

1009 SIDE STORY (LOU): THE MEANING OF LIFE

"Bad dream?" Nala asked Lou when she was woken up because his body kept trembling. She tried to wake him up, but only managed to do so after two whole minutes. "What happened?"

Lou pushed himself up from the bed and then sat down. He looked outside and it was still night.

"Come here, sleep again," Nala said. It had been five years since the last battle with Decraic, but their relationship didn't improve at all. She was still his woman, someone that would warm his bed if he was in the capital city, but Nala didn't have any idea whether Lou would seek another warmth when he traveled around, which he did a lot.

"No, I am hungry," Lou said, he got off the bed and asked someone to bring him food.

"You look so awful," Nala said, she waited for his reply, but he didn't say anything. He sat down on a single chair and closed his eyes. *www.NoVeLWo(r)M.cOm*

Nala had been with him for so long, she understood him. He would be like this whenever he didn't want to be bothered.

And not long after that, someone knocked on the door and brought food that the merchant wanted, while Nala continued sleeping.

The next day, Lou had gone. He didn't say anything and every time Nala asked for him to let her know where he would go, or at least, tell her if he would go somewhere, he would chuckle to her face.

"Why should I? Are you my wife? My mate? Or whatever you called that. I will go wherever I want to go." *www.NoVeLWo(r)M.cOm*

That would be it.

Physically, they were very close, how could they not when they drew pleasure from each other without any restraint, but emotionally, Lou would always put Nala at arm length.

He would be nice to her and shower her with gifts, but the next time they met, he would be so cold and calculative, or he would straight away ignore her, but then he would act childish, as if nothing had happened.

This confused Nala.

"If you wanted to end thing and pursue another life, go ahead. I will not stop you. I will compensate you handsomely. You don't need to worry about money."

That was what Lou said when Nala brought up the possibility of them being together... like a family. She tried to bring the idea of having a child, but the merchant laughed again.

"You can have as many child as you wanted, but not with me."

Nala was free to leave this relationship, but she chose to stay, thinking if she gave him enough time, Lou would change his mind.

Especially when he saw how happy Iris was with her mate, having their own children.

"You are not Iris."

"You are coveting someone else's woman. The queen."

Nala couldn't take it. She knew that was not Iris's fault for Lou's obsession, but she was sad and upset because she couldn't have a simple life that normal people had.

"People know how I feel toward her. She knew, Cane knew. You are so stupid if you have not figured that out."

That was their first big fight and Lou disappeared for half a year, when he returned, he acted so sweet, he gave him gifts and overall became the happy Lou.

That was ten years they were together.

Nala stared at her reflection on the mirror. She was no longer young. She was thirty three years old now and she had nothing.

Not that she didn't have a roof over her head, not that she didn't have food on her table, not because she didn't have fancy dress to wear, but because her life felt very empty.

She walked on the street and saw women around her age and even younger, walked with their children, having their man by their side and walked together happily.

But she? She had no one. She only had Sabian, but right now he was already very old, he was very sick.

"What are you thinking about?" Sabian asked. "You look trouble."

"I am fine, Sabian," Nala said.

"Still the same problem?" Sabian asked, he Nala was afraid that if he died, she would completely be alone in this world. She couldn't rely on Lou. She knew that she couldn't be with him. Growing old with him was not an option, but still, she held onto a nothingness.

"Let him go, Nala, live your life." Sabian patted her arm. He thought of her as his own daughter. "You have waited for him for too long. It's no longer worth it."

Sabian knew very well the dynamic between Nala and Lou and this was not the first time he suggested for her to stop waiting for him, yet she didn't listen.

"You only fool yourself if you thought you can change him, or he will change for you. He will not." walk away and pretend those years have never happened."

"Are you going to waste another ten years? Twenty years? Thirty years with him?" Sabian patted her arm again. "You have been waiting for him for ten years and that's enough."

Nala didn't want to admit that her waiting was not worth it. She held for the hope that Lou would come around eventually, whether it was ten years from now or twenty years...

However, three years later, the reality hit her when Sabian passed away.

He died alone in his room. There was no one by his side. He didn't have a woman, a child and even the person that he served as his master was miles away.

They could only reach Lou two days later after they buried Sabian. *www.NoVeLWo(r)M.cOm*

Nala stared at him, watching how the merchant only stood there silently, he didn't even shed a tear, even though Sabian had dedicated his life to him, but he didn't even have a single tear to offer to the poor old man.

"How could you be so cold, Lou?" Nala couldn't understand that.

"This is how I am. Give it up if you wished to change me." He then walked away from Sabian's grave.

The way Lou treated Sabian's death bothered her. If Sabian's passing couldn't even move his heart, let alone her.

This thought kept bothering her mind and she couldn't sleep properly. She felt sick in her stomach, as she reevaluated everything.

However, no matter how hard she was rethinking about everything, three years later, Nala was still with him. During this period of time, Lou had been very busy because the king's health started to decline and he had to help with the state affair, being there for Iris's sons.

But one day, life really knocked her head so hard.

"I am pregnant," Nala said. She was thirtyeight right now and she didn't think she would have a child at this point.

Lou stared at her for a while. "So? Go ahead and tell the father."

"You are the father, Lou!" Nala shouted, she didn't believe with the way he insinuated that she slept with someone else. They had never talked about this, but after Nala ended thing with Kian, Lou was the only man that she had been slept with.

"Okay, no need to shout." Lou raised both of his arms. "Don't worry, I will ask the royal healer to make a good concoction to abort the child."

It felt like a pang in her heart. "I want to keep the baby."

"I don't play father."

"You play father to Iris's children! Why can't you play father to your own child?"

"Because I don't want to have anyone with my flesh and blood! Damn it!" Lou cursed under his breath, while Nala was crying. "You are going to abort the baby."

"No, I am not." Nala shook her head. For the first time, she really wanted something. For the first time she determined on something and she wanted to be a mother. She wanted this baby.

"Damn it, Nala!"

"If you wanted to leave, go! I will not stop you! But, I will not give up on the baby!"

Lou threw a dagger look at her. He looked like he was going to kill her right there and then, probably the thought flickered in his mind.

"We will talk about this later," Lou said before he walked away from her and Nala broke down, crying so hard, she couldn't breathe.

Lou didn't return for three months and when he did, he found Nala was sleeping in the same room that they shared. She was visibly pregnant, you could see her little bump.

And for a long moment, Lou only stood there, staring at the woman. No one could tell what was in his mind, but then he left before Nala woke up, so she didn't know that he was there.

However, Lou returned that night to have a talk with her.

"It will be too late to get rid of that thing in your stomach," Lou started.

"That thing' is our baby, Lou."

Lou scrunched his nose. He didn't like the idea. Nala hated it that she remembered everything about this man when Lou might be not remember even her favorite color.

"I am not playing father with the baby. I will leave after the coronation."

This was a big news for Nala, because she didn't see this coming. "For how long?" *www.NoVeLWo(r)M.cOm*

"I don't know. Maybe a year or two, or maybe five years or ten." Lou stared at her stomach. "If you are going to raise the child, you are alone."