

# Forgotten Wife : Let the Traitors Kneel Down Novel

## Chapter 271

Maya stood at the edge of the tavern, her heart heavy with the weight of impending farewells. She wanted to say goodbye to her friends, unsure if she would ever see them again. The warmth of their embraces surrounded her, laughter echoing in the air, but one figure remained distant. Leo lingered in a corner, his expression unreadable. Maya approached him, her voice soft. "I wish you well." Leo fixed his gaze on her, and after a long silence, he finally replied, "You're not a good man." Meanwhile, in the palace, Alessandro paced restlessly.

He had just left his room, where he had been waiting for Abril. Dantriel leaned against the wall, his posture relaxed despite the tension in the air. "Is he staying there for a long time?" Alessandro asked, concern etched on his face. "Do you know where Abril is?" he pressed, his voice rising slightly. "She's not in the palace," Dantriel replied, his tone calm but serious. Alessandro's worry deepened. "Where is my wife?!" "The queen has taken her somewhere, but don't worry, she's fine. You'll see her before dusk," Dantriel assured him. Without Abril by his side, Alessandro felt lost.

"What am I supposed to do?" he muttered, frustration creeping into his voice. "Do you want to eat something?" Dantriel suggested, trying to lighten the mood. "Yes," Alessandro replied, still distracted. Dantriel began to walk, glancing back to ensure Alessandro followed. "Come on, I know a good place to eat. You can't spend all day staring at the wall waiting for her to return." "I suppose you're right," Alessandro conceded, reluctantly falling into step behind Dantriel. As they exited the palace, the air felt fresher, and for a moment, Alessandro's spirits lifted.

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Just then, Ethan appeared before them, his expression revealing his disappointment. "Is Abril with the queen?" Ethan asked, hope flickering in his eyes. "Yes," Alessandro confirmed, but the disappointment was palpable. Ethan's face fell. "I was hoping to see her today." "Let's go get something to eat," Alessandro suggested, trying to shift the mood. "Do you want to join us?" "Of course," Ethan replied, his voice flat as he followed them through the streets until they reached a restaurant. Upon entering, they were greeted with respect.

Everyone stood and bowed their heads until they were led to a table on the second floor, where they could see everything below. Several young servers approached, offering drinks in delicate cups, and a steaming teapot sat in the center of the table. Dantriel remained silent, sipping his drink, while Alessandro felt the weight of the conversation hanging in the air. "Is Abril coming back soon?" Ethan broke the silence, his tone anxious. "I don't think it will be possible tonight," Alessandro replied, his brow furrowing.

"I thought she would be back in a few days!" Ethan exclaimed, frustration creeping into his voice. "I'm worried about my kingdom and what Cira might do in my absence," Alessandro admitted, his gaze distant. Ethan nodded, understanding the gravity of the situation. "I just want to talk to Abril's mother again." Alessandro sensed the tension in Ethan's silence. He knew how it felt to love someone so deeply that the thought of losing them was unbearable. After a few drinks, the food arrived—an array of eggs, chicken, meat, and vegetables, all beautifully presented.

Alessandro savored a piece of meat, its flavor rich and satisfying. "I still don't have the answers I was hoping to find at the guardians' home," he confessed, his voice low. Dantriel looked at him, concern etched on his face. "You can't prevent what's coming, Alessandro. If you know you can't avoid it, you shouldn't martyr yourself. Live now and stop worrying about tomorrow." Alessandro clenched his fists, the tension palpable. "Maya is my sister.

I can't just ignore what's happening." Meanwhile, Maya stood in the tavern, surrounded by her friends, each one offering warm hugs and playful banter. But Leo remained distant, his expression unyielding. "Goodbye, Leo," she said softly, hoping for a connection. He met her gaze, and after a long pause, he finally spoke. "You're not a good man."

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The Marriage Mark Maya felt a pang of regret as she looked at Leo. "I'm sorry about the beautiful worm for you," she said, her voice soft yet teasing. "But that face would be Leo's change." "Are you sick?" Leo asked, concern etched on his features. "I'm fine," Maya replied, forcing a smile. "Then why do you look so pale? You should check your health." "Sometimes I'm surprised by how observant you can be. Just the other day, we should have gone out together, like we used to." "Leo would have been with you, but he followed you when you left the tavern.

I took a deep breath; it was a beautiful day to be out." As they walked through the bustling streets, Maya paused at various stalls, buying food and fruit. She waved goodbye to Leo as she left. "I don't think I'm going to carry anything more," she said, glancing back at him. After trying on a sombrero, Maya lost track of where she was and continued on her path. "Don't you think about what you have?" Leo asked, his tone teasing. "You've done nothing but shop." "Am I boring you with this life of luxury?" she replied, a hint of mischief in her voice.

"Maybe a little." "Then why not go back?" "Not that I don't want to be with Cassian. It's just..." "Are you saying that seriously?" Leo pressed. "You always rejected the idea of marriage." "That was because I hadn't found the right person." "Have you spoken to your priest or your brother about it?" "Not yet. Just tonight. You're the first one I've told." "Why?" he asked, curiosity piqued. "I don't know," Maya admitted, her gaze drifting. She sat at a small stall, watching the children play nearby. "You're embarrassed," Leo observed, a teasing glint in his eyes.

"Of course not, good sir," she replied, feigning indignation. Maya had been sitting there, contemplating the journey ahead. "Why do you ask?" she inquired. "It's hard for me to believe that you're getting married." "I am getting married. I want to be united with the one I love as soon as possible." Maya looked at him earnestly. "Remember, I'm not alone in this." "You

could use a ring; you don't need a marriage for that." "The marks of marriage forge a deep bond. That's what I want." "Do you know that the mark of marriage unites you with that person forever?" "I know.

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It's a brand that means nothing without her death. That's why it's important." Maya continued walking with Leo through the city. When they returned to the tavern, Leo stopped and took her hand, a serious look on his face. "I hope you're ready," he said. "I wish I could return to the city where I grew up," Maya replied, her voice tinged with nostalgia. Leo released her hand, sensing the sincerity in her words. "Next time, let us repeat this." "I hope you don't stop me from visiting the stores next time.

