

Madly Yours

Chapter 13

Nora followed Hudson out of the building.

The afternoon sun in the city was blindingly bright, and a wave of humid heat washed over them, a stark contrast to the icy interior.

The black Maybach waited quietly in the shade.

Hudson pulled the rear door open and stepped aside for her.

Sunlight filtered through the trees, casting shattered shadows across his face. He stood there like a sheathed blade—restrained, yet terrifyingly capable of drawing blood at a moment's notice.

As Nora slipped into the car, she felt his heavy gaze tracking her every movement.

It wasn't forceful, but its intensity was impossible to ignore.

"We're going to the main estate first. My grandmother is waiting to meet you."

Hudson slid in beside her, the heavy thud of the door shutting out the sweltering heat.

Nora nodded. Just as she was about to speak, her phone vibrated violently in her purse.

It was an unknown number from Northampton.

She froze. A horrible sense of dread coiled in her stomach. Why now, of all times?

Hudson glanced over, his expression unreadable.

Without a second thought, she declined the call.

But seconds later, it rang again.

Nora tightened her lips and finally swiped to answer.

"Nora!"

Edmond's frantic voice blasted through the speaker the second she answered, brimming with days of pent-up anger. "Why didn't you come home after you left the hospital? Where the hell are you? Do you have any idea how many times I've called?"

Nora's heart plummeted. She instinctively shot a look at the man sitting next to her.

Hudson had already looked away and was casually flipping a lighter in his hands.

He wasn't doing anything. He was just sitting there quietly, not even glancing her way, yet his mere presence radiated a suffocating pressure that made her skin prickle.

She quickly pulled the phone away from her ear, keeping her voice low. "What do you want?"

"What do I want? Nora, enough with the tantrums!" Edmond yelled. "Fine, I was wrong about what happened the other day. But you hit Juliette. My parents have been breathing down my neck, demanding you apologize to her. Look, whatever, we can deal with that later. Where are you? I'll come pick you up and we can talk."

Apologize to Juliette.

The demand felt like a physical blow, leaving a bitter taste in her mouth. The sheer audacity of it was almost laughable.

Before she could respond, a sharp click echoed next to her.

Nora turned her head.

Hudson had pulled out a small, unmarked pill bottle from somewhere.

He twisted the cap off, tipped two or three white pills into his palm, and tossed them into his mouth without a second glance. His jaw tightened and his throat moved as he brutally crunched the dry pills between his teeth.

The crunching sound was jarringly loud in the silent cabin, exuding a savage, ruthless energy.

Nora stared at him, completely forgetting the man still rambling on the phone.

What kind of medicine was that? Was he in pain?

Hudson caught her staring. He arched an eyebrow and casually offered the bottle to her. "Want one?"

Nora was speechless. She didn't even know what they were!

Edmond had clearly heard the exchange. His voice dropped dangerously. "Who is that? Nora, who the hell are you with?"

Refusing to entertain him for another second, Nora hung up and immediately powered her phone off.

Blessed silence returned to the car, leaving only the soft hum of the AC and the overpowering aura of the man beside her.

"Your boyfriend?" Hudson asked, shattering the quiet.

"No," Nora shook her head firmly. "My ex."

Hudson didn't say anything, merely letting out a low hum. It was impossible to tell if he believed her, but his penetrating gaze lingered on her face, analyzing her every feature.

After a moment, he looked back out at the blurring city streets, his tone returning to its usual icy calm.

"Since we are now married, there are some ground rules we need to establish."

He spoke slowly, enunciating every word. "First. During this agreement, you are my wife. You will act the part, and you will watch your behavior."