The Tamer

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By N.B. Martens

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The hospital visit

‘Your father’s in the hospital,’ Nuela said, when Irithidya didn’t reply.
For a second, Irithidya stayed quiet, her mind swirling with thoughts about what could have happened to her father. She almost couldn’t believe it, he seemed just fine yesterday.
‘Why- why didn’t you tell me?’ she asked her mother, her voice filled with disbelief and concern.
‘I thought it would’ve been better if you asked yourself where he was,’ her mother said.
‘Have you known this all along?’ she asked, looking at her brother.
‘I only found out a few hours ago,’ Adanian said.
‘What happened to him?’
‘He got a heart attack,’ her mother said.
Irithidya stayed silent for a while, trying to process this information.
‘But he’ll make it, right?’ she asked, looking up at her mother with wide eyes.
‘The doctors, they- they don’t know yet,’ her mother said, tears slowly beginning to fill her eyes, her voice cracked with emotion.
At those last words of her mother, her chest tightened and tears started to form, her heart racing as she tried to make sense of the situation.
He can’t die, right? He’ll make it through this. He has to, I don’t want to lose him again.
She ran upstairs to her bedroom and slammed the door shut. She curled up onto her bed and held onto her pillow tightly. Her mother wanted to go up and comfort her but Adanian stopped her.

‘Give her some time,’ he said. ‘She’ll come down when she’s ready.’
So they left her alone.
Her sobs slowly died down and her eyelids felt heavy, and slowly but surely she fell asleep.
When she got to school the next day, Bunethris was standing there.
‘What are you doing here?’ she asked him.
‘I heard about your father,’ he said. ‘I’m sorry.’
‘Don’t be,’ she said. ‘He’ll get through.’
‘Did you still have a good time at prom?’ he asked her. ‘It’s a pretty big thing becoming prom queen.’
‘I had the best time,’ she said. ‘And you?’
‘Pretty well,’ he said. ‘I didn’t go with someone, it still doesn’t feel quite right yet. But you and Fagoring are a couple now aren’t you?’
‘We are,’ she said, a smile forming onto her face. ‘It’s a long story, but apparently we’re soulmates too. It’s a whole thing, I know, I’ll tell you the whole story later, I don’t think that there’s enough time for that right now.’
‘I’ll be looking forward to it then,’ he said. ‘How’s he dealing with being prom king?’
‘He never expected it,’ she said. ‘But I think he likes it, I feel like it gives him confidence of some sort.’
‘Good.’
‘What did you even do the whole night?’ she asked him.
‘I ate and drank a little,’ he said. ‘I also talked to some kids I know.’
‘When do you think you’ll move on from, well, you know?’ she asked him, awkwardly.
‘I don’t know,’ he said. ‘Maybe soon, maybe not soon. Only time will tell.’
‘If you ever want to start dating I’m always here to help,’ she said.

‘Thanks,’ he said. ‘That means a lot to me.’
Then Fagoring arrived at school.
‘Bunethris, right?’
‘Yes,’ he said. ‘Congratulations by the way.’
‘Thank you,’ he said. ‘I really didn’t see it coming at all.’
‘Weird,’ Bunethris said. ‘I had a very big feeling you’d be prom king.’
‘Everyone seems to,’ he said. ‘I still don’t get it though.’
‘I’ll leave you two alone,’ Bunethris said.
And so he left, leaving them alone.
‘How’s it going?’ Fagoring asked her, he had noticed she seemed a little off.
‘Not that good actually,’ she said. ‘I just found out yesterday that my dad’s in the hospital.’
‘I’m so sorry to hear that,’ he said. ‘What happened?’
‘He got a heart attack,’ she said. ‘They’re not sure if he’ll make it.’
‘Do you think you could do something for him?’ he asked her. ‘Like you did with me?’
‘Actually, maybe, I don’t know, I haven’t really given it much thought yet.’
‘It will work, don’t worry. You can literally do anything,’ he said.
‘I wouldn’t say anything, but sure,’ she said, the ghost of a smile present on her lips.
They walked to class together, in silence as always. As they walked into the classroom Daylore was already in his seat, he smiled at them. They smiled back and went to their places.
‘It’s still so weird,’ she said. ‘That he’s fine with everything.’
‘That’s the way he is,’ Fagoring said. ‘He just wants you to be happy, or so he told me.’
‘He said the same thing to me,’ she said. ‘Let’s just hope it stays that way.’
‘Let’s hope so,’ he said.
A few boys from their class then walked in.

