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2,348 words.

<The King>

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## Chapter Two

Maeve found herself quickly in chains and carried by those chains like a prized hunt into the throne room. It was magnificent, she had never seen anything even remotely close to the enormity of this great hall before. The room was also not very well guarded; it stood to reason that the strength of her captor would be the reason for a lack of guarding.

“You’re not from around here, are you?” the brutish man grunted at the small thief. “I reckon you can’t be if you thought it was a good idea to try and steal from me.”

The words shook the girl to her core; she was frightened as she was carried like a lamb to slaughter.

“Sire! What have you got there?” an older man dressed in long robes called to the large man as he jumped up from a table with lots of parchment across it.

“A thief.” The man grunted.

“Lord Stone, let me get the guards they-”

“No need Flint. At ease.” The command was heard and the older man took a step back. “I just need to borrow one of your brews.” The large man gave his second request.

“Anything Lord, what one do you require?” The old man’s eyebrows raised, a sinister pride smile spread over his face.

Lifting Maeve up and hooking her onto the large throne, he left her to dangle before he followed the old man to the table. Upside down, scared and disorientated, Maeve tried to see what they were doing but she could just see the giant man pointing at the big tome that Flint had produced. After a brief exchange the older man handed the giant a vial.

“Perfect Flint, bring more to my cabin when you’re done, don’t make me wait too long.” Lord Stone made his way back to the throne and he picked Maeve up and carried her out of the castle to the stables.

Placing her in a cart he took a seat and let the horses pull them towards the cabin. The snowy air was cold on the petite thief but there was a beauty to what she saw. The chains she was in were bolted to the cart so she could only sit patiently and take in the scenery. The beautiful snowy tundra offered very little reprieve from the pit in her stomach, she had yet to say a word to her captor and she didn’t want to.

The Lord however wanted to break the uncomfortable silence.

“So, what’s your name?” He asked nonchalantly.

Maeve didn’t reply.

“This will be much nicer for both of us if you at least speak to me.”

Silence again.

“So be it, lucky for you, I can talk for both of us.” He bellowed, the scary demeanour of the giant faded, even if only briefly.

“My name is Magnus Stone, and I am the king of this land.” The large man held his hand out towards the snowy tundra around him. “My family have ruled for a long time in these parts, the loyalty these people have to me is unconditional. The Stone family have brought these people through the harshest of winters and it is why we prosper now.”

He stuck his chest up proudly, happy with his own ego inflating commentary.

“But. My hands aren’t clean. Almost never have been. Traitors, spies and the plots that these people come up with.” He scoffs. “They all crumble beneath my might.” He looked down at the very uninterested eastern girl.

“Clearly my backstory does not amuse you.” He scolded. “Well, how about your future.”

She looked at the man, the first time she had responded to his words since the cart ride had begun.

“There! Now I’ve got you perked up ready to listen.” He grinned. “I’m a man with tastes. Very particular tastes. I can’t say I’ve ever spent a long time with a girl from the eastern kingdoms before, so I will now be keeping you in my cabin. We will be left alone for the most part.” His voice turned a bit more sinister. “You won’t survive the cold looking like that. Don’t you worry, I’ve got

a plan on how we can get you fit for the winter months.” Magnus held up the vial that Flint had given him earlier. “And I can’t let you go entirely unpunished. You did break into my castle after all.”

Maeve was shaking, looking up at the king, she felt an uneasy dread wash over her. She didn’t want to know what the vial was for, but she knew she was going to find out soon enough.

The trip to the cabin felt like an eternity to the small Maeve, she didn’t opt to speak and after Magnus’ talk, he didn’t talk much more, just made comments on the scenery.

The cabin was large, huge wooden logs that were arranged perfectly, fit for a king even. Maeve marvelled at the structure, it wasn’t something she had seen before, there were not an abundance of trees back where she was from, not enough to make cabins like this. The sun was setting and the chill was really starting to get to her.

“You’re shaking now, this is summer.” Magnus laughed, picking her up with ease.

Taking her inside, he quickly set up the fire in the middle of the room, the heat was a very welcome reprieve for Maeve, the light smoke that filled the air was an unusual smell for her, but Magnus felt right at home.

Still chained, he commanded her to stand up so he could take the hood from her face and reveal what was underneath. She didn’t resist, she either knew better or was too scared, Maeve wasn’t sure which one it was.

Feeling his large hand grip her head and pull the covering off, he was

shocked to see her short brown hair fall down the side of her face, her forehead entirely covered by her fringe. Her skin was a pale pasty white, and her sunken brown eyes stared at the beast of a man. Her lips were plump and trembling.

“Wow, I didn’t think you’d look that pretty.” He admitted, chuckling.

Looking down her fairly boyish body, he grabbed at the waist of the one piece she was wearing, the stealthy garb had done a great job until she met this man, it only seemed fitting that he be the one to tear it open. With a strong grip he tore the middle of the fabric and it exposed Maeve’s flat and toned stomach.

Maeve expected his hand to keep tearing so that she would be fully exposed, but she was shocked when he let go of her and turned around to walk away from her.

*What is he doing?* The girl was confused by the giant’s actions.

He returned moments later with a belt in his hand. The leather looked sturdy, the buckles looked high quality, and it also appeared to have additional straps. The thing looked completely strange to Maeve, but he had a hand behind his back.

