

# Forgotten Wife : Let the Traitors Kneel Down Novel

## Chapter 461-470

Lissana met with Tarik before he left, but their farewell was more than just a moment; it was a simple meeting of brothers. Tarik had been dragged away by the wolves, but he paused to say one last thing before departing. "Fulfill my promise, Lissana," he urged. A promise known only to her, a declaration that resonated deeply. Those were the last words Tarik spoke before he vanished from her sight. The camp, once bustling with life, began to empty as many of the troops abandoned their posts. As Lissana stood there, Abril approached her, placing a hand on her shoulder to draw her attention.

"It's our brother's shift," Abril said gently. "Yes," Lissana replied, her gaze drifting away from the battlefield that had once been a scene of chaos. The arena seemed to have been swallowed by the remnants of battle, now eerily peaceful and calm. For a fleeting moment, Lissana wished that the conflict had been nothing more than a bad dream. But deep down, she knew that no matter how much she wished for it, reality would not change. The war had taken a heavy toll, and she had lost many, including her priest. Lissana took her mother's hand, and they used a teleportation parchment.

In an instant, the camp and the mountains of Vaizel faded behind them. \*\*\* Most of the army had abandoned the camp, leaving behind the remnants of the kingdom of Xurt and the kingdom of Valer. Elisha decided to visit Enzo at his shop that night. "Can I come in?" she asked softly. "Of course," he replied, gesturing for her to enter. Elisha settled onto Enzo's bed, her expression earnest. "Do you need anything?" "Honestly, I just wanted to see you. Do you want me to leave?" he asked, concern lacing his voice. "No, I don't want you to go," he said, sitting beside her and taking her hand.

Elisha leaned against him, seeking comfort. "When will you leave?" "Do you want to destroy me?" he teased lightly. "No, that's the last thing I desire. But I know you can't stay here for long." "I haven't decided yet," he admitted. "Don't keep delaying. I should be preparing to return to the kingdom." "That's true," he conceded, his voice softening. "I like seeing you again." Elisha leaned in, pressing a gentle kiss to his lips. "Our time has ended. Even though it was brief, I will cherish it." "It doesn't have to end this way," he protested.

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"If you hadn't left and I hadn't left, maybe it wouldn't have to end at all. But we both have heavy burdens to bear, and we can't abandon them. So this is goodbye, even if it's hard." Elisha drew closer, whispering against his lips, "Don't you believe that?" Enzo understood perfectly what she meant, yet he couldn't give her what she wanted. If he did, she would never truly leave him. He caressed her cheek, his voice thick with emotion. "If we did that, we wouldn't be able to part." "I knew you would say that, but I had to try."

I really wish it could be different." "I don't want to be alone, Elisha. I want you to be the one." "But this isn't possible for us," she replied, sadness creeping into her tone. Elisha gave him one last kiss before standing. "I'll be gone tomorrow. You should do the same." "Elisha..." he began, but she was already moving toward the exit. "This is our farewell. Goodbye, King Enzo." He wanted to chase after her, but he felt powerless, so he sank onto his bed, wondering if he would ever see her again and if he could ever forget her.

As Enzo lost himself in thought, Cira entered the shop, her expression serious. "What are you thinking about?" she asked. "What's happening here, Cira?" he replied, startled. "I'm here to talk to you," she said, her tone firm. "What do you want to discuss?" "The war is over, though many things remain unresolved. I don't expect you to forgive me, but I would appreciate it if you allowed me to return home." Enzo regarded her with suspicion. "I don't plan to break the throne. That's not what I want." "Is that what you want?" she pressed.

"To be with the man I love and build a family by his side," she admitted. "How can I trust that what you're saying is true and not just another lie to take the throne from me?" "I can swear an oath if you wish. You can seal my magic here, but I just want to go back home with the man I love." "Are you really willing to give up all your power to be with Hans?" he asked incredulously. "Yes, because I believe it's worth it." "Fine. I will allow you to return, but you will not be treated like a princess, and you will not have power." "That seems fair.

After all, I don't need to wonder if you trust me. You'd be a fool if you did," Cira said, heading toward the exit. "Tomorrow, we leave. Tell Hans to organize the soldiers and prepare everything for our departure." "Yes," she replied, her voice subdued. Cira hesitated at the door, turning back to him. "Enzo, thank you for allowing me to come back. You won't regret the opportunity you're giving me." "That's what I hope, because there won't be a next time.

I want you to understand that." "I do, and that's why I will do everything in my power not to disappoint you." "You don't have to try to please me," he said, a hint of warmth in his voice. "I am, but you're my family, and I don't want to break that bond. If possible, I'd like for us to come together again, like normal siblings." "Do you think we can still do that?" he asked, a flicker of hope in his eyes. "We are still alive. I believe we can, if that's what you want." "I suppose we can try," he replied, a small smile breaking through the tension.

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The power of children Maya traveled tirelessly, eager to reach her destination faster than she could. She longed to be with her wife, who must have been very anxious, left alone in a place where she felt out of place, surrounded by strangers. Using a teleportation scroll, Maya arrived at the royal capital, only to be met with a shocking sight. The city lay in ruins, half-destroyed as if it had been attacked during her absence. Pain surged through her as she recognized the familiar power of her wife, unleashed in that devastated place.

Maya urged her mount to go faster, desperate to reach the royal palace. Upon arriving, she called out for her daughter, her voice filled with urgency. "Uzziel!" She repeated the name until Uzziel finally appeared. Maya scrutinized her daughter, searching for any signs of injury or distress. When she realized Uzziel bore no marks of inheritance, relief washed over her.

She enveloped her daughter in a tight embrace. "I saw the disaster unfolding in the city. I feared something terrible had happened to you." "I'm fine, Mommy.

I protected the city just like I promised, even if it took a little longer than expected." "What happened?" Maya asked, her heart racing. Gabriel stepped forward to answer. "Monsters attacked us, but thanks to Uzziel, we are safe. She saved us." "I thought all the monsters would be on the battlefield." "A woman led them. She seemed to know there was no one to defend the city; she wanted to destroy it." "Where is that woman now?" "She's a prisoner in the dungeons." "If I manage to break the barrier that protected the city, I should be strong.