‘Congratulations,’ they said to Fagoring. ‘You’re a lucky guy with a girl like that.’
‘I know,’ he said, a smile tugging at the corner of his lips, his eyes twinkling with pride.
They boys went to their seats.
‘So you’re a lucky guy huh?’
‘Very,’ he said, and his eyes met hers.
All he wanted to do at that moment was kiss her, but he had to resist it, because class just started.
During recess they saw a lot of people looking at them, because they now knew that she and him were a couple.
They walked to their usual spot and sat down.
‘Don’t you think it’s weird?’ she asked him. ‘All of these kids never thought that you and I were together. You’d think they’d put two and two together.’
‘I don’t think that they’re the brightest people,’ he said. ‘But they know now at least.’
‘Thankfully,’ she said. ‘I don’t know what I’d do if they didn’t.’
‘I actually would know,’ he said. ‘I’ve been doing it for a long time now.’
‘I’m sorry I didn’t notice before,’ she said. ‘I’m sorry I kept you waiting.’
‘Don’t be,’ he said. ‘I’d wait forever if I had to.’
‘That’s sweet,’ she said.
They looked into each other’s eyes, smiling. It felt right to them, being together.
‘Will you join me when I go to my dad?’ she then asked him.
‘Of course,’ he said. ‘If you want me too.’
‘I do,’ she said. ‘It’s just that I’m nervous and you always find a way to make me feel better.’
‘I’m honored,’ he said.
So after school he went to the hospital with her.
‘Are you here for your father?’ doctor Orithrismil asked her when they came in.

‘I am,’ she said. ‘Where is he?’
‘Second floor first room on the right,’ he said.
They went to the second floor and went into the first room on the right. Irithidya saw her father lying there, motionless. She had never seen him like that before, he had always been very alive every time she saw him. It took her a lot not to cry, but she managed to keep her tears inside.
She walked up to her father, and her powers came out of her hands yet again, and she put her hand on his arm. It was warm, so she knew he was still alive.
She didn’t know if it would work, but she knew it was worth the shot if it meant she could manage for her father to recover.
After a few minutes she saw her father moving his face, that immediately gave her hope, she tried her best and after a few more minutes her father’s eyes had opened. She looked shocked but was still happy that he woke up, she quickly hid her powers and looked at her father.
‘What- what happened?’ he asked, his voice still weak.
‘You got a heart attack,’ she said.
‘Did you do it, make me wake up?’
‘Of course I didn’t,’ she said. ‘How could I even do that?’
‘Don’t ask me, I was just asking,’ he said.
Then her father saw Fagoring standing in a corner, watching them.
‘I see you brought your better half,’ her father said, teasingly.
‘Dad,’ she said.
‘Don’t worry,’ he said. ‘I don’t mind him being here.’
Fagoring came closer and sat beside Irithidya.
‘Can you remember something about what happened?’ he asked him.
‘Nothing really,’ Halrod said.
‘That’s too bad,’ Fagoring said. ‘How are you doing?’

‘Pretty well,’ he said. ‘I mean I got a heart attack and survived, so I can’t complain.’
‘Should I call mom?’ Irithidya asked.
‘No,’ her father said. ‘Let me have some peace while I can.’
They all laughed.
‘So, Fagoring, why is it that you always smile?’ her father then asked Fagoring.
‘I don’t always smile,’ Fagoring said. ‘But you always see me smiling because of your daughter, she gives me more joy than anything on this whole planet.’
He put his arm around her shoulders, squeezing her softly.
‘Could you get me something to eat?’ her father then asked Irithidya.
She stood up Fagoring made her sit back down.
‘I’ll go get something,’ he said. ‘You just sit here with your dad.’
So he went out of the room to find something her father could eat.
‘He’s a really good guy,’ her father said.
‘I know,’ she said. ‘I’m very lucky to have someone like him.’
‘So, when’s the wedding?’ her father asked her.
‘Wedding?’
‘Just kidding,’ he said. ‘You kids are really gullible these days. But he’s still a very good guy. You’re very lucky with him, he seems like a guy you could trust with anything, even the weirdest things and he still wouldn't make fun of you.’
‘He is that kind of guy,’ she said. ‘I tell him everything.’
‘Good,’ he said. ‘I’m glad that he’s your soulmate and not his brother, I always liked him better, you know. I know he’ll treat you how you should be treated.’
Then he walked back in with food for Halrod.
‘This is his favourite,’ Irithidya said, looking at the food. ‘How’d you know?’
‘I didn’t,’ he said. ‘It’s actually my favourite too.’

