

Forgotten Wife : Let the Traitors Kneel Down Novel

Chapter 261

Alessandro felt a flutter of nerves as Abril took his hand. "I want to know more," he murmured, glancing at her with a mix of anticipation and uncertainty. "Yes, Mother, I am their guardian," he assured her. "There's no need for you to worry. I can speak just as well as Sophia." "You're right. If Sophia has said it, then it must be true. So don't be scared; just open the door. Think of it as a simple formality." With a gentle squeeze, Alessandro released Abril's hand and stepped toward the door. He felt an inexplicable pull, as if something-or someone-was calling to him from the other side.

An energy surged through him, awakening every nerve in his body. "Open the door, and you will receive answers to all your questions," he heard Enora say. When he stood motionless, Enora urged him, "Order it to open." "Ábrete," he commanded firmly, and to his surprise, the door swung open. A brilliant light spilled out, blinding everyone present and pushing them back slightly. As their eyes adjusted, they realized the door had closed again, but Alessandro was nowhere to be seen. "Where is Alessandro?" Abril asked, her voice tinged with worry as she scanned the room.

"He must be inside," Enora replied calmly. "You can only cross that door. Now we just have to wait for him to return." "He will be there," Abril insisted, though doubt crept into her heart. "If he never inherited it by entering, then you don't have to worry. This seems to be a safe place for him," Enora reassured her. Abril stared fixedly at the door, her mind racing. Despite Enora's calming presence, she couldn't quell the turmoil within her. "We will have to wait," Enora suggested.

"If you want, we can talk while we wait." "What do you want to discuss?" Abril asked, still not looking away from the door. "Just a little about you," Enora replied, settling down on the floor with her back against the wall. "I'd like to know more about you. You could even change your hair color, even if it's not red." "Why do you say that?" Abril asked, intrigued. "Because I changed mine. It was natural, but I didn't like looking so much like Sophia," Enora explained with a hint of regret. "I thought you would feel flattered if I resembled you," Abril said, a smile creeping onto her lips.

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"It's the other way around. It reminds me that she is here," Enora replied, her tone shifting slightly. Abril turned the ring on her finger, and her hair transformed back to its original vibrant red. "It seems fitting, given your red hair," Enora remarked. "Did you use magic?" Abril asked, curiosity piqued. "Yes, I left Arkala and sold my destiny," Enora said, her expression growing serious. "But that's a story for another time." "I don't care about my father; I only know his cruel side. He probably hid in the dark, but when he died, he told me he loved me."

That he always had," Abril confessed, her voice heavy with emotion. "Your father was always a bit soft-hearted, which is why he ended up in the dark," Enora replied. "That was the first time I heard something about him that wasn't evil, and I wanted to follow that path." "Do you know how to communicate with my father?" Abril asked, her heart racing. "Yes, if you want, I can tell you his story," Enora offered. "I don't have any memories of him, but I would like to hear about him," Abril said eagerly. "Your father, oh, it was more than twenty years ago in the forest on a warm day.

We saw a young redhead fighting with all his strength to save his life. Several bandits were attacking him. They were human, and I wanted to ignore them, but Sophia was nowhere to be found. She threw herself into the fight like a lioness." "Apparently, my mother was very brave," Abril said, a hint of pride in her voice. "Yes, and very reckless. You take after her," Enora continued. "She protected that young man fiercely, confronting the assassins with a voice that commanded respect.

'Leave him, you cowards!' she shouted." The assassins responded, "And who are you?" Sophia's contemptuous gaze swept over them. "It's my duty. If you don't want to die, then stand down." Enora, watching from a distance, raised her hands to see what her sister was up to. When the bandits lunged at Sophia, Enora sprang from the trees like a panther, attacking them from behind and swiftly taking them down. "What do you think you're doing, Sophia?" Enora called out. "It wasn't a fight; I hated ignoring her," Sophia replied, her focus still on the young man hiding behind her.

When their eyes met, it was as if a lightning bolt had struck them, the attraction between them palpable. "Who is that boy?" Enora asked, curiosity piqued. "He's my inheritance!" Sophia exclaimed, her voice filled with urgency. The young man withdrew his hand, blood spilling from a wound in his abdomen. "I believe so," he murmured before fainting. Sophia pressed her hands to his side, applying pressure and using her magic to heal him. Enora watched, torn between admiration and concern. "What do you think you're doing, Sophia?" she asked, her voice rising in alarm. "I'm trying to save him!

It's prohibited to show our power to humans, but- " "If you are destined to die, then what a death it will be," Enora interrupted. "What's the point of having so much power if you can't save the lives of those who need it?" Sophia retorted, her determination unwavering. Enora turned to her sister, urgency in her voice. "If you punish me for one life, then let me be punished. I don't care." Sophia ignored her sister's protests, focusing instead on the young man. "I need someone to blindfold my inheritance," she said, her voice steady.

"I can't do it, and you know you're here for support," Enora replied, frustration creeping into her tone. "If you were completely closed off from the wound, it would have been a big problem," she added. Enora removed a blue scarf tied around her waist and handed it to Sophia. "I can't believe you're accepting my help." "I help you because we have a better chance of escaping discovery and punishment," Enora said, her eyes fierce. "We can't afford to be caught."

Sophia carefully examined the inheritance of the young man, her gaze fixed on his face. Enora, watching her sister, saw the determination in her eyes. "We can't leave him here,"

Sophia insisted. "Soon, some wild animal could come and eat him." "That would mean destiny is cruel," Enora replied, her voice laced with concern. "We need to get back home before anyone notices we're gone." Sophia looked at her sister with the wide-eyed innocence of a newborn lamb. Enora knew she had no choice but to accept the help of her stubborn sister. "Is that what you want?"

To take him home?" Enora asked, her brow furrowing. "There's a cave nearby. We can hide him there until it's safe," Sophia suggested. "What if the fire goes out?" Enora questioned, her skepticism evident. "We can use magic to keep it going," Sophia replied, though her plan lacked conviction. "Fine," Enora conceded, though she felt uneasy. They dragged the young man to the cellar. "We'll need him for the boat," Sophia said, glancing at the entrance of the cave. Enora began gathering dry branches from inside, her hands moving quickly as she prepared for the fire.