I want to buy a lot more things, and I'll have to carry everything." "I suppose I'll have to help," Leo said, smiling as he watched Maya's small figure move ahead. He had been in love with her since he could remember, and even though it pained him that she wasn't with him, he loved her too much to let her go. "I'm happy when I'm with you," he whispered to himself. "Are you not coming?" Maya called back. "Yes, I'm coming now," he replied, quickening his pace. When Maya returned to the tavern, she said goodbye to Leo and went to find her brother.

Barto was in his workshop, speaking in a loud tone, though she couldn't see anyone else in the room. "Barto, can I interrupt your important conversation?" she asked. "Come in; I'm not talking to anyone," he replied, his voice gruff. Maya noticed a small figure lurking nearby, trying to hide. It was contemptuous, and she couldn't help but feel annoyed. "What are you doing here?" she demanded. "I'm just a fairy, and I must follow you everywhere," the pixie said defiantly. "You have a lot of nerve to show up here, considering the trouble you've caused me," Maya retorted.

"Despite being so small, you have a big mouth. I'd have to force it shut," the pixie shot back. "I just want to help you. If you decide to return, you will die," it warned. "Stop with that nonsense. You keep telling me to come back, and it's becoming a true torture. Sometimes I wonder if it was the queen's intention to send you with me." "You're such a grouch. The queen only cares about you," the pixie said, crossing its arms. "If that's true, your offer wouldn't be so hard to accept," Maya replied, frustration bubbling beneath the surface.

"It's true I don't understand it, and I didn't even know it was possible. So just disappear. If I catch you today, I'll crush you like a grape," she threatened. The pixie stuck out its tongue before disappearing. "You're bitter. If you want to die, I'll do it for you," it taunted. "That damn pixie," Maya muttered, shaking her head. Barto sat down next to her, a serious expression on his face. "What do you think you'll do now?" he asked. "I suppose I'll return to the land of the fairies if I promised Cassian," she said thoughtfully.

"Then it's not true what that little thing said about giving you peace?" "Because I don't think I can accept that," Maya replied, her voice heavy with uncertainty. "I'm fine at the moment. Abril helped me with magic, and while I can keep it as it is now, I'm thinking about going back. I'm also preparing for a wedding." "What?! How can you get married?" Barto exclaimed, his eyes wide. "Just like the dark," she said, her tone serious. "I can't believe you're even

considering it. I thought you hated the idea of marriage!" "I never thought I would marry, so I dismissed it completely.

But if that's the case, I want to get married." "When you try it, you can't see it again if you don't return to the land of the fairies?" "Yes, Cassian seems good," she replied, her heart racing. "We want to unite our lives, to stop being two and become one. You should understand me better than anyone. You know what it feels like to want to tie your life to the person you love, even when you can't have her." "Will you tell the priest?" Barto asked, his voice cautious.

"Yes, I think I'll decide before I leave." "You might want to ask Dad not to 'sop hacer' after knowing what's wrong with you," he suggested. "I know, but just like he told me, it would be impossible to be with me if I need him. Just like Cassian promised me, and I believe in him."

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The curse of them It appeared that a decision had been made. An invitation was extended, and there was no need to ask for it; on that day, it would be important for her. "If one day you are able to marry your beautiful elf, I hope I can be there for you," the voice echoed in her mind. "I also hope to see you, even though my relationship is a bit complicated and, for various reasons, prevents us from being together. You can't be with the person you love because it hurts, and I'm dying. It seems we have little luck in our relationships." "It's true.

Perhaps we weren't good at choosing," came the reply. "I don't believe it's a matter of choice. I think our problems run deeper than that, maybe something is keeping us from being together. You'll have to do something to break this curse. If you find a way to achieve it first, let me know. If I discover a way to win, you will be the first to understand." When Abril returned to the palace, she called for one of the servants. "Search everywhere and bring it before me." "As you command, Your Majesty," the servant replied. Meanwhile, Alessandro would be arriving soon.

Enora mentioned, "I'll let you know as soon as he gets here." "You should think carefully about what he says to you. Your body won't be able to withstand so much power for long," Enora warned. "I will," Abril promised. There was little time left, and there was one thing Abril hadn't been able to ask. "I have a fairy, she is dying. I tried to heal her with magic, but it didn't work." "I'm taking care of your daughter," Enora assured her. "I saw something rare about her.

Now I understand what it was; she is nurturing." "Is there any help for her?" "Being close to you will help, but it's temporary. Each species has its own ailments. You can heal her; she should return to the land of the fairies. There, she will have more power in her kingdom. Perhaps the queen knows how to cure her, even if she seems very old. If anyone knows, it must be Serella." "Thank you." "I'm sorry I can't be of much help," Enora said, gesturing to a tray filled with jars of different colors.

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One of those bottles looked familiar to Abril; it was the same one that had been given to her by Ethan. "This is a gift for you. The elves have created these potions for magic annulment.

You can't use many things to heal us, but these potions will help you recover faster and increase your magical resources. Just try to use them sparingly; it's very difficult to achieve." "Thank you," Abril replied, her heart swelling with gratitude.

"Be very careful, and if someone needs my help, don't hesitate to ask." "I don't dislike you anymore, and what happens is all my fault, Mother, but I still thank you." "It's not that you don't like me; I just have a hard time accepting that things are different. It feels unnatural." "I understand." Just then, Alessandro appeared, and Abril felt a wave of happiness wash over her. He wrapped his arm around her and asked, "Is everything alright?" "Yes, everything is fine," she replied, her heart racing.

Enora interjected, "How did you fare against the guardians?" "A bird of Hades warned me that the two keys must be together; that would be dangerous." "I think so too. It's better if both keys remain hidden, and if possible, let the missing key never appear." "My sister Cira will not rest until she finds her," Alessandro said with determination. "Then we must protect the key that remains," Enora added. "That's it," Alessandro agreed. "You are a guardian. If you need the clans, we are obliged to help. Don't forget that," Enora reminded him. "I won't," he promised.