‘You must have good taste then,’ her father said, eating the food that Fagoring had brought him.
‘I have to go,’ Irithidya said. 'Tutoring. But I’ll come check up tomorrow if that’s okay.’
‘It is,’ her father. ‘See you tomorrow then. Fagoring, will you stay for a little longer?’
‘Of course I will,’ he said.
He gave her a quick kiss before she left and talked to her father for the remaining time that he was there.
When Irithidya got to Garland’s house he opened up and let her in.
‘So, what’s the subject today?’ he asked her, as they sat down.
‘Same as yesterday,’ she said. ‘I hope you didn’t forget.’
‘I didn’t, I promise,’ he said.
They began and after a little while they were done.
‘I’ll see you tomorrow then,’ she said.
‘See you tomorrow,’ he said, letting her out of the house.
When she got outside she saw that Fagoring was just arriving home, and a smile appeared on her face.
‘I’m guessing you had fun with my dad,’ she said.
‘Surprisingly yes,’ he said. ‘He seems to really like me.’
‘Tell me about it,’ she said, shaking her head softly. ‘I’ll see you at school then.’
‘See you at school.’
She turned around and went home.
When she got home she saw her mother talking to someone on the phone.
‘Who was that?’
‘The hospital,’ her mother said. ‘Your father, he woke up.’
‘I know,’ she said. ‘I saw it happen.’
‘Why didn’t you tell me then?’
‘Dad wanted some time to rest,’ she explained.

‘Typical,’ her mother said. ‘I’m going right now, if you want to, you can come.’
‘I don’t want to,’ she said. ‘I talked to him long enough.’
So her mother and her brother left the house to visit Halrod. She just read her book, the one that Fagoring had given to her. It was almost finished when the doorbell rang.
She finished the page and went to the door. She opened it and was surprised when she saw Mithrandar standing there.
‘What are you doing here?’ she asked him.
‘I have to tell you something,’ he said. ‘It’s urgent.’
She quickly let him in and they sat down on the couch.
‘What’s wrong?’ she asked him.
‘I think I’m in love,’ he said, his eyes serious, yet panicked.
‘That can’t be that bad,’ she said. ‘I’m sure she likes you back.’
‘That’s the thing,’ he said. ‘I don’t think you know who it is.’
‘It’s not the girl that you took to prom?’ she asked him, confused.
‘No,’ he said.
‘Then who are you in love with then?’
‘Fagoring’s cousin,’ he said.
‘That’s not so bad.’
‘Oh, it’s bad,’ Mithrandar said. ‘He’s very protective of his cousin, she’s the only girl cousin he has.’
‘Still,’ she said. ‘I don’t get the problem.’
‘You see, I made a pact with him that I’d never date any of his relatives,’ he said.
‘From which side is she, his father’s side or his mother’s side?’
‘Why does it matter?’
‘Everything.’
‘Alright,’ he said. ‘I think his father’s side.’
‘It’ll be fine then,’ she said.
‘How?’ he asked her. ‘I’m really confused right now.’

‘I can understand that you are,’ she said. ‘But it’ll make sense in the future.’
‘This is really weird.’
‘How did this even happen?’ she asked him. ‘I thought you were in love with that other girl.’
‘I was,’ he said. ‘But then I saw his cousin, she was sitting all alone so I went up to her. I talked to her for almost the whole night, so my date left.’
‘I still don’t get how you’re in love with her.’
‘You see,’ he said. ‘I believe I’m in love with her because when we talked it felt good, I felt good while talking to her.’
‘That doesn’t mean anything,’ she said.
‘You know, I think I even felt something in my chest afterwards,’ he said.
‘What did you two talk about then?’
‘Just about life,’ he said. ‘It just went so effortlessly. We just talked and talked, and I could feel myself getting lost into her eyes.’
‘Okay, and you’re completely sure you’re in love with her?’ she asked him. ‘I mean, you’ve only talked to her once.’
‘Not once, she’s always at Fagoring’s birthday parties and what not, so I’ve talked to her before,’ he said. ‘I’m pretty sure I'm in love right now.’

