

## 20. Bridget

Bridget reflects on her recent joyful experiences and the changes in her relationship with Rhys, her bodyguard. After a memorable night, she wakes up feeling elated, but soon realizes their dynamic has shifted back to a professional one, dampening her mood. They're preparing to leave for New York, and Rhys, back in his usual attire, seems distant. Bridget, feeling a mix of disappointment and determination, offers Rhys a proposition to extend his contract to stay with her during her transition into a more prominent role following her brother Nikolai's abdication. Despite the awkwardness between them, she hopes to maintain the comfort and security his presence brings.

Rhys's response is non-committal, leaving Bridget to ponder the implications of her request. Their journey to New York is marked by silence, reflecting the tension and unspoken regrets between them. Despite the strained interactions, Bridget finds solace in the memories they created together, recognizing them as more than just whimsical adventures.

Upon arrival in New York, staying at The Plaza, Bridget faces the impending challenge of a press conference announcing her new role due to her brother's abdication. She invites Rhys to join her, seeking his support during this critical moment. His acceptance brings her temporary relief in the midst of her anxiety over the significant changes and public scrutiny she is about to face.

As the day of the press conference arrives, Bridget struggles with her nerves but finds unexpected comfort in Rhys's presence and care. Watching her brother officially renounce his title and succession, Bridget is forced to confront the reality of her new responsibilities and the public's reaction. Despite the overwhelming stress and apprehension, she prepares to face the media, supported by Rhys's steady confidence.

Throughout these events, Bridget navigates the complexities of her evolving relationship with Rhys, the weight of her impending duties, and the personal challenges of stepping into a more visible and influential role in the eyes of the public and her own self-perception.