't you follow me?" she asked, glancing back. "In truth, I can't," he admitted, torn between desire and duty. "Isn't that what you've been looking for?" she pressed, a playful smile on her lips.

"Yes," he replied, his heart racing. Enora began to remove her tunic slowly, and Dantriel felt himself drawn to her, captivated by her beauty. She had always had that effect on him, igniting his deepest instincts. Their fingers intertwined, and as their lips met, Dantriel lost himself in the moment. In that intimate space, it felt as if the world outside had faded away. He realized, despite his attempts to deny it, he was completely in love with her. Their kisses were slow and deep, filled with a longing that transcended words.

detected. He slipped into the shadows near the princess's quarters, but the guards quickly noticed his presence. He climbed onto the balcony of the princess's dwelling, hoping to catch her attention. Kiara stood on her balcony for a moment, contemplating whether to alert the guards who lingered at the door. If she called out, they would surely apprehend him.

As she opened the door, she kept her voice low, ready to call for help if Ethan attempted to harm her or take her away. "What are you doing here?" she asked, her eyes narrowing as she spotted the baby cradled in his arms. Ethan hesitated, glancing at the child. "Please forgive me for this, but I need to ask you a favor." "A favor?" Kiara echoed, her brow furrowing. "You want me to hand over the girl?" "That's not what I'm asking for," he replied, his voice steady despite the tension. "Then what do you want?" she pressed, crossing her arms.

"I need your help to cross the barrier without being seen," he explained, desperation creeping into his tone. "My mother has forbidden me to leave Akala. Do you think I'll just sit idly by?" Kiara's expression softened slightly, but she remained cautious. "You know that's exactly what my mother wants, don't you?" "Yes, but I'm worried about you," he insisted. "I wish you would come back with me." Kiara shook her head. "My mother has disobeyed me. If you're a risk, I can't help you." "Where is my daughter?" Ethan suddenly demanded, his voice rising with urgency.

Kiara's heart raced as she recalled the necklace she had left behind. "You need to find it. It will guide you through the barrier." Ethan's eyes widened. "The compass?" "Yes. The golden needle will point you to where the noise is coming from. If you don't return it, I'll tell everyone you stole it, and the guards will hunt you down." Ethan nodded, understanding the weight of her words. "I promise to bring it back. I'm not as reckless as I seem." As he glanced at the baby, Kiara took a step back, feeling a mix of fear and uncertainty. She had helped him, but trust was a fragile thing.

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"Calm down, little one," she whispered to the baby, trying to soothe her as Ethan prepared to jump from the balcony. "Everything will be fine. You'll be with your mother soon." Ethan leaped down, landing softly on the ground below. He glanced back at Kiara, who had closed the balcony door, her trust still wavering. "Where is my daughter?" he murmured to himself, scanning the area for any signs of danger. After a moment, he saw that the door was unguarded and seized the opportunity to slip out of the palace, moving stealthily through the shadows.

He felt the compass Kiara had given him in his pocket, the golden arrow pointing the way. When he finally reached the barrier, he hesitated, unsure if he should touch it. But as he extended his hand, he felt a strange pull, and the barrier shimmered, revealing an opening. He stepped through, finding himself in the woods, cloaked in darkness. Ethan took a deep breath, orienting himself. He knew he had to head north, away from the palace and into the city of Farell. He needed information, a guide to help him navigate this unfamiliar territory.

Meanwhile, in the palace, Abril awoke to find Alessandro sleeping beside her, his presence a comfort as the first rays of dawn broke through the window. She rose from the bed and walked to the corner of the room, where her daughter's cradle stood empty. Panic gripped her heart. "Where is Lissana?" she cried, her voice laced with desperation. Alessandro stirred, sensing her distress.

"She's not here," he said, his tone heavy with regret. "I was waiting for her protector to bring her back." Abril's heart raced as she turned to him, fear and anger flooding her. "Where is she?"

Is she with Maya?" Alessandro shook his head. "No, Lissana is not there." Abril grabbed him by the collar of his shirt, her eyes wide with terror. "Where is my baby?" "They took her," he admitted, his voice barely above a whisper. "I couldn't stop it. I'm so sorry." "No! My baby, no! Tell me it's a lie! She's fine, isn't she?" Abril's voice broke, her heart feeling as if it had been struck. "I'm sorry, Abril. I'm so sorry," he repeated, his own voice trembling with sorrow. "Who took her? Was it Cira?" she demanded, her mind racing. "No, it was the king. He took her."

I tried to intervene, but I couldn't stop him," Alessandro confessed, his face pale. Abril felt a wave of relief wash over her at the thought that Cira hadn't taken Lissana, but the knowledge that it was the king who had done so filled her with dread. "He promised me he wouldn't harm her. Lissana must be safe." "Before letting her go, he swore he wouldn't regret it. He wanted to protect her, even if it meant taking her away from us," Alessandro said, his voice heavy with the weight of their situation. Abril felt a flicker of hope amid her despair.

She had to believe that Lissana was safe, that the king would keep his word. But the uncertainty gnawed at her, and she knew they had to act quickly to bring their daughter home.