Why hasn't she escaped?" "I immobilized her," Uzziel replied, pride evident in her voice. "Take me to her." Maya's expression darkened, and Uzziel looked at her with concern. "Mom, you always told me not to use my powers because I can't control them properly. But I just wanted to protect the kingdom. I hope you're not upset because I disobeyed." Maya gently caressed her daughter's head and replied, "No, my dear, I'm not upset with you. I'm just frustrated with myself. You did what you had to do." "Did I do well?" "Yes, my little one, you did wonderfully.

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I'm so proud of you." Maya turned to Gabriel. "Take me to the prisoner." "Yes, my lady." Gabriel led Maya to the dungeon where the prisoner was confined. The woman's body was bound, only her face visible. Maya recognized her as Liona, a member of the dark king's army. "I heard that part of the dark king's army had escaped. I never imagined they would attack Cosset," Maya said, her voice steady. Liona remained silent. "My son is the most important thing to me, and you monsters put him in danger." "In danger? That child is a damned monster, not so different from what I am," Liona retorted.

Maya responded, breaking the silence. She drew a dagger from her waist and approached Liona, plunging it into her left arm. Liona let out a cry of pain; it was a dagger blessed with the magic of light. "You should know better than to call my son a monster. He is no such thing and will never be like you. His power is a gift, while you are merely an illusion, destined to fade away and return to the pathetic human you were." "Escape from this place? I'll kill you and your damned girl," Liona hissed. Maya pressed the dagger into Liona's right leg, her voice calm yet lethal.

"Then I should kill you right now. I won't let a pest like you live." She twisted the dagger in Liona's left leg, and the woman's cries intensified. "You know, I considered keeping you alive until Abril returned to decide your fate, but I believe it's best to rid myself of you now." Maya raised her hand high, aiming at Liona's cell. Liona's eyes widened in horror as she realized her impending doom. "Wait!" Liona shouted. "What do you want me to wait for? For you to escape and attack my family? I am not merciful.

I was taught that heavy burdens must be cut out at the root, or they will continue to fester, ruining what I hold dear." Maya might have fallen into the trap of that woman, but she remained resolute until she uttered her final words, ensuring Liona's demise. "Spend another day in the dungeon and reflect on your heart. After you turn to ashes, I don't want any more

surprises." "Yes, my lady." Maya returned to her child, who had fallen to the foot of the stairs, waiting for her return. Maya smiled sweetly upon seeing Uzziel. "Are you hungry?

"I'm starving." "Are you all right?" "Yes, my child, everything is fine." "Will Father be back soon?" "Maybe in two days." "Will you come with him?" "Yes." "Is that really all? Is it over?" "That's it. It's all over now. We can finally have a happy and peaceful life." "Is it real?" "Yes, we don't have to hide anymore." "Will we never go back to the land of the fairies?" "Not for now. Maybe one day, but for now, we will settle here, in our true home."

There are so many things I want to show you, so many people I want you to meet." "I want to know and love what you love, Mom." Maya caressed Uzziel's soft hair. "And so it shall be. We have all the time in the world to do it." \*\*\* Abril and the others arrived just as Maya had predicted. Seeing the Middle Kingdom in ruins, confusion spread among the soldiers. Cassian left his men and hurried to Abril's side. "Aby." "What happened here?" Sirius appeared beside them. "The barrier that protected the city has been destroyed." "What?!" Cassian exclaimed.

"All the kingdoms were fighting against the dark king's army. I don't believe there's another human kingdom left unscathed." Abril dismounted from her horse and rushed toward the palace. Maya was waiting for them at the doors. "Maya! Are you all right?" "I'm fine. What happened in the city? Is it destroyed?" Uzziel stood shyly behind her mother and answered Abril's question. "I think this is my fault. I didn't mean to destroy the city; I just wanted to protect it from the monsters." "Monsters?" Abril echoed, surprised.

Maya explained everything that had transpired, and Abril listened in shock. She learned that Uzziel had single-handedly held off a large number of monsters. Lissana was exceptional; her power was immense, flowing through her veins with elfin blood and the blood of guardians. Uzziel was no different. Both girls were considered prohibited children, possessing great power capable of saving the world-or destroying it if they chose.

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Abril was exhausted after a long day, having ensured that everything was in order before finally allowing herself to rest. Lissana accompanied her, not wanting to be alone with her mother. After some fussing, Abril lay back on her bed, her damp hair clinging to her forehead. Lissana settled beside her, using her magic to dry Abril's hair. "Thank you for staying by my side," Abril murmured, caressing her daughter's cheek. Lissana hugged her mother tightly. "You know you can count on me for anything you need." "Really?" Abril asked, her eyes softening.

"Yes, really." Abril gazed at Lissana for a moment, then closed her eyes, surrendering to a deep sleep. All the exhaustion she had accumulated seemed to wash over her like a wave. The next day, Lissana woke up around midday, while Abril continued to sleep soundly. Not wanting to disturb her, Lissana quietly left the room. As she made her way to the dining hall, Lissana encountered her uncle Cassian in the courtyard. "Good morning, Lissana. How are you?" he asked. "I slept deeply. I didn't want to wake her," she replied. "She must be exhausted. Even if you tried, it would be hard to rouse her."

"When her magic runs out, she'll sleep for days," Cassian said, a shadow of concern flickering in his eyes. "Don't worry; she'll be fine. She just needs rest." "I hope so," Lissana said, her voice tinged with worry. "I was going to visit the guardians' room. Your priest's spirit should be there. Do you want to come with me?" Lissana hesitated. She wanted to ask her priest why he had sacrificed himself, but confronting his spirit felt like accepting that he was truly gone. "Don't you want to see your priest?" Cassian prompted gently.

"I do want to see him, it's just..." "What's going on, Lissana?" "I feel that talking to his spirit means accepting that he is dead." "He will return, I'm sure of it. If you don't want to come, I won't force you. I'm sure your father would understand." "Is that true? Do you really believe that?" "Yes, and if you change your mind, I can take you whenever you want." Lissana fell silent for a few moments before finally asking, "Can you ask Papa why this happened?" "Are you talking about his death?" Cassian inquired. Lissana nodded.

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"If you want, I can ask, but I believe he did it for a reason." "Why?!" "Because he knew you wouldn't attack while he was in the middle of it." "How could I do that? He was my priest." "That's why I say it, so you don't have to choose between saving him or the world." "I hate everything. I hate that I couldn't save him," Lissana said, tears welling in her eyes. "I understand what you're going through. I felt the same way when I couldn't help my brothers. This kind of pain can only heal with time." Cassian placed a comforting hand on Lissana's shoulder.

