

"Take me by my hand. Now, held it up high. Like this" said the she-elf. "Now, the other hand on my waist. There..." she made a smile, a lovely one. "Look at my eyes. Let the rhythm guide your reason". She moved, the Heir to the Kingdom trying to keep up the pace. "There, good. Follow the music and concentrate", she whispered only to him, yet I could hear her every word.

Both were dancing now, following the sound of the music... No, she was; my lucky brother was just a small doll into her arms. With every turn, the Kingmaker made the bracelets at her long legs sway and sing and spin alongside her gold and white dress. She led the dance and all the eyes on that room as she had led the hopes of the kingdom on her arms.

"I think he is still not ready", said the Kingmaker as the music came to a close, her voice directed to my father. "He may need a little more practice. It would be wise for one last lesson before the day."

My heart sank. This was supposed to be the last time yet my brother always found ways to have another meeting with her. I felt my stomach turn and heat rise from it. Another night with this sinking feeling, I whispered to myself. Oh, how much I cursed not being born the first, or the second, or the third, or not being a crippling shy kid.

Yet I felt comfort knowing the Kingmaker didn't see my brother as nothing more than a project, as my father and his forefathers were to her. Rumor said that she was once asked to name any price for her services to the crown; she had replied with a price so absurd no kingdom could ever hope to give... And yet, in spite of all that, she still served and taught and danced...

I wish I could had the courage to ask her about that. I wanted to know about what she longed for, what she had asked that time in return, why was she still here. What was like to be so loved, so perfect...? No. I just wanted to know her a little. Talk about anything but her work. Feel her close.

As the crowd started leaving the room, she walked next to me. "Did you spot it?"

"... My brother couldn't keep up" I managed, somehow. She smiled a little bit, her eyes encouraging me to continue. "He was not taking you as your equal but looking up to you, to your guidance. That was not what a king should do or be. He... didn't listen to what you told him this past two weeks." The she-elf went to say something but I interrupted "Forgive him. He did listen. He tried. He just... couldn't put that into action. Not yet."

The Kingmaker didn't reply, her expression behind a beautiful, imaginary mask. Was my answer not good enough? Did I make a mistake? I sighed, looking down. Words failed me once again. I wanted to ask so much but my head was a mess. How was her day? How did she always know what to do? Why was she so beautiful? I breath once. Twice. To still this beating heart... And when I did all that, she was gone.

This little, meaningless talks had been our only moments. She, asking me what my brother did wrong. Me, telling her what I thought it was. And after that I would be a mess till the next day.

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The night was at my window when I reach my bedroom. As I walked in front of the mirror, I took away my shoes and fancy clothes. I closed my eyes. I held my hand up high, the other would go on

her waist. I would practice this lesson as I would practice every single thing she taught my brother.

Today, as every day, I would dance alone.

Yet, when I closed my eyes, she would be there with me, in a room as pale as her skin and as radiant as her every move. There, I was no kid and she was no Kingmaker. I was her equal and she, my everything. "Good. Concentrate", she would say, mirroring my every move. We would dance and laugh and sing until the night of times, recalling every single moment we shared. And I would whisper in between songs, in between heartbeats, how much I loved her "And I, you", she would whisper back, the sweetest most sincere of words. "Now, open your eyes."

And after that, the magic would disappear. There would be no music, no pale and gold room. No bracelets at her long legs and no white hood over her head. No dance. No lessons. No hearts entwined. No king. No queen. No her... Only my sad impotence would remain.

"You did great. You took this lesson to heart as you did all of others before. You are ready," she said now, her hand up high, holding my own; her other hand on my waist.

My eyes were open, my heart on my throat. She was no dream. She was there in front of me. Tall, blonde and beautiful, basking in the afterglow of our dance "... h-how...?"

She smiled. "I have always been here, watching, waiting. Doesn't matter now. What matters is that you understand and you have grown and you are ready."

"Ready for what?"

"To be worthy of the price I once asked for", she whispered into my ear. "...Only if you want it, of course", she finished, the loveliest of blushes painting her perfect face.

The kiss we shared would be my reply.