243

"Where is my daughter?" Abril cried, her heart heavy with despair. "I'm ready to die if we don't recover Lissana." She moved toward the door, but her legs felt weak, and she stumbled. Alessandro rushed to her side, gathering her in his arms and gently laying her back on the bed. "You've been through so much. You need to rest." Abril's voice trembled with pain and desperation. "I must get my baby back." "I know how you feel, but you can't push yourself like this. You've been fighting for days, and I can't lose you too." "What if something happens to her?" Abril's eyes were wide with fear.

"Everything will be fine. We will get her back, I promise," Alessandro said, wiping away her tears. "Our family will be whole again, and we will be happy." Meanwhile, Ethan Nego entered the tavern, a place he often visited for information. He felt a wave of relief wash over him, but exhaustion and hunger gnawed at him. Pulling a hood over his face, he made his way to the second floor and approached the bar to order some milk. As he waited, Barto appeared, surprised to see him. "I didn't expect to see you here again."

I thought you were done with the royal palace." "Do you know what's happening?" Ethan asked, urgency lacing his voice. "This is a dangerous game we're playing," Barto replied, glancing around cautiously. "What do you need?" "I need to get to Laios. I require parchment paper. Can you help me get it quickly?" Barto hesitated. "You know it's risky for me to assist you. Most people in this kingdom wouldn't want to help you." "I'm not here with bad intentions. I just want to help," Ethan insisted. "How can I trust you?" Barto challenged, eyeing him skeptically.

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Ethan pulled out the compass he had given to Princess Kiara and showed it to Barto. "Where do you think I got this?" Barto's expression softened. "Kiara gave it to you? How is she?" "She's well," Ethan replied. "But I need your help. If you don't assist me, I can't guarantee my sister will be safe in the palace. If anything happens to her, I will find you." Barto nodded, understanding the gravity of the situation. "Fine. I'll help you, but you must promise not to do anything reckless." "I promise," Ethan said earnestly.

Barto rummaged through a drawer and pulled out several sheets of parchment. "Take these, but I'll accompany you. I need to ensure you're serious about this." Meanwhile, Alessandro was worried about Abril. He had managed to find her some food, but she had little strength left. "How do you feel?" he asked gently. "My magic isn't fully restored, but I'm getting better," she replied, forcing a smile. Alessandro took her hand, his grip firm. "We will get our daughter back. I won't let anyone stand in our way." Abril nodded, determination shining in her eyes. "I don't care who I have to face.

I will recover her." Just then, Cassian burst into the room, concern etched on his face. "Abril, are you okay?" "Yes, I'm fine," she assured him, though her heart raced at the sight of him. "What's happened?" "It's good to see you awake. Everyone's worried. I need to tell you about Maya," Cassian said, his voice heavy. "What about Maya?" Abril asked, her heart sinking. "She's sick. The doctor says she's exhausted," Cassian replied, his expression grim. Abril felt a wave of helplessness wash over her. She knew that Maya's condition was more than mere fatigue; her vital energy was fading.

"I wish I could help her," she murmured. Alessandro began searching for Sirius when a servant approached him. "They've requested an audience with the queen." "Is Abril safe?" he asked, his heart racing. "Yes, but they say it's urgent. Something important has come up regarding the queen," the servant replied. Alessandro followed the servant to the room where Ethan was waiting. Upon seeing him, he felt a surge of anger. "What are you doing here, you scoundrel? Where is my daughter?" "Your daughter is safe, well cared for in the elven kingdom," Ethan said, his tone calm despite the tension.

Alessandro felt a mix of relief and frustration. He knew he had to remain composed, even as anger simmered beneath the surface. "You're the one who revealed Abril's existence to them." Barto, standing off to the side, interjected. "Calm down. He's here to help." "I didn't want anyone to know about Abril," Ethan said, his voice steady. "But I'm here to help you get her back." "Help us?" Alessandro scoffed. "You betrayed our trust." "I'm here to make amends," Ethan insisted. "You can trust me.

I have no intention of letting anything happen to her." "Then prove it," Alessandro challenged, his eyes narrowing. "Show us you're serious about this."

244

It was a chaotic scene, filled with tension and uncertainty. Abril just wanted to help, but the situation was spiraling out of control. "Where is Abril? Let me talk to her," Ethan insisted, his voice firm. "She won't welcome you. You need to go back to where you came from," Alessandro replied, his tone leaving no room for argument. "No, I won't leave this place without speaking to her," Ethan countered, determination etched on his face. Alessandro's

patience was wearing thin. "Your majesty, it's not about suspicion; it's about the truth. You don't understand how the elven kingdom operates.

It's shrouded in secrecy, and if I want to recover what was lost, I must accept your help." "Do you expect me to trust you after everything you've done?" Abril's voice was laced with anger. "Why not? I've trusted you, even if it was a mistake," Ethan replied, his expression earnest. "If you can use my assistance, then do so." "Please, let me help you get your daughter back," he urged. Alessandro knew he had no choice. To recover Lissana, they would need Ethan's help, despite the risks involved. "Fine, I'll accept your help.

But if you do anything to harm my family, you will pay dearly," Alessandro warned, his eyes narrowing. "Let's hope it doesn't come to that," Ethan replied, his tone serious. "What about the elven kingdom?" Alessandro asked, his brow furrowed in thought. "Only those with elven blood can pass through the barrier, or those whom the queen allows entry. If you want your daughter back, Abril is the only one who can retrieve her," Ethan explained. "You're lying," Alessandro shot back. "You can accompany us if you wish to seek asylum, but I won't answer questions when you can't enter.