"There are things you might never forget, but remember that you are not alone. You have your family to help you through this." "Thank you, Uncle Cassian, for understanding me." "You've felt like you're growing up too fast and losing too much. But now it's over. We're home, and it's time for you to live your life, Lissana." "I'll try." "I must go see your priest. I'll see you later." Cassian headed to the guardians' room, and upon crossing the threshold, he encountered his brother. "How is everything?" Cassian asked. "Sad because you're not here," Alessandro replied.

"I know." "Cassiel took your body to the village of the guardians. He doesn't know when you can return." "I didn't expect it to be ready." "Lissana is very upset about what you did and blames herself." "That was never my intention. I wish I could apologize to her." "You'll have to wait until you return to do that. If you refuse to see her as a spirit..." "I suppose I deserve it." "How is Abril?" "She's more affected than anyone.

She tries not to show it, but she has a kingdom to rule and a daughter to care for." "You're placing too much on Abril." "Yes, it's too heavy a burden for her, but she remains strong. You can help them when you return." "I would have done it without being asked." "Thanks, brother." "Just know, that's what brothers are for. You can always count on me." Cassian spent a long time talking with Alessandro in the guardians' room, sharing everything that had happened since his death. Finally, he said goodbye, feeling the weight of his brother's absence.

The world outside continued to move, and he knew he had to stay strong. As Cassian headed for the door, Alessandro called out to him. "Cassian." "What is it?" "Tell Abril to forgive me for leaving her with all of this." "I will." "And tell her that no matter how long it takes, I will return to

be by her side." Cassian nodded solemnly and left. When he exited the guardians' room, the sun was setting, casting a warm glow over the courtyard. He sought out Abril, but she was still asleep. He could only deliver his brother's message to Lissana. Abril finally woke up three days later.

It was on the fourth day that Cassian was able to convey his brother's message. After hearing his words, Abril felt a deep sense of loneliness. At that moment, she didn't want to see anyone. Alessandro had promised he would return, but doubts gnawed at her. Would she ever see him again? That night, as she slept, answers to her questions came to her in a dream. She found herself lying in bed with Alessandro, feeling blissfully happy because her beloved was with her.

She intertwined her fingers with his and felt the familiar warmth of their bond, the mark of their marriage glowing brightly once more, as if the broken union had been restored. "I'm so grateful you waited for me," Alessandro whispered. Abril nestled closer, the dream so vivid that when she awoke, she instinctively reached for him, only to find the space beside her empty. Yet deep down, she knew that one day he would return, and they would be whole again.

From that day forward, she focused on her responsibilities as queen and cherished her time with Lissana, determined to have everything in order for his eventual return.

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\*\*Yearning for the Past\*\* A month had passed since Abril last heard from Cassiel. A persistent sweat clung to her brow, a reminder of her longing to be with Alessandro. Yet, the visions that haunted her were not of joyful reunions but of scenes that could stretch on for years, even decades, before resolution came. This uncertainty gnawed at her. She sat in Alessandro's workshop, wondering when news from Cassiel would arrive. Just then, Lissana burst through the door, her irritation palpable. "What's wrong, Lissana?" Abril asked, rising from her seat to approach her daughter.

"I don't want to take any more dance classes. They're boring!" Lissana exclaimed, crossing her arms defiantly. "Why not?" Abril inquired, curiosity piqued. "The dances here are all rules and perfect coordination. You have to watch your posture and speak politely. It's horrible!" "It might be a bit difficult at first, but once you learn—" "I don't want to learn them! Dances are supposed to be fun! They should be free and expressive!" Lissana loved to dance; in the lower halls, dancing was an expression of pure joy, where everyone participated regardless of their status.

But the rigidness of the court dances felt stifling to her. "Lissana, I know it's challenging, but you've grown up in a world where things are different. Now you're in the human realm, and you must learn to adapt." "I'm trying, but it's harder than I thought. Sometimes I feel like I don't belong here." "Don't say that, my dear. This is your home." "I know, but it doesn't feel that way." "You just need time to get to know the people here, to love this kingdom as your father and I do." "Do you know anything about Daddy?" "No, but I'm sure he'll return.

Don't you want to visit him when he does?" "I don't feel ready yet." "He'll be here when you return. You can see him whenever you feel prepared." "Okay." Time passed swiftly, yet Lissana still felt out of place. She hesitated to voice her feelings, not wanting to burden her

mother with her sadness. When Lissana turned fifteen, a grand banquet and ball were held in her honor. Everyone wore smiles and sweet words, hoping to win the favor of the princess heir. But Lissana merely greeted them with curt nods, sensing their insincerity.

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Once she was alone with Abril, she sighed, "More than a ball, this feels like a battlefield where everyone is waiting for me to let my guard down so they can pounce, like a pack of hungry wolves." "Lissana..." Abril began, but her daughter interrupted. "What? It's the truth, and you know it." "You need to be careful with your thoughts. You can't say everything you think." "I know, but it's not easy for me." As the dance was announced, Abril should have opened it, but she had left Lissana alone with Uzziel. Lissana had no desire to dance with any man who wasn't her betrothed.

Besides, there were rumors swirling about the king's death-something Abril had tried to keep hidden, fearing it would bring back painful memories. As Lissana stepped onto the dance floor, Maya and Cassian approached Abril, taking their seats beside the throne. "How is everything?" Maya asked. Abril let out a long sigh. "I suppose it's better than I expected." "Lissana will have her first dance; we should go." When the music stopped, Lissana and Uzziel began to dance. "What's wrong?" Uzziel asked as they twirled. "Doesn't it bother you to dance like this?" "Not really.

I prefer these dances; they're more enjoyable. This is our home, and we must learn to accommodate each other." Uzziel was smaller than Lissana, yet he seemed determined to make this place his home, something she hadn't fully accepted yet. When the song ended, Uzziel smiled and said, "Happy birthday, Lissana." "Thank you," she replied, a smile breaking through her earlier gloom. "Do you want to keep dancing?" "No, you know I don't like these dances. Besides, there are many noble ladies who would love to dance with you." Uzziel was charming, and she could sense the attention he drew.