The palace

‘Is there anything else you need to say?’
‘I’m just very curious about how you’re alive,’ he said. ‘You’re perfect in every way.’
‘I wouldn’t say that I’m perfect,’ she said. ‘There are a lot of imperfections you don’t know of.’
‘Still, you’re good at everything,’ he said. ‘You’re a miracle.’
‘I don’t think I am,’ she said.
Then the bell rang and she went to open it. When she opened it, she saw a highly armed elf standing in front of her door with a straight face.
‘What’s the problem?’ she asked him, confused. ‘I didn’t do anything, I swear.’
She looked at the man, studying him. He looked serious, which was expected from someone who was armed, like he was.
‘I’m here to deliver a letter,’ he said, handing over an envelope.
‘You’re *armed* just to give me an envelope with a letter inside?’ she asked, her voice tinged with disbelief.
‘Just open it,’ he said. ‘It’ll make sense then, madam.’
She carefully opened the envelope and got out a letter, she began to read it.

Dear Irithidya Dactorias,

We’ve heard about your powers and what you can do. For many years we have been searching for someone like you. We know everything there is to know about you, where you were born, where you go to school, your family, truly everything.

For this reason we invite you to our home, we hope you can come as soon as possible, as it is an urgent matter.
We would love to see you soon at the palace.
And please inform the guard of the time you wish to leave your home.

Sincere greetings,
The king and queen.

‘Are you joking?’
‘I’m not,’ the guard said. ‘So, when will you leave?’
‘How long will I be gone for?’
‘At least a few days,’ the guard said.
Her mind went to Fagoring, she couldn’t just leave him for a few days, she had to take him with her.
‘Can I bring someone with me?’
‘Only if you can’t bear to be without them,’ he said, still with a straight face.
‘I’ll leave in about three hours then,’ she said. ‘How will I get there?’
‘With the crefctor,’ he said. ‘That’s why you need to tell me when you leave, so we can get a ride for you.’
She looked at him, dumbfounded for a moment. She’d never heard about a crefctor, so she wondered what it might be.
‘And uh, what is a crefctor exactly?’
‘Something like a car, but then better,’ he said, not really bothering to give more details. ‘I’ll be here in three hours then.’
Then, he just left without a single word, leaving her in front of an empty doorway.
She got back inside and closed the door behind her, where she saw Mithrandar looking at her, curiously.
‘Who was it?’

‘A guard, sent by the king and queen,’ she said, absentmindedly, still thinking about the guard and the letter.
‘You didn’t do anything, right?’
‘I didn’t,’ she said. ‘But I have three hours to pack and then they’ll pick me up to go.’
‘What? You can’t just leave now.’
So she explained everything that stood in the letter, and he nodded, still quite confused.
‘Do you want me to tell the rest?’ he asked her. ‘I can go right now.’
‘I’d really like that, yes,’ she said. ‘Can you tell Fagoring that he has the option of going with me?’
‘Of course,’ he said. ‘Anything else?’
‘If he says yes, say that he needs to pack his bags and say goodbye to his family, we’ll be gone for at least a few days,’ she said. ‘That’s it.’
So Mithrandar left, going straight to Fagoring’s house.
Irithidya started to pack, she took anything with her that she could think of, and after half an hour almost her whole closet was in her suitcase.
She went to the principal to tell him the news and he understood and told her it wouldn’t be a problem for her or Fagoring to miss school.
She went to the hospital, where her mother, father and brother were, to tell them everything and they were all quite confused like Mithrandar, but knew it needed to happen, so they said goodbye to her and she went to the forest to say goodbye to Kaydeth.
When she got back home, she saw Fagoring walking there with a suitcase in his hand.
‘You came,’ she said, a smile plastered on her face as she let both of them inside the house. ‘I didn’t think you’d do it.’