Sophia gently caressed the young man's forehead, her heart aching at his stillness. "I've never seen anyone with red hair before," she murmured, captivated by the vibrant color. "It's beautiful." Enora nodded, unable to deny the truth in her sister's words. "There are few humans with hair that color. But it doesn't mean he's bad." "Do you really believe that?" Sophia asked, her voice filled with hope. "Yes, all humans have their own unique traits," Enora replied, placing the branches in a small pile. She lit the fire, watching as the flames quickly consumed the wood.

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Once the fire was roaring, she used her magic to ensure it wouldn't extinguish. "It's time to go," Sophia said, glancing back at the young man as if she hated leaving him alone in the cave. "Do you really think he'll be okay? What if he doesn't wake up soon?" Enora asked, concern etched on her face. "Then we'll heal him," Sophia insisted. "But that could put us in danger," Enora warned. "It will be fine. Just trust me," Sophia urged. "Fine," Enora relented, though doubt lingered in her mind. "Just don't take too long," she added, watching as Sophia prepared to leave.

"I'll be back tomorrow with food. Wait for me in the cave," Sophia promised, her voice firm. "Thank you," Enora replied, her heart heavy as she watched her sister run back to the cave where the young man lay. The following day, when Enora returned, she found Sophia anxiously hovering near the young man. Despite her worries, the young man's presence marked the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. As Enora settled down, memories of the past flooded her mind, filling her with nostalgia. She approached the door and spoke softly, "Your mother was foolish for falling in love with a human."

It's so sad; your life doesn't have to be so complicated." Abril, the queen, countered, "Maybe you think my mother was foolish, but she didn't seem to regret her choice." "Love is difficult to understand," Enora replied. "Sometimes it brings more pain than happiness. Yet, those who love are always happy, regardless of how long it lasts." "It's a dizzying feeling, isn't it? Why give yourself away so completely?" Abril mused, her heart heavy. "I never believed I could be loved by anyone," Enora confessed. "I was always alone until I fell in love."

That's when I truly began to live." "I hope you never regret it," Abril said, placing a hand over her heart. "It's not hard to love, because it's worth it," Enora replied, a smile breaking through her worries. As Alessandro stirred, a brilliant light enveloped him, momentarily blinding him. He found himself in a vast corridor adorned with portraits, each one reflecting the faces of his family. "Where am I?" he wondered aloud, the familiar voice echoing in his mind. Suddenly, he turned sharply to see a boy with brown hair and green eyes standing before him.

The boy looked like a ghost, but what caught Alessandro's attention was the striking resemblance to his deceased brother, Maximilian. "Max, what are you doing here?" Alessandro asked, confusion swirling in his mind. "I'm here to guide you," Max replied. "Guide me? Where to?" Alessandro pressed, eager for answers. "This is the land of the guardians," Max explained, leading the way. "The portraits you see are of those who have existed before us." Alessandro followed Max down the path, his heart racing with questions. "What is this place?

Why are all our family portraits here?" "I only keep eight of your portraits," Max said, his voice steady. "Just like you, I am a part of this legacy."

Sophia carefully examined the inheritance of the man before her, her gaze fixed on his face. Enora, watching her sister, felt a mix of emotions. "I fear that the thought of taking him home will linger in your mind," Sophia said, her voice heavy with concern. "We should leave him here. It won't be long before some wild animal comes and devours him." "That would mean his fate is sealed," Enora replied, her voice trembling. "I knew you would come around, Sophia. We should return to the house before anyone realizes we're missing.

Let's go; you've done all you can for him." "Enora!" Sophia looked at her sister with the wide, innocent eyes of a newborn lamb. "In the end, he isn't yours, but you have the choice to help him." "Why should we take him home? There's a cave nearby; we can hide him there." "What if the fire goes out?" "Use magic to keep it alive," Enora suggested, though her confidence wavered. Sophia continued to voice her doubts about the plan, but Enora felt there was no other option. "This is fine," she conceded. They dragged the young man to the cellar.

"We need to get the fire going," Enora said, glancing around. She had just emerged from the cave and began searching for branches. After gathering a substantial amount, she lit the fire, watching as the flames quickly consumed the wood. Once the fire was roaring, she used her magic to ensure it wouldn't extinguish completely. "Don't forget," Enora reminded Sophia, who was still staring intently at the young man's face. "You have to take him away from here." Sophia kept glancing back, as if she hated the thought of leaving him alone in that cave. "Enora, do you really think he'll be okay?

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What if he doesn't wake up soon and his condition worsens?" "Then we'll heal him," Enora replied firmly. "But... what if..." Enora cut her off. "Sophia, you can't take him with you." "But you can tell me what to do." "You're being reckless!" Enora exclaimed. "You can help me," Sophia insisted, her eyes pleading. "Have you lost your mind?" Enora shook her head in disbelief. "If we let him

go like this..." Sophia trailed off, her expression desperate. "Fine, but be very careful," Enora relented. "I will," Sophia promised. "I'll return tomorrow with food.

Just wait for me in the cave." With that, Sophia hurried back to the cave where the young man lay. The next day, when Enora returned, she found Sophia sitting close to him, her expression filled with concern. It seemed as if she had been marked by the encounter. Later, as they reminisced, Sophia expressed her desire to leave, longing for the freedom to follow her heart. "Your mother was foolish for falling in love with a human," Enora said, a hint of sadness in her voice.

"I'm sorry your life has become so complicated." Abril responded, "Perhaps my mother was a guide for my heart, but she never regretted her choice." "True, she didn't seem to regret it," Enora replied thoughtfully. "Love is difficult to understand, and sometimes it brings more pain than joy. Yet, those who love are brave, regardless of how fleeting it may be," Abril mused. "Why should you surrender your heart if you know the risks?" Enora asked. "I think I have to take that chance. You never know what you might gain," Abril replied, a flicker of hope in her eyes.

"Just like your mother, you're a dreamer," Enora said with a soft smile. "I never believed I could be loved by anyone. I was always alone until I fell for him. That's when I learned to hope," Abril confessed. As Alessandro stepped forward, an intense light enveloped him, momentarily blinding him. When his vision cleared, he found himself in a vast corridor adorned with portraits hanging on the walls. "Where am I?" he wondered aloud. Suddenly, he heard a voice behind him. Turning sharply, he saw a figure with dark hair, green eyes, and pale skin.

