Dance

by louvreangel

Summary

*MovieVerse* *Mostly AU* What if in Catching Fire, Katniss danced with Finnick instead of Plutarch at the party in the Presidential Palace? What would this simple dance lead to? COMPLETE.

Notes

A/N: English is not my native language so please ignore my grammar mistakes if there are any. Thanks!

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Dance With Me

Chapter Notes

This fanfiction will contain one-shots that are connected to each other but there is not a certain timeline that I'm following. Also, this is all Katnick/Everdair! No other ships will be taking place. Not Keeta, not Kale, not Finnick&Annie. But of course, there's going to be platonic love and stuff, some drama, some action, some adventure... Yet, this is basically an Everdair romance story. Just so let you know. ^^

Finnick and Katniss might be a little out of character but I'm really trying hard to keep them in character, so please be understanding.

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"May I have this dance, please?"

His smooth voice gave me goosebumps all over my body and I shivered right down to my spine. Normally, a man's voice wouldn't make me feel oh so... what's the right word... ah yes, flattered. But right now was different. Because right now, he was standing in front of me, with—obviously—an expensive suit that was bought just for this occasion. It was all black, plain and gorgeous. Well, what made the suit gorgeous was of course the man wearing it. Finnick Odair. Also known as The Capitol darling. I didn't trust him at all but I knew he could get anything he wanted with his looks. His sea-green eyes and his beautiful bronze hair was enough to make all that Capitol women beg him for company. Not that I was judging it. I knew Finnick didn't get this way because he wanted to. No. It was because Snow wanted him to get this way.

Suddenly, when I mentioned his name in my head, all that fire started inside me and I felt my cheeks and chest redden. I looked up but not at Finnick. I looked up and saw President Snow dancing with Effie Tricket in a far distance that I couldn't see well. The more they danced and swayed, the more I lost track of them. That's when I finally looked at Finnick, who was holding a hand up in the air, for me to take a hold of. I suppose. In my head, it had been almost half an hour passed with all that thinking and stuff but in reality, it only had been half a minute. And Finnick was still there, waiting for me to hold his hand and dance with him. I never met him formally before and I absolutely had no intention of being allies with him in the upcoming Hunger Games. But Haymitch told me not to make enemies either so I decided I could give it a chance and held his hand, let him drag me gently into the crowd.

I looked around and saw people with exaggerated make-up, fake smiles, stupid costumes and abnormally big eyelashes. Yes, eyelashes I said. Because when you look at them, the first thing you would notice is their big big eyelashes. Oh and, their colourful hair.

Apart from them there stood Finnick, right in front of me as he moved me to the dance slowly. I didn't know how to dance properly and he seemed to be aware of that. I shrugged the thought and looked at him upside down. He was a little taller than me, he looked young but I could see the light purple circles under his eyes which meant he was just as tired as I was and lastly, he had this...
smile plastered on his face that never faded. That smile could take you to a new land in your own head and make you fantasies about him all night long. Okay, that sounded like I was exaggerating things but no. Everybody knows about his famous smile. And the truth was, he was much more beautiful than he seemed to be on television.

Then I noticed he was also looking at me. I quite liked the dress Cinna designed for me so it was okay he looked at me upside down. The dress made me feel confident about my outlook. But I also noticed, I lost track of time while dancing with him. We didn't talk, we didn't look into each other's eyes... We just danced. I suddenly felt disgusted because I was enjoying it. He danced so elegantly that I lost myself to him...

No.

Abruptly, I stopped dancing. That's when, the first time that evening, he looked into my eyes. He knew something was off and he was right. Something was not right with me. His charms were working on me. But they weren't supposed to be. I got scared. I was scared. I survived the previous Hunger Games and even that didn't scare me this much. Because in the Games, I knew what I had to do. I had to survive. So I used my bow and arrow, killed a few monstrous people because they were about to kill me and I used my own strategies to make sure Peeta and I stayed alive. And right now, my exact problem was that I had no idea what to do. I wanted to leave Finnick there and go find Peeta but I didn't want to look like a coward too. Plus, people would find my actions weird because leaving Finnick Odair all alone on a dance floor was like an insult to them more than to the man himself. I wished someday they would notice that they're the weird ones and not us.

I felt my hands shaking and he noticed that. Before I could say something, he held my hands and started dancing with me again.

"I don't bite, Miss Everdeen. No need to be scared." He whispered to me with his—probably—most seductive voice.

I narrowed my eyes as I stared at him intensely. So he could read thoughts too? What more did he hide under that shining smile of his?

"I am not the least scared." I snapped at him. My voice came out harsher than I intended to.

His smile slowly faded and he rested his forehead against mine. I felt something got stuck in my throat and I blinked a few times.

"I'm just trying to get to know you. Come on, don't look so upset." He whispered to me mockingly and I flinched.

I put some distance to our faces and I hissed at him. "Why are you so cocky? Don't you have some Capitol woman to keep company?"

The look on his face immediately changed. I saw something flicker in his eyes and recognised it: it was anger. His lips turned into a thin line and I saw him grit his teeth but somehow he recovered fast. He put a big smile on his face as he looked at me softly.

"Tsk tsk. It'll be really hard for a little girl like you to win the new games." He spoke like he pitied me and I didn't like it. I knew he was right. Everyone was a grown up now and they had more experience than I had. The other victors, including Finnick of course, were way better than me and Peeta.

I knew Finnick was trying to scare me by simply telling me the truth and he was succeeding.
Guess I couldn't keep my promise to Haymitch that I would not make enemies because Finnick was becoming one at the moment.

"And it'll be really hard for a guy like you to protect a fragile, gracious woman like Mags." I knew I hit his weak spot when I mentioned her name.

I was expecting him to slap me right in the face but instead he laughed. My brows knitted as I watched him laugh for a few minutes. It was getting annoying when he finally stopped.

"They were not wrong about you, Girl on Fire. Just a little trigger and you will be burst into flames." He said and stared at me.

I huffed as I understood what he was doing. He was teasing me. It was annoying and I made it obvious that I was annoyed. Since the minute we started talking all he did was to mock me, try to seduce me and tease me. For starters, he absolutely didn't leave a good impression on me.

"You know, you're absolutely terrible at making allies." I told him.

He cocked an eyebrow. "What makes you think I want you as an ally?"

That stopped me on my tracks and we stopped dancing. When I looked around, I saw that nobody was dancing anymore and we were in a dark corner of the court. I had no idea how we got there but we were dancing the whole time and I didn't pay attention so... I was only wasting time thinking about it.

People were watching the fireworks which I also had no idea of when they started shooting them.

I looked at him and saw his eyes shining under the lights of the beautiful fireworks. "Isn't it why you asked me to dance with you? To convince me to become allies with you?"

When I asked that, he laughed at me. Again. "Honey, I don't ask people to be my allies. They come to me. Right now, all I'm trying to do is to make friends."

Make friends, I thought. Just like Haymitch told me. Finnick was making friends, being smart. Me, on the other hand, was being rude to a really strong competitor just because he teased me a little. I was acting like a teenager and I needed to get rid of this behaviour of mine.

I sighed. "I guess you're right. Sorry... for earlier too." I wasn't really sorry but I at least needed to apologize for my stupid behaviour. Though, he was not on his best behaviour tonight either.

He smiled at me and before I could see he was standing real close, he pecked my lips. Well, not really pecked... He put his lips on mine first and then took my lower lip in his mouth before he took a step away from me. "See you in training area, Girl on Fire." He said and disappeared into the crowd just like that.

I stood there, frozen. I couldn't talk, I couldn't walk and more importantly, I couldn't think. I knew he was trying to seduce me and leave me begging for more but it was in no way going to happen. But I knew I had to admit it to myself: I enjoyed it. The dancing, the small tease-talk we had and that little kiss... This boring evening became something interesting and it was him who made it possible.

That's why I couldn't erase that stupid grin on my face all night long no matter how hard I tried. It was a memorable night and Finnick Odair was a memorable man. I was absolutely going to become allies with him and it was going to be him asking for it.

I kept smiling as I walked over to Peeta and told him I was tired. I could now finally go home and
have some rest.
It was a little past midnight when we finally went back to the train. The party in the Presidential Palace was absolutely a disaster. We had to meet plenty of people to get them as sponsors. Me and Peeta did our best to act like we were crazy in love and all of them actually bought it. We really knew how to play this game but it wasn't easy. Everyone's eyes were on us all night long and I kept hearing people whisper that we were so adorable. Those stupid people talked about us like we were puppies and it annoyed me so much.

I sighed as I plopped on to the bed and started taking my high heels off. They had been a burden all night long. The most difficult was the dress though. It was a long dress so I had to keep it's tail away from other people in case they stepped on it and ruined it. I was also having a hard time right now trying to open it's zip. But when I managed it, I got it off of my body immediately. Then I found my pyjamas and wore them, finally going to the bathroom to wash of my heavy make-up.

When I looked at myself in the mirror, I noticed how tired and lost I looked. The more I washed away the make-up, the more the purple circles under my eyes became clearer. I also had some creases on my forehead that I hated. They made me look old... Well, thinking of what I've been through all along in my life, it was normal for me to look old. I felt old like I lived a thousand years and stayed undead like a zombie.

Then my entire life flashed right in front of my eyes and I squeezed my eyes shut. I didn't have a good childhood, I've always felt like a grown-up and I never found love like most people did. How people ever found love was still a mystery to me. No matter what Haymitch and Effie thought, I wasn't in love with Peeta. I just cared for him, like a little brother. He was a nice boy and he never meant harm to nobody. He deserved to live longer than me so I was absolutely not going to let him die on the arena. If someone was going to die, it was going to be me.