‘Are you kidding me?’ he asked her. ‘Being away from you would make me miserable; Irithy, I don’t think I would last five days without seeing you anymore.’
Hearing him calling her “Irithy” made her heart swell with love for him. And she wrapped her arms around him in a tight embrace.
‘I’m so glad you’re here.’
His arms immediately wrapped around her too, and he savored the feeling of her in his arms. His hand gently ran up and down her back as he placed his chin on top of her head. Her face was buried in his chest as her arms wrapped tighter around him.
‘So, what exactly happened?’ he asked her, and he reluctantly pulled away ever so slightly, making sure he was still holding her, he didn’t want to let go, not yet.
‘This guard appeared in front of my door and gave me an envelope with a letter in it,’ she explained; looking up at him. ‘It said that the king and queen knew about my powers and had been searching for someone like me for years, they said it’s an urgent matter that I come to them.’
‘And you could bring someone with you?’
‘I asked,’ she said. ‘And the guard said only if I couldn’t bear to be without them.’
‘You can’t bear to be without me?’ he asked her, a teasing glint in his eyes.
‘Oh shut up,’ she said, hitting his arm playfully.
‘Ow! You wound me, love,’ he says, clutching his arm as he feigned being hurt.
Irithidya let out a small chuckle at his dramatic display, she’d always loved when he did that.
‘But for real, I’d never go if that meant you couldn’t come with me.’
‘That means a lot to me,’ he said, and his smile only widened.

They stayed like that for a while, just looking at each other, before Fagoring softly spoke up.
‘When do they get here?’
‘In a few minutes actually,’ she said. ‘I hope you were able to say goodbye to your family.’
‘I was,’ he said. ‘How did Mithrandar know though?’
‘He was here when the guard came knocking on the door.’
‘What was he here for?’ Fagoring asked her, intrigued. ‘Was he gushing about his crush?’
‘Not exactly,’ she said.
‘“Not exactly”?’ he asked her. ‘What’s that supposed to mean?’
‘He wants to have someone,’ she said. ‘But it’s complicated.’
‘And his crush then?’
‘She doesn’t like him anymore,’ she explained. ‘It’s a pretty weird story, but she doesn’t like him anymore and he doesn’t like her anymore. They didn’t have a fight or something.’
The doorbell rang and it was the guard again.
‘Ready?’ he asked her.
‘Ready as I’ll ever be,’ she said.
He took her hand in his, intertwining their fingers as they got inside the crefctor.
Fagoring sat next to Irithidya during the ride, it was quite long actually. And Irithidya soon began to become tired, her head finding its way to Fagoring’s shoulder. He smiled as he looked down at her, wrapping an arm around her shoulder.

When they arrived at the palace the guard opened their doors and Fagoring led Irithidya outside.
The palace was grand, all sorts of details everywhere you looked.
While Fagoring and Irithidya were looking at the palace in awe, the guard started to talk.

‘You’ll have to go in and the king and queen will be waiting there for you,’ he said.
So Irithidya and Fagoring went in, still in shock at being at the palace. And indeed the king and queen were waiting for them.
‘We’ve been looking forward to this moment for a long time,’ the queen said, a warm smile on her face.
‘A very long time,’ the king added.
‘If I may ask, what am I doing here, your highnesses?’ she asked them, in the most polite way she could think of.
‘Oh please,’ the queen said. ‘Call us Jefrinthia and Krivaloctor.’
‘Alright,’ she said. ‘What am I doing here though?’
‘You’re destined to save us,’ the king said.
She looked over at Fagoring, who looked just as confused as she did.
‘Save you from what?’ she asked them.
‘The planet is in danger,’ the king explained. ‘With the Hepantoondors still roaming around and other deadly creatures we need someone to kill them, or at least tame them, so they won’t hurt anyone any further.
‘You want me to *kill*?’
It wasn’t something she would see herself doing. She had never thought of herself being a person that would have the strength to kill something.
‘If you don’t have another choice, then yes,’ the queen said. ‘But we just need them to become tamed so they aren’t deadly anymore.’
‘I see,’ she said. ‘How many do you think will be here?’
‘That’s the thing, we don’t know,’ the queen explained. ‘That’s why we need you, we’ve heard about your powers and connection with animals. We’re sure you can do this.’
‘I’ll try,’ she said. ‘But, why do I have to stay here then? Why don’t I have to go out to the forests and stuff?’