But she wasn't interested in that kind of attention, so she brushed it off. "Honestly, I'd rather go eat sweets before my mother finds me." Uzziel left, and Lissana returned to her mother, who congratulated her on the dance. Many young nobles approached her afterward, asking for a dance, but she turned them all down. When the opportunity slipped away, she slipped out of the ballroom. She wandered into the garden, where she had once stood at the entrance to the fairy realm. She gazed at the tree, wishing she could return to that dreamlike place where she had grown up and lived for so long.

Lissana wondered if anyone would ever call her back to that kingdom, to her true home, if she would ever have the chance to visit the land of the fairies and Tarik again. Initially, they had kept in touch, but a few months after the war, the portal had closed completely, severing all communication. Only memories of what they had shared remained, along with the promise that he had made-to wait for her, no matter how long it took. That night, Lissana returned to the ballroom, lingering in the garden until the music faded away.

When she returned to her room, she found Abril waiting for her, expecting to see her daughter glowing from the festivities. Instead, she wrapped Lissana in a gentle hug and spoke softly, "I feel like my little girl is growing up." "Why are you apologizing, Mom?" Lissana asked,

confused. "I shouldn't have organized this dance if you hate them." "It's not that I hate them... I just can't get used to them. The rules feel like they rob me of my freedom." "There are many rules, Lissana. We can decide to change some and create new ones.

I would love for you to help me with this, if you want." "Are you serious?" Lissana's eyes widened. "I'm sure if your father were here, he would say the same thing. He changed everything to prepare you for being a princess, and he would do it as many times as necessary to make this kingdom a place we can truly call home." Lissana hugged her mother tightly, emotion swelling in her chest. "Thank you, Mama."

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Two years later, Abril sat at a meeting with the high nobles, who were insistent on knowing the king's whereabouts. "If you tell them, you're on a mission," one noble cautioned. "I've told you for three years," another noble interjected. "We've seen His Majesty only once. Many people are starting to rumor that the king died during the battle against the dark forces, and that he is hiding away." Cassian leapt to his feet. "Since when do rumors equate to reality?" "If we could see His Majesty the King, all these rumors would cease. But all we hear is that he is on a mission.

What could possibly be so important that a king would abandon his kingdom?" "Duke Cardón!" Abril's voice cut through the murmurs, and all the nobles turned their attention to her, sensing her fury. "I understand your doubts, but I believe it has been demonstrated that I am someone worthy of trust. My husband may not be here, but I am in charge, just as he asked me to be. So, I expect you to respect that." "It was never our intention to offend His Majesty," one noble replied. "It's just that a kingdom also needs a king.

We are all worried for His Majesty." "There is no reason for you to be worried. My husband is well and will return soon. I don't want to hear any more of this. I doubt he will enjoy these dizzy spells when he returns." Abril rose from her seat, her voice firm. "I have more urgent matters to attend to. If there is nothing of importance to decide, this meeting is adjourned." As she left the room, Cassian hurried after her. "Abril, before you said that Alessandro would be back soon.

Did Cassiel say anything?" "No, that fool hasn't returned, and with the land of the fairies closed off, it will be impossible to see him until he chooses to appear." "You seemed so confident before; that's why I thought..." He hesitated, unsure of how to finish. "I've been dreaming about Alessandro, about his return. I believe he will come back soon." Cassian knew that some of Abril's dreams were prophetic, glimpses of the future, but he wondered if this was one of those visions or merely her deep desire to see Alessandro again. She could see the incredulity on his face.

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"I'm not the only one who wants him back. I'm sure these are prophetic dreams; we just need to distinguish them." "That's the only thing I can't believe. I don't understand why Cassiel hasn't returned and is hiding in the land of the fairies, leaving us in the dark." "I don't understand it either, but I trust what I've seen. If it's true, he will return." "I hope that's the

case. I believe we can't hide for much longer from your death." "Lissana has many years ahead of her.

Many nobles are eager to join the royal family through marriage alliances, but I won't allow that to happen." "And knowing Lissana, she would destroy the kingdom if it meant being used by those nobles." "I won't let that happen. I will never force my daughter into marriage; I want her to be free to choose." "But what if she doesn't like the person she chooses?" "Are you talking about Tarik?" "Lissana doesn't seem to have forgotten about him.

Every day, she goes to the garden where the entrance to the land of the fairies is located." "Don't oppose me if he's the one she chooses, but I hope it doesn't come to that. If it does, she would be choosing a thorny path. You know that better than anyone." \*\*\* In the garden, Lissana stood waiting when Uzziel approached her. "You should stop waiting. If Tarik hasn't communicated with you during all this time, it's because he has forgotten about you." Lissana turned away, and Uzziel followed. "Time flows differently in the land of the fairies.

For us, it's only been a few years, but for him, it must have been decades. He likely has a family by now." "You don't really believe that." "If you know, why do you continue to come to this garden every day?" "That's something I'd like to know as well." "Are you still extracting earth from the fairies?" Lissana didn't respond to Uzziel's question about what had happened to Tarik, knowing her silence only worried him more. "Don't you have anything better to do than follow me?" "I'm working on my training with my mother.

After the disaster when they attacked the capital, my mother won't give me a moment's rest; her training grows stricter every day. At this rate, I might end up dead." "Aunt Maya knows you can handle it; she would never do anything that could harm you." "My father says otherwise. No one should have to endure his infernal training." "Stop running away all the time. With this attitude, you'll only make Aunt Maya increase your training hours." Uzziel was still speaking when Lionel Cardón, Duke Cardón's son, approached them. "Good morning, Princess Lissana, Prince Uzziel." "Good morning.

What brings you here, Sir Lionel?" Lissana asked, trying to keep her distance. "I came to accompany my father. I had a meeting, and if I rushed through the last dance, I wanted to see it." Lionel was a year older than Lissana, tall and handsome with dark ruby hair and hazel eyes. Among the eligible bachelors, he and Uzziel stood out the most, but Lissana had no interest in him, which was why she tried to maintain her distance. "That's why I didn't find myself feeling very well." "Is it better now?" "Yes, although I'd prefer to rest.

The weather has turned cold again, and I wouldn't want to relapse. So, until next time, Sir Lionel." Uzziel bid farewell to Lionel and followed Lissana, remaining close enough to speak without being overheard. "Why do you keep rejecting him?" "I have someone in my heart. I don't want Sir Lionel to have any illusions. I don't think I can ever see him the same way again."

believe you could help bring back the priest of Lissana." "I'm considering it, but I don't think this is the right moment." "Lissana must be suffering. You couldn't go and come back quickly." "Time isn't flowing correctly here. Until Leriana settles down, I can't leave." Tarik was growing increasingly frustrated. The queen had never been weak; she didn't need protection.