I sighed as I finally finished cleaning of my face. Lastly, I brushed my teeth and went back to bed. When I lay down on the bed, all my stress was finally gone. I felt my body and my muscles relax. I closed my eyes, ready to sleep. But instead, suddenly, his face popped up in my head. I opened my eyes wide and stared at the ceiling. I didn't just think of Finnick Odair now, did I? For God's sake, I loathed the guy. There was nothing to think about him and yet, here I was, thinking about the way he kissed me tonight. Well, it wasn't a big deal but it wasn't a simple kiss either. He basically nipped my lower lip and I enjoyed it. I hated myself for it. He made me feel low when he kissed me. He made me feel like I was on the same level with those foolish Capitol women. I know he did it to tease me, or maybe it was his way of saying goodbye but it wasn't something I could stay silent about. Then I decided what I was going to do about it—because if I didn't do anything about it, I'd go insane.

I decided I would talk to him in the training area tomorrow.
The next day I woke up to Peeta calling my name. He was poking my shoulder and calling my name and my eyes snapped opened.

"What, what is it?" I asked him, panicking already.

"You didn't come for breakfast so I came to find you. We have to go to the training area today, you know." He said and shrugged.

I sighed as I got out of the bed, groaning. "I hate this." I complained. "Okay. I'll come in five." I said and I made my way to the bathroom. I had shower, brushed my teeth, braided my hair and wore my training suit in about fifteen minutes. I was a quick person when it came to morning routines.

When we finally came to the training area, Peeta, as promised to Haymitch, made his way to talk to some people about alliance. I thought I'd do the same too and saw Mags over there, trying to knit a fish net with her trembling little hands. She was a lovely woman but unfortunately she was really old. If someone was going to die first, it'd probably be her and that saddened me. I didn't know the woman yet but the sincere smile on her face while she was knitting the net slowly convinced me that she was a gracious person. Plus, she basically sacrificed her life for a girl named Annie who had been in the games before and... well... went nuts. Mags volunteered for Annie just like I volunteered for Prim back in the day. I somehow thought that Mags was like an older version of me.

But then I remembered Finnick. Maybe it was because I saw Mags, his ex mentor, or maybe something else but I needed to find Finnick and talk to him first if I wanted to concentrate on training. Then I wandered around the training area a little bit. He was nowhere to be found. So instead I went to the knots training spot and held a rope in my hand. The description and the tutorial popped up right in front of me, a slow training method being shown on the blue transparent screen. I tried to follow the knot on the screen with my eyes but I wasn't really doing well. Looking at the screen and at the knot in my hand at the same time was really hard.

That's when I felt someone's hand on my hands, whispering into my ear: "Here, let me."

Before I knew what I was doing, my body reacted on its own and I stepped away from the person almost immediately. I saw Finnick in front of me, laughing at me like something really funny happened but I saw nothing funny about it. "Sorry. I'm really sorry." He said and leaned back while tying the knot already.

"Now, let me show you the best knot to know in the arena." He said. I only stared at him, throwing daggers at him from my eyes. "Don't look at me, look at the knot." He said as he chuckled.

I hesitantly looked at the knot he was doing but he was so fast that I couldn't even understand what he did there. Then he wrapped the rope around his neck and tightened it, letting the rope squeeze his neck a little bit. "Well, it's... it's really..." he said and shrugged as I kept staring at him.

"Funny." I completed his stupid sentence.

Then he just stared at me with his big innocent eyes as if he had never done a wrong thing in his entire life. "Do you wanna take me for a walk?" he asked me.

I narrowed my eyes at him. "What is wrong with you?" Now was my chance to talk to him.

"I don't know what you're talking about." He replied.
"You know you do." I snapped at him. "All this being seductive stuff." I waved my hands in the air, trying to emphasize what I was saying and how ridiculous I found it. I moved closer to him and folded my arms on my chest. "You kissed me at the party. Do you think any of this is funny?" I hissed at him.

He smirked at me. "Oh, now we know what's actually been bothering you, Miss Everdeen." He said and moved closer to me. Right now, only my arms on my chest were separating us apart. "Seems like you've been thinking about our kiss." He whispered to me.

"Your kiss. You kissed me. I didn't kiss you back." I snapped at him again and unfolded my arms. My hands were now clenched into fists. "And no, I haven't been thinking about it. I just have been trying to erase the disgusting feeling it left in my mouth." I knew they were harsh words and a lie but he made me angry. His cool-guy posture was just an annoyance to me.

For the first time, he finally took off his mask and looked angry. I knew I insulted him and he seemed to have been offended by it. Good. That was my exact intention.

That's when he took one more step closer to me and now stood a few inches away from me. He leaned in closer until our lips were almost touching. We were in the damn training area with everyone else, for God's sake, what was he trying to do? But then I looked around me and saw everyone was busy with training. I saw Peeta was talking to Beetee and his back was turned to me. Basically, no one was paying attention to us which relieved me only a little bit.

"Aren't you supposed to make allies today because you're doing exactly the opposite, darling." He told me mockingly.

I gulped and looked into his eyes.

"You're making wrong people your enemies." He told me and I could see his eyes darken. I felt my heart beat faster. I knew he was doing this to scare me, of course, but he was also succeeding. He was a strong competitor and I was saying rude things to him. I was a fool for acting this way.

Though, I kept my posture cool as I answered him. "Are you threatening me?"

He shrugged. "You can understand it in any way you want to, honey." Then he took a step back from me. He was threatening me. I was scared, yes, but I wasn't going to let him know that. Foolish or not, I disliked him and didn't want him as my ally. Actually, just then, I put him as number one on my killing list. We were going to see who was going to die first. Plus, what was up with those stupid petnames he kept calling me? They were sickening me.

I was so angry I started shaking. He had no right to threaten me. I was so angry I couldn't hold myself back from vomiting my hatred to him. "You're insufferable! I only spent a few hours with you and I am already sick of you!" I confessed but then I noticed I quite yelled at him. I also noticed how silent the area became and I felt everyone staring at us.

"Who do you think you are just because you're the Girl on Fire?" he snapped back at me. All his seductive, cool posture was gone. He was as angry as I was.

"Keep your voices low, you two!" I saw Peeta running towards us as he yelled at us—mostly me. He stood in between me and Finnick now and he was throwing me daggers from his eyes. But I had done nothing wrong!

"And who do you think you are just because you're the Capitol darling?" I snapped at him, totally ignoring Peeta.
Finnick took a step closer to me and now Peeta was sandwiched between us. He put his hand on Finnick's chest to stop him but Finnick didn't seem to notice his presence at all. "Don't call me that."

"Or what? You'll kill me in the arena? You're already going to do that anyway!" I yelled back at him, again unable to steady my voice.

That's when he finally looked at Peeta who looked bewildered. "I am breaking our alliance. I am absolutely in no way teaming up with this fireball in the arena." He told Peeta.

Now it was my turn to look bewildered. "What?"

"I convinced him to become allies with us Katniss. He came to tell you that while you were trying to tie knots." Peeta explained and my eyebrows furrowed.

"She was doing quite bad anyway." Finnick said from there as he rolled his eyes.

I narrowed my eyes at him. "You know what? It's me who is not teaming up with you, you cocky man!"

That's when I heard a loud laughter nearby. I turned my head around to see the girl named Johanna—who stripped naked in front of me, Peeta and Haymitch in the elevator—standing there, laughing histerically. "You two are fighting like stubborn, married couples!" she said and kept laughing. There was something odd with the way she laughed but I ignored it. She had a point. We were fighting like two stubborn people but I didn't agree to the married couples part obviously. If I ever married this man—which would obviously be by force, I'd die on the second day of our marriage. Or I'd just kill him because he was absolutely and utterly an intolerable person.

I looked at Finnick who was also looking at me and noticed how stupid our fight actually was. We were two being stubborn just like Johanna pointed out and we were for no reason threatening each other. Yes, I really disliked him but not as much as I actually claimed to—or rather wanted to. Maybe I only disliked him because he was so... perfect. Nothing was wrong about him. Not his features, not his looks, not his techniques, not his way of fighting...

I sighed. I was jealous. I had to admit it to myself and move on with it. He was perfect and it was a fact that could never change.

I touched Peeta's arm and he turned around to look at me. I smiled at him and nodded, assuring him it was okay. He hesitantly moved away from us and left the two of us alone again. Though, everyone was still watching us from the corner with curious eyes.

"I forgive you." Finnick told me, smirking.

I gritted me teeth. Here he goes again. "I didn't say I was sorry."

He shrugged. "You were about to."

"No, I wasn't." I insisted.

But he, instead of saying something back as a reply, thrust out a hand to me. I looked down at it for a few seconds and then looked at him. If I held his hand, it was truce. And it meant we were going to become allies.

So I did the only logical thing I could do to save both me and Peeta some time from my stupidity. I shaked hands with Finnick Odair. The Finnick Odair.
Then he left without uttering another word but I saw him smiling wide at me. Peeta, from far away, rolled his eyes and smiled at me.

Haymitch was going to love these news.
Seperation

Chapter Notes

In this chapter, they're in the arena, already teamed up as Johanna, Finnick, Wiress, Beetee, Katniss and Peeta. Let's see where all this goes, shall we? (;

By the way, for some weird reason, I didn't kill Wiress so she is currently with them but you will see it when you read it anyway... so...

Here's the new chapter! Enjoy (;

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Everything was going according to the plan... supposedly.

In my opinion, we were doing everything wrong. I mean, we teamed up with a lot of people unnecessarily. When Johanna brought Wiress and Beetee to me, saying that she brought them because I once wanted both of them as my allies, I knew we were in big trouble. We teamed up with a lot of people that we knew we were going to have to kill. Plus, the more I got to know them, the more I liked them. Because in the end, none of us wanted to be put back in the arena. All of us were here because of President Snow and we were just protecting our beloved ones by playing this wicked game of his... for the second freaking time.