‘Because we need you to teach our guards,’ the king said. ‘You’ll need to take a few with you when you go, and they’ll need to know what to do.’
‘You want me to teach guards how to do their jobs?’
‘Exactly,’ the queen said. ‘We know it’s a lot, but we’re counting on you.’
‘But how do you know that I’m destined to do this?’
‘There was a fortune teller alive once,’ the queen said. ‘And she told us how a girl from your age would save the planet, we got a lot of information about her. You match her description exactly.’
‘Okay…’ she said, though she still felt skeptical about all of this. ‘Seems reasonable.’
‘You even brought someone with you like the fortune teller said you would,’ the king said. ‘Who is he?’
‘He’s my soulmate,’ she said.
‘You found him, congratulations,’ the king said. ‘I always knew you would find him.’
‘You knew about Lovel?’
‘Who do you think told us about you?’
‘But that’s impossible,’ she said. ‘He’s not alive. He’s not a living being.’
‘He’s not,’ the queen said. ‘But he is one of the most important voices we have, so he’s also connected to a speaker in the palace, that way he can communicate with us.’
‘Fancy,’ she said, bluntly.
And Fagoring couldn’t help but crack a smile at her blunt response.
‘It is,’ the queen said. ‘I’ll get you to your room.’
So the queen and Irithidya left the room.
‘Why are you just standing there?’ the king asked Fagoring.
‘I’m sorry, your highness,’ he said. ‘I’m just unclear what my function is in all of this.’

‘Your function is the most important apart from Irithidya’s,’ the king said. ‘You need to stay by her side at all times, you need to keep her sane and that you gave everything you knew up to go with her says a lot about you, how much you care about her. That’s very important, she needs someone who knows her and who she can talk to, someone she trusts with her life.’
‘So, do I get a room too then?’ Fagoring asked the king.
‘You do,’ the king said. ‘The one right across from Irithidya’s. But you could of course sleep in her room if you’d like to.’
‘I’ll take the room for myself,’ Fagoring said, his face heating up at the king’s suggestion.

The prince

Fagoring walked towards his room, still shocked about how big the palace was.
To his shock the room was even bigger than he thought, it was at least twice as big as his room at home.
He started unpacking his stuff, he had a walk in closet, so there would definitely be enough space for all of his clothes.
After he was done unpacking he jumped on his bed, it was so soft, softer than his bed at home. He knew that he'd like it here immediately. But then again, maybe the changes would be too much for him.
He heard someone knock on his door.
'Come in,' he said, standing up.
A maid then entered the room - she looked too young for her job - and told him about the plans for that day.
'Thank you,' he said, right before the maid left.
He walked over to the window in his room, he had the most beautiful view of the garden. He got out his book and started to read it.
And after a few minutes there was another knock on his door.
'Dinner's ready,' a maid said.
He followed her to the dining room, where the king and queen already sat, there was also a boy he hadn't seen yet.
He went into his seat and they waited for Irithidya to arrive.
When she finally came they could eat, she sat right next to Fagoring at the table.
'This is really good,' she said. 'Who made this?'
'Our chef,' the queen said. 'She's right over there.'
The queen pointed to an elf standing in the corner of the room. Irithidya thanked the women for the food and started eating again.

The king and queen didn't say anything during the dinner, neither did the boy.
When they were all done Irithidya and Fagoring went to their rooms together.
'How are you taking all of this so well?' he asked her. 'They're literally asking you to save the planet.'
'I only seem fine,' Irithidya said, when they had gone into her room. 'But on the inside I'm as scared as I could be.'
'At least we have each other,' he said, sitting down, wrapping an arm around her shoulder and she put her head on his shoulder. 'We'll get through this together.'
'Thank you, I really needed that,' she said, giving him a tight hug.
Her face was buried into his chest as she held tightly onto him. His arms wrapped securely around her waist, his chin was resting on top of her head. He was simply just enjoying the moment they had together.
Reluctantly they both pulled away from the hug and Irithidya looked up at him.
'Who do you think that guy at dinner was?' she then asked.
'Probably the prince,' he explained. 'He's never been shown to the public before, so I don't know for sure.'
'He probably is the prince then,' she said. 'He couldn't be much more.'
There was a comfortable moment of silence between, both of them lost in thought before Fagoring broke it.
'When will you start training your team?' he asked her.
'Tomorrow,' she said. 'But at 10am, so I'll have enough time to prepare myself.'
He smiled softly at her before giving her a soft kiss on the cheek and standing up.
'See you tomorrow, Irithy,' he said, flashing one last tender smile before leaving her room and entering his.