The resemblance was striking; it was his brother Maximilian, who had been killed by King Venobich. "Max! What are you doing here?" Alessandro exclaimed. "I'm here to guide you," Max replied. "To guide me? Where to?" Alessandro asked, confusion etched on his face. Max pointed down the corridor. "This is the path of the guardians." As Max ran ahead, Alessandro followed, eager to understand the significance of the portraits lining the walls. Each one depicted members of his family, their faces frozen in time. "What is this?

Why are all our family portraits here?" Alessandro questioned, his heart racing. "They are the guardians," Max explained, his tone serious. "These portraits tell the story of our lineage."

Abril had not yet surrendered. Soleia embraced her wife for what felt like the last time. "You should know that your family is waiting for you. As long as they are here, you can come back as many times as you want." "Mother, King-" Alessandro turned to the door, glancing back at his mother. She smiled broadly at him. "I'm ready, Lessan." As Alessandro opened the door, a brilliant light spilled into the room. He squinted, allowing his eyes to adjust to the brightness. Wrapped in warm arms, he felt Abril's comforting presence. "Lessan, are you alright?" she asked, concern etched on her face.

"Yes, I'm fine," he replied, though he sensed her worry was deeper than he realized. "I was very worried about you," she admitted, her voice tinged with anxiety. Alessandro thought Abril was exaggerating; after all, a mere mouse had passed by him. "I don't think that much time has passed, Aby." "It's been there all day," she insisted. "What?" Enora interjected, her brow furrowing. "I believe time works differently there," Abril explained. "You experienced only a moment, but for

us, hours have passed." "Is it the same as in the land of the fairies?" Enora asked, intrigued. "Not exactly.

Inside, it feels as if time flows more slowly, while in the land of the fairies, it can move either quickly or slowly. It's hard to gauge how much time has truly passed." Alessandro felt a sense of urgency. "How do you manage it?" he asked, his curiosity piqued. "No idea. The queen has never shared her secrets. I've already tested your limits, and I don't think you can hold on much longer." "And what about Ril? Will you let her go too?" he pressed. "If I have to, I will," Abril replied, her voice steady.

"Then nothing can hold us back in this place," he declared, a hint of determination in his tone. "But I promised to show you Arkala," she reminded him gently. "Then let me see it. I want to know the land I was born in and where I grew up with my mother." "Thank you for accepting my request. Now, I need to eat something; it's time for dinner." "Lissana will want to see you," Abril said, her eyes brightening. "I understand. Kiara must speak to her in the palace. Go to the servants' quarters; they will guide you." "Thank you," Alessandro replied, feeling a sense of relief.

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"This is your palace; you're free to wander. Go see Kiara. I believe you will feel more comfortable with her than with me, given your shared history." Enora moved toward the door, leading the way. Once alone, Alessandro embraced Abril, concern etched on his face. "Are you alright?" he asked softly. "Yes, and you?" she replied, her voice steady. "How did you fare inside?" "Better than I expected," he said, a smile breaking through. A servant interrupted their conversation, bowing slightly. "Please follow me to the palace of Princess Kiara." Alessandro and Abril followed, flanked by guards.

The servant led them through a beautiful garden adorned with silk ribbons of vibrant colors, tied to ivory columns, the air filled with the scent of blooming white flowers. In the center, near a tranquil fountain, Kiara and Lissana sat together, watching them approach. Abril rushed forward, her heart swelling with joy. "My baby, my baby! You've been weaned." "She has been well," Kiara assured her. Abril gently caressed her daughter's cheek. "Thank you for taking care of my little one." "Of course," Kiara replied with a warm smile. "Have you eaten?" "Not yet," Abril admitted.

"Then follow me; I'll have something prepared for you," Kiara said, leading them inside. As they entered, a grand feast awaited them, the aroma tantalizing. The food looked delicious, but Abril couldn't shake the question that had lingered in her mind since they had arrived. "Do you know how you helped us?" she asked Kiara, her curiosity bubbling over. "I've asked a thousand times, but I still don't understand." "Ah, yes. You are my husband, though I doubt you are committed to the archaic laws that bind me.

I only helped you for my own benefit, that much is true." "So you've only used me?" Alessandro asked, a hint of disbelief in his voice. "Yes, but I care for your daughter because it brings me joy. She is a sweet child." "My mother said I was going to leave. What do you think?" Abril questioned. "I will gladly show you Arkala," Kiara promised. Barto approached Maya, who had been sitting

in the garden, lost in thought. He stood behind her, clearing his throat to get her attention. "Finally, I see you! I've been looking for you everywhere," he exclaimed.

Maya ignored him, taking another bite of her pie. Barto leaned closer, his tone growing serious. "That's enough, Maya. We need to talk. There's no time for you to be eating pie." "Why not? I'm hungry," she retorted, raising an eyebrow. Barto's frustration was palpable. "You're dying, and the only thing that matters to you is pie?" "Because if I'm going to die, I want to eat everything I can," she shot back defiantly, clutching her plate. Barto slammed his hand on the table, causing the pastry to bounce. "You need to stop this!"

You're wasting time!" "I'm not saying that," Maya replied, her voice steady. "I'm thinking about how to avoid death, but your shouting isn't helping." Barto took a seat across from her, his expression firm. Maya sighed, exasperated. "What?" she asked, her tone softening. "Are you really thinking about how to avoid dying?" he pressed. "Yes," she admitted, her voice barely above a whisper.

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"I haven't surrendered to it yet," Maya said, her voice steady. If she was lost in thought, she wasn't truly present. Hada, the fairy who left the kingdom of the fairies, had been a part of their family. There was only one way to save her life. That was right; she wanted to separate something. "Go see it," she urged, her tone firm. "Are you dying?" Cassian asked, concern etched on his face. "I don't like the idea of doing it, but I think it's necessary. He knows a lot of things; maybe he can help me find a solution." "I suppose that's true," Cassian replied, his brow furrowing.

"I know it can seem foolish, but I haven't surrendered. I promise you that." "I'm glad to see you're not like that," she said, a small smile breaking through her worry. After having a lengthy audience with Barto, Maya sought out Cassian, who was in the king's workshop, engrossed in reading. She approached his desk, where he sat with a cup of water. "How are you?" she asked softly. "Good," he replied, looking up at her. "Are you safe?" "Yes, I don't feel tired or fatigued. I feel wonderful." Cassian reached out to caress Maya's hair, his fingers gentle. "I asked Sirius to come to the palace.

