

Fairytale

Von grmblmonster

Kapitel 1: Chapter 1

Nathan sat on a bench in front of that small village inn in the middle of this bustling city called Swordsforge. He watched the people walking over the market place, searching for something, buying stuff, offering vegetables, bread or meat and all the stuff you could buy within about 1 mile around this city. Especially different types of weapons. This region was famous for its weapons and weapon related things.

He sorted his small pack and the not very well hidden sword on his side, when he spotted a small group of girls, coming down from that fortress, sitting above that city like a huge, dark tomcat on the hunt, just waiting for the mouse to move. Their long dresses, embroidered with flowers, swept over the ground, leaving light dust in the air behind them.

Nate knew about the castle girls, the giggling mass of women always ready for a little bit of fun, may it be flirting, dancing or the more active things. He sighed quietly. With no money for a stay in the inn left he was willing to find another night's lodging. He was no dosser, he liked to call himself a roamer. Taking a job here, helping out there, always wandering around, sometimes as rich as a chieftain, sometimes as poor as a church mouse, he enjoyed his life this way. It was not his ancestry, which made him become this way. He was raised in richer parts of this country, there was no hunger nor cold winters in his life before. He could've owned the huge ground of his father, if he hadn't got this hunger for more. He blinked and shook of those thoughts. Time for some action...

He stood up, left a few coins for the drink on the bench and followed the giggling girls. He knew, that his charm would get him everywhere, so he started flirting with the girls, slowly wrapping every single one of them around his finger by his precise compliments, his charming facial expressions, his manners and after 2 hours, the giggling reached the point that implicates, that he'll be part of the party in that castle over there. Nate smiled self-satisfied. Some of those girls were good looking indeed, even if not one of them was very clever and they all looked and acted very alike. But for a warm and smooth bed no sacrifice was too much. And even the dumb girls were sometimes... something in the sentence one of the foolish pumpkins grabbed for his attention. When she talked about the archon...

"I'm sorry, Mylady, what was that?" He smiled at her, making her face turn deep red.

"Nothing." She giggled. "I just said, that our archon is very open-minded and employs researchers."

Nate tried to reconstruct what had waved at his attention, but he had been so deep in his thoughts, that he couldn't remember.

"Sounds interesting, indeed." He added, just to say something.

Meanwhile they reached the gates of the castle. From the distance it had looked dark and mighty, but when the gates opened, he stepped in a very light courtyard, that didn't look dark at all. It was decorated for the upcoming party with colourful bands and flowers and a huge bunch of people stood around. The girls disappeared, one by one, until the last one, a small and a little bit pudgy girl with a sweet and friendly face whispered her name in his ear, telling him to name that to the guy on the other end of the courtyard, giving away keys for guests.

Nate smiled and that last girl disappeared as well. He trotted to the line of people waiting to get a key, leaned against the wall and took a closer look around.

A scene caught his eye. Next to the entrance to the main hall was some kind of horse shag. In front of it stood a really huge horse in the colour of desert sand, dark mane and tail, the nostrils blown and uneasily paw his hooves. It was held by an older guy, looking at a woman, examining the horse with the most attentive gaze he ever saw. She wore a very unimpressive dress in a light blue, her hair looking darkish blonde and undone. In this very moment she reached out for the nose of that horse. It made a quiet sound, then stood still, letting the woman touch his head, neck, withers and back, examining his legs with her hands and letting her finally crawl the side of its neck. A huge smile spread over her face, dimples on her cheek appeared and she made a laughing and happy sound.

Nate swallowed slightly. This woman was wonderful, not comparable to the castle girls who brought him here. This one should be the one with the warm and smooth bed. And with her in it, it would be heaven.

She let go off the horse and nodded to the old man, still smiling, then patting the huge grey dog next to the old man on its head. She rose again, turning and looking over the courtyard. Her gaze caught his. She froze a moment, then her cheeks blushed and she gave Nate a small smile, that made his stomach jump and he replied the smile carefully.

