

“Reginald! I come bearing splendid news!”

“Ah, Master William. You startled me. I have begun preparing your afternoon tea for you—”

“You don't have to worry about that, lass— I mean, Your Highness! I just got word from my men. Your brother has been slain! That tyrannical despot has been taken off the throne.”

“...My brother is dead? So that means I won't be hunted anymore?”

“Nay, Your Highness. They'll likely call off your execution order now that you're one of the last few claimants to the throne. Come now, it's time for you to ascend to your rightful place.”

“Ah, b-but... I am still in this form, aren't I? The last time we refreshed the spell, you expected it would last until next month. How could I greet my vassals like this?”

“Nonsense! Your Highness, I have a dispelling scroll right here. It'll be but a simple chant, and you'll be back in your princely form in no time.”

“B-but still... I have been gone for so long. They surely won't serve a coward like me, who ran away instead of holding my own.”

“Coward? Your Highness, your brother ordered the entire army to execute you. Everyone would understand your decision to flee before he could put you to the gallows. Well, your decision to use a spell to hide as a lowly maid might not inspire confidence, but we can easily hide that fact.”

“Still, Master William, I do not think it's the most appropriate time for me to—”

“Master? Your Highness, you don't need to refer to me like that anymore. There's something odd about how you're acting.”

“O-odd? I don't see how you'd think I'm—”

“Yes, you are. Your Highness, we have been dutifully waiting for this day for months now. You yourself used the spell to turn into a common wench so that no one would recognize you. Even after your cow-like proportions came in, you were the one who assured me it helped to conceal your identity further. You had to suffer the indignity of working menial labor, and your only company was that of other lowly maids to not raise any suspicions! You even had to tolerate being courted by that brutish gardener, and I couldn't even act against him lest I raise suspicions of my own! Or even worse, rumors!”

[Small Font] “...He wasn't that much of a brute...”

“You suffered so much to make sure you were safe, and now you mean to tell me that it's not the right time?”

“Master William, I—”

“Sir! A letter from your scout.”

“Ah, thank you. Reginald, please give me a moment, and then we can return to...”

“...? Master— I mean, William. What does it say?”

“Oh... Oh dear. My scout has reported that the chamberlain's the one who masterminded the assassination of your brother, and he's attempting to pin the blame on you. The army has once again been ordered to find and execute you.”

“Oh, that's terrif—ble. It's terrible. Bad. Very bad. I suppose this means that I'll have to remain in hiding for some time.”

“Yes, unfortunately. This might be worse, as well. Clearing your false charges will be difficult. It might take even a year before we can safely turn you back to normal. I'm very sorry, Reginald— I mean, Rosaline.”

“Do not think anything of it. I will happily remain in hiding as long as needed. Now then, Master William, would you perhaps like your afternoon tea?”