Maybe he can help us." "Actually, we need to talk about that. I've been thinking about what you want, my priest. You want to separate as a way to help me, don't you?" "What have I thought about the wrath of Gr Temem?" he asked, his tone serious. "How about Farell?" "Yes, I will go with Barto and return in a couple of days." "Can't you ask your priest to come to the palace? Or should you travel instead?" "My priest won't come unless he reads the signs, and I don't want to send him a message. I need to tell him in person. Right now, I am—" "Maya, tell me! Use your magic.

If you don't go now, it will be too late." Cassian couldn't leave the palace alone since his brother wasn't there, and he had promised to take responsibility while he was gone. But in that moment, he regretted his words; all he wanted was to dress up and go wherever Maya went. Maya gave him a gentle kiss and said, "If you can't go with me, you must stay here, taking care of the palace until Abril and your brother return. But you don't have to worry so much. You'll go with Barto as soon as I'm fine." Cassian embraced her fiercely.

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"I hate the idea of us separating." "I like it too, but I can't do nothing. You are my priest, and you have to do what's necessary." "Will you really be fine?" "Yes, as long as you don't worry. We will only be apart for a few days." "When do you plan to go?" "I had thought of leaving tomorrow morning. Does that sound good to you?" Cassian wanted to argue, to insist that she wait, but he couldn't bear the thought of her life hanging in the balance. "Yes, that seems fine to me." "It's been a while since we had a moment like this.

Invite me to something nice, something romantic." "Then what do you suggest?" Cassian asked, his mind racing. Maya, impatient, said, "Well, if you can't think of a place, we can go to the city and eat something delicious." "No, I'm sure we're going somewhere special." "What is it?" she asked, excitement lighting up her eyes. Cassian heard her rise from her seat and, lifting her from the water, set her down gently on the floor. "You'll see," he promised, taking her hand and leading her to the lake. There, a boat awaited them, its curtains billowing in the breeze.

He climbed in first, extending his hand to her. "Give me your hand, my lady," he said, his voice warm. Every time he treated her like a noble lady, she couldn't help but find it charming, even if it felt a bit corny. "Shall we take a walk around this beautiful lake and watch the sunset?" he suggested. Maya took his hand, a big smile lighting up her face. "Of course, my priest. Take me wherever you wish." As they sailed across the lake, Cassian held her hand, and as he caught sight of their reflections in the water, he felt a profound sense of peace and tranquility.

He wished that day could last an eternity, that it would never end. Cassian stopped the boat in the center of the lake, just as the sun began to dip below the horizon. They sat in silence, enjoying the moment without needing to speak. When the sun finally set, Maya broke the silence. "We should go back." "The sunset wasn't what I wanted to show you," he replied. "Then what was it?" she asked, curiosity piqued. "Ready to let you know," he said, his voice low.

"Why don't you just tell me?" "Because it wouldn't make sense until it's completely dark." Maya leaned against Cassian's chest, feeling the steady rhythm of his heartbeat. "We often have moments like this, where we are not just you and I, but where we truly exist together," she mused. "It's true," he agreed. "When we come back, we should repeat this. Bring me to this lake, and we will exist here as if we are the only two in the world." "We should make a habit of it," he said, smiling. "Is it coming to the lake?" "No, it's about us thinking together." "That seems like your idea," she teased.

"Then kiss me," she whispered. Cassian leaned in, pressing a soft kiss to her lips, a mere brush of contact. But it wasn't enough for him. "That's not the kiss I wanted, Cassian," she said, her eyes sparkling with mischief. "I want something real." Cassian took her face in his hands and pressed his lips against hers again. This time, it was soft at first, but grew stronger and more assured with every passing moment. Their tongues intertwined, breaths mingling as Cassian deepened the kiss until Maya pulled away, breathless.

"And if it's a real kiss, that's what I wanted," she said, her voice a whisper. "I keep wishing for it." "As you wish, my lady," he replied, a smile playing on his lips.

A starry sky stretched above them, a blanket of shimmering diamonds scattered across the night. Cassian and Maya continued to kiss, lost in their own world, while Cassian wished he could leave their recordings to someone else until they grew tired. The stars shone brightly above them, illuminating their faces. But Maya felt a distance from Cassian, as if she were apart from him in some way. "It's beautiful," she said, her gaze fixed on the lake, which reflected the incredible view.

Yet, it wasn't just the scenery that captivated her; it was the way it reminded her of the last hills, a moment that transported her to the land of the fairies. For a fleeting instant, she felt at home. The evening was bright, but the night sky, adorned with countless stars, was overwhelming. "The truth is, it's like you have thousands of diamonds shining over our heads and beneath us," Cassian said, his voice softening. "Did you like it?" he asked, watching her with anticipation. Maya nodded, her eyes sparkling. "Yes, it delights me. This has been the best moment of my life.

Thank you." Cassian leaned in and kissed her gently. "I'm happy to see that you liked it." Maya took a deep breath, savoring the pleasant night breeze as she cleared her mind of worries and fears. "Do you know?" she began, her voice trailing off. "I love this view. I've always enjoyed the constellations," Cassian said, his tone filled with nostalgia. "When we escaped in the middle of the night, we could see them clearly." He pointed to a group of stars to the left. "Do you see the head, the paws, and the tail?" Maya laughed softly as she settled into his arms.

Cassian continued, "This is the swan. The wings stretch out on both sides, and the neck is the bow." "And that one over there?" Maya asked, pointing to a star that seemed to shine brighter than the rest. "That's the deer," Cassian murmured. "Mama's favorite. It's what sets it apart from the others. The deer always remains constant, just like our love. It's always there, always the first to rise. If you ever get lost, follow that star, and it will lead you home." "Then I'll keep it in mind," Maya replied, a smile gracing her lips. Cassian gently stroked her hair.

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"We should sleep here so we can watch the dawn. It must be beautiful." "It is, but not tonight," Maya said, her voice laced with concern. She hadn't had a good night's sleep in a while, and that worried Cassian the most. Even though she seemed fine at that moment, he knew it was only temporary. He didn't want to risk her falling ill. "Then only when you return," Maya suggested. "Yes, I will return," Cassian promised. Maya lived far away, and thoughts of tomorrow had faded from her mind. In that moment, she wanted to make a thousand plans, as if it were a way to cling to life.