They both went to bed, thinking about everything that had gone down that day.
The next morning Irithidya still woke up early and went to the garden for a walk. The garden made her think about the forest in Arenofal, they didn't look much alike, but it still made her think of home. Think of Kaydeth, the small pig she basically adopted since the moment they met.
There was a bench where she sat down and soon a rabbit went up to her, she played with it and petted it. The rabbit seemed to like her, instantly, as if it had already known her for many years.
Then a butterfly came flying to her and sat on her shoulder. And before she knew it, she was surrounded by animals, deer, rabbits, butterflies, birds and even Forgries.
She wasn't uncomfortable at all, the animals felt like home and she gave all of them attention. She tried to give them all equal attention. To make sure none of them felt left out. It might've looked weird, but for her, it wasn't weird at all.
Then the boy who had been at dinner saw her there, playing with the animals and a small smile formed onto his face as he watched her, leaning against a tree.
She hadn't noticed him, so she went on, playing with the animals as if they were her own.
'Is this normal?' she then asked Lovel, her voice soft so she wouldn't startle the animals.
'For you, yes, for others, no,' he answered.
'But why is it normal for me then?'
'Because this is what you're destined to do, tame animals and other creatures.'
'So you lied to me?'
'I didn't lie,' he said casually, as if it was the most obvious thing in the whole world. 'You asked if you had to save the animals, and you don't have to, you have to save the planet by taming animals.'

‘That’s basically the same thing, Lovel,’ she said. ‘Whatever, I’ll talk to you later.’
Irithidya went on with the animals, starting to even talk to them. But she turned her head a little too far and she saw an elf, shocked she stopped talking and turned her head a little more so she could see him.
‘How long have you been there?’ she asked him, her voice tinted with embarrassment.
‘Long enough to know you’re good with creatures,’ he said, walking up to her, a small smile still present on his face. ‘I don’t believe I’ve introduced myself before. I’m Pitherenon Frogamynera, son of the king and queen, and rightful heir.’
‘I’m Irithidya Dactorias,’ she said. ‘Nice to meet you.’
She reached out to shake his hand, but to her surprise he didn’t shake it. He took her hand and planted a kiss on top of it.
‘How long have you actually been standing there?’ she asked him, trying to ignore the fact he kissed her hand without her consent.
‘I’ve been here since before you started talking to yourself,’ Pitherenon said.
‘You saw that, huh?’
‘I did,’ he said. ‘Don’t worry about it, I talk to myself too sometimes.’
‘I wasn’t talking to myself,’ she said. ‘I was talking to Lovel.’
He looked at her in confusion, he still had no idea what she was talking about.
‘Did you name one of the animals that?’
‘It’s a long story,’ she said. ‘But he’s basically just a voice in my head.’
‘I understand,’ he said, before a small smirk formed on his face. ‘What were you about to say to them?’
He pointed towards the animals.

‘That’s nothing you should be concerned about,’ she said, a hint of secrecy in her voice.
‘Come on, I heard the rest,’ he said.
‘You weren’t supposed to,’ she said. ‘You’re not supposed to hear this either.’
‘Come on, it’s not like it’s some big secret or anything, you can tell me,’ he said, pressing the issue.
‘I never said I felt like I couldn't tell you. I just don’t want to.’
His face fell at her words, but he quickly composed himself.
‘Stop being so dramatic it’s only a few words. Come on, spit them out,’ he said. He clearly wasn’t giving up easily, something that only annoyed Irithidya further.
‘Maybe you’ve never heard no before in your life, that might be. But that doesn’t mean I’ll treat you like how everyone else does,’ she said, a hint of annoyance present in her voice.
‘What’s the big deal, princess? Just tell me,’ he said, a sly grin spreading across his face as he put on his most charming act.
But her face only hardened when she heard the nickname, she didn’t like it. Not one bit. Her father from Earth used to call her that. It was their thing. She couldn’t stand hearing it from anyone else but him. Especially with how long it had been since she last saw him or spoke to him.
‘Don’t call me that,’ she said. ‘Just don’t.’
He could sense it was a sensitive subject and let out a sigh, dropping the issue.
‘Alright then,’ he said. ‘I’ll leave you alone, then.’
‘Good,’ she said, watching him go back to walking.
The sun still hadn’t risen, but she still enjoyed her time with the creatures.
After a little while she started to walk again, with the creatures leaving her.
After a few minutes of walking she felt like she already knew what the garden looked like, it was the same thing over and over again, but it was still a gorgeous garden, that’s for sure.