You should ask Abril," Ethan said, his gaze steady. "Would you let me see your husband?" Abril's voice was weak, filled with concern. "He's not well; I think..." Ethan hesitated, glancing toward the door. "You can see him right now," he said, pushing the door open. "What happened?" Abril asked, her heart racing. "She lost her magic. I was unconscious for seven days, and there's still no recovery," Ethan replied, his voice heavy with concern. "You can help me with that," Abril insisted, her determination shining through. "How?" Ethan asked, curiosity piqued. "Take me to her," Abril demanded.

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"Very well, I'll take you to her, but if you do anything to harm her..." Ethan warned. "Yes, I know. You'll kill me," he replied, a hint of resignation in his tone. Ethan led Abril to her room. Before entering, he paused, cautioning her. "Be careful with what you say." "Don't worry; I won't regret it," she replied, steeling herself. Alessandro opened the door and approached the bed. "Aby, someone has come," he announced gently. Abril's heart raced as she watched her daughter. She began to scream, trying to rise from the bed. "Where is my daughter?

Give her back to me!" she cried, desperation in her voice. "She's in the elven kingdom. That's where I want to help you," Ethan said, trying to calm her. Abril's anger flared as she faced him. "Do you want to help me recover her? If that's what you truly want, then why did you betray me?" Abril lunged at Ethan, her frail body fueled by rage. "Give me back my little one!" Ethan caught her hands, wishing to defend himself but feeling the weight of her grief. "Stop. You're hurting yourself." "This is nothing compared to what I feel for her," Abril retorted, tears streaming down her face.

"I can't betray your daughter, but Princess Kiara is taking care of her. I'll take you to her, but first, you need to recover," Ethan insisted. Alessandro held Abril in his arms, his voice steady. "You are the only one who can help us recover Lissana." After placing Abril back in bed, Ethan retrieved a small bottle and offered it to her. "This elixir will help you regain your magic," he said, his expression earnest. "What is it?" Abril asked, eyeing the vial suspiciously. "It's an

elixir believed to be infused with the magic of light. Drink it, and you'll recover your powers," Ethan urged.

Alessandro watched as Abril snatched the bottle from him. "I need to recover quickly; Lissana is waiting for me," she said, her resolve strengthening. Ethan nodded. "It won't affect you like it does wizards. Didn't you know?" "Yes, we were already aware of that," Alessandro replied, concern etched on his face. "How do you feel?" he asked Abril after she drank the elixir. Almost immediately, she felt a surge of energy. Her magic began to return, coursing through her veins. "I think it's working," she said, hope blossoming within her. "Soon, your magic will be complete," Ethan assured her.

"Then we will leave for the elven kingdom. I can't afford to waste time; I need to regain my strength," Abril declared, determination in her eyes. "I won't wait for Lessan. I can't. Every minute without my daughter feels like a lifetime," she added, her voice trembling. "I know how you feel; my heart aches too. I don't want to lose you either," Alessandro replied, his gaze softening. Abril cupped his face in her hands. "You won't lose me. I promise." For some reason, Ethan felt a pang of guilt for the pain Abril was enduring. "Whenever you need me, I'll be there," he said quietly.

Abril released a wave of anger, but deep down, she knew she couldn't blame him for her suffering. "Go. I'll find you soon," she said, her voice steady. "Very well," Ethan replied, stepping out of the room. Once alone with Alessandro, Abril turned to him. "Don't trust him," she warned. "I'll keep an eye on him," Alessandro assured her. Barto, who had been lurking nearby, felt a mix of emotions. He had heard enough and didn't need to hear more. "Where are you going?" Abril asked, her brow furrowing. "I'll be in the cabin where I was last time. You can follow me if you wish," Barto replied.

"I won't. You can go, but don't forget what I told you before you leave," Abril cautioned. "Yes, I know. If anything goes wrong, you'll kill me," Barto said, a hint of humor in his tone. With that, Ethan departed, leaving Barto alone. He had no intention of following Ethan; he would rather remain in the shadows, watching over the king.

245

Barto hurried through the palace corridors, his mind racing. He had to find Maya. As he walked, a small pixie appeared before him, darting around with an urgency that matched his own. "You should come with me. We need to go," the pixie insisted. "Where are you from?" Barto asked, confused as the tiny creature tugged at his long hair, trying to pull him along despite his reluctance. "There's no time for questions! You have to convince Maya to return to the land of the fairies, or she will die." Barto's heart sank. "What do you mean? What illness does she have?" "The disease of the fairies.

The only way to heal her is to take her back to their realm, but she refuses to go." Barto's younger brother caught up with him, breathless. "Explain what you mean by illness. What does it do?" "The women who swore loyalty to the queen cannot abandon their lands. They must return, or they will weaken until they perish." "But Maya broke her oath," Barto replied, frustration creeping into his voice. "Even if her oath is broken, the ties to the fairy kingdom remain. There's nothing that can sever them.

If we don't act soon, the kingdom will fade away." Desperation gripped Barto as he thought of his sister's life hanging in the balance. "I'll tell her to go back and heal. I'm sure she—" "No," the pixie interrupted. "She's already too far gone. I can't cure her. Her vital strength is slipping away." Barto felt a chill run down his spine. "What do you mean? There must be another way!" "There isn't. The fairy realm is the only place that can save her." "Then you must take her back!" Barto insisted. "No! She can't return to the human world.