As far back as he could remember, Tarik had never seen the queen unwell. He wondered what kind of illness could have weakened her so drastically. They had become completely isolated from the rest of the world. No one could enter, and they could not leave. It was a mystery to everyone that there was a queen inside, yet no one knew what was happening. Cassiel seemed to be the only one who understood, but no matter how much he insisted, he didn't appear willing to share. Tarik hated not knowing how much time had passed in the human kingdom.

He despised the uncertainty of when he might see Lissana again. Cassiel entered the room where Leriana lay on a bed of flowers. He approached her and took her hand. "How are you?" he asked softly. "I'm fine," she replied. Cassiel caressed Leriana's swollen belly and shoulder. "And our baby?" "He's fine for now." Cassiel had discovered a way to have a child with Leriana, but it consumed much of his magical power, causing instability in the fairy realm, even though it was connected to her.

Leriana could see the worry etched on Cassiel's face and understood what he was thinking even if he didn't voice it. "I'll be fine, and our baby will be too. That's what matters," she reassured him. "I can't help but feel scared. I don't want to lose you." "In the farm, I have plenty of magical power. I'll be okay." "Let's agree that you're fine. If you're not, you'll be the one who reigns while the baby feeds off you. Sometimes, when your eyes close, I fear you won't wake up again. I've been selfish; I shouldn't have—" "I'm not the one who decided this alone.

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I was the one who said it was fine. I'm just as invested in this as you are, especially now that I'm sick." "I feel like I'm just worrying you in the end." "As soon as that expression changes, everything will be fine." Cassiel fell back beside Leriana, feeling like a defeated rat. When he left, Leriana summoned one of her servants to call Tarik. He was surprised to be summoned by the queen after such a long time. Upon entering the room, he was taken aback to see her belly swollen. "Now I understand why this guy doesn't seem willing to leave," he murmured.

"Come closer, Tarik," Leriana beckoned. Tarik approached the flower bed where the queen lay. "I suppose you won't be his successor now that you'll soon have your wife." "You're mistaken, Tarik. I'm not sending you to Ilamara because I think you'll be replaced. Rather, I want you to assume the role of king." "What?!" "You know that the land of the fairies is linked to its king. In my condition, I can't maintain that connection. That's why I want you to become the new king of the fairies." "I don't think I'm ready to be king!" "Tarik, if I could give you anything, I would.

I'm afraid I'll have to leave you to care for this kingdom. But if you can manage it, you won't be alone. You'll have my support at all times, just like your priest." Tarik couldn't help but feel doubt. He knew that once he became king, leaving the land of the fairies would be impossible,

and the chances of seeing Lissana again would vanish. "Tarik, you can think about it. I just want you to understand why I'm making this decision. I'm weak, and my baby is consuming my magic.

The land and the seasons have been affected; I'm fading without time, just like this kingdom." "Lissana has great healing power. If she comes, I'll be safe. How can I help her until the baby is born?" "She can't come. The land of the fairies needs a new king-one who is strong. I can't continue my reign." The queen had been saying she had thought it through, but in reality, she had no options left but to accept that Tarik would become the new king of the fairies. "I'm sorry, Tarik, though it's a heavy burden I'm placing on your shoulders." "If you had more options, you wouldn't ask me.

I've made the decision to protect this kingdom, so I accept becoming the new king of the fairies." "Thank you, Tarik." "When will it happen?" "I'm feeling very weak right now. When I'm more stable, I'll send for you." Tarik returned home, saying nothing to his parents, knowing they wouldn't approve of the idea. In the days that followed, the queen summoned him, and they both made their way to the heart of the land of the fairies. Cassiel felt anxious as he assisted the queen in walking, asking her repeatedly if she was sure about what she was doing. That only made Tarik more nervous.

"Everything will be fine," he reassured her. Leriana missed the alien presence, taking him in her arms. "How can you ask me to be calm when you can barely walk?" "I'll be better soon." When they reached a vast blue circle, Leriana instructed Tarik to kneel and step into the circle. Only he and she could be inside it. She asked Tarik to approach and extend his left hand, which was closer to the heart. "This will hurt you, Tarik, but you have to endure it. You might feel a little overwhelmed. Now repeat my words: My blood, My flesh, My heart, My spirit. All unite with the land of the fairies.

You will be its new guardian." After saying these words, the circle they stood in glowed with intensity. Tarik felt a great weight on his chest, as if he were being chained. The queen began to recite a few words, but it was impossible for her to do so, her voice faltering in the room. "I surrender my reign: My blood, My flesh, My heart, My spirit. Free yourself from these chains, liberate him." After this declaration, Tarik felt as if he were being bound by invisible chains. He could feel the land of the fairies, hear them all, and it felt as if his mind were being rewritten.

In contrast, Leriana began to feel liberated as the chains passed to Tarik. When the circle began to shine, Tarik collapsed to the ground, unconscious. Cassiel rushed to Leriana's side. "Are you okay?" "Yes, wonderfully so, as if you've freed me from my shackles." Cassiel glanced at Tarik and asked, "And him?" "He'll be fine. He just needs time to adjust to being the king."

The wait was finally over. Tarik felt overwhelmed, sensing the turmoil in the land of the fairies. He could feel it all around him. "How are you?" he asked, struggling against the noise that seemed to echo in his mind. "It's too loud," he continued, clutching his head. "Just take your time to adjust. Everything will be fine," came the soothing voice of the queen. "Silence, I want

silence," he pleaded. "You must try to concentrate on one thing. Learn to listen to what you want to hear," she advised gently. "I can't."

No matter how hard I try, I feel like my head is going to snap," he confessed, frustration evident in his tone. "You weren't ready yet, but you will succeed," she reassured him, though her own heart was heavy with doubt. Despite the queen's encouragement, the land of the fairies began to destabilize, mirroring Tarik's inner turmoil. Leriana looked deeply worried. Cassiel approached her, concern etched on his face. "What's wrong, Leriana?" he asked softly. "The land of the fairies is suffering. I fear it's too soon for Tarik to become king."