"And we should also get married," she added suddenly. Cassian stood up abruptly, nearly staggering. "Are you serious?!" "Yes, when I return, I want to marry you," she replied, her tone earnest. Cassian leaned closer, his voice low. "Of course I want that. It's what I desire most." He had proposed to Maya countless times, but she had always rejected the idea, believing it was not necessary. Yet, now she felt differently. "I want to be united with you in

every way possible, and marriage is one of those ways. I want to marry you and spend the rest of my life by your side," she declared.

"Do you really want that?" Cassian asked, his eyes searching hers. "You've always turned down marriage." "I never thought I could get married. It wasn't something I considered necessary, but I've changed my mind," Maya confessed, her voice steady. "I want to be with you forever. If there's a next life, I would come to you and give you my life again," she added, her heart full. "But you mustn't regret what you said," Cassian warned gently. "I could never regret loving you," she replied, her gaze unwavering. As Cassian watched her, he marveled at how deeply he loved her.

He never imagined he could feel such an intense connection with someone. Suddenly, a little pixie appeared before Maya, its presence startling her. "Let it go," Maya murmured, trying to wake Cassian. "Are you thinking about this human? What a fool," the pixie teased. "No, I don't think I can resign myself to losing the one I love," Maya replied defiantly. "But if you don't return to the kingdom of the fairies, you'll find yourself lost." "When the time comes, you will find a way to escape," the pixie insisted.

"But I have a promise to keep; I can't die." "If you continue to refuse to return, you will only find death," the pixie warned. Maya reached out to coax the pixie, but it vanished in an instant. She sighed, feeling the weight of the small nuisance. Cassian woke just then, rubbing his eyes. "What are you murmuring about?" "Don't bother me; talk to me anyway," Maya replied, her tone playful. "Are you with me?" Cassian asked, sensing her unease. Maya had been quiet for a long time, knowing that the soil beneath them held more than just earth.

"In reality, I'm bored with the little thing that follows me everywhere," she admitted, a hint of frustration in her voice. Cassian recalled seeing the pixie perched on Barto's shoulder, listening without asking questions. "It appears and disappears like a ghost, a nuisance that hasn't stopped bothering me," Maya continued, taking a deep breath. "It insists that I return to the kingdom of the fairies; it's the only way to save me." Cassian didn't want to admit that perhaps this was the only way to save Maya. He would rather face the kingdom of the fairies than lose her.

"Why do you insist on going back to the kingdom of the fairies?" he asked, his voice strained. "You would find a way to travel back, but I couldn't bring you from among the dead," the pixie had said. "If we cannot find another way to save you, you will have to return to the kingdom of the fairies." Though Maya didn't like what Cassian was suggesting, she knew it was true. She nodded in agreement. Cassian took Maya's face in his hands, forcing her to look at him. "Maya, I promise..."

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Welcome to Casa É. Maya and Cassian met with Barto in the dining room. Afterward, they both headed toward the entrance. "Take care," Cassian said to Maya. "You too," she replied, a hint of worry in her voice. Barto joined them, ready to assist. "You're my sister; you don't have to decide alone," he said, extending his hand to help Maya climb. As they prepared to leave, Maya felt a familiar nervousness. "Are you sure you want to travel using a teleportation

scroll?" Barto asked. "Yes, I want to get there as soon as possible. I don't have much time," Maya insisted.

Barto didn't ask any more questions. He unfurled the scroll, and in an instant, they were outside Farell. Maya took a moment to absorb the view of her hometown. It was so familiar, yet it stirred a sense of nostalgia within her. "Maya, are you happy?" Barto asked, noticing her contemplative expression. She nodded, feeling the magic of the teleportation still tingling in her limbs. "I'm good," she assured him, though a wave of nausea washed over her. It was nothing she couldn't handle. Barto continued down the path, leading them toward the guild tavern.

"I have a few jugs of wine set aside," he said, pulling Maya close as they walked. "Pequefia, you see her here? I believe she never saw you again," he added, glancing at Wallas. "I'm glad to see you, Wallas. Do you know where my priest is?" Maya asked. "If he hasn't come, do you want me to send someone to look for him?" Wallas offered. "No, I'll go. Thanks," she replied. Wallas nodded. "You have to go back and tell me what you find out." As they entered Casa É, Maya took a moment to admire the beautiful rose garden her father had lovingly tended.

Despite their wealth, he never wanted to move to a bigger place. This house was perfect—large enough to feel comfortable but small enough to maintain intimacy. Maya approached the door and grabbed the key that hung beside it. "I thought the key would be lost," she mused. "I wanted to hide it, but my father always left it here," Barto said with a warm smile. She opened the door and rushed into the house, seeking her priest. "Maya!" he exclaimed, his eyes lighting up as she burst into the room. "When did you return?" "I came back to see you.

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How has my father been?" she asked, concern etching her features. "He's been worried. You don't look well; you've lost weight. Has he not been treating you right?" he asked, his voice filled with concern. "I suppose my father has treated me well," she replied, forcing a smile. "Are you truly happy here?" "If I were, I couldn't be happier. You made the right choice," he assured her. Barto entered the room, noticing Maya sitting in her father's old clothes, a gift she cherished even as a child. "You're still wearing those?" he teased. "I'm happy to be back," Maya said, her voice brightening.

"I thought you would never return." "I was only gone for a few days," she replied. "It felt like an eternity. I had to manage everything alone," Barto said, a hint of frustration in his tone. "You should complain less. You know I'm always here to help," she said, trying to lighten the mood. "I'm just tired, Maya. I don't have time to tend to my garden," he admitted. "You've done an excellent job with it; it's beautiful," Maya complimented, noticing the vibrant blooms. Barto looked at her, a mix of pride and annoyance in his gaze. "It's been a long time since the three of us were together.

Let's have a good meal," he suggested, ignoring the unspoken tension. Maya had come to talk to her priest, but she also wanted to share how much she had missed him. She approached him, her heart heavy with unspoken words. "Why did Maya come?" Barto's priest

asked, sensing the weight of her presence. "I believe I needed to see you," she murmured. Barto's gaze shifted as he sensed the seriousness of the moment. "How did things go while I was away?" he asked. "I received information about the kingdom of Laios.