"I suppose they ended up at the scene," Enora continued. "Suppose we want to go back home..." "Then there is the portal for users." Enora moved toward the portal when Kiara appeared. "Mother, please wait." "What's going on, Kiara?" "We need to talk for a moment." "What could it be now?" "Yes, it has to be important." "Fine, go ahead," Enora said, her tone softening.

When they left the room, Enora asked, "What's going on, Kiara?" "I want to go with them." "No, don't go with the humans." "Why not?" "Because I don't want you to suffer, and I don't understand why you want to go with them." "I want to help. A war against darkness is underway.

For starters, I want to support my cousin." "I don't agree with them." "But I'm with you, and I know you'll end up doing what I don't want to, so I won't stop you from going." "Really?!" "Yes, but I ask you to be very careful while you are there." "Don't worry, just take care of me very well." "You will have to stop your things; they want to leave now." "It's priceless; I have everything I need right here," Kiara said, holding her bag tightly. "Now you have to convince them to take you.

I doubt they will allow you to go with them." "Don't worry, I'm sure it won't be denied." When they turned back, they found Alessandro waiting for them. He asked what they had discussed. "Let her go to the human kingdom," Enora said. With a nod, Enora opened the portal that led to the kingdom of Cosset, directly to Alessandro and Abril's home. As they prepared to cross, Enora said, "I leave my daughter in your care." "Don't worry, we'll take good care of her," Alessandro assured. Abril and Lissana crossed the portal together. Kiara turned to see her mother before stepping through.

"Take care, Kiara." She smiled and replied, "I'm ready, Mama." Kiara crossed the portal, joining Dantriel, who had remained behind. He approached Enora and said, "I'm surprised there was no reason to stop her." "There was no point in trying; she would always find a way."

After the portal closed, Abril found herself enveloped in darkness, avoiding the urge to ask Kiara why she had decided to accompany them. "There's something I need to do here, and it's hard to leave Ark because my mother watches me all the time," she said, her voice tinged with frustration. "I can't just abandon you all; I need to be of assistance." "I owe you one," Abril replied, grateful. "You took care of my daughter, so I feel at home here." "Thanks, but I don't think I'll have much time," Kiara said, her tone serious.

"As I mentioned before, I have something I need to attend to." "Ask for your room to be prepared if you need it. Don't hesitate to ask," Alessandro suggested, his voice steady. "We're deciding to go back, so we'll also ask that they prepare the scene for our return," he added, leaning in to kiss Abril before leaving the room. "I'm glad to see you back," Kiara said, her expression brightening. "I believe this change has come about so I can alter my mother's opinion, if not my own." "Maybe you're right. My mother has always felt guilty for exiling Aunt Sophia.

I think she's trying to make amends through you. Please don't hate me for saying this." Abril remained soft, her heart still heavy with the burdens of her past. She had been the one to bring her daughter into the elven kingdom, and now she felt the weight of that decision. "I don't hate her," Abril replied, though she couldn't deny the lingering discomfort. "What I hide still bothers me, especially because of the darkness that lurks in my past." "I understand. It's not easy to forget, especially when desperation drives one to harm their own," Kiara said, her voice low.

"Indeed, there's nothing worse than losing someone you love," Abril murmured, the memory of her struggles weighing heavily on her. Lissana, touching the collar Abril wore, seemed to sense her mother's turmoil. The child appeared fine, which eased some of the heaviness in Abril's heart. "You have a lot of power, my dear," Lissana said, her innocent voice breaking through the tension. "Too much, I would say. At your age, when magic awakens, you can decide how to harness it.

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Teach it to be used wisely, so you can control it." "Yes, that's why I'm cautious with your magic," Abril replied, her brow furrowing. "If it's not handled properly, it could lead to disaster." "Exactly. She could die if her powers are unleashed recklessly," Kiara added, her tone serious. "So I think it's wise to be careful." Alessandro returned to the room, accompanied by Cassian. "Thank the heavens you're safe and back home," Cassian said, relief washing over him as he spotted Lissana.

Abril noticed a beautiful red-haired girl with golden eyes in the room and couldn't help but ask, "Who is she?" "I am Kiara Babette, elven princess of the kingdom of Arkala," she introduced herself, her voice confident. "What is the elven princess doing here?" Cassian asked, bewildered. "I have business in the human kingdom," Kiara replied, her expression serious. "And I'm here because of Alessandro." "Alessandro? You mean he's not just a prince but also a guardian?" Cassian questioned, his confusion deepening. "Call him a guardian, not just a prince.

I suppose your brother will explain everything to you," Kiara said, her eyes sparkling with mischief. "What does Alessandro say?" Cassian pressed. "I'll explain later. For now, just know

that she's here to help me," Alessandro interjected, placing a reassuring hand on Cassian's shoulder. "Take care of her, and she'll guide you." "Thank you for your help," Cassian said, still trying to process the situation. "But why did she betray you?" "Because she asked us to. She helped us immensely while we were in the elven kingdom, and we couldn't refuse her," Alessandro replied, his voice firm.

Abril watched as Cassian's shoulders relaxed slightly, though the tension in his face remained. "How are you?" Cassian asked, concern etched across his features. "I'm well," Abril replied, though she could see the weariness in his eyes. "Maya isn't in the palace right now; she went to visit her priest," Cassian informed her. Hearing that Maya was with her priest eased Abril's worries. It meant her daughter was well, even if she was alone for the moment. Yet, she couldn't shake the concern reflected in Cassian's pale face. "You might be tired. It's best if you let me rest now.

We can all be together tomorrow," Cassian suggested, gently stroking Lissana's hair. "Thank you for taking care of the palace in my absence," Abril said, her gratitude sincere. "You don't need to thank me. It's part of my duty, even if I'm not flaunting my title as prince right now," Cassian replied, a hint of a smile crossing his lips. "Still, thank you for always being there when I need you," Abril said, her heart swelling with appreciation. Cassian gave her a light smile before leaving the room, and Alessandro approached Abril, concern etched on his face as he cradled Lissana in his arms.