I sighed as I thought all of this. I was now walking in the woods to get water for the others with the spile Haymitch sent us. But I wanted this finding-water journey to end as quickly as possible because I was walking with Finnick Odair, the annoying sex-slave of Panem. Well... Maybe that was a harsh way to describe someone. Let me try again... Finnick Odair, the arrogant bastard who constantly flirted with me and teased me in front of everyone. He was obviously having fun with all of this but I was not. What's more annoying is, everyone always laughed along with him when he teased me and I got angry. Even Peeta laughed along with them! They were unbelievable. Apparently no one thought of his flirtious actions to be ridicilous.

"What are you thinking, Katniss?"

My thoughts were pretty much interrupted by the only person who I had been thinking about for the past few minutes. He whispered his question in my ear seductively and I felt myself blush like a teenage girl. Everytime he spoke in that voice of his, my cheeks would immediately blush and I would feel... dirty. His voice was like a furr surrounding your body; it was soft, elegant and charming. I absolutely hated describing it like this but there was no better way to explain it. Okay, unfortunately, Finnick Odair had an effect like this on almost everyone around him... including me. But that didn't change the fact that I still disliked him. I wasn't head over my heels with him like those idiots back in the Capitol.

"Stay away from me, Odair." I told him as I inserted the spile in the nearest tree I found and started filling the water to the bended leaves we made. He gave me another leaf as the one I was holding filled up. We kept doing the same thing until we both had two leaves filled with water.
They didn’t hold much water in them, of course, but this was the best we could get. If Haymitch hadn’t sent us this spile, we would have been dead by now because of dehydration. I silently thanked him and felt grateful all over again.

When we were back to the beach, I gave Johanna and Peeta their water and Finnick gave Beete and Wiress their water. Finnick and I drank back in the woods so we were okay. Then Johanna went to Finnick’s side and they started talking. Beete and Wiress were also talking so none of them were paying attention to me and Peeta. I looked over to Finnick and saw him glancing at me over his shoulder. I immediately turned my head to Peeta who was smiling widely at me. I sat beside him on the sand and leaned my back against the tree behind me.

"You two seem to get along well finally." Peeta told me and chuckled.

I narrowed my eyes. "What are you talking about?"

Peeta nodded his head towards Finnick. "Him. You two seem to be on good terms finally."

I huffed. "That will not last long. Because I will be killing him when it comes down to that, I continued the sentence in my head. I didn’t want Peeta to think of me as a killer. I made a deal with Haymitch, a deal where Peeta would come out alive of the arena and I... Basically I didn’t want Peeta to remember me as a bad person when I die.

Peeta stared at me, obviously confused, but said nothing. Then I looked at Finnick and saw him still talking to Johanna, chuckling at the same time. I sighed. Could I really kill him, I had no idea. I didn’t know if I could shoot my arrow right to his heart and watch him choke on his own blood, listen to his heartbeat slow down every second. I noticed, I never actually hated him that much. At least I didn’t hate him enough to be able to kill him. But I didn’t know if I could say the same about him. Eventually the time was going to come to that and he probably wouldn’t hesitate to kill me first.

Suddenly I felt... strange. When did I even grow a soft spot for Finnick Odair? I was being stupid. No matter what, all of us were making plans about how to kill each other in the future. We were six people now, yes, but that number wasn’t going to last long and we all knew that. Even if we didn’t kill each other, the other tributes were going to come to hunt us down. Sooner or later, all of us were going to become enemies and no alliance was going to be kept.

A kiss to my cheek interrupted my thoughts and I looked at Peeta who just pressed his soft lips to my cheek. "Everything's going to be okay, Katniss." He said and caressed my arm lightly.

I shook my head. "No, it is not, Peeta. Unfortunately, it is not."

He was about to say something back when I heard Johanna scream. "Behind you, Katniss!"

Before I could even realise what was going on, someone appeared from behind the tree and grabbed Peeta from his shoulders, stabbing his knife into his right shoulder. Peeta screamed in pain but fought the guy who just stabbed him and managed to take away his knife with his trembling hand. The guy—whose name I couldn't remember at the moment—dragged Peeta under him and punched him on the face as hard as he could, also trying to take his knife back from Peeta. I still couldn't register what was going on and stood there frozen, looking at Peeta's wound on his shoulder. Then I heard someone screaming my name. It was Finnick's voice and that made me finally come to my senses as I reached for my bow and arrow immediately. I shot my arrow right to Gloss’ heart—whose name I finally remembered clearly—and watched him fall down to the ground with a groan. I felt relief to see him die and I knew it was wrong. But this was war and they were not on our team.
"Peeta!" I screamed and kneeled beside him, taking the knife from his hand. Then I turned around and saw Johanna and Finnick fighting with Cashmere. They were both protecting Beetee and Wiress because we needed them.

"Wiress, Beetee! Over here!" I called them over and they ran to my side immediately. From the corner of my eye, I saw Finnick finally killing Cashmere and making his way over to us. Johanna also followed him.

"Is he okay?" Johanna asked as soon as she came to Peeta's side. Peeta groaned and I tried hard to hold my tears back. A few minutes passed as we discussed on how we were going to rescue him but then a little flying parachute landed right beside Finnick. He opened the small box attached to it and smiled.

"This is from Haymitch. He tells you to use it wisely." Finnick told me and handed me the box. I looked into it and saw a kind of balm which heals your wounds almost immediately. I remembered this from the previous games because Haymitch sent it back then too. I smiled and applied it to Peeta's shoulder, using just enough amount of it. The rest could come in handy later.

"Help me carry him to the woods." I told Finnick and he nodded. We carried Peeta into the woods with Johanna, Beetee and Wiress following us. I had no idea how long we carried him but when we made sure the place was clear, we finally stopped. I took a deep breath and looked at Peeta whose eyes were half closed. He was sweating so much so I knew I had to find water for him. But then Beetee said he had a plan and we all paid our attention to him.

The plan was literally crazy... And brilliant.

Attaching wires to a tree and connecting the wires with water so we could kill all other tributes by electrocuting them? Who was left anyway? Not many of them were out there but of course they were all still a threat. Yet, we agreed to it and promised to keep Beetee and Wiress alive in return of their help with coming up with this "genius" plan.

The only problem was, Peeta was going to stay with Beetee and Wiress. At first, I suggested taking the coil through the jungle and then drop the metal spool into the water with Peeta but Beetee told me he was promised to be kept alive. So someone had to stay with them in this process. Johanna, for some weird reason, volunteered to stay with them and it only left me and Finnick together.

And it was settled. Johanna and Peeta were staying to protect Beetee and Wiress whereas me and Finnick were going to get the coil through the jungle, unwinding the wire as we were going.

When it was time to go, I kissed Peeta on the cheek and whispered: "I'll see you at midnight."

I knew it was a hard chance for me to get back to him—because probably around there somewhere, me and Finnick were going to try to kill each other—but I still had hopes. I wasn't in love with him though, contrary to popular belief. I just considered him as a genuine, good friend. Like Gale. Well, my relationship with Gale was a little more complicated than that. But the whole deal with Peeta... He was so precious to me and I knew how it made him sad to see me fake everything. I didn't love him and I never felt anything when I kissed him and he was well aware of all of this. Yet, he never wanted anything more from me. So we stucked to being friends who had to act crazy-in-love all the time.

But the thing was, when I walked into the jungle with Finnick by my side, what I didn't know was that it was my last time kissing Peeta ever again...
When I woke up and opened my eyes, the first thing I remembered was me kissing Peeta goodbye and walking into the woods with Finnick. But then I looked around me and saw I was no longer in the arena. I was in this white, boring room with so little furniture in it. I hurriedly got out of the bed they apparently put me in and suddenly felt dizzy. My knees weren't strong enough to hold me so I collapsed and found myself staring at the marble floor. I couldn't recall a thing and being so weak wasn't helping me at all. The more I tried to remember what happened back in the arena, the weaker I felt. I couldn't think properly and I guessed it had something to do with the needles in my arms. Of course, when I got out of the bed, they came out of my arms because their wires weren't long enough.

Wires.

Then I remembered everything...

*Flashback*

I was in the jungle with Finnick, carrying the coil to the beach, unwinding the wire as we went through the jungle. The beach wasn't far from our reach and I was glad about that. Finnick was oddly silent and serious and it made me uncomfortable. I know, I said I hated him when he flirted with me but this Finnick was scary. His one hand was holding the coil and the other was holding his trident. I was also holding my bow and arrow in one hand, in case we decided to kill each other after we dropped the coil into the water.

"Why so silent, Odair?" I asked him, trying to come up with something to talk about.

He shot me a look over his shoulder and said nothing as a reply to me. My eyebrows furrowed and I stared at him but said nothing.

When we finally reached the beach, he dropped the coil into the water and we both watched it to make sure it went deep enough in the water, just like Beetee told us to. Then Finnick looked at me and I knew it was time. I immediately got my bow and arrow ready, aiming at his heart. I was holding onto my bow like my life depended on it.

Finnick narrowed his eyes at me. "I thought we were going back to the tree." Then he aimed his trident at me.

"We both knew it would come to this, Finnick." I told him.

That's when he smiled at me and lowered his trident slowly. "This is the first time you ever called me Finnick."
It was my turn to narrow my eyes. "We're going to kill each other and you seriously only focus on what I call you?"

He started walking towards me and I held my bow tighter, not knowing what to do. "We are not going to kill each other, Katniss. Put your bow and arrow down."