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The queen won't allow it." "Is that why Maya doesn't want to go?" Barto asked, his voice softening. "She doesn't want to leave her human lover," the pixie replied, her tone heavy with understanding. "But she must." Barto clenched his fists. "You will convince her to return to the land of the fairies." "Take me to her, now," the pixie demanded. Barto followed the pixie to Maya's room, urgency propelling him forward. He opened the door and was met with the sight of his sister lying on the bed, looking frail and pale. It struck him like a blow to the chest.

"What are you doing?" he asked, his voice tight with concern. Ignoring him, Barto rushed to her side, taking in her condition. She looked worse than he had imagined, her skin cold and clammy, as if she were fading away. "It's true, you are dying," he whispered, his heart aching. Maya managed a weak smile upon seeing him, but the pixie perched on her shoulder was not as gentle. "You need to listen to your brother, Maya." Barto's heart sank further as he watched the flicker of hope in Maya's eyes dim. "What did you say?" Barto turned to Cassian, who had just entered, his face a mask of fear.

"What did you say to her?" Barto ignored Cassian's question, focusing instead on Maya. "You need to tell him it's a lie, that you're not dying." Maya wanted to deny it, to claim it was all a fabrication, but the truth hung heavy in the air. "I can't lie anymore," she admitted. "The fairies don't lie, Maya," Cassian said, desperation creeping into his voice. Barto felt the weight of the moment. "Since when have you been sick?" "Since I created a bond with you," Maya replied, her voice barely a whisper. "Why didn't you tell me?" Cassian asked, anguish etched on his face.

"I didn't want to worry you. I didn't want to see you suffer," Maya said, her eyes shimmering with unshed tears. "But I can't lose you. I'm your partner," Cassian pleaded, his voice breaking. "You don't understand," Maya said, her voice trembling. "I didn't want you to feel burdened by the knowledge that our time together was limited." Barto interjected, "You must return to the fairy realm. It's the only way you can recover." "I won't go back, Barto. I can't," Maya insisted, shaking her head. "You'll die here!" Barto exclaimed, frustration boiling over. Cassian was bewildered.

"Why do you want her to return to the fairy realm?" "Because I believe April can cure her. We must wait for her to come," Barto replied, his gaze steady on Maya. "But what if she can't?" Cassian asked, fear creeping into his voice. "She will heal you, I'm sure of it," Barto insisted, desperation lacing his words. The little pixie, feeling the tension, spoke up. "She can only delay the illness. If she doesn't return to the fairy realm, she will die. If you love her, you must let her go." "Be quiet," Maya snapped at the pixie, her patience wearing thin.

"I don't want to hear any more about returning to the land of the fairies. Just leave me alone." The pixie vanished, leaving Barto feeling helpless. "I'm sorry, Maya. I just want what's best for you." "I need to rest now," Maya said, her voice barely above a whisper. Barto nodded, understanding the weight of her words. As he left the room, a heavy silence settled between Maya and Cassian, their gazes lingering on each other, both grappling with the uncertainty of what lay ahead.

246

When Cassian stopped, Maya grabbed his arm. "I suppose you also know me!" she exclaimed, her voice trembling. Cassian leaned over in the middle of the road, his eyes searching hers. In that moment, they were alone, and she seemed on the verge of tears. "Is it true that you want me?" he asked, his voice low. Cassian still had unresolved matters to attend to, but at that precise moment, he didn't want to worry about anything else. "Do you want us to be together?" he pressed.

Maya shook her head, knowing she needed to tell him everything she had been hiding, but the moment felt too heavy to bear. "No, but if you want..." she started, her voice faltering. "I won't force you to do anything," Cassian replied, though Maya could see the pain etched on his face. She understood that his silence wasn't due to a lack of desire to know; it stemmed from feeling isolated. "Cassian," she whispered, tears threatening to spill over. "More than you can imagine. It's just that I didn't tell you about my illness. Don't think that I don't consider you my partner.

You are my friend, my life companion, someone I chose." Maya struggled to continue, her emotions overwhelming her. Tears streamed down her cheeks as she felt like a child at a rodeo, unable to contain her sorrow. In the end, she couldn't find the words and simply hugged him fiercely. Abril felt a sense of relief as she got up from the bed. "You should give it a little more air," she suggested to Alessandro. "I can manage," he replied, though his voice was strained.

"You're safe now." "I don't know if it was this medicine Ethan used to measure, but it's much better than what Sirius prepares," Abril said, approaching the Lissana mountain. She felt empty inside, as if summer had crashed into her heart. "And Lissana?" Alessandro asked, concern lacing his tone. "Yes, when she found me, you asked about our little one... I had no choice but to let her enter Aby." "I know. I don't blame you; I blame myself for not being there when she needed me most." "Aby," he said, his voice heavy with regret.

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"I thought I had suppressed her powers to keep them under control." "Why didn't you tell me? Why did you hide that Lissana's powers had awakened?" Abril pressed, frustration bubbling to the surface. "You were scared," he replied softly. "Scared of me?" she shot back, disbelief in her eyes. "No, not you..." "You didn't trust me, Alessandro. You can't decide for me." "I'm sorry, Abril. It's just that her powers awakened so quickly, I didn't know what to do." "I will help you decide what to do," she said firmly. "Now I regret not saying anything sooner.

