

## The Last Piece of Her Heart

She gazes at the small mirror standing on the makeshift dresser, guilt gnawing at her stomach. Her reflection seems to mock her, the scar across her eye standing as a proud reminder that she may not have learned her lesson after all. She shouldn't be here; coming was a mistake, one that she should correct immediately, before it's too late.

She picks up her dagger, sliding her thumb along its sharp edge just as she weighs the possibility to erase that failure. It would be so easy to end things now, to put an end to her madness once and for all. He's not wearing any armor. She would be onto him in the flash of an eye, and there would be nothing to protect his heart from her blade.

She looks at him through the mirror, calculating her chances. She could do it, plunge her dagger in his chest and kill him. Be rid of him just as she rids herself of the last piece of her heart.

"You're welcome to try, Kat, you won't have a better shot at it."

His words snap her out of her musings and she throws him a glance over her shoulder. He's on the other side of the tent, sitting on his cot, not even bothered to look at her while he balances his chest plate on his knees, polishing it.

Maybe he knows what's going on inside her head; perhaps he even shares the same guilt and the same temptation ebbs at the edge of his conscience? Truth be told, it shouldn't even matter to her if he knows or feels the same way. They are enemies and they will always be a threat to one another. This is the sole constant in their relationship, back to their very first fight.

Yet, for now, she sheathes her blade and flips to face him, swaying her hips, playing at the prey, even if he knows all too well the predator lurking behind her smile.

"Where would the fun be in that?" she answers with mock solemnity.

A grin spreads on his lips, genuinely amused, one that makes him look younger than the seasoned and serious faced warrior that everybody knows.

"Well then, I guess you'll have to try your best tomorrow."

"You know you can always count on me for that."

"And I wouldn't have it any other way," he says, serious once more.

Putting his armor aside, he stands up and picks up her cloak where it lies on his trunk. He walks up to her, delicately places it around her shoulders and, as he pulls the hood over her fiery red hair, he slowly lets his fingers brush her cheeks. A tender gesture. One that he cannot help as their stolen moment reaches its inevitable end.

It's impossible to fight the twinge that pulls at her heart as she looks up at him, finding in his eyes the same soul crushing questions.

Why did fate throw their lives on a colliding path? It's a nerve wracking trail of thoughts that always leads her to that same answer. Fate had nothing to do with it. Fighting for the truth brought them

together. Sharing the same ideals of duty and service made him the one man that is right for her, and at the same time, the one she can never have.

Her duty towards Noxus would ask that she kill him now. She still has a chance, she could grab the knife strapped to her thigh and in one quick move, all of this would be over. If only it wasn't so hard when he gazes upon her with soulful eyes.

"Don't get caught on your way out," he says.

Genuine concern as much as a cautionary advice lies beneath the softness of his tone.

"Not a chance, those sentinels of yours aren't good enough to catch me. Maybe whoever trains them should be better at his job,"

Sarcasm, again. It seems like it's all she's able to do, but it won't fix her problem.

"Maybe I should, but you know I am a man of justice and taking advantage of our private endeavors to teach about your techniques would be, unfair."

As he says these words, he leans down, his lips closing on hers, and despite the overwhelming sense of guilt, she kisses him back.

A horn resounds in the distance, breaking the spell. It announces the arrival of the royal retinue. It's now or never. She only has a few minutes left; she has to kill him now! Yet, her mind cannot take that decision, so her heart does it for her. She steals one more kiss from his lips, and breaks away from his embrace.

"See you on the battlefield," he says as he lets her go.

"You better be in one piece when I find you, I want the first dent in that shiny armor of yours," she says, cowering behind a glib attitude, backing away from a decision that, one way or another, she will have to face.

"Why do you think I spend so much time polishing it? I know you like to damage it."

A small but teasing grin tugs at the corner of his lips, and despite the knowledge that she is once more failing her duty, she cannot help but smile in return.

"See you on the battlefield *Crownguard*," she says as she exits, the flap of the tent falling behind her as she disappears in the shadow of the night.

She leaves the Demacian encampment, unseen and unnoticed, the last piece of her heart still beating strong.

One day, maybe, she'll find the strength to get rid of it, but for the time being, it remains safe, it remains with him.