I snorted. "Hah. Like I would do that." I mocked him. But then suddenly he jumped right on me and before I could release the arrow, he held my bow in his hand. I attacked him, punching him on the face and knocking him down. He was on the ground and before he could stand up, I kicked his side and took my bow from him and ran. I ran as fast as I could back to the tree. I had no time to fight him. He would win anyway. And I didn't know why but I had no guts to kill him. Just not yet.

But when I came back to the tree, no one was there. Where was everyone? More importantly, where was Peeta? I was out of breath but I still managed to call for Peeta. No one answered me and I panicked. I heard the thunder and looked up at the sky to see the next thunder would be on this very tree I was standing next to in a few minutes.

I looked around myself and screamed for Peeta again. Then I heard someone coming and held my bow ready. I waited to see who it was and a few seconds later, I saw Finnick standing afar from me.

This time, I was going to do it. I had no other choice but to kill Finnick or he would kill me. I was about to release my arrow when I heard him say: "Remember who the real enemy is."

I knew that phrase... It was what Haymitch told me before the games.

I stared at Finnick for a moment and then thought killing him wasn't going to change anything. If I was going down, everyone else was coming with me. Peeta was probably dead by now so I had no other choice.

I aimed my bow to the sky and shot my arrow to the sky when I saw the thunder coming.

*End of Flashback*

Then it was all blackness for me. The last thing I remembered was that and then I woke up in this room. I had too many questions to ask but no one around to answer. I tried to get up but I couldn't feel my lower body so I stayed on the floor. I was about to pass out when I heard someone calling my name, shaking me by the shoulders.

I knew the voice very well.

My eyes opened wide and I saw Finnick shaking me by the shoulders. Defensively, I tried to punch him but he held my fist and stared at me. My vision was blurry so I couldn't really see him. The only thing crystal clear was his sea-green eyes in front of me.

"What happened here, what have you done?" he murmured as he laid me down on the bed gently.

"Go away..." I tried to talk but words were wobbling on my tongue, coming out of my mouth as a small whisper.

Then I felt his hand on my cheek, caressing it lightly. "Calm down, Katniss. I am not here to hurt you."

I would have laughed to that if I had the strength. He was the last person I would trust after all we've been through.
But, *wait a minute.* He was *alive.* We were *out* of the arena and he was alive.

"You're... alive... Peeta... is he..." I again tried to talk but failed.

"I promise you, when you feel better, I'll tell you the whole story. Just rest now." He told me and I felt him kiss me on the forehead. I was too tired to say or do anything I just stayed still. Then I felt the pain all over my body. My arms were aching, my back felt uneasy and I had this massive headache in my head. I groaned in pain and understood what those needles were for. Then I blacked out because I couldn't bare the pain anymore.

I felt anger before but this... this was something way different than simple anger. I felt so many emotions at the same time and I couldn't even figure them out myself. I yelled at Haymitch, tried to stab one of the needles in my arms to him and then blacked out again. They told me everything about the rebellion. They didn't skip a part because I wanted them not to. But it was a hard time for me to process everything in my head.

They told me Peeta was in a really bad condition. They, thank God, managed to get him out of the arena but he was attacked by the Careers before they could reach him in time so right now, he was in intensive care unit, out of my reach. Also, he was in the other ship, not the one I was in. They—and by they I meant Haymitch and the game maker Plutarch—put me in the same ship with Finnick, Beetee and Wiress. Johanna was with Peeta in the other ship so there was no way I could see him. I only had to trust their words about his condition—which was impossible in this state. I trusted Haymitch as a mentor, as a friend, but he betrayed me. He kept the truth from me, he lied to me.

And then there was Finnick. Even *he* seemed to be a part of this plan this entire time. He could have told me too, but *no.* Everybody decided to keep the most important news as a secret from me. I really wished they would all go to hell and leave me all alone.

I was undressing to have shower when I noticed the bracelet on my arm. It said *"unstable."* It was my hospital bracelet and it said unstable on it... Well, *screw them.* Oh yes, *I was* unstable. I could just sneak into Haymitch's compartment room one night and kill him, and nobody could prove that I did it. These emotions were fogging my mind and I knew my psychology wasn't in it's best condition. I felt like the world was slipping away from my hands and I couldn't do anything to stop it. I had nothing and no one to hold on to.

With my trembling hands, I turned on the tap and waited for the water to get warmer. That's when I heard a soft knock on the door. I wrapped my towel around me and opened the door. I knew who I would see so I didn't really care if I had something on me or not. The sex-slave of Panem wouldn't mind these kind of stuff anyway. After all, this was his profession. Then I remembered I also yelled at him while yelling at Haymitch and I suddenly felt a little guilty.

*Katniss, please just calm down and listen to them." He told me cautiously.*

*"Fuck you and fuck everyone who is a part of this bullshit!" I yelled back at him.*

Then Haymitch stepped in and we started arguing, things got heated and I tried to stab my needle into his arm. Unfortunately, it resulted with *me* being stabbed and not *him.*

"They told me to check up on you." He told me as he stepped into the bathroom and closed the door behind him.

"How nice of them." I said sarcastically and stared at him, waiting for him to leave.
Instead, he reached out for me and pulled me closer for a hug. At first, I wanted to push him and punch him in the face but then I just stood there, listening to his calm heartbeat. His ex-girlfriend was being held by Capitol and it must have been hard on him. Though, I didn't know what kind of a relationship they had. After all, I never asked him about it.

"Your body is shaking, Katniss." He told me and pulled back a little. He looked into my eyes and I noticed I was indeed shaking. I didn't know what caused it. Maybe the medicines they gave me, or the sedatives they injected me. But for some reason, I couldn't control my body and I felt really weak all the time. So this was what they did to people who they thought to be unstable.

"Let go of me." I whispered but my voice didn't even convince me. If he let go of me, I would collapse immediately. In this condition, shower was obviously out of question for me. I just wanted to have a warm shower to calm myself and look what's happened. I was probably the unluckiest girl on the entire planet.

Before I could understand what was going on, Finnick held me in a Princess hold and started walking back to my room. When he got to the room, he closed the door with his foot and carried me to my bed, laying me there gently.

"You rest here and I'll call the nurse." He told me but I, with all my strength, held his wrist. He looked at me with a confused look on his face.

"Please Finnick, do not call the nurse. Don't you see what these drugs do to me? I just need some time to myself, not more sedative." I told with a weak voice. It was becoming hard for me to talk every second passed.

He looked at me for a few seconds before finally nodding. "Alright. But I'll stay here with you and if I see you get worse, I'll call the nurse. Deal?"

My lips formed a small smile and I replied back before closing my eyes to sleep. "Deal."
It took me days to finally accept the fact that I was the Mockingjay and people were depending on me to stop Snow and bring down the whole Capitol. People believed in me and I couldn't let them down. So in the end, I accepted being their leader and got involved to the plans they made. Just today they informed me that Gale was in the other ship with Peeta and Johanna. They told me that Prim and my mother were safe but it might not stay that way for too long if we don't get to work immediately.

They told me we didn't have a long way left to District 13 so I was a little excited to be honest. A district we all thought to be evacuated was actually there with people in it and it was a land I had never been in. It also frightened me not to know what I was going to face there.

I was in my compartment, sitting there thinking about everything that's happened in the past week. That's when I noticed, the thing I've been doing the most was thinking. I always wanted some time alone with myself to think. Normally, I would never have time to think but now I had plenty because there was nothing to do in these stupid little compartments. Well, there were televisions but they only had Capitol channels and I had no intention of watching those stupid reality shows that could make you go numb if you watched a lot.

I sighed as I looked at the plate beside me. They gave me my dinner an hour ago and it still laid there untouched. I didn't feel hungry, I didn't feel pain... I basically felt nothing. Maybe it was the sedatives they gave me before, but for some reason, I went numb. Nothing they said, they did, they showed affected me. As if nothing mattered anymore but they actually did. They did matter and I couldn't feel it.

I got up from the bed and started pacing in the compartment. I wondered what did Finnick and Beetee do to pass time but then I remembered Beetee was still in a deep sleep whereas Wiress wasn't talking at all. They were both in a very bad condition but the doctors said they'd get better in a week or so. They said Beetee—even though I didn't see him there—was very close to the tree so he got hurt the most. I felt sorry for him and Wiress—who literally went "nuts" after seeing Beetee's condition.

Then I decided I didn't want to go nuts either. So I made my way to the only compartment I thought I could go for some... actual conversation. Even though I still saw him as a traitor, I also knew he didn't have a choice when they told him all about this rebellion plan. All of my allies knew about it and they protected me, so it'd be stupid to put all the blame on just one person. And, I had no one left to talk or spend time with, so he was my only option in this case.

I hesitated before knocking his door. A few seconds passed without an answer and I turned around to leave. It was stupid of me to have come here in the first place anyway. He was probably with Haymitch and Plutarch, talking about some strategies—"Katniss."
My thoughts were interrupted when I heard him call my name from behind me. I slowly turned around and saw him standing there, no more the charming man I knew from before. He looked as tired as I was and it kind of relieved me to see someone was in the same condition as I was. Haymitch and Plutarch acted like everything was okay but it was not... and it never would be.

"I—uhmm..." I started off but didn't continue my sentence. What was I supposed to say? I just wanted to talk to him and now I couldn't even say hi to start a normal conversation. I was such an idiot.

He cocked an eyebrow at me. "Can I help you with something?" He asked with a confused expression on his face. Yet, there was still something elegant about the way he asked it.

I sighed and decided I would lie and go back to my compartment to sleep a little more. "I was going to ask you where Haymitch's compartment is but then I remembered where it was, so I'm fine. Thanks, though." I turned around to leave but he grabbed my wrist and turned me around to him. He probably didn't buy my lie.

"You've always been an open book, remember?" He told me and smirked as best as he could. There was no sexiness in his smiles anymore. His smiles didn't reach his eyes—those eyes which also lost all its spark.

