

Just Another Day, Eh?

Amanda was nervous. Countess Racine had told her about the meeting that had been set up, but then Amanda had completely forgotten about it until this morning. She was on the way to meet a young girl who was apparently also human but was evidently a princess. Amanda definitely wasn't sure how to feel about that, but she was ready to see another person from Earth. No matter where they were from.

The last human she had met was much different, and that was when Amanda realized that things weren't as what they first appeared at all. The other human had been a kind man. Yet she remembered how mistrusting of him she had initially been when he had mentioned being from the Terran Interstellar Republic, and how confused she felt after he presented knowledge that seemingly proved it. Now, she was going to meet another human, who could be from literally anywhere. If humans were from the future, *or a parallel universe*, who knew where this girl could be from?

Too bad he wasn't here anymore to meet the girl with Amanda.

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Gwyn sat outside in the gazebo that was in the gardens behind her house. She was reading a book while Lorrena, Nora, and Ilyana sat around relaxing as well. Nora and Ilyana were quietly talking back and forth about tasks Siveril and Taenya had given them. Lorrena... actually looked like she was passed out. Gwyn snorted as she watched the girl rub her nose and shift to get more comfortable.

Ilyana and Nora looked up at her from where they huddled together. It made Gwyn smile. The two girls had seemingly come to an understanding with each other. When they had first moved in, all they did was bicker and fight, as if they thought Gwyn didn't know. She was glad that they were nicer now. She didn't like when they fought over her. *It's silly, but I remember my friends back at school were the same way sometimes.*

“Is everything okay, Your Highness?” Nora asked.

Gwyn groaned. “Nora! I told you guys, there’s no one around but us. Please, call me Gwywyn.” She dragged out her name to emphasize the point. It was irritating how *proper* they acted *all... the... time*.

Nora just bowed her head. “As you say, Princess Gwyn.”

Gwyn threw up her hands and looked at Ilyana. “You’ll at least listen, right?”

“Of course, Your Highness.” She said with a sly grin.

Gwyn’s head dropped. *I just want friends. Not people who only want to do stuff for me.*

She looked at Lorrena. *Eh, she’s too quiet. She seems almost scared to talk.*

Gwyn thought of the blonde elf girl from the duke’s court and hoped she would get to meet her soon. *Maybe she’ll be different.*

“Your Highness?”

Gwyn set her book down next to her and looked up as one of the guards walked up to them. “Yes?”

“You have a guest. Ser Taenya is meeting her now,” he explained.

“A guest?” She perked up. *Is it her?*

“Yes, Your Highness. It’s the terran from House Racine. She’s here to meet you,” he replied with excitement in his voice.

“Oh... Okay. Thank you!” *Oh. Drat. Not who I was hoping for.*

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The guards had Amanda wait in a parlor of some sort while they went and fetched one of the knights. She sat and drank water from the small glass they had given her as she looked

around the room. It was well decorated and seemed like it was situated in a way to make the guest feel at ease and comfortable. She could appreciate that. The chairs were disappointing, like anywhere else she'd been since arriving in the world. She was lucky to have run into Lady Racine's carriage after... after events. After she finished her water, Amanda stood up and walked around, stopping to look at one of the bookshelves.

Roughly a quarter of an hour later, she had a book open and was reading about two elf Houses that were from competing Sovereign Cities. The story was amusing, skimming through the book, it seemed centered around the two heads of Houses. A man and a woman, as they aged, slowly wanted to put aside the disagreements and fighting. Yet, they couldn't do it without harming their houses, so they snuck around as they fell more and more in love. The children and other members of the family got mad and tried to stop their respective family heads from committing "treason." Amanda snorted, *It's like a reverse Romeo and Juliette*. She was trying to read the ending when someone cleared their throat.

Amanda jumped in surprise and turned to see a telv woman standing there with an amused expression. "Good story?"

She suddenly felt embarrassed and fumbled with the book as she closed and tried to place it back on the shelf. "Oh, uh... sorry!"

The blonde chuckled. "No, it's alright. Welcome to Reinhart House. I am Ser Taenya Shavyre. We appreciate you accepting the invitation to visit Her Highness."

"So, she's an actual princess, then?" Amanda asked.

The woman squinted her eyes, and Amanda considered she looked more like a traditional elf to her than the actual elves, at least from the media she had seen back on Earth. She hadn't really been into fantasy, though, so her knowledge of the subject was lacking.

"She is. Is there some concern?" The knight replied, hesitantly.