He's not bringing the stability we need." "Is there nothing we can do to help him?" Cassiel pressed. "I think I should put him to sleep until he can control himself," she replied, her voice tinged with worry. "Will this affect the land of the fairies?" he asked. "No, unless time begins to pass slowly, as if it were reversed," she explained. Cassiel placed a hand on Leriana's belly and asked, "Will it affect our baby?" "No, but I think it will be a long wait. You should go awaken the human," she urged. "I don't want to leave you alone," he replied, his voice filled with reluctance.

"Our baby will follow me next time. Just not this afternoon; it's too much," she assured him. Cassiel pressed a kiss to her forehead. "I hate the idea of leaving." "You will be fine. You need to go before Tarik falls asleep. Once that happens, you won't be able to leave," she instructed. "But can I come back?" he asked. "Yes, but it will be a solo trip. You won't return until you finish what you need to do." "Understood," he said, determination settling in. Leriana handed him a small, red bead. "Break the pearl whenever you want to return." "I will," he promised.

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With that, Cassiel departed, heading into the woods where the guardians dwelled. Years ago, they had been surprised to see him return, having once slept in a sacred tree. One of the guardians rushed to find the village leader. He ran quickly to where she was and bowed before her. "Welcome back to the forest," she greeted. "I have returned to seek the man who was lost," he replied. "We are very cautious with him," she warned. Cassiel approached the tree, touching its trunk. The tree responded to his brother's touch, revealing Alessandro.

Cassiel caught him, contemplating how to carry Alessandro's body back to the kingdom of Cosset. The guardian seemed to realize his predicament as Cassiel struggled to support Alessandro's weight. "My lord, do you want us to help you?" the guardian offered. "I must return to the kingdom of Cosset. Do you have any teleportation parchment?" Cassiel asked. "Yes, I still have a few. I hope they serve you well," the guardian replied. "Thank you very much," Cassiel said gratefully. He broke away from them, disappearing in an instant. Abril had just stepped out into the garden when she met them.

"Lessan!" she called, spotting Cassiel. "This is just your body; you haven't woken up yet," Cassiel explained, urgency in his voice. "Why did it take so long to get involved?" she asked, worry creeping into her tone. "I'm sorry, I couldn't return sooner," he replied, guilt lacing his words. "Will you bring him back?" she pressed. "Yes, your body has been completely regenerated," Cassiel assured her. Abril touched her husband's face, which had remained

unchanged through the ordeal. "Bring my husband back," she demanded. "I must take him to the guardians' chamber.

I need Cassian's help," Cassiel explained. Abril called for one of the guardians to assist in carrying Alessandro's body inside. The guard was taken aback to see the king unconscious in the queen's arms. Though he felt the king's cold body and noticed he wasn't breathing, he didn't dare question the situation. After placing Alessandro in one of the chambers, Abril instructed, "I don't want you to make a sound until the king returns. Remain silent." "As you command, Your Majesty," the guard replied. "You may leave," she added, dismissing him.

He exited and sought out Terran, who was surprised to be called by Abril so late at night. Maya accompanied him. When they reached the room, Abril ordered the servant to retire and rest. Cassian began to ask what was happening when he saw Cassiel and then noticed his brother lying in bed. "I thought you would never return. Where have you been all this time, Cassiel?" he questioned. "I've been somewhat busy, but I'm here now, and I haven't forgotten you, brother," Cassiel reassured him. Abril interjected, "We must take Alessandro to the guardians' chamber.

It's ready, despite the rumors circulating in the palace." Cassian was aware of the many whispers about Alessandro's death, and seeing his lifeless body only fueled the rumors. "Of course," he agreed. Cassian and Cassiel carried Alessandro to the guardians' chamber, while Maya and Abril waited anxiously at the door. Abril was visibly anxious. Maya placed a comforting hand on her shoulder. "Everything will be fine," she said softly. "I can't help but feel scared, scared that he won't return, that time is running out," Abril confessed. "That won't happen.

Let's trust that when that door opens, your husband will come back. Soon, you'll be free from this wait," Maya encouraged. Abril clung to Maya's words, even as the hours stretched endlessly while they stood before the door. Time seemed to stand still until it finally opened again. Abril remained fixated on the door, even as the light hurt her eyes. She needed to see with her own eyes that Alessandro had returned. Cassian and Cassiel supported Alessandro as he emerged from the room. It wasn't until their eyes met that the tension in Abril's body melted away.

She rushed forward to embrace Alessandro, exclaiming, "You fool, you made me wait too long." Alessandro wrapped his arms around her and replied, "I'm sorry for making you wait so long."

Abril clung to Alessandro, unable to believe that he was finally back, alive and breathing. Cassiel cleared his throat, breaking the silence. "I'm tired. I can't keep going like this all night." Abril shot him a fierce look, and Cassiel felt as if she might kill him with her gaze. He quickly decided to change the subject. "Alessandro is still exhausted. The best thing would be to take him to his quarters." Abril noticed how difficult it was for Alessandro to remain upright, so she didn't bother with Cassiel's complaints. "You're right.

We should go." Cassiel and Cassiel helped Alessandro to his room. "You should call for your daughter. I don't think you can regain all your strength on your own," Cassiel suggested before leaving the room. "I'll go find her," Cassiel replied. He found himself staring at his brother, still unable to believe that Alessandro was alive. Abril took Alessandro's hand and noticed that the mark of their marriage had vanished from his skin. "The marriage mark!" she exclaimed. "It only remains until death separates us. When you die, the mark disappears," Cassiel explained.

Alessandro lightly squeezed Abril's hand. "I'm sorry for putting you through all of this." "It doesn't matter, Lessan. The important thing is that you're back." Abril began to infuse her magic into Alessandro, but it was just like when Cassiel had first revived him; it felt like pouring magic into an empty well. No matter how much she tried, it didn't seem to help. "Don't hold back," Alessandro urged her. "I want you to recover quickly," Abril replied. "I know, because I want that too. I want to be well again," he said.

Cassiel interjected, "Lissana will be ready soon, Abril." Alessandro caressed Abril's cheek, noting that she hadn't changed at all during the time he had been gone. She was still beautiful, though her gaze held a lingering sadness. "I've been through so much," he murmured. "Yes, and if you don't take care of yourself, you'll die again. I can't bear to lose you," she warned. "I won't die. I refuse to lose you again. I wouldn't survive being apart from you," he promised.