"Cassian was acting strangely, don't you think?" he asked, his brow furrowed. Though Abril had promised to share everything with Alessandro and not withhold information, she hesitated regarding Cassian. Instead, she simply replied, "Don't worry. He's safe and just tired."

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Abril felt uncomfortable with the weight of the jewels adorning her. All but one had been removed—the pendant bearing her mother's portrait, a reminder of the reign that had been bestowed upon her. She had chosen to dress more modestly, opting for a low-cut shirt that felt more like her. Alessandro, playing with their daughter Lissana, thought he would return home if only it were quiet, but the atmosphere was anything but calm. "What's wrong, Aby? You seem worried," he said, noticing her troubled expression. "It's about Lissana.

There's something I need to tell you," Abril replied, her voice serious. "Just hearing you say that worries me," he admitted, his concern growing. "The elven queen told me that I should be worried about Lissana. In her opinion, my little girl doesn't possess enough power," Abril explained, her brow furrowing. "Then what does she want?" Alessandro asked, his protective instincts flaring. "Lissana needs to grow up faster so she can control her power," Abril said, her voice tinged with urgency. "But that's impossible," he countered, shaking his head.

"In the kingdom of the fairies, things work differently. If they send her away, she will have more opportunities to..." "To survive!" Abril finished, her heart racing. "Yes," Alessandro said, pulling his daughter into a tight embrace, wishing to shield her from any danger. "Our daughter is dying?!" he exclaimed, panic rising in his voice. "No, but with so much power, she could end up destroying her small body," Abril replied, fear lacing her words. "Then we have to leave with the fairies?" he asked, dread creeping in.

"Although I hate the idea of separating from her, I despise the thought of losing her forever," Abril confessed, her voice breaking. "She's so young; she might forget us if she's away for too long," Alessandro said, his worry evident. "If we aren't in the country to visit her, we'll make sure she knows we care," Abril reassured him. "She'll be fine, right?" he asked, seeking comfort in her words. "Yes, she will be fine. We will take care of her," Abril promised. Alessandro wrapped his arms around Abril's shoulders, and the three of them shared a heartfelt embrace.

"Yes, we will take care of her," he echoed, feeling a sense of unity. After the moment passed, Abril and Alessandro lay beside Lissana, watching over her as she slept. It was their way of protecting her from the dangers that loomed ahead. As they opened their minds to Lissana's dreams, both parents felt exhausted. Alessandro remained awake, his thoughts swirling with conflict, unable to reconcile the turmoil within. His beloved family, which he had not wanted to leave behind, seemed destined to be apart, and it pained him to witness the shadows of death looming over his wife.

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He prayed to the sky god, asking for protection for his family and for the strength to endure. The next morning, Abril was the first to awaken, stirred by the sound of her baby's cries. She quickly got up and called for a servant to bring milk for Lissana. As she walked around the room, soothing her daughter, she noticed Alessandro tossing restlessly in bed, caught in the grip of a nightmare. She approached him, placing a gentle hand on his shoulder. "Lessan, what's wrong? Are you okay?" she asked softly. "Yes, I just had a nightmare," he murmured, his breath still quickened.

Abril caressed his shoulder, trying to calm him. "Everything is fine," she assured him. Alessandro felt the warmth of Abril's presence, a comfort that reminded him that what he had dreamed was not real. "I know," he replied, finally finding solace. Meanwhile, Maya had risen early, determined to speak with her priest before she left. The previous day's news of her impending marriage to Cassian had not been received well by either her father or her brother. They had both insisted that the bond of marriage should not be taken lightly.

She was certain of her choice, but their disapproval weighed heavily on her. When Maya entered the kitchen, she was surprised to find her priest preparing breakfast. "What are you doing here?" she asked, her curiosity piqued. "I'm making breakfast for you. It's been a while since we've had a chance to catch up," he replied warmly. Maya embraced her priest, feeling a rush of nostalgia. "It's true, we haven't spent time together in ages," she said. "Are you sure about marrying Prince Cassian?" he asked, concern etched on his face. "Yes, I couldn't be more sure," she affirmed, her resolve firm.

Ryan sighed deeply, though he struggled with the thought of Maya marrying Cassian. He knew that her decision was final and unchangeable. "I hope you enjoy your wedding," he said, trying to mask his reluctance. "I'll be there, I promise," she replied, her eyes brightening. "Even if you don't like Cassian?" he teased lightly. "I don't hate you, Father. You're my little girl, and I'll be there for you," he assured her, his voice softening. "Alright then," she said, smiling. "Now come and sit down; breakfast is almost ready," he urged.

Maya took her place at the table, her heart lightening as she focused on the moment. As her priest finished preparing the meal, she felt a sense of excitement wash over her, momentarily letting go of her worries. After breakfast, Maya bid farewell to her priest, who embraced her warmly. "Goodbye, my little one," he said. "I'm not ready yet," she replied, a hint of reluctance in her voice. "You're right," he conceded. Barto, her brother, entered the room just then. "Where do you think you're going?" he asked, raising an eyebrow. "I'm taking Maya back to the palace," he said, his tone serious.

"You should stay a little longer." "No, I'll return today. I leave the club in your capable hands, brother," she insisted. "Just make sure you're ready this time," he replied, a teasing smile on his face. "I will be, no matter what," she promised, determination in her voice. After saying goodbye to her priest, Maya and Barto headed to the teleportation parchment. As they prepared to use it, Barto looked at her with concern. "Are you sure you're okay?" he asked. "Maybe you should stay a little longer. You just used the teleportation parchment." "I'm fine, Barto.

Don't worry, just tear the parchment," she urged. "Alright," he said, tearing the parchment as they arrived at the outskirts of the capital. Maya felt a wave of nausea wash over her as they traveled. "Are you happy?" Barto asked, trying to gauge her mood. "Yes, I'm fine. Just a little..." she started, but her words were cut short as she suddenly vomited on the street, her stomach rebelling against the journey. Barto quickly rushed to her side, supporting her until she regained her composure. "I'm fine, Barto. It's just the travel," she reassured him, though her face was pale.

"We shouldn't have come back so soon. It would have been better to use a carriage instead of the parchment," he said, concern still etched on his face. Maya hated traveling by carriage; the long journeys always made her feel sick. "I think we needed to rest during the trip," she replied, her voice steady.