"No concern," Amanda replied, a touch too quickly.

The astute woman clearly caught on, because she asked, "Could it be because you may be from a different Earth? Or Terra?"

Amanda's eyes widened, and her mouth decided to stop working. Before she could respond, however, the telv continued.

"We have another man from Earth in our House, who also identifies as *human* instead of terran. He and the princess are not from the same world or..." She trailed off at the end, which sent Amanda's mind into a whirl in itself. *There's another human with them? He's also from Earth?*

"May I meet him as well?"

"That can be arranged. Do you swear to not cause harm to Her Highness or her interests, even if anything she reveals causes undue stress for you? Do you swear to not seek to take advantage of her kindness and not attempt to influence her unduly because of your shared circumstances?"

Why would anything a child say upset me? Has something happened to her? "No, of course not. Is she okay?" Amanda suddenly got a thought and felt anger bubbling up within her. She squared up her shoulders and looked up at the knight. "Are you holding her here against her will? Are you afraid I'll convince her to want to leave you?"

Taenya chuckled. "No, nothing of the sort. Be at ease. A noble at court attempted to force her into a situation that she did not wish to be in." She suddenly turned serious. "I will not see such an occurrence happen again while I am around."

Amanda considered how to respond. "I... heard something about that. I wasn't sure what to make of it. However, yes, I swear not to do anything to harm a child."

"We can unpack that at another time. For now, yes, you may meet Sir Friedrich. I will ask if he wishes to join the princess and yourself."

"Thank you."

The knight, apparently content with Amanda's responses, excused herself and went to her princess. Something that still had her mind reeling. She'd never met or even considered the possibility of meeting royalty back on Earth. They were always just these people you saw on the news. Honestly, Amanda simply expected the girl to be from a different version of Earth. It made the most sense, no matter how disappointing the idea was. She really just wanted someone from home to be here.

Not even ten minutes later, there was a knock on the door, and an elf that Amanda hadn't seen yet entered. Amanda stood back up from where she had sat and faced the woman that came in. She was taller than Amanda, but not quite as much as Taenya and she had dark brown hair and her face was painted with a blue crescent over her eye. Amanda thought she looked cool as hell. *She definitely embodies the look of a badass elf warrior.* Lady Racine definitely doesn't have anyone like this. *Definitely a bit jealous.* The elf smirked as she examined her, and Amanda was about to say something before the woman turned and opened the door.

A girl walked in with Ser Taenya following close behind. The kid was also fairly tall, but luckily still shorter than Amanda. *What the hell? Is this a House of Amazons?* Amanda could only imagine how tall the girl's mother was. However, everyone was tall compared to her own one hundred sixty-three centimeters. Amanda guessed the girl's age at around eleven or even twelve. She had curly, dark brunette hair and piercing blue eyes. Eyes that quickly peered into and scrutinized Amanda in return. The girl looked like she had the build of a gymnast or maybe a runner, which led Amanda to believe she played sports back on Earth.

Not really knowing proper etiquette, as it was definitely not something she learned in school, she just greeted the girl as nicely as she could. "Hello! It's really nice to meet you. I am Amanda! Amanda Levings."

The girl smiled. "Hi, Amanda! I'm Gwyn. Are you from Earth?" She closed her eyes for a second and looked up before refocusing on Amanda. "Sorry, of course, you're from Earth. You're human! Are you from... my Earth? Wait. No. You wouldn't know that either. What year is it on your Earth? Oh my gosh."

Ser Taenya leaned forward and whispered something into the girl's ear, and Amanda held in a smile as Princess Gwyn straightened her back with a serious expression on her face. "My apologies, Ms. Amanda. I got a bit excited."

Amanda looked between the two women and the young girl in front of her and got a weird feeling. *That was strange. She changed her tune real quick.*

She put on her best smile to reassure the girl. "It's quite alright! I can understand being excited. Why it's only expected when you meet someone you have a connection with. Allow me to answer your questions. Then maybe we could sit down and talk some more? I don't know if I'm from your Earth." Amanda chuckled. "In my Earth, it's the year twenty-twenty-two." The girl's face instantly fell. *Likely not the same then. That's unfortunate. But not too far off if she's*

not acting any other way. I wonder what if she's okay here? If she's safe. Do they even know how to take care of a human child?