Before I could say anything, he dragged me into his compartment and closed the door behind us.

"You came here to talk so... talk." He said as he sat down on the bed and patted the spot right next to me.

I awkwardly sat right next to him and stared at my hands, not knowing how to start a conversation. Then—stupid me—blurted out the most inconvenient question at the most improper time. "Who is Annie?"

His eyes opened wide and he looked at me, obviously surprised to see how blunt I could be at times. He opened his mouth to give me an answer but then closed it. He looked like he was hesitating to answer me. "It's a long story."

I shrugged. "I got plenty of time." I knew I was pressuring him by saying this but now that I already asked the question, I might have as well got an answer.

He ruffled his hair with his hand and sighed, not looking comfortable. This was a sensitive subject for him, I noticed that, but it was too late to take back my question. Besides, I needed a distraction and his story could be a good distraction.

"She was just like Peeta actually. A co-star for my love story, a story Snow invented himself." He said and looked at my eyes. "Before you and Peeta became the center of attention for the Capitol people, it was me and Annie who fooled them into thinking we were madly in love." He paused before continuing and my eyebrows raised. Even after all the things I've heard from Haymitch and Plutarch about this whole rebellion-Mockingjay stuff, this sounded more interesting to my ears and I was more surprised to hear these than anything else. I thought me and Peeta were the first ones to act to be in love. But from the way Finnick looked at me, I knew it was just the beginning of the whole story.

"When I first won the games, I became the center of attention for almost everyone in the Capitol. They adored me. Then after some time, people started sending me flowers, jewels, chocolates and stuff like that. I simply thanked them and appreciated the gifts but then... Snow paid me a visit." He stopped for a second and took a deep before continuing. "He told me I was attracting too much attention and people were fighting over me. To have me. He said things got heated in the Capitol
so I had to act like I was actually in love with someone so people would stop wanting me. Then he found Annie, and since we were both from the same District, he said she was the perfect match. We played along like that for a while but people didn't stop sending me gifts. Then Snow told me there was no stopping them, that they weren't convinced enough so... I had to... sell myself. Yet, even after selling my body, he wanted me to keep my relationship with Annie. He said people liked to see a man like me to fall for a girl like her."

My mouth was gaped open and I couldn't find the right words to tell him. Was I supposed to soothe him? Or say that I've been there? No, none of them seemed right. Because basically I hadn't been there. He became a sex-toy for those back in the Capitol and it was probably more disgusting than I could imagine. So I just stayed silent until it was awkward for both of us. It was then I finally couldn't stand the silence and decided to say something, stupid or not. "Have you... really loved her?"

He then looked at me with such a sad look in his eyes that it melted my heart. Finally, I saw the real Finnick beyond the mask he wore all the time. He opened up to me, told me his story and in the end, we were both more alike than I thought we were. When Plutarch told me that I was put in this ship with only Finnick for a reason, I didn't understand it. But now I did. It was because we could understand each other. That meant we could work well together, maybe heal our wounds—not the physical ones of course, but the mental ones. It never actually occurred to me that I could get along with Finnick but this wasn't Finnick Odair the Capitol darling I was talking to right now. This was the broken boy who became the toy of the Capitol when he was only fourteen. I suddenly felt pity inside me and did something I'd never do.

I hugged him.

At first he was surprised, I could tell. But then he hugged me back, his head on the crook of my neck, his breath tickling me a little bit. I pitied him and I knew he also pitied me. Because we were both in this stupid situation that we couldn't get out of.

He murmured a small apology before pulling himself back from me. I looked into his eyes and remembered how much I liked their colour. It was sea-green, reminding me of the oceans I've never even seen.

"You never stop surprising me, Everdeen." He said with a grin on his face.

I rolled my eyes. "That was just a one-time thing, Odair. Don't get used to it."

His grin widened. "What a shame then."

I got up from the bed and so did he. We looked at each other for a moment and then I made my way to the door. I knew the nightmares wouldn't leave me but still, I could use some sleep at the moment. My hand was on the doorknob when he grabbed my wrist and turned me to him—the second time that day and stepped in closer.

My heart started beating fast when I saw how close he stood in front of me. He leaned his head closer and suddenly our faces were inches away from each other. It scared me to be so close to him for a reason I didn't know of exactly. Maybe it was because of the fact that he was a playboy. Or maybe it was because...I could get used to being so close to him. Yet, I knew I couldn't—shouldn't accept that. It'd complicate things and it'd make me feel weak. And right now, all I needed was strength to fight my own demons.

Then his lips brushed against mine and I held my breath, not stepping back from him. I was sandwiched between him and the door. The hold of my hand on the doorknob became tighter as I felt his breath all over my face. His breath smelled like mint and I had no idea why I noticed that
in the first place.

"Goodnight Katniss." He whispered to my lips. I expected him to kiss me but he did no such thing. He suddenly pulled himself back and stood one foot away from me. My forehead creased as I stared at him intensely. What kinda game was *that* now? I felt anger building up inside me, finally coming to my senses. I clenched my fists as I narrowed my eyes at him, trying to stay calm.

"Goodnight." I didn't want to go further about this whole situation to be honest. Because he was just being Finnick Odair and he could find a whole bunch of excuses to *not being seductive* at all. Besides, this was his *nature* so I had better get used to it as soon as possible. We were going to fight against Snow side by side, I had to learn to bear with him. We couldn't just go around fighting with each other on a battlefield, right? I was thinking like a mature person, unlike him.

So I turned my body to the door, hand still on the doorknob, deciding not to think through all this. But before I could open the door, I felt his hand on my neck, possessively turning my head to him. I had no time to think, to act, to push him away when he crushed his lips to mine. My body instinctively turned to him which only caused him to deepen the kiss and I immediately put my hand on his chest to push him away. Then I heard his heartbeat underneath my palm and how rapid it beat. I knew I had to act fast when I felt my knees slowly go wobbly.

I pushed him away from me as hard as I could and saw him smirking widely at me. "You just looked disappointed that I hadn't kissed you." Was all he could say before I gave him a big, beautiful punch on the face. He looked startled as his hand flew to his cheek, touching there and I, satisfied enough with my punch, stormed out of his compartment.

And I've certainly changed my mind; I *loathe* the guy.
Sometimes I think what I'd done wrong in the past to have deserved all these.

Today we landed on District 13 and they've made me meet this unbearable woman called Coin, the President of District 13. I didn't like her at all and nothing could change that. She was a strict, cruel woman towards me and Finnick and absolutely an insufferable person. Also, she was the so-called "real" leader of this whole rebellion thing. It was obvious she was having a hard time accepting my position as the Mockingjay. Not that I was happy to be the Mockingjay, no. I was everything but happy. I was pissed because all of this was planned without asking my opinion—or even permission. Those idiots came up with this plan and I had to play along or else my entire family would get killed.

I sighed as I left the meeting room and made my way to my—temporary—house, feeling the weight on my shoulders more than ever. I was only seventeen, for Heaven's sake, how could I lead thousands of people? I wasn't born to fight. I wasn't born to be merciless. I wasn't born to be a leader. No. I became all those in the passing time. I became a fighter when I volunteered for Prim, I became a merciless person in the games and I became a leader because people believed in me. I even saw a few women get killed just because they were braiding their hair the style I do. All of this craziness had to end and I was supposed to put an end to this. But, how? I had no one I trusted by my side.

Speaking of people I didn't trust, I heard someone walking behind me. I turned around and saw Haymitch walking towards me. I rolled my eyes and kept walking, acting like he wasn't even there.

"Come on Katniss, you can't treat me like this forever." He said and caught my wrist, turning me around to face him.

"What is it with you people catching a hold of my wrist?" I snapped at him angrily. "And I can treat you any way I please for any amount of time I consider to be okay." I turned away from him and kept walking but then he started walking beside me.

"We're gonna fight side by side, sweetheart. We have to get along." He said and I looked at him.

"Actually, no, we don't have to get along." I deadpanned and walked away from him as fast as I could. I sighed with relief when I finally reached home. I dropped myself on the couch, feeling its softness even in my bones. I was both mentally and physically tired so I really needed some sleep—even though I knew I could never sleep peacefully. Not after all I've been through.

While thinking about the past few days, I drifted away to a sleep full of nightmares.
I woke up to my own scream and looked at my right side immediately. In the nightmare, there was a dead body lying right beside me and its blood was all on my hands. I also checked my hands to be sure it was indeed a nightmare. When I was certain none of it was real, I slowly got up from the couch and made my way to the kitchen. I wasn't hungry but I needed to drink some water. I was thirsty and finding a bottle of cold water in the fridge felt like finding treasure at that moment. I drank the whole bottle with only a few gulps and felt refreshed. But when I heard my door being knocked, all the freshness went and anxiety took place again.

I, with small steps, reached the door and hesitated before opening it. Then I heard his voice through the door.

"Katniss, it's me."

I rolled my eyes. "Go away Finnick. I don't want to see you." But my hand still didn't let go of the half turned doorknob.

"I just want to talk." He said but I heard the uncertainty in his voice.

I huffed and opened the door wide open. I made my way to the living room and heard him close the door behind him, following me to the room. I stood in the middle of the room, my arms folded on my chest, waiting for him to start talking. But when he said nothing and just stood there in front of me, I talked instead of him.

"You came here to talk, so... talk." I quoted him from before and saw him smirking at me. But his smirk disappeared quick.

"To be honest, I am here to say sorry. I just woke up from a nightmare where you killed me so..." I knew the last part was a joke to lighten up the mood but my anger towards him wasn't going to pass easily.

I just stared at him and then saw him staring back at me. Suddenly, everything about his beautiful face, shining mischievous eyes was gone and something else entirely covered him up. It was like his mask dropped and there he was, Finnick Odair, vulnerable and weak. His shoulders dropped slightly and he sighed.