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Barto sat next to Maya, who leaned her head on her brother's shoulder. "I'll be fine," she murmured, her voice barely above a whisper. "I hope you give me a chance to recover. I'll be as good as new." The soft strands of her hair brushed against his cheek, a refreshing sensation that made him feel a bit better. He silently thanked her for the comfort she provided. As he gazed at the blue sky, the clouds danced in the wind, and he reminded himself that he was merely a whisper in the grand scheme of things. Yet, thanks to Maya, Barto felt heard. "I'll be ready with you, my love," he promised.

Hearing Maya express her affection made Barto think of his own beloved, whom he hadn't seen or heard from in far too long. He wondered if she still loved him, if she was waiting for him. Meanwhile, Kiara rose early in the morning, calling for one of the servants to prepare a horse. She also requested an audience with Abril, though she hesitated to ask for something unplanned. But Abril wasn't available yet, so Kiara waited, leaning against the counter with a sense of impatience. When Abril finally appeared in the garden, she was playing with the princess. Kiara approached her, eager to speak.

"Good morning, Abril," she greeted. "Good morning, Kiara. What brings you here so early?" Abril replied, her tone warm. "I have some matters to attend to in the human world. It might take me a while, but if you need my help, don't hesitate to ask. I'll return afterward," Kiara said, her voice steady. She handed Abril a small book. "Write what you need in this. Whatever words you inscribe will be spoken through me when I use it to contact you." "Thank you, Kiara," Abril said, her eyes softening.

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"If my mother sends someone to watch over me, please don't tell them I've left." "I won't care if they laugh at my back," Kiara replied with a smile. "I just hope everything goes well for you." Abril looked at her little one, wishing with all her heart that everyone would be safe and that she could see her child grow. "Me too," she whispered. Kiara waved goodbye and headed toward the exit, her heart heavy with the weight of her thoughts. She felt lost, as if she had misplaced something important.

Wandering through the corridors, she searched for the main door, feeling increasingly disoriented. "Where is the main gate?" she asked a passing servant. "It's on the other side of the east palace," the servant replied. "What?!" Kiara exclaimed, frustration creeping into her voice. She had taken the wrong path, and every corridor felt like a maze. "Please, I need help." "Of course," the servant said, leading her. Kiara often found herself lost, but this was the first time she felt truly disoriented in a building. She sighed deeply, grateful for the assistance.

As they walked, Barto had paused in his tracks, his gaze fixed on a beautiful blonde girl nearby. Maya, noticing his distraction, opened her eyes wide. "What's wrong?" she asked, trying to understand the sudden change in her brother. "Kiara," he breathed, recognizing her instantly. "Is that the girl?" Maya asked, her curiosity piqued. Barto hesitated, remembering how he had kept his feelings for Kiara a secret. He had respected that privacy until now, but Maya had always been perceptive. "Yes," he finally admitted.

Kiara, meanwhile, felt a pang of betrayal as she spotted Barto with another girl in his arms. The sight twisted her heart, making her feel foolish for believing in their love. She tightened her grip on the book, wishing to be with her mother instead of feeling abandoned. "Barto!" she shouted, her voice laced with hurt. "Kiara!" he called back, desperation in his tone. "What?!" she snapped, her emotions boiling over. "She's my sister," Barto explained, gesturing toward the girl in his arms. Kiara looked down, taking in the young woman's dark hair and striking red eyes.

The resemblance was undeniable, yet doubts lingered in her mind. Maya watched the scene unfold, recalling how Barto had never mentioned his sister before. "You should take her to rest," she suggested, sensing the tension. "We can discuss this later." Barto nodded, feeling the weight of the situation. "I must take my sister to rest. We'll continue this conversation afterward," he said, moving past Kiara, who felt a mix of confusion and disappointment. As he walked away, Barto couldn't shake the feeling that everything had changed in an instant.

On the way, Cassian found himself lost in thought, contemplating what would happen next. He had waited like a fool, even though he knew she was there. He believed he had remained there, waiting for her, while she had not thought to follow. Without hesitation, he decided to pursue her in secret, trailing a few miles behind. Cassian had been informed that Maya was on her way to the palace. He ran like a madman, desperate to reach her. When he finally found her, he held Maya in his arms. She looked pale and weak, and the sight shattered his heart.

"Maya!" he exclaimed, his voice filled with concern as he noticed the pain etched on her face. Maya caught sight of Cassian approaching and felt a pang of regret for not being able to muster the strength to greet him properly. Before returning to the palace, she saw the anguish and helplessness reflected in his eyes, and it broke her heart. "I'm so sorry," she whispered, her voice barely above a breath. "You're not well," he replied, worry lacing his tone. "I'm fine. I just need to rest a bit," she insisted, trying to reassure him.

Barto, who had been nearby, stepped forward to ensure that Maya was alright. She playfully nudged him on the arm, though her intention had been to give him a stronger jab. "Just go, I'm fine," she said, forcing a smile. Barto hesitated, seeing that his sister was improving, but he still felt the urge to stay close. Cassian hurried to Maya's side, wrapping his arms around her waist to support her. "Are you okay?" he asked, his voice filled with urgency. Maya leaned in and pressed a gentle kiss to his cheek. "I'm fine, just don't look so worried." "You're very pale.

You should see Abril," he urged. "Have they returned? How were they?" she asked, her eyes wide with concern. "They returned yesterday and are well. Lissana has recovered," he replied, relief washing over him. Maya let out a sigh of relief. "That's good." Cassian noticed the unease still lingering in her expression and pressed further. "What happened to you?" "Just a bit of sickness from using the teleportation parchment. My stomach was churning, and that's why my brother had to carry me," she explained. "Are you lying to me?" he asked, searching her eyes for the truth. "No, this time I'm not.