Amanda felt a strange feeling, so she quickly looked at the two women. The elf had her eyes narrowed slightly and did not look happy. *Did I say something wrong?* She smiled at the girl and bent forward a little. "Is everything okay? I assume we're not from the same place if your disappointed expression is anything to go by. Shall we sit and talk?" *Maybe I can figure out if she's safe here.*

The group walked over to the chairs and a couch that looked like some old-style French couches with its curved form and asymmetry that she had seen in pictures and museums. Amanda suspected it was an expensive piece of furniture, as she hadn't seen many of them. It was yet another thing she'd viewed since arriving that didn't fit her assumptions of how society should develop.

Amanda and Gwyn sat on the couch with a space in between them, while Ser Taenya and the elf sat in the two chairs across from them. She looked at the elf with the serious expression. "I apologize, I've been rude. What was your name again, Ms..."

The elf's eyes narrowed further. "It's *Ser Sabina.*"

"Oh, I'm sorry, Ser Sabina. It is lovely to meet you." *She seems rude. Hopefully, she doesn't act that way toward a child.* Amanda shifted so she could face Princess Gwyn and give her the attention she deserved. "Now, where were we? Oh yes, Earth. May I ask why you think we came from different places?"

Gwyn sighed softly. "Because, on my Earth, it is two thousand twenty-four. I'm from Italy, by the way. I heard you were from Canada. Where at?"

Italy? They're not a monarchy... What is going on? She glanced between the two knights. Ideas were forming in her head about the situation the girl found herself in. "Oh, Italy! That's so amazing. It's really beautiful there. I didn't realize Italy was a kingdom still. Is it in your world? It's a republic in mine."

The girl seemed to fidget slightly, causing the elf to look between Gwyn and Amanda. "Yes. It is there," the elf Sabina said.

Uh, no. Amanda scowled at Ser Sabina. "Respectfully, I asked *her.*"

The princess looked at the elf in question. "It's okay, Sabina." Gwyn turned to Amanda. "That's another reason I'm upset. We're from such different worlds. Friedrich is from an Earth almost like this one. He is a knight also, from when they still used armor and swords. Everything is so different. You know? I really miss showers." Gwyn chuckled. "So silly. And YouTube and movies."

Amanda nodded. Filing away information about the other human being from what sounded like the *actual* Middle Ages and not whatever amalgamation of development this world had. Focusing back on the present, she realized what was wrong. *These women can't properly care for a child of modern sensibilities. They're much too primitive...* Suddenly, Amanda felt some pain in her head, like she was getting a migraine. She winced and rubbed at her head, but continued. "I can certainly... understand that! I miss fast food and cars. Oh, and Tim Horton's coffee and donuts! How has everything been here for you? It's pretty different from what you're used to, eh?"

"It's very different, but everyone has been really nice." Gwyn scowled. "Well, except that *jerk* when we went to meet the Duke."

"I heard all about that. I am so sorry that happened to you, and I can't imagine anyone trying to put a child in that situation. Why I don't think you should have gone there at all at your age."

"It's alright. I'll be going to school soon. They're going to take me to the city of Avira so I can go to the Academy there."

Amanda scowled and looked at Ser Taenya. "You're just sending her away? Now that you've gotten what you've needed from her?"

Taenya jerked her head and leaned forward as if she were about to stand up, but stopped herself. She glanced at Gwyn before she placed her hands on her chair's armrests and gripped them tightly. "That is not true at all, Ms. Levings. You seem to have misunderstood something here. We are *not* taking advantage of Her Highness. We are helping her, and going to the Royal Academy is the best opportunity for this."

So they're sending her to boarding school? That doesn't seem right, something's wrong. I would never send her away. I'd keep her close, so we'd both be safe. I need to get that girl

away from them no matter what it takes. They are clearly not fit to—Actually... They don't seem too bad.

Wait... No.

“I’m sorry to hear that! Having to go away again can’t be what you want,” Amanda said. *Traveling in this society has to be dangerous. This city is relatively safe, and I’m sure more humans will come here. She should stay here.*

“The princess’ education is our highest priority,” Ser Taenya interjected.

“Yeah... It’s okay. I can learn a lot,” Gwyn said.

Amanda scowled. *A medieval school is not what I’d call an institution that will let someone learn a lot. If she went there, she would never fit in when we return home.* “I don’t know, sweetie.” She pointedly looked at the two knights. “The people here aren’t used to what we are. Our schools are *much* different. You know, if you wanted, I could teach you. You wouldn’t even have to leave—Ow!” She felt another shock of pain jolt through her head. *What the hell?*

Gwyn looked concerned. “Are you okay, Ms. Amanda? What’s wrong?”

