

Madly Yours

Chapter 17

By the time the black Maybach pulled out of the estate, night had fallen. The neon lights along the harbor stretched into endless ribbons of color, shattering into stars across the dark water.

Nora sat by the window, staring at her faint reflection in the glass before sneaking a glance at the man beside her.

Hudson was resting with his eyes closed. The passing city lights sharply defined his striking jawline, and his dark lashes cast shadows on his cheekbones.

He didn't look like a man on the brink of death.

But then she remembered the way he had brutally chewed those unidentified pills in the car like candy.

Just what the hell was wrong with him?

"What are you thinking about?"

His deep, raspy voice sliced through the silence, snapping her out of her thoughts.

She looked up and crashed straight into his piercing, icy stare.

"Nothing," she lied quickly, averting her eyes. The car glided to a smooth stop, and she peered out the window. "Where are we?"

A faint smirk touched Hudson's lips as he noticed her reddened ears. "We're home. Get out."

Arthur stepped out first to open her door. He was just about to warn her about something, but Hudson had already grabbed her hand and was pulling her toward the entrance.

Cloudwater Estate was an absolute masterpiece of modern architecture. Floor-to-ceiling glass wrapped around the massive structure, reflecting the manicured gardens and the pristine private pool.

Suddenly, a chorus of vicious barking erupted from the shadows of the courtyard.

Arthur paled. "Miss Reed, watch out!"

Before he could finish, a massive black blur lunged from the bushes.

It was a terrifyingly huge German Shepherd. Standing almost waist-high, rippling with muscle and baring its teeth, the beast looked like a wild wolf out for blood.

Nora gasped in pure terror. She stumbled backward, crashing right into a solid, heated chest.

Hudson stiffened. Her intoxicating scent flooded his senses, and the soft curves of her body pressed flush against him.

His throat moved, but his arms instinctively locked around her, refusing to let her go.

Arthur froze, about to intervene, but the beast suddenly slammed on the brakes.

Bane tilted his head, sniffing the air furiously before his savage glare completely vanished.

Then, to Arthur's absolute shock, the lethal guard dog—who normally tried to rip his throat out—trotted over to Nora. The massive beast nuzzled her leg and let out a pathetic, attention-seeking whine.

Nora stared down at the terrifying creature that was suddenly acting like a puppy.

The rest of the pack, who had charged in ready to kill, instantly dropped their aggressive act. Their ears perked up, and their tails began wagging like propellers as they stared at her in adoration.

Arthur was absolutely speechless.

He had worked at Cloudwater for years, and aside from Hudson, this pack wanted to maim every living soul that walked through the gates. Even when he fed them, they still snapped at him. Now Nora shows up, and they turn into soft little lapdogs?

Were these demons seriously playing favorites?

“Are you done holding me?”

Hudson's deep voice rumbled against her back. Nora suddenly realized she was clinging to him like a koala. A furious blush exploded across her face as she scrambled backward.

“I'm so sorry!”

A dark smile curved his lips. He slipped his hand behind his back, subtly rubbing his fingers together to savor the phantom warmth of her waist.

Bane whined again, nudging Nora for attention.

Tentatively, Nora reached out and gave the massive dog a gentle pat on the head.