The borders are closed, and there are reports of monsters devouring humans," she explained, her voice steady. "Laios has been invaded. This is a significant problem; we share borders with them. The monsters could invade us," Barto said, his brow furrowing with concern. "Yes, that's why there are several people keeping watch. I waited for you to return to face this threat," the priest added. "You should go and help your sister. She has good cooking," Barto said, trying to lighten the mood. "Don't worry, Father. I don't think I'll bother her.

I enjoy having her at home," Maya replied, a soft smile gracing her lips. Maya was in the kitchen when Barto appeared. "What are you planning, Maya?" he asked, eyeing her preparations. "I'm making tenderloin, Daddy's favorite," she said, her voice filled with determination. Despite her cooking skills being less than stellar, she remembered her father's compliments. "This is how I tortured them with my food countless times," she joked. Barto handed her the knife. "It shouldn't be too hard for you. You should rest," he said, concern lacing his tone. "I'm fine.

I want to prepare his favorite meal. I won't be defeated by this," she declared, her spirit unyielding. "Then let's cook. It's been a long time since I've done this," she added, a hint of nostalgia in her voice. Barto knew he would get bored watching her, but perhaps this was the time to enjoy family, laughter, and the warmth of home. As the day wore on, Maya found herself in her priest's office, where she often spent her time reading. "Papa, may I come in?" she asked softly. "Of course," he replied, gesturing for her to sit beside him.

"There's something I want to tell you," she began, her heart racing as she prepared to share her thoughts.

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The hug from a priest enveloped Maya, a moment filled with warmth and fear. "I decided that your visit here wasn't just because of my ramblings," the priest said, his voice steady despite the weight of their conversation. "In truth, I was compelled to come. But I must confess, I'm not here alone. I want to learn more about them," Maya replied, her determination shining through her frail demeanor. "You studied my time in the first place, didn't you? I believe all of you have your answers," the priest continued, his brow furrowing in concern.

"What exactly do you want to know?" he asked, his tone shifting to one of curiosity. "I want to know how our family could survive on the land of the fairies," Maya said, her voice barely above a whisper. "That's because you are only half fairy. Our veins run with the blood of heroes and humans alike. That is why we can live among humans and do not depend solely on the fairy realm," the priest explained. "Father, I made the vow to serve the queen, and even I..." Maya hesitated, her voice trembling. "I thought I would be freed, but I was wrong.

The bond that ties me to the fairy kingdom cannot be broken." "What do you mean, Maya?" the priest asked, concern etched on his face. "My strength is fading, Father. I must return to the fairies, or..." Her voice trailed off, the weight of her words hanging heavily in the air. It took

a few moments for the priest to process what Maya had said. Then, it felt as though a heavy blow had struck him. Minutes later, he felt as if he could breathe again, but it took even longer before he could articulate a response. "That's not true.

You're not..." Maya grasped the priest's trembling hand, holding it tightly. "Father, you will be fine," she reassured him, though her heart ached with worry. Ryan, her father, caressed her hair, the mess she always had. It broke his heart to see her like this. "Papa, I want to know if there is any way to save me without having to return to the land of the fairies. That's why I'm here. I'm not the first to leave the kingdom; there must be a way to sever my connection to them." Ryan embraced her tightly, wishing he could shield her from the harsh realities of the world.

For a moment, Maya felt as if she could return to being a carefree child. "If there is a way to break the ties that bind you to the land of the fairies, I don't know it," he said, his voice heavy with sorrow. "But the daughter of the fairy kingdom, she left the realm..." Maya's voice was filled with hope. "She only lived two years after leaving the land of the fairies. Her life among humans was very short," Ryan replied, his expression grave. "I know what illness she suffered from, and it's documented. She weakened until she died.

You are half human, so I believe you might fare better, but it would still affect you in the fairy realm." Ryan sat down, searching Maya's face for signs of hope. He could see the impact of his words, and he felt a pang of despair. "My girl, for about a year now, I've been weak and sick. One day, a little girl appeared to me and told me I had to return to the land of the fairies to recover. If I denied it, I would die." "Then you should go back," Ryan said, his voice firm but filled with concern.

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Maya had denied herself countless times, refusing to accept the reality of returning to the fairy realm. But she had promised she wouldn't go back. Shaking her head, tears welling in her eyes, she replied, "I suppose I have no choice but to return." It broke Ryan's heart to see his daughter crying. He wrapped his arms around her, holding her close. "I'm sorry I couldn't help you.

I understand that you don't want to go back to that place, but I promise you, I will do everything in my power to find a way to sever your ties to the land of the fairies." Maya wanted to tell her father that time was running out, that her life was slipping away day by day, but she couldn't bring herself to say it. Instead, she cried like a little girl in her father's arms. Meanwhile, Enora had invited Alessandro to explore the kingdom, breaking the silence that had settled between them. "Are you enjoying my kingdom?" Enora asked, her voice light.

"Yes, I understand why you love it so much," Alessandro replied, a hint of admiration in his tone. "I would like to show you your favorite place," she said, her eyes sparkling. "Of course," he agreed, though silence soon enveloped them again. Enora rose from the table. "I must take my leave. I will see you later, Mariana." After Enora departed, Abril and Alessandro took a moment to gather themselves. Abril focused on feeding their daughter, and after a brief pause, Alessandro reached behind him, cradling their little one, who was sleeping peacefully.

"When are we going?" Abril asked, her voice soft. "Do you want to go?" Alessandro inquired, concern lacing his words. "I would be lying if I said no. I'm worried about Cassian. He didn't seem well when we left," she admitted. "Then we should inform the brothers there," he suggested. "You knew when she was in the elven kingdom. You're sure that whatever we wanted, it seemed she wanted to pass," Abril said, her brow furrowing. "It doesn't excite me to spend time with someone who has tried to take my daughter from me," Alessandro replied, his voice low.

"The queen uses a kind of portal to betray Lissana here. Can we ask her to open one for us?" he proposed. "That would be better. Lissana is very small; I wouldn't want to explain it to her. Traveling with a piece of parchment for teleportation is risky," Abril cautioned. "I also worry about what your sister could do with her newfound power," Alessandro admitted. "Me too. I wonder what she is planning," Abril said, her voice tinged with anxiety. "She might be in the Gates of Hades," Alessandro speculated.