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I felt better after resting," she reassured him. "I still think Abril will laugh at you," he said with a teasing smile. "I'd prefer to rest a little before I go see her. I feel like everyone is watching me," she admitted. "Alright," he said, holding her close as she settled against his shoulder. "Sorry for being such a burden," she murmured. "Don't say that. I'm here for you, through thick and thin, in health and in sickness, until..." Cassian's voice trailed off, the weight of his words hanging in the air. "Until death separates us," Maya finished, her heart heavy with the thought.

Cassian continued walking in silence, feeling that these words, once romantic, now felt like a curse. He could see the pain and sadness etched on her face. "When he dies, he dies with them," she said, her voice trembling. "With white hair and a hunched back, it's terrifying to even think about." "Are you sure you're alright?" he asked, concern deepening in his gaze. "No, but I won't give up," she replied, her determination shining through. Meanwhile, Kiara had followed Barto, but when she saw him running away, she hid, not wanting to be seen.

As he passed, she remained concealed, ensuring she wouldn't be discovered. From her hiding place, she could see the tension between him and Cassian, and she couldn't help but overhear their conversation. Once they were gone, Kiara heard Barto's voice behind her. "After what you've seen, do you believe me now?" Kiara jumped at his voice, startled but not entirely surprised. "Don't scare me like that!" she exclaimed. "Then don't act like it bothers you," he replied, though he didn't quite understand why he felt the need to push her. "Don't get too close."

You still think that girl from before is my sister, Maya?" she said, her tone defensive. The truth was undeniable; she felt something for him that she had never experienced before. Barto, noticing her avoidance of eye contact, gently took her face in his hands, forcing her to meet his gaze. "Why won't you look at me?" he demanded, frustration creeping into his voice. Kiara felt like a fool, staring into his deep, red eyes that sparkled like precious jewels. "Do you really think I don't love you?" she asked, her heart racing. The trance she had been in shattered, leaving her feeling exposed.

She loved him so much that she was willing to defy her mother for him. With a sudden burst of strength, she pushed him away. "Forget it! You're the only one who seems to have forgotten me," she snapped. Barto held her hand firmly, refusing to let go. "I haven't forgotten you. My feelings for you haven't changed. I'm still the same lover I was before, and my love for you only grows." Kiara turned to face him, her eyes locking onto his, understanding the depth of his words. They spoke of love and longing, of how much he had missed her. Barto released her hand to wrap his arms around her waist.

"Come back to me, Kiara. I'll return to you like a shadow," he whispered, caressing her skin with a tenderness that made her heart flutter. "Will this be a hardship?" she asked, her voice barely above a whisper. "Did you really think I cheated on you?" he replied, his tone earnest. "Every moment you weren't by my side," he confessed, his words soothing her initial disgust. Kiara ran her hand along his strong arms, feeling the warmth of his skin as she climbed up his spine, drawn to him. "I missed you too," she admitted softly.

Barto brushed a finger along her cheek, and with his other hand, he pulled her closer, closing the distance between them. "Can I kiss you?" he asked, his voice low and inviting.

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It was there, and the secret lovers were entwined in a moment of intimacy. Kiara cherished this side of Barto; he was chivalrous and sweet. "Yes," she murmured, her lips brushing against his. Barto paused, looking into her eyes. "I don't think you'll make me kiss you again." Kiara smiled, her heart racing. "Oh, I can imagine it because I feel the same way." They remained locked in an embrace for several minutes, sharing silence that spoke volumes. It felt as if everything they needed to say was conveyed in that hug.

Kiara could hear footsteps approaching, and she knew Barto was always attuned to her wishes, even if it meant keeping their relationship a secret. Kiara nodded, and Barto took her hand, leading her to the first empty room they found-untouched and private. "Don't you want to be with me?" he asked, concern lacing his voice. "I tried so hard, but nothing came of it," she replied, a hint of frustration in her tone. "I'm not here for that reason. I came because you

wanted asylum. You asked me to keep our relationship secret. You never told me otherwise; you said the opposite.

I just wanted to respect your wishes." Kiara hugged Barto tightly and whispered, "It's true, I've forgotten." "If it were up to me, I would tell everyone I know about us. I would show you off to the world. I would be proud to have conquered your heart." Kiara looked up, searching for the expression on his face. When their gazes met, her heart raced. She caressed his cheek, tracing her fingers over his lips. "I would scream to the world how much I love you," she said softly, "and how much I want to be with you." Barto leaned in and kissed her, their lips meeting in a tender embrace.

"Then why don't you?" he asked, pulling back slightly. "My mother doesn't accept relationships for different reasons. She sees it as an abomination. If she found out, she would do everything in her power to separate us forever." Kiara had repeated this to Barto countless times, but he still struggled to understand that their relationship would never be accepted. "So I always have to hide and wait for you?" she asked, her voice tinged with sadness. "You want me to wait in uncertainty, not knowing if you've forgotten me?" "Of course not! I'm working to change that.

My mother has that way of thinking, but I will make it so we can be together openly." "That's true," Kiara replied, her voice firm. "I love you, and I don't want to continue like this. I don't want to be your occasional lover; I want to be with you for the rest of my life, Barto." Those words felt like a proposal of marriage. "Do you want to marry me?" he asked, his eyes wide with surprise. "Yes," she replied, her heart swelling with joy. Barto took her hand and kissed it gently. "I want to see the marriage mark shining on you and in my heart.

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I want everyone to see that our union is real and forever." Kiara was overwhelmed with happiness. Barto's proposal was something she had never expected. In another time, it might have saddened her, but this moment felt different. She was closer to achieving her dream of her mother's acceptance. She kissed him again and said, "Yes, Barto, I want to be your wife. I want to carry the mark of our marriage and be united with you until death separates us." Barto was taken aback, taking a moment to digest her affirmative response. "You're serious?!" "Yes!

Did you think I would reject you?" Barto began kissing Kiara, showering her with sweet and tender kisses, until their lips met in a long kiss that left her breathless. "There were more chances of being rejected than accepted, which is why it's hard for me to believe you accepted my marriage proposal." Despite the joy flooding through him, a thought nagged at Barto's mind. What would Kiara's mother say about this marriage? "Will you tell your mother?" he asked. "Not yet, but I will soon.

