

## Chapter 5

Everything is new to me. Not only this wedding but all of the things that are happening now.

First is my parents, they started to act as if they are loving and caring parents. And also my heart, it keeps on beating crazily.

"Are you okay?" Maru asks sweetly.

I forced myself to smile just to assure him that I'm okay.

He squeezed my hand.

I furrowed and look at him.

"Just relax. I'm here so no need to be nervous." He said to assure me.

I heave a heavy sigh. I look at him again, this time with a genuine smile on my face.

I mouthed 'thank you' to him.

"We have come together at the invitation of Mara Denise Almonte and Andrew Maru Ottave to celebrate the uniting in Christian love, their hearts, and lives. This is possible because of the love God has created in them, through Jesus Christ." The pastor started the wedding ceremony.

"Jesus said, 'I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.' This abundant life, for many people, is an impossible dream, yet God wants us all to have this abundant life and proved His love for us by giving His Son, that we might have this life."

"Another way that God provides for this 'full' life is creating those who will love us. Maru has found such a one in Mara hearts and spirits were drawn together before today by the Lord of all creation. Two lives are not united by ceremony, but only in the power, love, and grace of God."

"Maru and Mara are here to publicly declare that because of Jesus Christ's love, they too can truly love one another. As God demonstrated His love in Jesus, our Lord, Mara and Maru will demonstrate this God given love by giving themselves to one another and one for the other."

Can we truly love one another?

I shove that idea in my head. I am just feeling sorry because the thing that the Pastor has said is the opposite of what we have.

Maru gently squeezes my hand. I look at him.

"Are you okay?"

I just nodded and smile at him.

My eyes widen when he placed my hand on his lips and kiss it.

I furrowed while he just gave me a wink.

I shrugged. I just let him do what he wants.

"Maru and Mara, no other human ties are more tender, no other vows are more sacred than these you are about to assume. You are entering into that holy estate which is the deepest mystery of experience, and which is the very sacrament of divine love."

The pastor looks at Maru.

"Maru, will you have Mara, to be your wedded wife, to live together a er God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony; will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only for her so long as you both shall live?"

He looked at me, and he answered "I will."

A er Maru, the pastor turns his head to look at me.

"Mara, will you have Maru to be your wedded husband, to live together a er God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony; will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only for him so long as you both shall live?"

I look at Maru and then to the Pastor and answer "I will."

I didn't expect that I will feel happy at this wedding.

As I look at Maru something rather someone caught my attention.

I look at the person and there I saw Jana at the corner of the church.

And then reality hits me.

I feel sorry for her. If it weren't for me maybe these two will have their happily ever a er.

I suddenly felt drained. I lose the happiness I felt at this wedding.

I saw Maru getting the ring.

He placed the ring on my finger. "Mara wear this as a sign of my love and faithfulness to you."

I also get the ring and place it on Maru's ring finger.

"Maru wear this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness to you."

"Really?" He whispered.

I gave him a cold stare.

"Just kidding hon."

I just shrugged. Maru is in his playful self again.

Now we have to give our marriage vow to one another.

"I was writing my marriage vow, but I just can't think of anything." I started my vow.

"I was so young when I found out that you will be my husband. And I felt nothing."

"And even a er that we never became friends nor lover. And that's fine with me."

"And now that I came to know you for the past months, I can now say that I'm very happy that you are the person that my parents chose to be my husband."

"Thank you, Maru for being a good friend and I know that in the future you will also be a good husband."

"I promise you that I will be faithful and will always here to support you."

I felt relieved a er I'm done with my vow. I wasn't expecting that I will be able to deliver that well without stammering.

Maru grabs my hand.

"Hon I decided not to have a written or rehearsed vow to you because I don't want a scripted vow, I want to give it to you genuinely." Then he winked.

I chuckled.

"You're right, we were young when we found out that we are bound to be together forever. If people won't believe in forever then let's prove to them that forever exist and that is Mara and Maru."

"I always wanted to be close to you but I want you to do what you want to do. Date whoever you like. But surprisingly you never had anyone in your life. And for that I am thankful."

"I promise you hon that I will be forever faithful to you. And will be a good and loving husband to you."

Loving husband?

I gave him a sweet smile. I honestly don't know how to respond to that. Jana's face is running through my mind.

"I now pronounce you, husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride."

My heart started to beat crazily again. And I completely understand why. This is my first kiss!

"Don't worry hon I will be gentle"

I pinched him.

"Aw! Hon!"

The crowd laughs at us.

"Maru will you please behave!" I whispered.

"Yes, my dear wife."

I can't help but smile when I heard him call me wife.

He li ed my veil slowly.

He held my face and kiss me.

I close my eyes when I felt his lips on mine. It was so and gentle.

Everyone is cheering for us.

Maru keeps on kissing me. I so ly punch him to stop.

I felt my face heated because of that LONG kiss.

I give him a death glare.

"What? The pastor said that I can kiss you."

"But not that long."

"Okay, sorry wife. Let's just continue later."

"Shut up Maru!"

He hugs and started to caress me. "Okay, sorry wife." Then kiss me again.

When the ceremony ends, we started to do picture taking with our family and entourage.

We took again our last shot when Jana caught my attention again.

She's now crying. I look at Maru and it seems like he knew nothing about Jana's being here at our wedding.

"Maru, Jana's here."

He looked for her and when he saw her I saw him furrowed.

"I'm sorry," I told him.

"Shush don't be hon." He said.

"If it weren't for me, you would have married her."

"I don't have any plan on marrying her. You're the only girl I plan to marry."