This migraine is painful. What I’d give for some ibuprofen... Amanda winced again as she rubbed her temple. “I’m okay, just a headache. Sorry. Where was I? Oh yes. I think—” Another jolt hit her and she nearly doubled over from the shock.

Ser Sabina looked at her. “Perhaps we can reschedule this meeting for another time when you are well. Maybe you should go back to House Racine and rest. I assure you, we have Her Highness’ best interests in mind.”

There was something going on, and Amanda would get to the bottom of it. She felt like these women were taking advantage of the girl, possibly even falsifying her status of royalty just for their own benefit. “I am fine. Thank you for your concern. I also only have Princess Gwyn’s best interests in mind. She is from a society much different from your own. She has things she is accustomed to and has a right to that you simply cannot provide in your level of development.” *This isn’t a modern society, they just don’t have what we need.*

She didn’t know why they were ignoring her very real concerns. It was obvious that the two women weren’t understanding that Gwyn needed more than they could give. *They don’t*

even have working plumbing! We humans have to stick together, then we can figure out a way to make everything right.

Ser Taenya's eyes narrowed. "And *you* can provide these? After one meeting?"

Amanda was getting upset and frustrated. These women *were* taking advantage of Gwyn. Why else would they not want anyone else to assist her? Especially someone else from Earth? "Gwyn? Where is your mother?" *I need to get this girl away from—*Pain shot through her head again. *No, she's fine. Taenya and Sabina just want to help her.*

She shook her head and looked at Gwyn, who seemed on the verge of tears. "Gwyn? Are you okay? What's wrong, sweetheart?" Amanda reached out but stopped when Taenya leaned forward in her chair.

"I don't know where my mom is. We were together, but then I got here alone. Taenya and Raafe went and looked for her but they couldn't find her."

*They were together? Then Taenya took her away? Did she do something to that girl's mother? Oh, my god. They kidnapped her. Gwyn needs to get away from—*Amanda cried out and bent over, trying not to vomit. *She's fine. Everything is fine. I'm just having a moment, and overreacting. I really need to go home to rest. Take a deep breath and tell them goodbye.*

Amanda took a deep breath. "I'm sorry, Gwyn. That all sounds really horrible. I am glad Ser Taenya was able to help you. However, I am not feeling well. I think I should retire for the day. Maybe we can meet again soon?"

The girl nodded her head slowly, and the two knights stood up. Amanda stood as Ser Taenya stepped forward. "I am sorry you don't feel well. Please, reach out when you feel better. I will have someone escort you back to House Racine to ensure you are well. Thank you for coming."

But. Gwyn, she isn't saf—She's safer than anywhere I could take her. "I'm sorry again. I'm not sure what's come over me. Maybe I ate something that didn't agree with me. I can't wait to see you again, Princess Gwyn. Please tell Ser Friedrich I'm sorry I didn't get to meet him."

Gwyn nodded. "It was nice meeting you." She caught sight of the girl giving concerned looks between her and the two women.

Amanda smiled as she walked out of the mansion. Content that the little girl was safe and well cared for.

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Several hours later, Amanda was sitting in the house drinking tea with Lady Racine. The noblewoman had asked her to come by and talk about her meeting. She was excited to hear about the young royal that had been the talk of the city's high society.

"It was a good meeting then? Was she from your Earth?" Lady Racine asked.

"No, unfortunately not. Everything about her version of our world is so much different. Starting with the fact that her nation is a kingdom. It was historically in my world, but to listen to the differences, it sounds fascinating."

"I'm sorry to hear that she isn't from your world. I know how hopeful you were, but she is a princess?"

"Oh absolutely. There isn't any doubt in my mind," Amanda replied with surety.

"How was her situation in the House? Do you still have any of the concerns you voiced when we discussed meeting her?"

"No, none at all. I had some initial hesitation, but I wasn't feeling well, so I think it caused me to overreact a bit. Thinking about it, it seems everything was perfect and the people there are very attentive to Princess Gwyn's needs. I believe she's in great hands, and she's very lucky they're on her side. It could have been gone very poorly if that noble from the court had taken advantage of that poor girl."

"On that, I agree. I'm glad everything is as it seems though. I was worried that they wouldn't be enough to protect a princess, but it seems my fears were unfounded. Ser Siveril seems to have everything in hand."

Amanda smiled and nodded. "They definitely do. That girl is loved there. Which is important. I'm happy for her."

I can't wait to meet them all again. Especially Ser Sabina. She was great.