"Hello, Sir?" Nate winced at the sudden voice next to him and looked irritated around. The guy next to him nodded in the direction of the key-master. "It's your turn, Sir."

Nate swallowed a last time, then looked again to that woman. She had looked down with still pink cheeks, and turned around now entering the main building. He sighed and turned to the key-master, quietly telling him his own name and the name of the maidservant, getting a huge grin from the man back and then a key to his hand. "Have

fun, Sir." The man bowed his head slightly, and a boy grapping Nate's sleeve. "I'll show you your room, Sir!" The blonde boy grinned as dirty as the older man and guided Nate into a small chamber in the lower parts of the main building.

The chamber was not very comfortable, but it had a bed, a cupboard and a washing place. Nate threw his pack on the cupboard, took off his woollen cloak and let himself fall on the bed. It was soft and smooth, and he sighed in relief, closing his eyes. That was just wonderful. One moment later, he was deeply asleep.

He awoke when somebody poked his cheek. His eyes sprang open and he looked into the warm smiling face of that maidservant. "Maybe you should get dressed properly and wash before the feast starts." She rubbed his chest and he made a humming noise, shaking of the pictures of his very delicate dream, involving that blue clothed woman and him and a huge bath tube. He had always lived by the motto "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush", so he reached out for that warm and tender body of that maiden, trying to get some comfort. She giggled and crawled into the bed. Her warm kisses and her body full of lust shook of the pictures of that other woman for a while, but when he was close to the climax, the picture sneaked back in front of his inner eye, pushing him into a wild ride and making him forget who lay under his body.

Later he entered the main hall in his more fancy clothing, looking around the huge tables full of food, people laughing, talking, flirting, singing, discussing everywhere. Nate searched a seat in a good position to watch everything and he found it in the lower end of the hall. He sat down, immediately holding a cup of beer in his hand, testing every bit of food that was in reachable nearness. A huge and satisfied smile appeared on his face. That was a very good evening, comfortable sleeping opportunities, excellent food, a good drink, music and...

In this moment the music stopped. The big door had swung open and a group of very fancy clothed people walked into the room. Nate straightened up, looking attentively in the direction of that group. Someone of them must be the archon, and Nate was as curious as always when he saw an archon. Mostly they looked alike in this country: elderly, slightly fat men with grey beards, trying to hide their tiredness. Sometimes you could see a young monarch, full of unreleased energy, keen on ruling the country, full of new ideas. But even those guys turn into the first sort within a few years.

Nate's jaw fell open, when he spotted the archon of this tiny country. It was her. Now she wore a huge and rich dress, completely different from that blue worn dress a few hours ago. Her hair was pinned up and she wore a thin silvery ring around her forehead indicating her status. She really looked completely different, but he could still tell it was her. Her smile looked less happy now, but from time to time, when her gaze fell on a special person, her eyes started to smile as well and a slight indication of the dimples came back.

She walked with the group of different middle-aged men up to the biggest table, right next to Nate's. When she went past him, her gaze fell on him too. The smile spread again, and to his amazement she blushed slightly, turning her eyes quickly down, trying to look normal again.

Nate blinked. Did she really blush at his sight? Good Lord, she did. His smile came back and his heart bumped in his chest.

She sat down and when she raised her voice to welcome the guests, his heart jumped some more. She had a wonderful voice, and even with that hint of dialect in it, it sounded awesome.

Nate sighed deeply and went on listening to her.

The evening went on, more beer in more mugs, the music went louder, tables were moved to make space for a dance floor. The vibes got more and more tense the more the people drank, and when the night was all black outside, in the main hall of the castle was a feast as big and loud like Nate has never seen one before. He stuck with a few beers and watching the female archon, drinking and laughing, and to his own amazement looking in his direction from time to time, blushing slightly. When she got up and started dancing with different men, he felt a sting in his chest. He tried to get rid of it by getting deeper in some conversations with different people. He already knew, that they celebrated the birthday of the archon, that her name was Elaine, that she took over the regents position from her father because of the lack of a son, she never married so far, the country's most exported stuff were custom made armour, the country researches on better weapon building systems, they were open to scientific researchers, the archon paid good for good work, the country...