She smelled the flowers she saw and enjoyed the fresh air, then she saw a flower hanging lifelessly, so she used her powers to make it alive again so it stood up like the rest.
She looked at her hands while the purple light was still in her palms, she still didn't quite believe what she was capable of. The light also made her think of Fagoring's purple eyes. The ones she'd grown so fond of. And a small smile formed onto her face as she thought about their time together, the highs and the lows. All of it made their story.
It was just such an odd story. They met, and didn't get along before they became inseparable. Yeah, they fought quite a few times, but they always made up. It was like they were meant to be from the start. Which is pretty ironic since they're soulmates.
After about half an hour she saw Pitherenon again, she tried to ignore him but she couldn't although he tried to talk to her. She was acting as if she hadn't heard him, hadn't heard a thing he said at all. But she knew he wouldn't give up.
So eventually, she turned around to face him.
'What do you want?' she asked, a sense of curiosity but also resentment from earlier.
'I'm sorry if we got off on the wrong foot,' he said. 'I know I can be a bit stubborn at times. Will you forgive me?'
A small smile crept onto her face. Yes, she didn't like the way he didn't respect her boundaries before, but hearing him acknowledge he was in the wrong felt good.
'Of course I will.'
'So, how about we act like nothing happened?' he suggested, a tone filled with hope in his voice.
'Sure,' she said, still smiling. 'I'm Irithidya Dactorias.'
'I'm Pitherenon Frogamynera,' he said. 'Nice to meet you.'
'Nice to meet you too,' she said.
It was really weird, they already knew each other. But then again, it felt better to start over again.

‘What are you actually here for?’ he asked her. ‘I didn’t quite get what father meant yesterday.’
‘I’m here to save the planet,’ she said, as if it was the most common thing on Hythelania.
He let a small chuckle escape, thinking she was just messing with him.
‘Very funny, what’s the real reason?’
‘That actually is, I have powers,’ she said, making the purple light come out of her hands again. ‘See?’
His eyes widened in surprise, but a grin quickly made its way onto his face.
‘That’s so cool,’ he said. ‘What does it do?’
‘Anything I want it to do,’ she said. ‘Literally anything.’
‘You’re so lucky,’ he said, envy evident in his voice as he spoke. ‘But how will you save the planet then?’
She thought for a moment, trying to find the right way to tell him.
‘I need to tame the dangerous animals and creatures,’ she explained. ‘I can also kill them, but that’s not really my thing. I’d rather only see blood if necessary.’
‘I can imagine that,’ he said. ‘Aren’t you scared? It’s a really dangerous thing, and you’re still a teenager.’
‘A little,’ she admitted. ‘But what’s life without a little risk?’
‘I guess it would be boring without it, yeah,’ he said. ‘If I may ask, why haven’t your ears grown yet? I mean, I know you haven’t always lived here, but I’m just wondering.’
‘I got teleported to Earth when I was three,’ she explained. ‘And just came back in May, so I’ll need to wait a little longer for them to grow.’
‘That must have been hard, coming back after all of those years.’
‘It was at first,’ she said. ‘But my life’s better here.’

‘That’s good,’ he said, smiling. ‘Cause I have a feeling you’ll have to stick around for a little longer.’
‘Probably,’ she said. ‘Let’s just hope that I don’t die trying to save everyone.’
‘Let’s hope,’ he said.
There was a moment of silence that stretched between them, and Pitherenon was desperate to fill it with something, anything.
‘Can I ask you something?’
‘Sure,’ she said.
‘How’s life like out there?’ he asked her. ‘Outside of the palace?’
‘It’s great,’ she said, a smile forming on her face as she thought about the people she met in the last few months. ‘Everyone’s nice, well most ones. Sure, it doesn’t compare to how beautiful the palace is, but it’s still gorgeous.’
He smiled back at her, a sense of longing filling his chest. ‘That sounds great. You must have a lot of fun.’
She nodded, her smile never wavering from her face. ‘Yeah. Yeah, I do,’ she said, before pausing for a moment. ‘Actually, why did you ask me?’
His face fell slightly, his gaze now focused on the ground. ‘Well, I’ve never been allowed outside the palace grounds.’
A sense of sadness washed over Irithidya. The thought of having to stay in one place, even if it was this big, wasn't something she’d even want to think about doing.
‘Really? Never?’ she asked, her voice softer than before.
‘Never,’ he said, shaking his head. ‘My parents don’t let me.’
‘That must suck,’ she said. ‘Staying here your whole life.’
‘It does sometimes,’ he admitted. ‘But sometimes my parents have guests that make life here a little more tolerable.’
‘Then you must be glad I’m here.’
‘Very glad,’ he said. ‘There haven’t been people here in two whole years.’