"Forgive me." "Right now, the important thing is to recover Lissana," he said, though the weight of disappointment hung heavily in the air. Alessandro sat on the bed, running a hand through his unkempt hair—an indication of his frustration and desperation. "Curse it, when will all this end? When can we be truly free?" Abril approached him, placing a hand on his shoulder. "If I'm honest, I wonder the same thing. I was there when we were happy." She squeezed his shoulder gently. "But I'm sure this will end someday."

We'll be together again, and we will be very happy." "I hope so," he murmured, leaning into her touch. She ran her fingers through his hair, finding comfort in their connection as he wrapped his arms around her waist. That simple contact calmed their racing hearts. Alessandro pulled back slightly, looking into her eyes. "You should rest. Today was hard." Ethan had told Alessandro that he couldn't enter the Arkala kingdom, the elven realm, but he would accept that until it became necessary to act. "Yes, we will," Abril replied, her determination shining through.

"Lessan, how is the elven kingdom?" she asked, concern creeping into her voice. "It can be dangerous," he warned. "Is Lissana really okay?" she pressed. "For what it's worth, you're taking very good care of her," he reassured her. "But how do we get Lissana back?" "If necessary, we'll steal her back in the middle of the night. We will do whatever it takes to recover her." "Yes, sharing tears of blood with them," he said, a fierce determination igniting in his eyes. "I won't hold back."

We will do what is necessary to bring our little one home." "Aby, when you're there, you have to be very careful," he cautioned. "Don't worry," she replied, her voice steady. Alessandro lay back on the bed, exhaustion evident in his features. "Come on, rest," he urged. Though his magic was recovering quickly, he felt drained. Abril, sensing his fatigue, nestled beside him. She could see the weariness etched on his face, the spark of hope dimmed by the weight of their situation. As she caressed his hair gently, she used her magic to help him drift into sleep.

She pressed a soft kiss to his forehead, wishing for peace. She tried to sleep herself, but her mind wouldn't quiet. Thoughts of their daughter and how to recover her consumed her. She needed a plan. Tired of her racing thoughts, she got up from the bed, rummaging through her closet for black pants and a shirt. When she arrived at the small hut where...

247

Ethan had lived several years in the kingdom, and now it was flooded with memories. Some were good, but many were tainted by the shadows of the past, the very shadows that had once been his home. He had seen the news arrive and left to receive it. "What are you doing here? You should be resting," Abril said, her voice laced with concern. "It's not enough," he replied, his tone heavy with frustration. "I need to go home." The best strategy, he thought, was to face the truth head-on. The shadows, the personal guardians of the king, appeared suddenly.

Abril ordered them to withdraw, her authority clear. "But, Your Majesty—" "The soils will be fine," she assured him, her voice steady. Once alone, Ethan turned to her, his expression serious. "What do you want to talk about?" "It's about the elven kingdom. I want to know what happened to my daughter," he said, his voice trembling with urgency. "Why was she taken?"

"You know that half-breeds are taboo for us," Abril replied, her gaze unwavering. "That includes royal elven bloodlines. Even if you are her uncle, she is seen as an aberration-something that shouldn't exist.

Imagine what they think of your daughter." "Don't they care about my daughter?" he pressed. "She is locked away in the mauve tower until the end of her days," Abril said, her voice heavy with sorrow. "Is my daughter in that place?" he demanded. "No, she is in the baby wing, and she is being cared for," Abril explained. "She has always been with us." "I hope you find a way to get her back," he said, desperation creeping into his voice. "Then why don't you return her to me?" he asked, frustration boiling over. "Because you are a princess, even if you don't agree with the queen's decisions.

There is a limit to what I can do. To return your daughter without her authorization would be to rebel against her. That could lead to accusations of betrayal, and you know the price of that." "How do you plan to help my daughter?" he asked, his brow furrowing with concern. "If you want to get your daughter back, you must ask for the favor of the elven kingdom. She will not rest until she brings them back with her," Abril advised. "That's easy for you to say. How am I supposed to do that?" he replied, frustration evident in his voice.

Follow new episodes on the

"Enora loved her sister Sophia very much; she always loved me," Abril said, her voice softening. "You should use that to gain her favor." "Do you really think I look like my mother? Will that be enough? I don't believe the elven kingdom is so easily swayed," he said, doubt creeping into his heart. "No, the queen is cold and cruel. Very few things can be done, but I can ensure you resemble your mother. Despite the years that have passed, she still seeks her. She tortures herself when she is refused to speak of her.

I can assure you that your mother is gone, and the only hope you have of seeing your daughter again lies in this," Abril said, her voice firm. "Then what do you suggest?" he asked, feeling the weight of the situation pressing down on him. "Present yourself before her and ask to leave without more. No, if you do that and she refuses, you will only confuse her heart. Remember how you once changed the color of your hair? You should change it again to match your mother's. You will see yourself as she did," Abril advised. "Could you really help me?" he asked, a glimmer of hope igniting within him.