Nate noticed a really handsome guy dancing the fourth time with the archon. He decided that maybe he should take over and get at least ONE single dance with that woman. Maybe this weird feeling inside him would go away, finally. He had seen the looks of that maiden in whose room he was going to stay, and maybe it wasn't the best idea to get back there with another woman's face in his head.

He cleared his throat, smiled his boyish charming smile to the older minister he was talking to and whispered. "What do you think, Sir... would she like to dance with a small man like me as well?" He nodded in the direction of the dancing Elaine, who was laughing while dancing, due to something her dance partner had said. The old minister grinned slightly, looking from Nate's smile to the archon and back. "Young man, when I think about her blushed cheeks a few hours ago, I would say she would love to dance with you. Even a blind man could tell that." He patted Nate's shoulder and pushed him slightly out of the chair. "Do it now or don't do it at all." Nate blinked irritated, then he saw the huge grin on the man's face and nodded grinning. "Thank you."

"I'm sorry, but I guess this now is my dance, Sir." Nate laid his right hand on the shoulder of Elaine's dance partner. The guy looked slightly angry, but let go off her hand and removed his hands from her waist, bowing to Nate and bowing deeper to the archon and buggered off. Her blue eyes caught Nate's dark ones and she blushed again, when he bowed his head to her as well. "May I ask for that dance, mistress?" He straightened up again and offered her his hand. She smiled widely, laying her hand into his. "Of course." Her other hand laid down on his shoulder and he moved his free one onto her waist.

They danced silently, just looking into the other eyes, moving to the music. Nate didn't care about the people around them, just holding her in his arm and dance with her was enough this very moment. This moment seem to last forever, until someone patted Nate on his shoulder and he had to give her free again, leaving her to another man to dance with.

Still completely stunned, he backed off, his eyes still on her and sat down on the next free chair, breathing heavy, trying to sort his racing thoughts.

"She is a fascinating woman, hm?" Nate turned his head, looking into the amused face of the old minister again.

"Yeah." He managed to reply. "Yeah, she is."

"You're a charming one, young man." The minister shrugged. "She likes that."

"I... I think, I had enough." Nate stood up, bowing to the minister, who gave him a confused look. "Have a good night, thanks for all the food, dancing and feasting." With fast steps Nate left the hall, not heading for the small bedrooms where a warm and comfy bed with a warm and comfy maiden waited for him, but for the courtyard.

Outside he took a deep breath, entering the small stairs leading to the wall. He took two steps at the same time, walking fast past a few meters of the wall and then sat down between two battlements.

Nate stared down the sleeping city under the perfectly clear dark sky with tons of stars and the huge half moon. He didn't plan that. He never felt that way towards a woman before in that short amount of time. He felt confused and helpless and... He heard steps behind him and turned round.

On the wall stood Elaine, her hands folded in front of her, her face uplifted to the dark starry sky. "It's a wonderful night." This wasn't a question, just a statement. He nodded, aware of her not looking at him. "I personally like those nights more when no feast is going on." She turned to him. Even in the dark he could tell, she was blushing again. This thought made him smile again. He instantly liked her blushing. He rose and walked to her, stopping right next to her, looking up in the sky as well. He could feel the look of her blue eyes on his face, so he turned the head to look at her as well. She was looking at him, her eyes dark with huge pupils, her gaze a little bit dizzy due to all the drinks, but still very attentive and examining. "You haven't told me your name." Another statement. "In contrast to you knowing my name for sure." Another

smile appeared on her face and made Nate's heart thump against his chest. "It's Nathan, Mylady." "Nathan." She repeated quietly, then she looked back at the dark sky. "I liked dancing with you, Nathan."

Nate slowly got the feeling that she wasn't used to ask, but just to point out obvious facts, but before he could finish that thought, she continued. "What do you search for in my little principality?" She looked back at him. "Did you gamble on charming me to get some free weapons?"