“Here is your punishment.” The king said with an evil giddy glee.

Magnus produced from behind his back a metal rod that looked to be crafted in the shape of a male appendage. Fiddling with the belt it clipped onto the belt and Maeve raised her eyebrow, still silent.

“Put it on.” He reached his hand out with the strange looking strap

contraption.

Maeve held her hands out, still shackled together. She didn't grab the strap, she knew she couldn't fulfil the request as she was.

"Fine." He didn't attempt to get a key to undo the clasp, he just bent the metal to break her free, a feat of strength that made the small woman realise just how powerful the man was.

"You run. You die." He poked his huge finger into her chest bone with enough force to knock the wind out of her.

She knew it wasn't just talk. Lowering her head she took the strap and started to put it on.

"Wrong way." The king added.

Maeve looked at him confused. The phallic object was pointed out at him, but he repeated again.

"Wrong way round." He twirled his index finger in the air.

Maeve was still confused.

"Turn it around and put it on." He was getting a bit impatient with his prisoner.

Maeve turned it around and just looked at it confused again.

"Now put it on." His words were getting a bit fiery.

"How?" Maeve broke her silence, it would've been a bigger moment for him if he wasn't mad, so he did what he usually did when he got mad.

Used his strength.

"You're not bright are you." He grabbed her wrist and lifted her off the

floor and seeing as she hadn't undone the belt he just lowered her through the loop, the metal rod rubbing up her leg as it rose up her body.

Maeve braced for the rod to be left by her inner thigh, but she then realised that she was still covered. Feeling the rod climb higher up her body she looked down at the brutish man as he carefully raised the belt around her stomach.

"Surely that's too high."

"Silence." He barked.

The straps then were flung over her shoulders when he put her onto the floor. With a delicate hand he positioned the rod against her belly button and then started to tighten the clasps.

Maeve felt the rod press very firmly against her torso, specifically her belly button. It was very uncomfortable, it wasn't painful like if she moved wrong it might cut her open, but it was so dull that it just pressed against her. She looked at the king with a confused look for about one second before his giant palm grabbed the back of her head and before she knew it she was swallowing down the contents of the mystery vial.

The taste she had expected to be atrocious, but she actually found herself licking her lips, savouring the taste somewhat. The juxtaposition confused her; he let go of her head and she brought her eyes to meet his.

"So, you do talk then?"

"What was in that?"

"You'll find out." Magnus said walking towards a chest and pulling out a

huge hunk of meat, he set it up on the fire and the room was filled with the rich aroma of cooking meat.

Maeve felt quite restricted by the straps on her and the rod pressed against her middle, she tried to move it, but it was pressed very tightly into her middle. It was more painful to move it out of her belly button than she was anticipating, like the belly button was perfectly positioned to keep her from feeling the pain of the rod.

Her stomach growled, she wasn't a woman that required a lot of sustenance, and she had not heard her stomach growl in years from her lean diet, her body was used to going long periods without food.

"Hungry?" Magnus said, looking over at Maeve, the rod made the belt stick out from her middle, he plucked the taught leather, and the musical vibration made Maeve's whole-body quiver in a strange pain.

She looked up at him, her hand resting against her belly, saliva was filling her mouth, her stomach growled again.

He smiled and reached towards another chest, and he pulled out a huge gourd "Eat up." He said as he threw the heavy round fruit towards Maeve, she caught it and looked down at the succulent skin, and she wasted no time before she started to tear into the fruit with a reckless abandon the usually very controlled woman had not seen from herself.

"Yes. That's it." The king commented, smiling as he turned the meat. "Eat it all up, there is plenty more. The meat will be ready soon too."

Maeve ate and ate, the gourd was gone and she felt a pain in her

stomach, the rod was pressed against her even harder now that she had consumed some food. Her belly pushed out slightly, the bloated feeling felt even more intense because of the rod.

“More?” The king handed her a basket of fruit, fruit that she had never seen before.

Again, she ate and crunched, gnashed and swallowed, each gulp adding more pressure to her middle. She rubbed the sides of her stomach that was now visibly bulging. She had never eaten this much food all at once and it was just fruit.

Groaning and laying back to try and ease the pain from the rod, she felt the straps of the belt dig tightly into her shoulders, every movement was causing her more discomfort.

“More?” The giant man said, holding back a laugh.

“No... I can't...” Maeve huffed.

Without much warning, the king was on her, the leg of meat in his hand. He held the flesh to her mouth, leaning over her body.

“More.” It was no longer a question but a demand. Maeve, scared once more, moved her face towards the food, partially because of the demand but also unconsciously because her stomach was still rumbling.

Her teeth bore into the skin, and she tore a chunk off, the meat was superb, she quickly swallowed and bit off another chunk. Maeve had never eaten anything as good as this in her life. She greedily continued, feeling the king's presence over her, her stomach was aching more each second.

“You’re going to eat... And eat... Everything I give you...” his voice was low and gruff. “And then you’re going to ask for more...” She reached down and tapped the side of her already painfully full stomach. “I bet you are wondering what was in that vial?” He teased. “Just something to make you as greedy as you actually are.”

Maeve couldn’t hear his words; she only knew taste and the still building pressure from her middle.

Magnus leaned in, his face next to hers he whispered into her ear.

“More... Keep going...”

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