"They're torturing her, Katniss. They told me she's being tortured."

I didn't need to ask who she was because I knew too well. I saw him slowly walking towards the couch and sitting on it, trying to keep his balance while doing that.

"I'm sorry Finnick." Was my only reply to him. What more could I say? That I was going to save her? Well... I couldn't guarantee that, nobody could. It'd be unfair to give him high hopes about her. All in all, she was being held by the Capitol.

Then he slowly looked up at me. "Is that all you got to say? Katniss, we got to save her."

"I can't promise you anything, Finnick." I said and shrugged. I knew I was acting like a cold-hearted bitch but that wasn't my intention at all. I was basically telling him the truth. Plus, I honestly didn't feel like helping him. I still didn't trust him and his odd behaviour weren't helping. Also, I didn't know this Annie girl whatsoever. She was absolutely not on my priority list.

That's when he stood up from the couch fiercely and stood right in front of me. "You're the Mockingjay, Katniss. You are the leader. You can do it, you just don't want to."

I saw so much anger in his eyes that it scared me. I looked away from him, trying to stay cool. But he grabbed my upper arm and squeezed it tightly. "I've done nothing wrong to earn your hatred."
He hissed at me, squeezing it even tighter. That made me squeak like a little girl.

I struggled under his tight hold. "You've done everything to earn my hatred, Odair." I snapped back at him. But he was not letting go of me and my arm started to hurt so much.

He rolled his eyes. "Is it because I kissed you or is it because you liked me kissing you? Which is it, Katniss? Are you sure the problem isn't you and not me?" He deadpanned and I froze.

I narrowed my eyes at him. "Let go of me now."

He narrowed his eyes too. "Or what? What are you gonna do, Katniss? Kill me? I'd like to see you try."

His words made me feel like my blood was boiling inside me but I did nothing at all. The team needed him so I couldn't risk killing him. And, I had no weapon with me in the District, or in the house. I only had my bare hands and I didn't think I stood a chance against him with only my bare hands. He was much stronger than me, I faced that fact a long time ago. So I just kept staring at him and his hand on my arm. I didn't even feel his touch anymore, I felt numb there already.

"I will not kill you Finnick. They will. Right now, they need you. But when they're done with you, they'll be the ones to kill you without hesitation, not me." I said calmly and shrugged. Here, I stated another truth. What an honest girl I was.

Then he let go of me and stormed out of the house, just like I stormed out of his compartment days ago. My days here and in the ship were going to be hell because I was turning everything into a mess with the only person I was supposed to get along with. The thing keeping me hopeful was that Peeta's ship was going to land on District 13 within two days. But he was still unconscious. Maybe I could interact with Johanna a little but she was a friend of Finnick's so... I was all alone in this. I was all by myself.

And I chose to be alone in this. Stupid me.
I started believing that everything was gonna get better. Finally, I had hope. Because right now, Peeta was sleeping in his hospital bed with a steady breathing. The doctors said that, slowly but eventually he would wake up with less than a few scars. The doctors were doing their best to heal him because they knew he meant a lot to me, to Mockingjay. And if I wanted something, I'd eventually get it. That's why right now, I felt happy. Plus, Gale was also with me the whole time so that also helped a lot. I finally had hope for everything to get better around here. Somehow, Peeta's slow but rhythmical breathing became my strength in the past few days and it felt good to feel strong after a long time of constantly feeling weak.

I excused myself from the hospital room for a while to take a walk. I needed some fresh air and the weather was really good today. It was sunny and there was a breeze that felt like someone was breathing on me. I looked up at the sky and felt—even for a second—free. Then I saw him approaching me from the corner of my eye. After that night in my house I never saw him again. He avoided me at all costs and I avoided him likewise. I knew I acted like a complete bitch that day but I had to. I didn't want to get closer to him. It was a selfish thought, to sacrifice a human life—which was Annie's in this case—not to get close to a man I dislike. Or like. Or hate.

Okay, I had no idea about how I felt towards Finnick Odair and that was annoying me. There was something inside me that I couldn't name towards him but I didn't know what I felt about a guy. So the right thing to do was to save Annie, I knew it. Well, maybe because Peeta was going to wake up or maybe because I now had Gale by my side, I started thinking in more positive ways. To be honest, I had a lot of alone time to myself while waiting for Peeta to wake up. I stayed in his hospital room day and night and sometimes I even talked to him, knowing he didn't hear me. I asked him whether I was doing the right thing or not, even though I knew I wouldn't get an answer.

In the end, I decided I would help Annie but I didn't know how to tell Finnick about this. He was probably really mad at me and the tension between us wasn't helping whatsoever.

So when I saw Finnick coming my way, I knew I had to take the first step. "Hi." I said with a small smile on my face. It wasn't a fake one but the smile didn't reach my eyes either.

"Hi." Was all he said before walking past me. I was surprised because I thought he was approaching me but apparently he was just going to the hospital—which I had no idea why. He couldn't be going there to visit Peeta, right?
I couldn't be going there to visit Peeta, right? So I walked after him and caught him by the arm. "How are you?" I blurted out, as if nothing was wrong between us.

He cocked an eyebrow at me and stayed still, apparently expecting me to continue. So I did. "Finnick, I'm... sorry about earlier." When he kept staring at me, I continued. "I will help Annie. I promise."

He stared at me for what seemed like an eternity and finally sighed in relief. "Thank you." He took my hand in his and squeezed it for a second before letting it go immediately. It was a simple gesture so I smiled in return.

"I see Peeta's getting better." He said and smiled genuinely.

I nodded. "Yeah, that's what the doctors say."

"I'm happy for you." He said and looked over my shoulder, eyeing someone with a strange look on his face. I turned around and saw Gale standing there, frowning.

"I should get going. See you around." I heard Finnick say from behind me and I turned around to say something back but saw him already walking on the same path he came from. I was confused to see him leave just like that but then again, what was left there to be said? I apologised him, he thanked me, he told me he was happy for me... End of conversation.

"Why were you talking to him?" Gale approached me as soon as Finnick was out of our sights.

My eyebrows furrowed. "Do I have a reason not to?"

Gale looked surprised by my respond but said nothing in return and just shrugged. "I don't know. It just looked... weird."

"I'm going to help him save Annie from the Capitol."

He narrowed his eyes at me. "Annie—the crazy victor, right? Why are you even helping him?"

Now it was my turn to narrow my eyes. "I don't like your tone, Gale. She is being held by the Capitol and she is a human, just like us. She deserves to be saved."

Then he rolled his eyes and waved a hand at me. "Do whatever you want Catnip." Then he approached me and put his hand on my shoulder. I suddenly remembered him kissing me before the games and felt my cheeks burn. They were probably a visibly red already and I hated myself for acting like such a teenage girl. Well, basically I was a teenage girl but not in my case. Plus, I didn't even see Gale in that kind of way. He was just a dear friend and absolutely nothing more.

"Just...be careful, okay?" he whispered as he stared at me with a meaningful look in his eyes. He didn't want me to just be careful, no. He wanted me to be careful towards Finnick. He wanted me to not fall for his charms. He wanted me to be suspicious about him all the time. I knew all these from just a look from him because I knew him too well.

The thing was, I was a little late to that. Because deep down inside I knew, I had fallen for Finnick's charms a really long time ago.

_Stupid me._
It had been six weeks since Peeta woke up.

It had been a week since everything turned into a disaster and I'm going to tell you step by step, how it managed to turn into a disaster so quick and so suddenly.

First, Coin sent me and Gale together to fight the Peacekeepers and get into the Presidential Palace to fight Snow, also setting a trap on our way back so we would die before we would even reach the shelter. That was when I found out she really wanted me dead. When Haymitch had told me about it, I told him to piss off and went my way. Apparently, he was right and he was just trying to protect me. I was an idiot to have not believed him.

Luckily, we were ahead of time when we got out of the palace and so when the trap bomb set off, we weren't there. Well, we were near it but the explosion didn't quite reach us. I couldn't say the same about the Peacekeepers that kept following us since the Palace.

What's worse was, Snow wasn't even in the Palace so we had been there for nothing. Well, not for nothing.

The worst part of this all was, I managed to get Annie out of there. But she was a complete mess. She kept yelling at us, screaming Finnick's name all the time, also telling us and to an invisible Finnick how much they hurt her. She yelled at him for not having come to rescue her from them. She was trembling vehemently non-stop and nothing we said or did helped soothe her pain. We were running away from the Peacekeepers when the bomb set off and dear Lord...

I told her. I really told her to keep running but she just shook her head and told me to keep going, that she couldn't do this anymore. I caught her by the arm, tried to make her come with me but she was strong. For a petite girl like her, she was really strong. She stood her ground and snapped at me for being so persistent. Then before I could say anything else, she was snatched by a Peacekeeper and Gale was holding my wrist, dragging me along with him to run. I remember him saying we had to go and I yelled at him, told him to let go of me but he wouldn't listen.

That's when I heard the loud, ear-deafening sound and turned around to see more than ten Peacekeepers lying on the ground, blood coming out of their noses, ears... and then I saw Annie. She was lying there too, bleeding so bad. I hurriedly ran to her, knelted beside her and checked her pulse. There was no beating. She wasn't breathing and her heart wasn't beating. She was dead. And I could have saved her. And I promised Finnick.

So when we came back to District thirteen, my first instinct was to put an arrow in Coin's heart but Gale talked me out of it. He told me we had to act strategically. He came up with a plan and forced me to agree to it. We were going to act like there was no explosion and we both saw nothing. We were already on our way to District thirteen before the bomb set off so we had no
idea there was a bomb. Basically, we were going to play *dumb*. But no matter what, those two idiots were going to pay for this. Just, *for now I had to agree* with Gale.