Nate backed off, blinking and raising his hands. He didn't expect an attack out of the sudden by her. "No, Mylady, I didn't even know about that fact about your country before I joined the feast..."

She frowned, her eyes becoming two small slits in her face. "You bewitched a few of my maidens. What for?"

Nate lowered his hands and sighed one more time. "I'm sorry, Mylady. I'm just a wanderer and I was..." His eyes met hers again. She had laid her head to one side, listening attentively to him and he suddenly got aware of the fact, that he didn't want to lie to this woman, never in his life I wanted to tell her something that was not true. "I searched for a warm place to sleep in because I ran out of money a few days ago." His shoulders sank and he looked down on the stones of that wall, looking awkward.

Elaine looked at this handsome man, who gave her those weird feelings. He looked ashamed and so honest, that something inside her melted. She smiled warmly, gently touching one of his upper arms. "You don't look like someone without money." She asserted, ignoring the feeling of the muscles of his arm through the textile of his tunic. She moved her hand away, a bit too quick and his dark eyes found her faces. One of his eyebrows slightly rose. Instantly she felt herself blushing again.

"I'm from a richer house, down in the East. But I chose to live the life of a traveller. So money comes and goes..." From his face she could tell that he was being completely honest towards her and she breathed in relief. "So, no bewitching the weapon-queen to get advantages?"

He laughed. "No, Mylady, I didn't even know, that the Archon of this district is a woman. And even if I had known that, I wouldn't have expected a beautiful young Archon like you." His laughter was deep but light, and in combination with that compliment, Elaine felt her cheeks burn again and a bashfully smile rose on her face. She wasn't really used to such light and charming compliments, normally passing over any compliments, concentrating on the important things. She got the gift of the gab as well, but this man took her ability to answer easily. So she swallowed and looked back to the sky in the lack of something else then his face to look at. For a moment, there was absolute silence. Only the slight hint at music being played somewhere behind them in the buildings, the short calls of an owl and the breathing of the man and the woman on the wall. Elaine felt his eyes on her face, examining it and she was surprised as she noticed the upcoming wish to please him. Then he did something, she

didn't expect.

"What about having another dance to the sound of silence, Mylady?" She looked down on his outstretched offering hand, then into his face. He smiled at her in a charming, slightly rascally way and to top it all, he winked at her. She shivered by excitement and grabbed his hand smiling.

Down on the courtyard, Bastian the old minister looked amused up to the couple, dancing to the music of the silence, their hand entangled as well as their eyes. He smiled and turned around, back in the main hall. Maybe there was a free maiden right now. An old man needed some comfort sometimes as well.

Nate blinked bewildered and tried to get back in reality. He had fallen in those deep, blue eyes and had bowed forward as they ended their silent dance to kiss her. A few centimetres from her lips away, he had woken up. Now he stared at her face, her eyes closed, obviously as entangled in this magic moment as he had been. When the expected kiss didn't come, she slowly opened her eyes. There was a smile in those eyes, and it was dedicated to him, then her mouth joined in this smile. Her eyes promised him everything and he felt his heart racing in his chest again. But more than that he felt her slender body against his, her warm hands in his hand and on his shoulder, the line of her waist under his other hand. This... good lord, this was too much. He couldn't charm a Archon, no matter how young, beautiful and fascinating she was, could he? This was not suiting him down to the ground, it was out of his league for sure. He closed his eyes and was about to back off.

And suddenly he felt her warm lips on his own. His eyes shot open instantly, staring at her bemused. She let go of his lips and smiled again, this time not shyly, but with a wink and the hint of passion in her eyes. He stared for what felt like an eternity, fell back into her eyes, then he wrapped one arm around her waist, with the other hand he gripped her face and pulled her closer to his body and his face. Nate looked one last time in her eyes, then his lips gently touched hers again. Elaine sighed against his mouth, then her lips parted slightly, allowing him to deepen the kiss. He took the invitation and kissed her with the whole might of his rising passion, shivering slightly by the intensity of this kiss, which seemed to be the first real kiss of his life.

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