"Play your cards right, and you will gain an ally instead of an enemy. I can ensure you don't want her as an enemy," she replied, her eyes piercing. Abril turned away, but not before she added, "I don't know what you're plotting, but if you try to deceive the kingdom, you will pay dearly." "I assure you there is no scam. I promised to protect you, and that is what I am trying to do," he insisted, frustration bubbling beneath the surface. As Abril walked through the palace, she encountered Sirius, who was wandering through the mountains. "What are you doing here?

You should be resting," she said, concern etched on her face. Ethan had spoken to her again, his voice filled with determination. "I want to get my daughter back." "No, but I have many options," Sirius replied, surprised by Abril's calm demeanor. "I believed you would be distraught since Lissa was kidnapped," he said, his brow furrowed. "I am, but it doesn't matter

"if I have a broken heart," she replied, her voice steady. "I'm sorry. If I hadn't delayed our return, maybe..." he started, but she cut him off. "You have nothing to argue about.

"If it weren't for you, I would still be in Laios," she said, her tone sharp. "If you need anything, don't hesitate to ask," he offered. "Thank you," she replied, appreciating his support. "And Your Majesty?" he asked, concern creeping back into his voice. "During the days you were unconscious, I felt guilty for not being able to protect her," she confessed. "I'm sorry. I was in very bad condition. I had to use magic to make it rest," he said, his voice filled with regret. "I'm fine," she insisted. "And what do you think about now?" he asked.

"Not recovering my daughter," she replied, determination hardening her features. "And the barriers?" he pressed. "Yes, magic has recovered completely. It will leave tomorrow morning," she said. "Do you want me to come to you?" he asked. "No, I want you to reinforce the barriers of the kingdom. I'm busy as I'm in Laios, so please take care of the kingdom while we are away. I'm worried that Cira might attack while we are not here," she warned. "Now that you mention it, I'm surprised you're so calm," he said, raising an eyebrow. "I worry. I worry all the time," she admitted.

"I will do everything in my power to protect the kingdom." "Thank you. I feel more at ease knowing you're here," he said, relief washing over him. As the sun dipped below the horizon, Abril left Sirius and returned home. Alessandro was still sleeping soundly. She lay beside him, seeking comfort in his warmth, needing his support to hold herself together and stave off the encroaching sadness.

248

Abril had not slept all night. She rose with the first rays of sunlight streaming into her room, calling for the servants to prepare the bath. She needed a good soak before embarking on her journey. "Leave me be; I can choose my own clothes," she instructed one of the servants as they exited. Once alone, Abril approached the bed to check on Alessandro, who was still sleeping soundly. She hesitated to wake him, opting instead to head directly into the bathroom. The hot water enveloped her, soothing her weary body.

When she returned to the room, she found Alessandro awake, looking a bit agitated. Relief washed over her as she saw him. "What's wrong, Lessan?" she asked, concern lacing her voice. "I thought you had left without me," he replied, his brow furrowing. "Don't worry; I just didn't want to wake you too early." "You should have told me," he said, shaking his head to clear the sleep. "You were sleeping so soundly; I didn't want to disturb you," she countered gently. Alessandro studied her face, noting the dark shadows beneath her eyes.

She hadn't slept much, but despite her exhaustion, she looked well. The color had returned to her cheeks, and her lips, once pale, now bore a healthy hue. "How are you feeling?" he asked, his voice softening. "I'm alright. I can feel my magic flowing through me again, so there's no need to worry. I'm fine," she assured him. As he finished drying her hair, Abril caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror. She had changed into a white tunic and black pants, cinched at the waist with a gold belt-comfortable attire for her journey. She also carried a water bag embroidered with intricate designs.

"I want to check on Maya before we leave," she said. "Then I'll meet you at the entrance. I'll send someone to fetch Ethan so he can join us," Alessandro replied. "That sounds good." He leaned in, pressing a soft kiss to her lips before departing. After he left, Abril donned her tunic and prepared to see how Maya was faring. As she approached the door, Cassian emerged. "Aby! What are you doing here? You should be resting," he chided gently. "I'm fine. I've regained my magic. I suppose it's not just me; he's here to take us to the elven kingdom, and we'll be leaving soon." "Good.

Follow new episodes on the

I need to take care of a few things first. I assume one of those things is to speak with you. You should seek him out if you have something important to discuss." "Yes, it would be better to find him now," she agreed. "I wanted to see Maya. Is she awake?" Abril asked. "Yes, she's awake. You can go in if you'd like. I don't think she'll mind," Cassian replied. As she entered the room, Abril found Maya lying on the bed, her condition evident. "Hello, Maya," she greeted softly. "Hello, Aby. It's good to see you," Maya replied, though her voice was weak.

"You don't look well," Abril observed, concern knitting her brow. "I feel worse," Maya admitted. "I can't muster the strength to get up." Abril sat beside her, taking her hand. "I wish you could feel better." "You used your magic to save Lissana," Maya said, her voice trembling. "Yes, but using my magic on you would never be a waste. You're my dear friend, and I can't bear to see you suffer," Abril replied, her heart aching for her friend. Maya's eyes filled with tears. "What's wrong, Maya? Does something hurt?" Abril asked, alarmed. "It's my heart.