Though, it had been hard to play dumb when she was staring right at me, making my blood boil inside me. I never wanted to kill someone so bad in my life before, not even Snow. She was a cold-hearted betrayer and a manipulative bitch. But for the sake of everyone, I kept my mouth shut. I didn't tell anything to Peeta, because well... his psychology wasn't in its best shape. He wouldn't talk much, he wouldn't eat much... The doctors said his physical wounds were gone but they couldn't say the same about his mental ones. They told me it would take time for him to recover fully. That's why I left everything about Peeta to time.

*But* I had to tell Finnick about everything. His beloved one died right in front of my eyes and I couldn't save her. I was the last person who ever saw her alive... and Gale saw her but that didn't matter.

So I made my way to his house, noticing how dark and cold the weather was. Absolutely a *great* day with a *great* weather to announce the *great* news...

I sighed.

*I hated myself.*

I hesitated before knocking on his door but there was no escaping it. He was going to find out about Annie, one way or another. It would be better if he just found it out from me. Plus, he *deserved* to know the truth. Therefore, I knocked on his door and waited for an answer. A few seconds passed and the door flew open, a *just-out-of-shower* Finnick appeared right in front of me. I looked at his naked upper body and gulped loudly, trying to recollect my thoughts. Yet, it was really hard to think straight when he had just a white towel covering his lower parts.

He must have noticed my anxiety because he grinned at me knowingly. I blushed and cleared my throat, remembering why I came here in the first place.

Then I hated myself once again.

"Hi." He said with a charming smile and I had to look away from him.

"Hi." I said back and walked into his house without waiting for his invitation. I was going to go straight to the point.

He closed the door behind him and stood in front of me. "Is something wrong?"

"Annie's dead." I blurted out and instantly regretted it. My hand flew to my mouth as I noticed what I just did. I just told a man that the woman he loved was now dead. I should have said it in a better way... not that there was a *better way* of saying someone was dead.

There was a long pause before he eventually closed his eyes and sighed. He said nothing whatsoever; he just stood there still. I couldn't be sure whether he was okay or not so I put my hand on his forearm. His eyelids fluttered open and I looked at his eyes. They held no emotion so I couldn't tell how he was feeling.

"I'm *sorry* Finnick." I started with a quivering voice. "*I really* tried to save her. But... she was a mess and she wouldn't listen to me and I tried to convince her to keep running but she gave up and she told me she couldn't do it anymore and then there was a bomb that Coin set as a trap for me and Gale and then—"

I knew I was babbling but I hadn't realised it until Finnick hugged me. He didn't let me finish my
babbling and I was actually grateful for that. But him hugging me took me by surprise. He put his head on the crook of my neck, but before I could say something or move away, I felt something wet touching my neck. Then I heard a muffled hiccup and knew he was crying. My arms slowly wrapped themselves around his body and held him closer. That's when he let it all go and cried his eyes out.

I didn't know how long he cried but when a big silence filled the room, I knew he was finished. Then he moved his head away slightly but his arms were still on my waist, holding me close.

"I'm sorry." I whispered at him. He was so close that I didn't need to use a loud voice. Then he put his forehead on mine and took a long, deep breath.

"I don't even know how I feel." He explained. "I mean... I always thought she couldn't have survived it in the Capitol anyway. I was so sure she was killed already when I asked you to help me. But now... Now, knowing that she is dead for sure..." he couldn't continue and silence filled the room again.

I felt guilty for what had happened. I could have saved her, I had the chance. But she was a really stubborn girl and she didn't leave me much choice. Then there was Gale... I didn't blame him for saving me, no. His priority was me, not Annie so it wasn't a surprise when he dragged me along with him to keep running. Still, I felt guilty for everything.

I was about to apologise again when he hushed me. I shut up hesitantly and looked up at him. He was so close that I could see every single line on his face and the dark purple colour under his eyes let me know he was really tired. His sea-green eyes weren't shining anymore and it was obvious that they were slowly losing all their spark. He wasn't the lively, seductive boy who wanted to have a dance with me when we first met.

Thinking back, it was such a long road I rode with him.

We met at the Presidential Palace, then the cocky bastard kissed me and we argued like stubborn married couples—Johanna's words, not mine—and then we found ourselves back in the Hunger Games. After the games, everything slowly turned into a disaster.

Now we stood close to each other, his breath on my face, slightly tickling my nose. I suddenly remembered that he was very naked under my arms and I blushed, feeling warm all of a sudden.

I immediately looked away from him and cleared my throat, putting some distance between us. My arms fell to their sides and I took a step away from him. But to think he would do the same was a really stupid mistake.

As soon as I stepped away from him, his hand caught my arm and held me in place. My eyes opened wide as he pulled me by my arm and I found my body crashing with his. I wanted to complain, say something, do something, anything... but nothing came out. I was like a deer caught in the headlights. I put both my hands on his chest to hold him in place but when he leaned in closer to me, I couldn't push him away. I just listened to his rapid heartbeats and let him take my lower lip in his mouth, just like he did the first time he kissed me at the Presidential Palace. I—unintentionally—sighed into his mouth and found myself kissing him back. His kiss was hungry, begging for more. When he licked my lips, asking for permission to fully kiss me, I willingly opened my mouth to him and let him explore. Our tongues danced in a rhythm I didn't know existed and felt the weight of the world lift from my shoulders.

I never would have guessed that kissing Finnick Odair would feel this good. It was hot, overwhelming and passionate.
And I was enjoying it, I really was. Until my brain shouted a big NO in my head. It felt so good but so wrong at the same time.

When we both gasped for air, I knew it was my oppurtunity to escape. "This is—"

"Wrong. I know." He cut me off and continued my sentence. Our eyes locked for a second and before I managed to say something else, he crashed his lips with mine again.

Then I decided to let go.

I just wanted to feel good after feeling bad and upset for such a long time. And this felt good, really good.

No matter how wrong it also felt.
Epilogue

Chapter Notes

Warning: This chapter contains character death, pessimistic thoughts and unhappy feelings. No happy ending guys. Unfortunately...

Disclaimer: I do not own Hunger Games. All rights go to Suzanne Collins. I am just a simple fanfictioner.

A/N: English is not my native tongue so please excuse my grammar mistakes if there are any. (Also you might see slight changes in the Tenses in this chapter.)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

After a few more sloppy kisses and tears from Finnick for the loss of Annie, we went to sleep. I spent the night sleeping right beside him and it scared me. Actually, the thing that scared me wasn't the fact that I slept in the same bed with him, cuddling. The thing that scared me was that it felt utterly familiar, comfortable. It was scary to feel such comfort in the arms of someone who I used to hate.

That's why I freaked out. It was dawn and he was fast asleep when I exited his house with all the strength I had. I wanted to return to his bed, hug him and have a good night's sleep but that wasn't right. Not that I could differ what was right or wrong at this point. But when I arrived at the hospital and saw Peeta being discharged from the hospital, I felt butterflies in my stomach. I approached him with little steps. He saw me and looked at me for a few seconds before hugging me tightly. I felt tears in my eyes and I let them go. We both cried on each other's shoulder for what felt like hours. It was a refreshing feeling really.

Then I started avoiding Finnick at all costs just like I did back in the day.

I don't know how days, even months passed. Peeta wasn't the Peeta I left in the arena. He was someone entirely else. Yes, I could see that he loved me and yes, I could see he cared for me but when he looked at me, sometimes, even for a mere second I could see a twisted look in those beautiful eyes. Maybe it was because he had been unconscious for too long or maybe it was because I made a rash decision by blowing up the whole arena before finding him. I would probably never know unless I asked him.

Not that any of this mattered anymore.

The rebellion was over all of a sudden before we could understand what was going on. Coin and Plutarch were making their best counter move when a broadcast was on all our screens, showing us the death of President Snow choking on his own blood, because of his own venom. Then, who seemed to be the new President said he wasn't going to follow on President Snow's steps. None of us believed him but at least the rebellion and the whole war was over for now. We could finally breathe.

Then I found out the new president was killed by Coin's men. She wanted to be the new President. So she eliminated her only rival and attacked Panem. She and her army immediately got rid of all the Peacekeepers at their most vulnerable moment. She was not more innocent than
Snow, she had never been. And I never saw this coming, not even when she set up a trap for me and Gale.

But then one day, I was called in to the Headquarters. When I entered the building, I saw Coin's men aiming their guns at me and to a few people behind me who I guessed to be Finnick, Gale and Haymitch and found myself aiming my bow and arrow at two people at the same time. One of them was Coin herself and the other one was a soldier, who was standing rather too close to me than my liking. With just one command from Coin and I would be dead. The scariest thing was, behind Coin, Boggs had Peeta. His arm was wrapped around Peeta's neck, squeezing it a little bit. He also held a gun to his head, letting me know if I did something stupid, he would shoot Peeta in the head. I was scared. Yet, I stood my ground and held onto my bow with all my strength. Coin's business with me was finished and she felt like she could get rid of me and my friends finally. I wasn't gonna give it to her. If someone was going to die, it wouldn't be me. And if I was going down, she was coming with me.

So I did the only thing I could do.

I released my arrow and it hit Boggs' forehead.

At the same time as I released my arrow, Boggs fired his gun mercilessly, as if foreseeing what I was about to do.

"Katniss, no!" I heard Gale and Finnick say the same thing at the same time. Before I could understand what was going on, Boggs collapsed in front of me with Peeta in his arm and I aimed my arrow to Coin this time. Then a soldier tried to shoot me and I ducked, avoiding a gunshot right to my heart. I knew I was supposed to run and hide but I had nothing to lose. Not anymore. They could shoot me but they would never be fast enough to prevent me killing Coin.