I'll find a way to make her accept you." "And if she doesn't?" "Then I will abandon my position as princess and run away with you." "You've always said you couldn't abandon your duties." "Yes, but I am not the only princess of my kingdom. I have a cousin who has the same rights to the throne. If I disappear, the weight of the throne will fall on her." Barto began to

understand the gravity of her situation. Kiara was not just fighting for herself; she was also considering the future of her kingdom.

"This time, you didn't come to the human world alone for me, did you?" he asked, a hint of concern in his voice. Kiara smiled softly. "I'm preparing to be with you, and that's all you need to know." Meanwhile, Cassian had placed Maya on the bed. "I think it would be best if you read it in April," he suggested gently. Maya clung to Cassian's clothes, her voice barely a whisper. "Don't leave me." Cassian leaned back, cradling her close. Maya nestled against his chest, feeling safe. "How good it feels to be in your arms," she murmured.

"I believe I'm getting better." "Maya, you need to tell me if you're not feeling well. Hiding your pain only makes me worry more." "I'm seasick and tired, but apart from that, I'm fine. It's just a feeling." "Are you sick?" "No, when it gets bad, I lose my strength, and my body becomes so weak I can't even move a finger. But that's not the case right now; I just have waves of nausea." Cassian began to stroke her hair tenderly. "It's fine; I believe you. But if it doesn't improve, I'll ask Abril to come." "That sounds good to me." Cassian continued to stroke Maya's head until she fell asleep.

As he looked at her delicate, fragile face, his heart ached. She had always been strong and vibrant, and seeing her in this state broke his heart. There was nothing he could do to help her, but he would stay by her side. Useless, he thought. He felt completely helpless, unable to save the woman he loved. Maya slept for the rest of the day, waking only when the sun began to set, casting an orange glow through the room. As she opened her eyes, she saw Cassian sleeping beside her.

She caressed his face, marveling at how handsome he was, but it wasn't just his looks that had stolen her heart; it was his kindness, sweetness, courage, and love. "How much I love you, my prince," she whispered. "You should say sweeter words; they make me feel good, even if I'm a bit dizzy," he replied, half-asleep. "This is my way of showing my love," she said with a soft smile. "Do you feel better?" "Yes, the nausea is gone. I feel much better, but I'm very hungry." "Do you want something special?" "Apple pie," she said, her eyes lighting up.

"I don't think it's a good idea for you to eat something so sweet." "Please, I'm dying for a piece of cake. Don't deny me this."

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Cassian called one of the servants and asked for something light to eat, along with a slice of apple pie and some fresh water with lemon. The servant quickly returned with a plate of the pie and, after setting the food tray down, retreated. Maya looked at the apple pie, contemplating it for a moment before taking a bite. The sweet flavor mingled with the tartness of the apples, reminiscent of a tear rolling down her cheek, and it tasted delicious. "Are you feeling well, Maya?" Cassian asked, concern etched on his face. "Yes, I'm just happy to have lived to see this day."

This is delicious," she replied, her eyes brightening. "You scared me. I thought you were feeling unwell again," he said, relief washing over him. "There's no need to worry. I'm here now, and I've tried," Maya reassured him. Cassian chuckled softly. "I'm glad to hear that." Maya devoured the pie with enthusiasm, while Cassian remained calm, watching her with a hint of worry. "You should

eat some soup instead; you shouldn't just eat sweets," he suggested gently. Maya, however, had little appetite. She stirred the soup absentmindedly, pushing it around in the bowl.

"I don't feel like it," she admitted. Cassian took a sip of his own soup and urged her, "Come on, just eat a little." As the aroma of the soup wafted toward her, Maya felt a wave of nausea wash over her. "I think I need some air," she said, pushing the bowl away. Immediately, Cassian called for one of the attendants to bring Maya a glass of fresh water with lemon. "I should look for Abril," he mused, realizing he might have misunderstood the situation. Maya got up from the bed, stretching slightly, and extended her hand toward Cassian. "Come on, Loredana," she said.

Cassian would have preferred for Maya to rest, but he knew she was right. "It would be boring to stay here alone," he replied, knowing that if he left her, she would be fine. As they stepped outside, they found Alessandro, who seemed to be searching for something. "I've been looking for you everywhere," he said, his brow furrowed. "Is something wrong, Lessan?" Cassian asked, concern creeping into his voice. "I discovered something about our mother and the elven kingdom," Alessandro replied, his tone serious. "What do you mean?" Cassian pressed, intrigued.

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"Our mother wasn't just anyone," Alessandro continued, rummaging through his office. Cassian felt a knot of anxiety form in his stomach. "What did you find out?" he asked, trying to keep his voice steady. "I'm looking for the accounts she wrote. They might hold the answers we need," Alessandro said, his eyes scanning the shelves. "Did you find anything?" Cassian inquired, his curiosity piqued. Alessandro shook his head, frustration evident. "Not yet, but I will. I need to know what she was involved in." Cassian felt a mix of confusion and urgency.

"What does this mean for us?" Alessandro finally pulled out a book, flipping through its pages. "Apparently, we are part of an ancient lineage of guardians. We have the ability to close the doors of Hades." "But Hades is closed, and the threat that existed in Laios has been contained," Cassian argued, trying to wrap his mind around the implications. "The doors will open again, and there's nothing we can do to stop it," Alessandro replied, his voice grave. Cassian fell silent, trying to digest the weight of Alessandro's words. "I saw her..."

she told me that in the palace is hidden a room that leads to the guardians," he said, recalling a vision. "What do you mean, a room for the guardians?" Cassian asked, bewildered. "It's a place where we can communicate with any guardian who has passed away. We could see our mother and our siblings again," Alessandro explained. "Where is this room?" Cassian pressed, eager for answers. "I don't know. She never told me, but I believe it's mentioned in this book," Alessandro said, determined to find the truth.

"Why don't you just tell me what it is?" Cassian asked, frustration creeping into his voice. "Just let me search," Alessandro replied, diving back into the pages. After a moment, he looked up. "This story... it mentions a door that connects to a dwelling where we can find portraits of all guardians. It seems this place connects the spiritual world." Cassian's mind raced as he recalled a story about a boy who traversed the spiritual realm through a hidden journey. "Could this be it? The tale of

Valor?" he wondered aloud. Alessandro nodded, remembering their mother mentioning a secret passage.