You know I'm sick, and I don't have much time left," Maya confessed. In that moment, Abril understood why Cassian had looked so worn. She resolved to calm her friend. "Don't talk about your illness. I understand how you feel, Maya. I have something similar with Lessan," she said, trying to reassure her. "Was it because of Lissana?" Maya asked, her voice barely above a whisper. "Yes, if I had been true to Alessandro, perhaps things would be different. But there's no use in regretting what has happened; it cannot be changed," Abril replied. "You're right," Maya said, her expression softening.

Abril took Maya's hands in hers, infusing her with warmth and magic. With each passing moment, she could feel Maya's sadness lifting, the weight of despair beginning to fade. "Don't laugh, but you're all I have left," Maya said, a hint of determination in her voice. "I had accepted my fate and surrendered, but not anymore. I won't go down without a fight." "That's the spirit," Abril encouraged. Maya wrapped her arms around Abril in a tight embrace. "Thank you, Aby. I wish I could be there to support you, to comfort you in this moment.

Forgive me for not being able to prevent this, and for taking Lissana away." "Don't worry. I could never stop you from being there, and I appreciate you looking after her while I was in the study," Abril replied, her heart swelling with gratitude. "She's a wonderful girl. While she cares for you, I hope to have children of my own someday," Maya said wistfully. "I'm sure you'll find a way to heal. You're sick, but you may still have those children you dream of," Abril reassured her. "That would be wonderful," Maya said, a glimmer of hope in her eyes.

"I can do something more for you," Abril offered. "Don't worry; this is enough. You've given me the strength to seek a way to save myself," Maya said, determination returning to her

voice. "I must be strong." "Take care, Aby, and good luck!" Maya called as Abril prepared to leave.

249

The entrance to Arkala was bustling with activity when Cassian found Alessandro in his workshop. As he turned around, he was struck by the sight of his brother's weary face. "I'm tired," Alessandro admitted, rubbing his eyes. "Looks like you had a rough night," Cassian remarked with a hint of concern. "I used your bed to get some sleep," Alessandro replied, a faint smile breaking through his fatigue. "I'm glad you did. You looked like a walking dead man," Cassian said, crossing his arms. "I felt like one."

Maybe someone thought I was," Alessandro replied, his tone lightening despite his exhaustion. "Though you look quite well, I must say." "I suppose it's because I don't feel very good myself," Cassian confessed, his brow furrowing. "Are you sick?" Alessandro asked, his concern deepening. "No, brother, but I didn't want to worry you. Waiting for news about Maya hasn't been easy either." "I'm still worried about her," Cassian said, his voice low. "Don't be. I'm not just sick," Alessandro reassured him. "I promise." "Then go with me for a while. I wish..." Cassian hesitated. "I know."

I'll take care of everything while you're gone," Alessandro replied, his tone firm. "I asked Gabriel to help you with whatever he can," Cassian added, grateful for the support. "It's good to know," Alessandro said, his expression softening. "And forgive me for always leaving you alone, brother. You're already a person of importance here; taking care of this kingdom is also my obligation, as our priests taught us." "Yes," Cassian sighed. "It weighs heavily on us." Alessandro nodded, feeling the weight of responsibility. "How do they stay here?" he asked, glancing around.

"I know it would hurt if they were here," Cassian replied. "It would be simpler if they were." "Yes, it certainly would be," Alessandro agreed, handing the royal seal to Cassian. "If you need help with the workload, don't hesitate to ask Gabriel." "I might take you up on that," Cassian said, a hint of relief in his voice. "Take care, Lessan. Watch over my niece," Alessandro instructed. "I will," Cassian promised. "Try not to do anything foolish. Keep your head clear, given the circumstances." "I'll do my best," Alessandro replied with a smirk. "Thank you, Cassian."

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Thank you for always being there when I need you most, and forgive me for the trouble I cause." "That's what brothers are for, right? To support each other when it matters most," Cassian said, his voice warm. "When you need me, I'll be there for you, wherever you are," Alessandro assured him. "I know," Cassian replied, his expression serious. Alessandro moved toward the door, pausing to turn back. "Take care, Cassian." "Until next time, Lessan," Cassian called after him. As Abril reached the entrance, she spotted Ethan waiting for her. "Can we go now?" she asked, her voice steady.

"Yes, my lady," Ethan replied, gesturing to the guards to prepare their horses. "Why did you decide to go now? Did you lose track of time?" Abril inquired, a hint of frustration in her tone.

"Because I couldn't enter the elven kingdom," Ethan explained. "What do you mean?" "There's a barrier to the elven kingdom. Only those with elven blood can enter," he added. Alessandro appeared beside Abril, his brow furrowed. "When did you think you couldn't enter the elven kingdom?" he asked. "I was told I can't enter, but I can't believe it," Ethan replied, looking conflicted.

"Can you enter?" Abril pressed. "Yes, I'm waiting at the entrance," Ethan said, his tone firm. Alessandro took Abril's hand, his grip reassuring. "I'll wait for you to return with our daughter. This time, I won't just sit in the palace waiting for you. I'll go with you and accompany you wherever I can. I won't leave you alone, Aby." Once they mounted their horses, Alessandro turned to Abril. "We must go; there's no time to waste." He helped her onto her horse, then climbed up behind her, noticing Ethan was already mounted and ready. "What are you waiting for? We should go," Ethan urged.