I released my arrow again to a now-running Coin. It shot her from her knee and she fell down, as I aimed another arrow at her. But before I could release the arrow, someone ran to me and jumped at me, both of us falling to the ground. I struggled as I tried to get rid of the soldier on top of me but he punched me with such strength that it paralyzed me for a moment there. Then I, with blurred eyes, saw Finnick killing the man on top of me with his trident. He helped me get up, yelling at me things I didn't understand. My eyes were locked with Peeta's lifeless body on the floor.

I had nothing to lose.

As if I was programmed to do this since the day I was born, I aimed my last arrow to Coin who managed to get up by a soldier's help, and did my best shot. The shot got Coin in the back of her head, blood spilling all on her clothes. The soldier beside her froze for a moment and I knew it was my chance to escape. Yet, I couldn't. My legs didn't work, my brain didn't work. All I could think of was killing Coin and now that I managed to do it, I felt empty. As if I was a robot programmed to kill people and without that one single command, I had nothing to do.

I saw Finnick fighting in front of me with Haymitch, who was fighting with his punches. Gale was also fighting a few soldiers at the same time. I was a threat to everyone's life. I was even a threat to myself. I wasn't supposed to live. Since the first Hunger Games, I wasn't supposed to live. Why did I do such a rebellious act and gave him the berries anyway? I had no reason to keep us both alive. I could eat the berries and die. But stupid me, fought for both myself and Peeta. In the end, after all these years, it was Peeta who died nonetheless. It was supposed to be me.

Then I felt a really mind paralizing pain on my leg and I looked down at it to see it was bleeding. I had no idea how it happened or who shot me, but it was bleeding really fast. My body couldn't carry me anymore and I collapsed to the ground. The cold surface of the marvel floor wasn't unfamiliar to me. Also, Finnick coming to kneel beside me and calling me stupid wasn't unfamiliar
either. When I first woke up in the ship that was taking us to District 13, I tried to get rid of the needles in my arms and I found myself shaking. That's when I first felt the cold marble floor and the feeling of being absolutely miserable. Finnick was the one who helped me back then. He was helping me now too. Why, I had no idea.

He held me in a princess hold and he escaped from the Headquarters where I killed Coin. The last thing I saw and remember was Haymitch and Gale running with us right behind us. There were shootings, lots of blood and the ear-deafening sound of a bomb. The minute I understood there were people in there fighting for me too, I closed my eyes to a sleep full of nightmares in the arms of a man who always helped me fight my own demons. It didn't work this time.

Present Day

Six months passed since the day I killed Coin and caused Peeta’s death.

Since then, they kept me in a hospital kinda room in a mansion in Panem. People for some weird reason, kept me as their leader and those who supported Coin were either dead or in prisons. That's how everyone started living in Panem. Some people went back to their Districts in the hope of making it all better. I didn't know whether they managed it or not but I didn't wonder either. At least I knew that everyone was living in peace now. Well, peace is a tricky word really. For me, this wasn't peaceful because the only thing I could do was look outside the window everyday.

One of my legs, the one that the soldier shot, became dysfunctional because they couldn't remove the whole bullet from my leg. It was way too deep to reach it and the bullet was touching my spinal nerves. They said it'd be too risky to try and remove it. So they left half of the bullet inside my leg. After that, my leg became dysfunctional. The doctors were still trying to treat me but I didn't really care. I didn't get up and wander around the mansion anyway.

Oh, forgot to mention, we are living in a mansion now. Me and Finnick I mean. They said I needed someone with me the whole time. The doctors were calling me unstable, which wasn't a new deal. I barely heard what they said all the time anyway. I am not listening to anyone but Finnick and Haymitch. Haymitch is living in a mansion right across the street just like Gale. Gale is staying with my parents, because I refused to live with them. I mean, I am a mess, they don't deserve to see me like that everyday.

The area we are staying in was only for survived Victors. Finnick came up with the idea and I accepted it. Because I didn't care.

I say it a lot, I know, but I really don't care about anything anymore.

I still have disastrous nightmares and wake up screaming in the middle of the night. Finnick always wakes up and checks up on me. He needn't do that though. Because this nightmare of me kneeling beside Peeta with his blood on my hands, his wide open eyes staring at me will never go away. The nightmare is always the same, it never changes. Yet, I still can't get used to it. Every night is a nightmare itself.

I barely talk, I barely eat. Nothing is appealing anymore. Sometimes Finnick would come and tell me how people were doing, how happy and comfortable they were. I'd nod and smile a little bit, even if it is a fake one. Then he would kiss my forehead and leave me, letting me watch everything that was happening outside my window—which is nothing. Nothing is happening outside my window because my room's window looks at the garden. The only thing I stare at is the white roses in the garden. At first Finnick wanted to dispose them but I yelled at him not to. For some weird reason, I wanted them to stay. It reminds me of Snow’s pathetic but very-much-deserved death. But his death didn't give me any peace. I hadn't noticed Coin was much of a
bigger threat then him. If I had noticed that earlier, I would have acted more carefully. More strategically.

But I was a fool. I still am a fool. Because I cannot fight my demons and I am living a very pathetic life where I do nothing whatsoever. I am not living. I am only a body with no soul. I think they—the doctors I mean—finally deserve to call me "unstable". Even I can tell I'm unstable.

"How's Miss Sunshine doing today?"

He always calls me that. I'm guessing he thinks that someday I will actually believe him and stop being such a miserable twit.

I didn't reply him. I just rolled my eyes as he put my lunch on the table and helped me get up from my chair. I walked to the dinner table in my room with my crutches as Finnick helped steady me. The dinner actually smelled delicious but I didn't feel like eating.

When I did nothing but stare at the plate in front of me, Finnick frowned. "Please Katniss. You do this everyday. Aren't you tired of having the same conversation with me everyday? Well, not exactly a conversation though... just listening to my monologue about your health."

I looked at him. "Aren't you tired of telling me the same things everyday?"

He shook his head. "No, honey, I am not. This can go on forever and I wouldn't get tired of it. It's actually kinda fun when you look at it from my point of view. You're acting like a spoiled little brat, which is cute."

I snorted but said nothing. But when I saw a genuine smile on his face, I couldn't think of anything else but how beautiful he was. Even though I knew, deep down inside, he was not in a good condition either. Seeing me like this hurt him, I knew that. Yet, I couldn't bring myself to be better.

I didn't deserve to be better.

He got up from his chair and took it with him, putting it right beside mine. I looked up at him and he sat right next to me, still smiling. Then he, surprisingly, hugged me. He hasn't hugged me since... that day. Since the day I stormed out of his house because I was being a chicken. And it felt really good to be in his arms again like this. I guess I missed it really...

Without thinking, I slowly wrapped my arms around his waist and held him close. We stayed like that for a while before he pulled away. "Please, Katniss. I need to see you eat, even if it's a little bit. Please."

His pleading made me eat some of what was on the plate. I didn't look at what I ate to be honest. Then he kissed my forehead and thanked me for eating. When you think about it, it was laughable really. He kissed me because I ate. I was really pathetic. I never felt so much self-pity for myself before.

He helped me get to the chair in front of the window and then made his way to the door but I called after him.

"Finnick?"

"Yes, Katniss?" He seemed surprised by me calling for him.

I didn't know why I called after him though. I guess I didn't want him to leave. "Thanks." I said sincerely.
"Always." He said and smiled in return before leaving the room.

Tears filled my eyes once again and I found myself singing an old song I've known since my childhood.

Are you
Are you coming to the tree
Wear a necklace of rope,
Side by side with me.
Strange things did happen here
No stranger would it be
If we met at midnight
In the hanging tree.

Finnick's POV

When I left her room, I finally had hope. She finally ate something and hugged me back when I hugged her. For six months, I kept thinking she would eventually let herself die by not eating, drinking, sleeping. I kept her my eyes on her all the time. Never had there been a minute I wasn't by her side. I lost Annie; I wasn't going to lose Katniss. I wasn't sure she felt what I was feeling for her in the same way but I had hope. Hope was what has kept me going for all this time.

Then I heard her sing a beautiful but heartwrecking song. I listened to it until the end, at her room's door. She wasn't aware of my presence, so, even when she finished singing the song, she kept humming its sad melody. Nobody could understand what was going on inside her mind, but I could feel the weight on her shoulders. A weight nobody could lift. It was her conscious. It was the ugly feeling of constantly feeling guilty.

I found myself going up to her and kneeling in front of her chair. She was playing with her fingers on her lap, looking outside the window like she did all the time. I held her hands, squeezing them a little bit. She was still unaware of my presence; she was so caught up in her own little world. I wasn't going to let her slip from my fingers. I wasn't going to let her sanity slip away from her.

I wasn't going to leave her alone. I wasn't going to watch her go through what Annie did. No matter what.

I looked up at her and saw her looking at me. She finished her song with these four last lines, keeping her eyes locked with mine;

Are you
Are you coming to the tree
Where I told you to run,
So we'd both be free.

That's when I saw how dead she was inside already. I was too late to save her. Just like I was too late to save Annie.

Then I felt her hand on my cheek, her thumb wiping away a tear that escaped my eye.

"Don't cry." Were her only words to me before she turned her gaze to the window again. I knew what those words actually meant. She was telling me not to cry for her. She thought she didn't deserve anything. But she was wrong. Though, she was never going to understand how wrong she was.

So instead of leaving the room, I stayed right where I was.
Even though I knew I couldn't fix the broken pieces of her soul, the least I could do was stay by her side forever. And that was exactly what I was going to do.

Who would have guessed, a simple dance would lead to such bigger things...

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading this fanfiction, I'd luv to hear your thoughts on it.

xoxo Louvreangel

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!