

## 33. Rhys

In this chapter, Rhys grapples with the emotional turmoil stirred by his deepening feelings for Bridget amidst the backdrop of a high-profile royal wedding. The imminent arrival of Bridget's brother and his fiancée marks the beginning of a hectic period filled with pre-wedding commitments, pulling Bridget further into royal duties and away from Rhys. This separation fuels Rhys's resentment towards Steffan, Bridget's suitor, who poses a threat to Rhys's unacknowledged desires for a relationship with her.

Rhys's internal conflict is portrayed through his struggle to maintain composure in his daily life, illustrating the hold Bridget has on him beyond mere attraction. This battle with his emotions is punctuated by an unexpected visit from Prince Andreas, Bridget's cousin. Andreas's subtle provocations and insinuations reveal a complex web of family dynamics and political ambitions that challenge Rhys's previously straightforward life. The prince hints at potential shifts in the royal succession and questions Bridget's desires, stirring doubts about the future.

The encounter with Andreas leaves Rhys on edge, questioning the prince's motives and the implications for his relationship with Bridget. Despite his strong feelings, Rhys is acutely aware of the societal and political barriers that stand between him and Bridget, highlighted by Andreas's manipulative conversation implying Bridget might be happier abdicating her royal duties for love. This suggests Andreas's own ambitions towards the throne and hints at a broader struggle within the royal family.

However, the tension momentarily breaks when Bridget calls Rhys. Her initiative to reach out and the playful exchange between them underscore their deep connection, providing a stark contrast to the chapter's earlier conflicts. This call represents a momentary escape for Rhys, offering a glimmer of hope and intimacy in the midst of chaos.

Overall, this chapter delves into the personal and political entanglements faced by the characters, setting the stage for potential conflicts and alliances. Rhys's loyalty is tested, and Bridget's call signifies a pivotal moment of respite and connection, reinforcing the complexity of their relationship amidst royal expectations and personal desires.