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"But it's worth it if you don't." When Lissana realized that her father had returned to life, she ran with all her strength to his room, bursting through the door without knocking. "Papa!" she cried. Alessandro was taken aback by how much his daughter had grown. The little girl he remembered had transformed into a beautiful young woman. She smiled brightly, urging him to come closer. "You're really here! This isn't just a dream, is it?" "It's not a dream. It's real. I'm back. Forgive me for making you wait so long," he said.

Lissana stepped closer, needing to touch his hand, to feel his warmth, to hear his breathing and the steady beat of his heart. She had suffered countless nights worrying about her father's return, her dreams turning into nightmares filled with dread. Alessandro extended his hand, and when Lissana touched him and felt his warmth, tears began to stream down her cheeks. "I can feel it," she whispered. "Why are you apologizing, Lissana?" he asked gently. "I'm sorry for not being able to save you." "That was my choice, Lissana.

Don't blame yourself for it." Lissana hugged her father tightly, tears spilling over as she confessed, "I missed you, Daddy." "I know, because I missed you too," he replied. Abril joined them, wrapping her arms around both of them. "Finally, we are together again. The family is whole." It took a while for Lissana to calm her tears. Once she did, she used her healing magic, which drained her strength, but Maya helped her return to her home. Abril stayed with Alessandro that night, watching over him as he slept. She didn't close her eyes, fearing that if she did, she might wake up alone.

When dawn broke, Alessandro awoke to find Abril's beautiful golden eyes fixed on him. He reached out, his fingers gently caressing her hair. "What's wrong? Can't you sleep?" he asked.

Abril pressed her cheek against his and replied, "I'm afraid to close my eyes if you're not by my side when I wake up. It feels so lonely." "It's not a dream. It's real," he reassured her. "I suffered so much with your return. My dreams were always so vivid that I couldn't tell what was real and what wasn't," she admitted. He continued to caress her red hair, his fingers tracing her cheek.

He lowered his lips, outlining the shape of her mouth with the tip of his index finger. "You can feel it. It's real," he said softly. Alessandro kissed her gently at first, testing the waters, but as she melted against him, he felt a sense of grounding, as if the ashes of his past were transforming back into life. Tears flowed freely between them, and Alessandro pulled away, feeling the moisture on her face. It made him feel like a child again.

"Aby!" Alessandro didn't know how to stop her tears, and as she continued to cry, their embrace began to wane, and she eventually fell asleep in his arms. He pressed a kiss to her forehead, cradling her gently as he whispered against her skin, "Forgive me. I've made you suffer too much, my love." For Alessandro, the time he had spent dead felt like a dream, and waking up had been like emerging from a long slumber. If it hadn't been for Cassiel's constant visits, his desire to live might have faded, and he could have easily succumbed to the world of the dead.

Even in the guardians' room, he had been able to feel emotions. Alessandro felt a wave of guilt wash over him. He had been the one to return, while his family had endured so much suffering. "I will make you very happy," he whispered, intertwining his fingers with Abril's soft hair-a promise he intended to keep, no matter what.

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When Abril woke up, she found herself in Alessandro's arms. It hadn't been a hassle. She pressed her ear against his chest and listened. His heart thudded, and she could feel his breath, his warmth. Alive. Stay alive, and I'm by your side. She remained beside him, listening to the rhythm of his heart until Alessandro stirred. He gently caressed her hair and spoke.

"Good morning, Aby." "Good morning." Alessandro kissed her softly and asked, "How are you?" "I'm good, happy that I'm not lost at sea in a dream, that you're here with me." Alessandro pulled her close against his chest and whispered in her ear, "I'm sorry." "Forgive me for leaving you alone for so long." "It doesn't matter. Just don't leave me alone again; I don't think I can bear it." "I won't. I'll never leave you again." Abril joined him and asked, "How are you?" "I'm fine, just feel a bit stiff." Abril got up from the bed.

"You should try walking." Alessandro rose as well, his legs feeling a little weak, but they held him steady. "Are you alright?" "Yes, I don't think I'll be up for long." Abril hugged him tightly, feeling small and fragile in his embrace. Alessandro wrapped his arms around her, and for the first time in a long while, she felt that this place was truly her home. "Welcome home," he said. They were sharing a beautiful moment when a loud knock echoed through the door. "Your Majesty, it's urgent. Please come to the drawing room." The voice belonged to Gabriel.

Abril knew he wouldn't seek her out directly unless it was something that required her immediate attention. She hurriedly opened her wardrobe and turned to Alessandro. "Go ahead, keep resting." "Is something wrong?" "Nothing you need to worry about. Just rest and

recover. I'll be back soon." Abril finished dressing and slipped on a pair of gloves, which caught Alessandro's attention. "Why are you wearing gloves?" "Our marriage mark has faded. If others found out about your death, I couldn't allow it.

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I knew you would return." Abril took Alessandro's hand and said, "I suppose we'll have to have a second wedding, if you still want to be married to me." Alessandro caressed her cheek. "Of course I want to be married to you. You are the only woman I wish to share my life with." Abril touched his lips with her finger and replied, "I'm glad you feel that way. I hope nothing hurts you anymore." She headed toward the door, turning back with a smile. "I'll see you later." As she stepped out of her room, Abril noticed the worried expression on Gabriel's face.

"What's going on?" "The nobles are quite restless." "Is that why these elders are so agitated?" "Rumor has it that His Majesty is dead." "Again with this?" "This time it's different. There's a witness who claims to have seen the king's death." Abril let out a long sigh. "It would be better if we arrested ourselves." When Abril entered the meeting room, she was met with the murmur of the nobles, all speaking at once, expressing their concerns. She knew that talking would be futile; they wouldn't be silenced easily.

So, she chose to sit in her seat, surrounding herself with her plated wings, watching as they fidgeted, scared and anxious. When silence finally fell, Abril extinguished their chatter and spoke. "What is all this fuss about? Why have I been summoned?" Abril had learned that with the nobles, she always had to present herself as strong and impenetrable; otherwise, they would descend upon her like birds of prey. The nobles fell silent, intimidated by the queen's piercing gaze. "I suppose this was all for nothing, just an excuse to disturb me," she continued.