"We have an idea of where she might be, but I could go back to the guardians and ask if they know anything about the other side of the Gates of Hades," he suggested. "That sounds good, but be careful," Abril warned. "Don't worry. Nothing will happen to me. This place is safe for me," he reassured her. Abril leaned back against Alessandro's chest, releasing a long sigh. "I hope that everyone is safe and that there is nothing to worry about." "Let's focus on being happy," he replied, a smile creeping onto his face.

The next day, a servant arrived with a light white gown adorned with jewels to decorate Abril's arms, hips, and hair. "What is this?" she asked, surprised by the lavish gifts. "It's a gift from the queen. She asked you to wear it today," the servant replied. "All of this?" Abril questioned, her eyes wide. "Yes, it will help you prepare," the servant insisted. "I don't need it," Abril protested. "The queen gave me orders. I cannot disobey her," the servant said firmly.

Abril realized she couldn't go against the queen's wishes, and with a resigned sigh, she allowed the servant to help her get ready. Meanwhile, Alessandro found himself in a corner, playing with Lissana, while Abril prepared for the day. He was captivated by her beauty, watching as she lifted her skirt, revealing the discomfort of the gown. "Are you uncomfortable?" he asked, concern etched on his face. Abril sighed, "These clothes are restrictive." Alessandro remained silent, his gaze fixed on her. She looked incredibly beautiful, like a true goddess.

In that moment, he felt himself falling in love with her all over again. "How do you think I look?" Abril asked shyly, her cheeks flushed. "You look stunning," he replied, his voice filled with admiration.

Abril stood before the mirror, adjusting the skirt of her dress, which had a daring opening that scandalously revealed her leg. The joys of the day had faded, and she felt a mix of excitement and apprehension. The jewels adorning her body sparkled against her pale skin, a stark contrast to the elegant attire she wore. "See you soon!" she called out, her mouth curving into a smile. "Beautiful," Alessandro replied, his eyes glinting with admiration. "Are you sure? I

feel like I'm too adorned," she said, her voice tinged with uncertainty. "For nothing! These jewels only enhance your beauty.

"When we return, we'll buy you even more gold and precious stones to highlight your grace," he assured her, his confidence unwavering. Abril had plenty of jewelry in the palace, though she rarely wore it, feeling it was more a burden than a blessing. However, Alessandro's reaction made her reconsider. Perhaps she would wear them more often. His eyes sparkled with emotion and love, as if he had fallen for her all over again.

A radiant smile spread across her lips as she replied, "If only I could love you more, my dear." "We should go," she interrupted their flirtation, glancing at the servant waiting patiently. "The queen awaits you," the servant reminded them. Alessandro took Abril's hand, supporting Lissana with his other arm. Together, they followed the servant down a long path that led to a beautiful garden. Enora was already there, dressed similarly to Abril in a stunning blue gown that accentuated her regal bearing. "Good morning, Your Majesty," Enora greeted them.

"Good morning," Abril and Alessandro replied in unison. Enora's gaze flickered with annoyance as she took in Abril's beauty, enhanced by the dress and jewels she had sent. "You look lovely, but I must say, Sophia would have looked even better in it," she remarked, her tone slightly bitter. "He chose and dressed you very well," Abril replied, trying to ease the tension. "Thank you for the dress and the jewels. I'll return them before long," Enora said, her voice softening. "You don't need to return them. The dress and jewelry belonged to my mother.

I'm sure she would be happy for you to wear them," Abril reassured her. Abril felt a wave of happiness wash over her at the thought of sharing her mother's legacy. "Thank you," Enora replied, her expression brightening. "This garden pleases your mother. Let me tell you," she added, her voice filled with warmth. Alessandro called for the attention of the elven queen. "What's going on?" she asked, her tone curious. "I would like to visit the guardians' room," he stated. Enora instructed the servant to show them the way. "Let's go," she said, resuming her march.

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Abril followed a few steps behind, her thoughts swirling. She wished nothing would change; she wanted to remain in this place forever, wandering the garden or picking her favorite flowers. "It's a beautiful garden. I understand why you love it so much," she said, admiring the vibrant blooms around her. "Yes, it is," Enora replied, gesturing for Abril to sit down under a charming gazebo. It was the perfect moment for her to ask about opening a portal to Cosset. As Abril contemplated her request, Enora interrupted her thoughts. "How is your daughter?" she inquired.

"She's fine," Abril answered, her heart swelling with pride. "Safe?" Enora pressed. "Yes, my daughter is beautiful!" Abril exclaimed, her voice filled with affection. "So she may not have any issues?" Enora asked, her brow furrowing. "Only a couple of times, but she's fine," Abril reassured her. "It's good for now, but soon your magic will stop taking effect," Enora warned. "What do you mean?" Abril asked, her heart racing. "Your daughter has power, and her body

is too small to contain it. If she loses control, she could die," Enora explained, her voice grave. "What?!"

You're lying!" Abril gasped, panic rising within her. "No, it's not a lie. Your daughter's power is immense, and while she has limits, they won't help her if she loses control," Enora said gently. "She's fine! Don't let anything bad happen to her!" Abril pleaded, her voice trembling. "If you want to save your daughter, you must go to the land of the fairies. There, time flows differently, and you might find a way to save her," Enora advised. Abril felt her heart ache at the thought of separating from her daughter. The mere idea of being apart from Lissana was unbearable.

She hugged her daughter tightly, tears brimming in her eyes. "My little one," she whispered. "I understand you don't want to be separated from her, but if you truly love her, you must let her go. It's not easy, but what if your power spirals out of control?" Enora cautioned. The queen's words echoed in her mind. "I don't want to lose my daughter," Abril admitted, clinging to Lissana as if she could protect her from the world. "There must be another way to save her. If you don't act soon, she could die," Enora urged.

"It's better to separate from her for a time than to risk losing her forever, don't you think?" Abril gazed at her daughter, memories flooding back of a time when Lissana was just a beautiful girl with long hair and golden eyes. The girl smiled happily, chasing a moth, and Alessandro had been there, sharing in her joy. It felt like a lifetime ago. "Can elves see the future?" Abril asked, her curiosity piqued. "Why do you ask?" Enora replied, her gaze steady. "I can see that you've inherited your mother's ability to glimpse what's to come," Enora continued.