"It must be this one, but we need to find it." "Are you sure it's real? I never thought I could actually open it," Cassian said, uncertainty clouding his thoughts. Alessandro continued searching, a silent question lingering in the air. "How did you know about it?" he asked. "When I was born, I heard these stories. I always imagined the characters in the book were in places just like this," Cassian explained, his voice filled with conviction. "Should we go check if this is the place?" "Wait, before we do that, explain to me what this is about the guardians.

I feel like I'm missing something," Cassian urged. "We are like the leaders of the clans, and each clan looks to us for guidance. We possess a special power; we are the only ones who can close the doors of Hades once they are opened," Alessandro clarified. "Wait, what do you mean we're the leaders?" Cassian asked, disbelief coloring his tone.

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Cassian stood before the hidden passage, a sense of urgency coursing through him. "Of all the clans that are in our debt, who will obey?" he asked, his brow furrowing in thought. "The fairies, the elves, the humans, and the wizards," came the reply. "The fairies have sworn obedience," Cassian noted, a spark of hope igniting within him. If the fairies were to surrender their loyalty to the guardians, they could not refuse to help him find a way to free Maya from their grasp. "Then they must decide how to release Maya," he continued, his voice steady. "Release her?

What do you mean?" "Maya is suffering from having left the land of the fairies. Her vital energy seems to be fading. Soon, if she doesn't return, she will perish." "Isn't there anything you can do?" Cassian's voice was laced with desperation. "I've tried. My magic can only alleviate her symptoms, no matter how much I wish it could do more." "Why didn't you tell me this sooner, Cassian?" "I didn't want to worry you, especially after Lissana had disappeared." "That explains why you looked so troubled. You should have told me.

It's the things you keep to yourself that worry me the most." "Well, now I have more hope of not losing Maya," Cassian said, a determined glint in his eyes. "We mustn't waste any more time. Let's find this door." --- When Maya met Abril, she rushed forward and enveloped her in a warm embrace. "I'm so glad everything turned out well and that you were able to recover your health." "I'm happy to see you too, Maya, even if you look a bit pale," Abril replied, concern etched on her face. "I went to visit my family.

I used teleportation parchment to go and come back, but it took a toll on my body." "I understand how you feel. I felt terrible the first time I used it," Abril said, placing her hand over Maya's, infusing her with a gentle warmth. "Thank you," Maya whispered, her voice barely above a murmur. "We discovered something intriguing among the elves. I believe it can help you," Abril continued, her eyes brightening with the revelation. "What is it?" Cassian asked, leaning in closer.

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"I still don't fully understand it, but all clans are obliged to obey the guardians, including the fairies." "What?!" "You don't need to ask Laxeina for help. Cassian can compel her," Abril explained. "Yes, but I didn't have to convince the elf to help me," Cassian interjected, his tone defensive. "That's why you're prepared to go," Abril said, her voice steady. "We are willing to fight to recover Lissana in the end if necessary." A smile spread across Maya's face. "You can take her to the land of the fairies and recover her." "Wait," Abril interrupted.

"Let's hear what Cassian has to say first." Abril sat beside Cassian, inviting Maya to join them. "Tell me, how have you been?" "To be honest, not very well," Maya admitted, her eyes downcast. "Is it still weakening you?" Abril asked, concern deepening in her voice. "Yes, but I still feel I should try to recover without fear." "When you return to the fairy realm, I would like you to do me a favor," Cassian said, his tone serious. "What do you want?"

I owe you so much." "It's selfish, but I need you to take Lissana with you and look after her." "You want to send her to the land of the fairies now?" Maya's eyes widened in disbelief. "It's not what you think, Maya. I don't want to be separated from Lissana. I would never want that." "Then why send her to the land of the fairies?" Maya pressed. "Lissana possesses great power, too much for her small body. She must grow quickly, and this is the only opportunity for her to survive." "Is Lissana smiling?" Abril asked, her heart aching for the child.

"You risk losing control and dying if she doesn't grow quickly enough to manage her power," Cassian explained. "Time passes differently in the fairy realm, and if you don't see her grow, it could be disastrous." "I'm sure that's why you care for her," Abril said, a bittersweet smile gracing her lips. "I asked you, can you deny yourself if you truly want her to thrive?" Cassian's voice was firm. "How much longer does Lissana have to grow?" Maya asked, her voice trembling. "I can't say," Cassian replied, his expression grave. Maya sighed heavily.

"It's a grave mistake to keep her away." "Thank you," Cassian said, his voice softening. "The land of the fairies may seem beautiful, but I don't believe it's the best place for her to grow," Abril cautioned. "I know, but if she doesn't go to the land of the fairies, she won't grow," Maya insisted, determination shining in her eyes. Abril caressed Maya's hands gently. "I prefer to always choose the path that leads to safety." "Before sending her, you must speak to the queen of the fairies. She doesn't take kindly to foreigners in her lands," Cassian warned.

"Lissana is bound to her priest and must connect with the guardian of their realm. They are obligated to help her," Abril added. "I suppose you've thought this through," Cassian said, a hint of admiration in his voice. "If my time with Lissana is short, I can lose her by refusing to let her go," Maya replied, her heart heavy with the weight of her decision. Cassian led Alessandro to the place described in the book. Before them stood a gray wall adorned with the drawing of a curved door. Alessandro fixed his gaze on it, curiosity piqued. "How do we open it?" he asked.

Cassian approached the wall, determination in his stride. "I will try to open it. There must be a way." "In the book, how did the passage open?" Alessandro inquired. "It doesn't mention it, so we need to find a way to unlock it," Cassian replied, scanning the letters etched into the drawing. Alessandro noticed hidden letters behind the door. "It's true." "Why didn't I see it before?" Cassian murmured, piecing together the letters until their meaning became clear. He recalled the story his mother had told him, the name she had given to the guardians.

"I believe it means 'guardian,'" he said, a sense of purpose igniting within him.