Duke Cardón was the only one brave enough to speak. "Your Majesty, there are rumors that the king is dead." "I suppose the nobles enjoy too much free time, and they only dare to summon me because of a rumor." "There's a testimony that claims his body has been found without life." "The king is not dead; he has returned." Gabriel was taken aback to hear that the king was coming back, as he was one of the few who knew the secret the royal family had been hiding.

"If the king is on his way, why haven't you joined us?" "After a long journey, should the king have to receive the ill-mannered nobles who impose their presence in the palace?" "You're lying. Is she really reigning there? Are you so bored with your position that you don't want to relinquish it?" Abril was about to respond when the doors swung open, and Alessandro entered, stopping behind her. "Duke Cardón, I'm not sure if you are very valuable or very foolish to insult my queen in this manner." "Your Majesty!" "And as you can see, I'm not dead. I'm more alive than ever.

If you doubt my identity, I could demonstrate the full extent of my power, just to ensure there's no doubt in anyone's mind." All the nobles fell to their knees, begging for forgiveness. Abril felt the weight of Alessandro's effort to maintain control, and she stood up, abandoning her seat. Once again, she addressed the nobles still prostrated before her. "If the reason for this absurd meeting was to discuss my husband's death, I consider it finished. Unless you wish to continue arguing and end up facing charges of treason." "Of course not, Your Majesty.

We withdraw." All the nobles left the room, but Gabriel lingered, staring at Alessandro in disbelief. "Is it really you, Your Majesty?" "Yes, Gabriel, it's me. I'm back." Gabriel bowed deeply before Alessandro. "Welcome back, Your Majesty. I rejoice for every heart that you have returned home." "Thank you, my friend, for your loyalty and friendship." "I have nothing to thank you for, Your Majesty. I feel honored that you consider me a friend." "You are a faithful servant.

I will ensure you are compensated as you deserve." Gabriel noticed that Abril seemed uncomfortable, as if she wanted to say something but didn't want to do so in his presence. "I'll make sure the nobles don't linger." Once they were alone, Abril turned to Alessandro. "Why did you come? I could have handled this alone." "I know, but you're not alone. You have me by your side. I'll fight your battles; I could never stand by and do nothing."

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Lissana stood in the garden, her gaze fixed intently on the trees surrounding her. She felt as if she were at the entrance to the land of the fairies, searching for a way to open her mouth and speak, but the familiar voice behind her made her hesitate. "I don't think you can visit the land of the fairies anytime soon." Lissana turned around, surprised to see Cassiel. "How did you get here? I thought all the entrances to the fairy realm were closed." "They are," he replied.

"No one can enter or leave, and it will remain that way for some time." "Why?" "Let's just say the land of the fairies is undergoing a transformation at the moment." "How is Tarik?" "He's fine," Cassiel said, though he knew he was lying to spare her worry.

"I suppose you've moved on with your life, unaware of whether I even want to be with you." "I don't think he has forgotten you, but he hasn't become the king of the fairies yet." "What?!" "Tell me, if the land of the fairies is suffocating under this transformation, why has the king changed?" Lissana felt a wave of discomfort wash over her; she hated being the only one who felt out of place.

"Everyone seems to have found their place, but I feel like I belong nowhere-not with the fairies, not with humans." "Then you should go and find your own place." "What?!" "If you feel like you don't belong anywhere, it's because you haven't found where you truly fit." "I can't leave my priests; my priest is back now." "This is your priests' place, but it's not your place. Staying here will only make you bitter. You should embark on a journey to discover yourself and find where you belong." "But..." "Nifia, I felt the same way for a long time. That's why I'm suggesting a journey.

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It's impossible to know where you fit when you're confined behind the walls of this palace. Explore your kingdom, all your human realms. Get to know your people, their landscapes, their customs, and their way of life. That will help you determine if this is your place or not. You also have Elven blood; perhaps your place is with them." Lissana didn't know how to respond. She remained silent for a while, until Cassiel spoke again.

"I must stay strong." "Wait, will you return to the land of the fairies?" "Yes, my beloved Leriana is waiting for me." "Take me with you," Lissana blurted out without thinking, surprising herself. "I'm sorry, but I only have a one-way trip. I can't take you with me." "How can I get to the land of the fairies?" "You haven't heard what I'm telling you." "I have, but it's the place I want to go." "I'm sorry, but I don't think you can return for a long time." "I will find a way to get there, to reach Tarik." "Then good luck.

I hope you succeed." Cassiel used the pass Leriana had given him and faded away before Lissana. She stood there, watching the spot where Cassiel had disappeared, contemplating his words. Eventually, Uzziel approached her, breaking her thoughts. "What are you doing here?" "I think you know." "That's true, but sometimes it's good to share what torments you, what worries you." "I want to go to Uzziel." "Where?" "To the land of the fairies, perhaps." "You don't seem very sure of your decision." "That's why I'm not there. This isn't where I want to be." "Listen, your uncle is returning.

You don't have to force him to stay here. If you want to go, then leave." "Do you think they'll understand?" "Um... and what does it matter? It's your life, not theirs." "I know, but we never had the chance to be a family. For one reason or another, we were separated. I don't want to..." "Is Lissana happy here? Because it doesn't seem that way to me." "It's not that I'm unhappy; it's just that I feel like something is missing. At first, I thought it was my priest, but now that he's back, I see it's not that." "Then seek what you are missing. Find your happiness, Lissana.

If I were in your place, I would." Lissana longed to escape the walls that had become a prison rather than a home, but doubt crept in whenever she thought about her family. After gathering her courage, she decided to speak with her priests, but they had already decided they wanted to stay until their priest was fully recovered. "I'll wait for him to recover," she thought, but as the months passed, she remained unable to tell her family that she wanted to leave. One day, while organizing some documents in her workshop, Uzziel entered without warning. "What do you want?

I'm busy," she said, glancing up at him. "Why are you here?" "I'm helping my mother with her work, of course." "Is that so? That's why I ask." "It's been months since you said you wanted to go, but you still haven't told your uncles." "I'm waiting for the right moment." "You're just doubting." Lissana stared at the documents on the table for several minutes before finally speaking. "Maybe that's true, but I can't help it. My family has suffered too much from being separated.

I don't want..." "And that's why you'll end up in a place you consider a prison if you stay." "I don't..." "Children always end up leaving their families; that's the law of life. Stop thinking so much about them and focus on what makes you happy." "You think I don't think about it every day? But when I see my family, I can't open my mouth. I can't tell them that I want to leave."