"I thought you couldn't do that?" Abril questioned. "No, that's my sister's gift. My power is different; I can open portals to anywhere," Enora explained. "What have you seen?" Abril pressed. "Your daughter and your husband," Enora replied, her expression softening. Abril caressed Lissana's cheek, her heart heavy. "She has six years, does that mean she will live until then?" "I believe so. She must grow and stabilize herself by the time she reaches six," Enora said, her tone serious. "But she doesn't have the only chance to live."

The only way is to return to the land of the fairies," Enora added. "If I do that, will she be okay?" Abril asked, her voice trembling with hope. "I believe so," Enora replied. "Then I'll go to their land with her," Abril declared, determination rising within her. "I don't think there's a time when you can appear, one after another. You owe it to her," Enora cautioned. "So you want me to hand my daughter over?" Abril asked, her heart sinking. "You have a good friend, one who is willing to fight for your daughter. She would make a good guardian," Enora suggested.

"She cannot go to the third place," Abril protested. "I'm just offering a suggestion. The decision is yours," Enora replied, her voice calm. They both fell into silence, the weight of the conversation hanging heavily in the air. Finally, Abril broke the silence, her heart aching for Lissana. "Could you open a portal for us?" she asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

"A beautiful gift," Abril thought as she gazed at the scenery around her. "Of course, I thought you would stay longer." Kiara had shown her several places in the kingdom, all of them stunning. If it were another time, perhaps she would have wanted to linger. But this was not just any moment. Dark times were approaching, and there was little time to rest. Abril hated the truth of it; the darkness was indeed coming. It grew stronger in difficult times, enough to conquer all in its path. "This war will be different from anything we have faced before," she warned.

"This time, all clans must unite and fight with everything they have. Otherwise, nothing will remain—only darkness." "Are you with us?" "What does it matter?" Enora replied. "That's what your husband asks me. He wonders what your life will be like in the future and if someday you could have that beautiful future you've dreamed of." When Enora set Abril down, she continued, "Let me show you something." She led Abril to a high vantage point, a place from which they could see the entire kingdom of Arkala. Enora crossed the threshold and urged Abril to follow. "Don't be afraid; it won't harm you.

Just follow me." Abril took a deep breath and crossed to the other side. The portal behind her closed, and she felt a surge of power as she stepped into the new realm. "I can't keep it open for long," Enora said. "I will open it again when we leave. That's when your frightened expression will change." Abril felt calmer with Enora's reassuring presence. Before her lay the kingdom of Arkala, more beautiful than she had imagined. She wished for more time to learn about every detail of this place. Yet, she had made the decision to leave, and there was no turning back.

The wind tousled her hair, and as she took in the view, she noticed a gold cameo glinting in the sunlight. "What's that?" Abril asked, curiosity piqued. Enora smiled. "It's a gift for you." "Another gift from your majesty?" Abril replied, her heart swelling with gratitude. "Yes," Enora said softly. "I thought you would enjoy seeing your mother's face." Abril had only seen her mother in dreams, and the thought of finally being able to see her face filled her with joy. "Thank you so much for this beautiful gift." Just then, Alessandro entered the room, his eyes adjusting to the bright light.

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The first thing he saw was his mother's warm smile. "There's no need for faith to believe," she said gently. "There are things left untouched." "I'm here for that," he replied, feeling a familiar ache in his heart. Every time he saw her, it was as if she returned to offer him wise counsel. "It's about the keys of Hades. I possess one, but I don't know where the other is. Could you help me find it?" "If you know where the loop is that opens the door to Hades, then you must not go there," she cautioned. "Why not?" Alessandro asked, frustration creeping into his voice.

"Because the two keys cannot meet. They were separated for a reason. When they come together, darkness surrounds them, and those nearby are affected by it. So, do not seek Lessan; you won't find him in the darkness of the kingdom." "But I could try to protect it..." "The second key is very dangerous. It's better to leave it where it is." "But..." "Lessan, the doors of Hades will open regardless of what you do. It is written. What isn't written is the

ending-what happens after they open. That is what you can change." Alessandro clenched his fists, his knuckles turning white from the pressure.

Soleia placed a hand on his shoulder, trying to offer support. "Lessan, I'm sorry you feel this way. I know it's frustrating, but there are things we cannot avoid. They are necessary. Even if you try to alter your path, you will find another way. There's no use in bottling it up, for what will be, will be." Gia looked at her mother, her voice trembling.

"Do you mean to say that my brothers and I are part of this destiny?" "Even if it seems so, our dead were part of this destiny, and you and your wife could find yourselves in it." Alessandro fell silent, guilt washing over him for the loss of his family. "Don't feel guilty for our dead, Lessan. Destiny is not something we can change, except for a few moments." "There is an exception to opening the doors of Hades and unleashing all the demons that dwell within." "That's it. When you reach the end of a world, that's when you can create something new.

That's when you can forge your own path and challenge your destiny." "I suppose there's nothing that can happen in these moments, then." "No, in these moments, enjoy your family while you can and prepare for what comes next." "So that's what I'll do." Meanwhile, Maya sat in the garden, basking in the sweet aroma of blooming roses. She closed her eyes, letting the warm breeze play with her hair, the songs of birds filling her ears. She was so absorbed in the moment that she didn't notice when her father approached until he called her name.

"Maya, sweetheart." "Daddy, yes?" "What are you doing?" "I'm enjoying this." "The gardens of Alacio must be even more beautiful." "Yes, but this one has something special. This one has you. Here, the roses are vibrant, and it seems like even the birds sing more beautifully." Maya leaned against her father's side, a content smile on her face. "I love being here." "I love being here too, even if it seems dizzying at times. This place, this garden, and being with you all makes me feel at home." "It reminds me of the past," Maya said softly.

"That's why we love the gardens so much, even if you and your brother never cared for them much." "It's true. I preferred books, and Barto..." "Your brother has always been a bit eccentric. Sometimes I believe he's part human and part fairy." That comment struck a chord with Maya. "You're absolutely right." "Since I returned, I feel like something has changed inside me, as if everything is different."