As they set off, Alessandro felt a twinge of worry. Abril had been very sick just days before, and he feared the teleportation parchment might be harmful to her. "Aby, are you alright?" he asked, concern etched on his face. "Don't worry about me," she replied, trying to sound reassuring. Ethan pressed ahead. "Where is the entrance to the elven kingdom?" "We won't use the main entrance," Abril answered. "Then how will we get there?" Alessandro asked, his brow furrowing. "There's a hidden one in the forest that we can use," Ethan explained.

"How will you find it?" Abril questioned, her curiosity piqued. Ethan pulled out a compass he had kept in his pocket. "This compass will guide us to the right place." "Is this a magical compass?" Alessandro asked, intrigued. "This compass isn't mine; it belongs to Princess Kiara, so I can't be sure," Ethan replied. "How is she?" Abril asked, her tone softening. "You couldn't ask for better allies," Ethan assured her. "Why don't you act like it?" Alessandro teased. "She's someone willing to help you," Ethan said, a hint of admiration in his voice. "That's kind of you," Abril replied.

"If you can do it," Alessandro added, nodding in agreement. "I've never been close to the princess. She's someone who fights against injustice and opposes the absurd archaic rules we face," Ethan explained. As they rode, the needle of the compass pointed steadily toward the forest. "We should hurry; the Norton Forest is a difficult place to navigate at night," Ethan urged. Alessandro quickened his pace, feeling the urgency in the air. When they finally reached the Norton Forest, it was already late. Abril looked around, but she saw no sign of an entrance.

"Are you sure this is safe?" she asked, her voice laced with doubt. Ethan dismounted and extended the compass toward her. "Your brother is where he should be; this is it." Suddenly, the air shimmered, and Ethan explained, "The barrier that covers the elven kingdom is invisible. You can't see it in plain sight, but I assure you, it's there."

250

Abril and Alessandro took a cab, both feeling nervous as they approached the unknown. They had no idea what awaited them. Abril was uncertain whether Alessandro could cross the border or if he would have to remain behind. She squeezed his hand, trying to calm him. "Everything will be fine, Aby," he reassured her. Abril cast a last glance at the spot where

Ethan had disappeared, at the entrance to the elven kingdom. "What do you think you'll do?" she asked. Alessandro replied, "That's what you told me to do, isn't it?" "For what purpose?" she pressed. "To win the favor of the elven kingdom.

If you want to save your daughter, it's the best option." Abril turned to him, her heart heavy. "My sister Sophia loved her dearly. It would break her heart to see something similar happen." "I never knew my mother. Could you tell me what she was like? How she acted?" "I don't think it's necessary to pretend," Alessandro said. "She was sweet and kind, with a warm heart, but also impulsive and incredibly brave. I suggest you change your appearance. Your best weapon is your true self." There was something in that plan that worried Alessandro.

"What if she doesn't want to go back, just like her mother?" he asked. "The kingdom won't hold her back if she expresses what her heart truly desires. If she wants to live without you, she will go," he replied. Abril lightly squeezed Alessandro's hand. "It doesn't matter. We will find a way to come back." "You're right," he said, knowing there was no way to delay the inevitable. "We haven't lost yet, but we must enter." Abril thought it was useless to try to enter the elven kingdom, but she kept her doubts to herself. "Let's do it," she finally said.

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Before they could move, Ethan warned them, though his warning was directed solely at Abril. They took a quick step and crossed the barrier, something that surprised them both. Abril closed her eyes, and when she opened them, she focused only on Alessandro, who supported and embraced her. She felt as if she could breathe easier now. Alessandro stopped, staring at Abril. As they crossed the barrier, his appearance changed; his features became more delicate, his ears pointed, and his golden eyes seemed to shine with greater intensity. He cupped her face in his hands, studying her closely.

"What's happening?" she asked, bewildered. Ethan crossed after them, his own appearance altered. "How did you manage to cross the barrier?" he asked Alessandro. Ethan looked different too; his ears were pointed and sharp, his features delicate yet defined. "Why do our appearances differ?" he inquired. Ethan glanced around, his expression thoughtful. "It's like those days when Sophia was still alive." "Are you going to answer my question?" Abril pressed. Ethan's expression shifted as he realized the truth. "The elves adopt a different appearance when we leave Arkala to blend in among humans.

But when we cross the barrier, we reveal our true selves. We have elven blood, which is why our appearances change." Once Ethan had clarified his inquiry, he added, "Since the barrier was lifted, no human has entered. What did you need to cross it?" "I didn't do anything. I just crossed," Ethan replied. Hearing footsteps approaching, Ethan urged them, "We should move quickly, Abril. Use your cloak to cover your head. We must try to go unnoticed." "We need to reach the palace before we attract attention," he warned, turning to Alessandro.

"If you're seen as a human, there will be chaos." Ethan started to lead the way, and Abril and Alessandro followed, cloaked in their garments. Abril thought the place was beautiful, though not as enchanting as the fairy kingdom. Yet it was undeniably more stunning than the human realm, with a certain glow that filled the air. It was as if she could see everything clearly for

the first time. The forest ahead was breathtaking, and she marveled at the splendor of Arkala's kingdom. Ethan turned to see if they were following. "Don't lag behind," he called.

Alessandro took Abril's hand, his voice steady. "Demons are imprisoned. We'll enter the city quietly." Abril's heart raced with worry for her daughter. Under normal circumstances, she would have stopped at every post along the street, but in that moment, all she wanted was to find her.