

~CARTER~

Everything happens in slow motion. My heart knew before my eyes could even fall on the woman before me.

The first thing I see is my favorite pair of eyes in the whole universe. It's always been the perfect shade of blue. Her wavy black hair was flowing wild and free, and her body was frozen on the spot, almost like she couldn't believe that I was in front of her. My eyes traveled to her tummy which had grown since the last time I saw her. It meant that our baby was safe and a part of me could suddenly breathe again.

Was I dreaming? Would I wake up in bed and realize I still hadn't found her?

I thought that the second I saw her, I would crush her against my body and hold onto her as tightly as possible. However, I was still terrified that she had moved on. I didn't know if she was now in love with Wilder. I didn't know if she would choose him instead of me.

I wanted to believe in her love for me, but I've never felt this vulnerable.

If Scarlett told me that she wanted to be with him instead, I'm not sure if it's something I would be able to offer her. Could I walk away from her to let her be with another man?

f**k no.

I'd rather die than let Wilder have her.

However, if it was something she wanted. . .

I close my eyes to hide the pain I felt from her. She was still very silent. She hasn't spoken a word to me, and neither have I. Maybe she now thinks I'm a monster and is terrified of me. I can't even look her in the eyes anymore.

My breath hitches when I felt her hand on my cheek. It's one touch, but with it, I felt a tear slowly roll down my face. I still couldn't look at her. I didn't want her to see how much f**g pain I was in right now.

Now, both hands are on my face, and she's wiping my tears away.

"Carter," she whispers, and this time, I can't help myself as I open my eyes to gaze at her.

"Carter," she repeats in a softer voice.

I place one hand over her hand on my cheek, "Is it really you?" She cries. "Are you really in front of me?"

I slowly nod, "I'm here, my love."

I can see the tears build up in her eyes, and I brace myself for the worst news possible. This was where she would tell me that she wanted to be with Wilder. This is where she would leave me.

My body turns to stone to prepare itself. However, she surprises me when she jumps straight into my arms.

I can't move for a few seconds before my arms finally close around her.

"What took you so long?" She gasps. "I've been waiting for you. I was scared that I would never see you again."

Did this mean what I thought it meant?

She buried her face against my neck and held onto me tightly.

"Scarlett," I whisper. "Wilder. . . I know that he's your mate. I know that is why he brought you here. . . I—"

"You what?" She asks as she pulls away to look me in the eyes. "You what, Carter? Do you want me to accept him? Do you want me to forget about you and our baby? Is that what you're trying to tell me? Is that why you haven't held onto me yet? Is that why I'm the only one that looks brokenhearted?"

My eyes widen in surprise. She was already misunderstanding me.

"No!" I gasp. "f**k no."

"Then why?" She cries. "Why are you not holding me yet? Why are you not crushing me against your body? Why am I the only one trying to get closer to you?"

The tears are falling uncontrollably down her cheeks like a f**g waterfall.

f**k me.

I was still messing things up even now.

"And why?" She whispers in a broken voice.

"Why what?" I ask her.

She grabs my shirt and blinks, "Why haven't you told me you loved me yet? Why Carter? Why?"

"You still want to be with me?" My voice breaks a little as I gaze down at her beautiful face.

She frowns at me, "What kind of question is that Carter?" she demands. "You're the only man I've ever loved. How can I ever be with another?"

Her words bring so much joy to my heart that I can't stop the smile on my face.

Her eyes widen, "are you smiling at a time like this? Is something funny?"

"No," I whisper as I jam her against the door, "I'm just happy, Scarlett. I'm so happy."

Her eyes widen.

I don't waste another second as I grab her by the waist and pick her up into my arms, "Carter!" She gasps right before I crash my lips to hers.