

The Dragon's Fated Bride Chapter 26 - TURNING PAGE - PART 3

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Andre was taken aback by Faye's flippant retort to his snide remark. He had not expected her to fire back with something so witty. She was a strong woman, not a weakling. This made him smile. She was an excellent match for the commander. He also discerned she would not take grief from Sterling or his ruckus knights. She was bold and unabashed in her words and actions. Her personality was just as fiery as the Dukes.

"Well, then. I guess our first stop should be the blacksmiths. He had an arrogant smile on his face. Andre knew what would happen the moment Faye asked for the spurs, and he could not wait to see how she handled the smithy's reply to her request."

He strode beside Faye along the edges of the street next to the shops on their way to meet the blacksmith. As they passed the businesses, Faye spotted a window display of jewelry. Each piece held eye-catching vibrant colored stones.

She had always admired the jewelry that Alice had in her box. It was a treat when she could open it, and Alice would allow her to assist in dressing her up for an outing with a suitor.

A unique design caught Faye's attention. It was neither jeweled nor flashy, but had a very elaborate carving. It matched the one on the locket her mother had given her before she passed away.

Faye reached up to touch the place where her pendant should sit, and for a moment, her heart skipped a beat to find it was missing. Then she remembered it was in the pocket of her dress back at the farmhouse.

She had hidden it from the Montgomerys as her mother had asked. She knew they would have taken it from her and sold or pawned it away from gambling money. The family had no scruples.

A man with a long white beard and benevolent green eyes that sparkled like emeralds appeared in the window, surprising Faye, and he waved his hand at her to enter his shop.

"Afternoon, young lady, and welcome to Hebert's. I see you admiring the Morgan Le Fay bracelet in the window. Do you know the story behind it?"

Faye shook her head as Andrè tersely interrupted. His hawkish eyes narrowed at the man, and he spat angrily at the shopkeeper. The paladin gestured with his hand toward the Duchess.

"You will address her properly either as Duchess or Milady. She is not some commoner or lowly noblewoman. This is the wife of Duke Thayer, and it would be wise for you to keep that in mind while interacting with her."

The man quickly came from behind the counter and bowed graciously to Faye.

"Oh my apologies, please forgive me, Milday."

Faye stood motionless, not knowing what to do or say. She had never been around nobility and did not know how to act like one.

So she handled it the way she had seen Sterling do. She responded to the owner.

"Please, do not make a fuss. I am unaccustomed to such treatment."

The old man sighed in relief that she did not scold him or do worse for his disrespect.

Her request was direct. "Now, please tell me more about the bracelet. I have a locket that was given to me by my mother that matches it. I would also like to know the price."

Faye knew she had no right to spend the money that the dress keeper refunded, but the idea of having the matching bracelet was so tempting.

"The bracelet is very special. It is told in an old legend that Morgan Le Fay was a gifted healer and mage. Her teacher was a great necromancer from the first mage tower and he had given her the amulet as a symbol of his love for her. Morgan was well renowned on the Isel of Apples for saving her brother, the King after he was mortally wounded by one of his own knights. She also could control time and steal her enemy's powers. They say..."

Sterling's voice was dark, and it filled the room. Faye was so engrossed in the tale that she didn't hear her husband enter the store.

"They say—anyone who possesses all three lockets can possess Morgan Le Fay's powers. Is that right?"

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A bow was offered by the old man to Sterling. "Greetings Duke Thayer, and yes, that is what the legend states."

Faye turned around quickly and flashed a devastating smile at Sterling. He stood there, admiring the beautiful woman in front of him. She was stunningly dressed in her new clothes. Faye shifted her feet forward to show him her new shoes, which made the Duke smile enthusiastically.

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"You look absolutely stunning, Duchess."

Faye blushed, her cheeks turning a rosy hue as her eyes glittered with joy. Her lips curved into a warm smile, and a soft, content sigh escaped her mouth. She had pleased Sterling with her appearance, and he even complimented her. It was more than Faye had hoped to hear him say to her.

Sterling pulled two silver coins from his pocket and tossed them onto the display case.

"Faye furiously shook her head, Oh, no, no. I-I was just admiring it. You have already given me enough today."

"Nonsense, give me your arm."

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Sterling extended his hand to the shopkeeper for the trinket. The man carefully placed it in Sterling's palm. The Duke deftly wrapped the bracelet around his wife's arm and fastened it. He held her white-gloved hand and admired the elegant jewelry. It looked lovely on her dainty wrist.

She couldn't help but admire the beautiful piece he had gifted her. Faye felt undeserving of such treatment. Her mind wandered back to the bedroom when she had been insulted.

Faye's brilliant blue eyes gleamed, but there was something else hidden behind them. "Thank you, Sterling. It is magnificent. However, I do not deserve this. I am sorry about this morning."

As Sterling listened to her heartfelt apology, he could sense the sincerity in her words. He kissed the back of her hand gently. Then his hand moved over the back of her head. Faye's breath hitched as his heavy gaze met hers. Her cheeks flushed crimson with warmth, and her pulse quickened. Faye experienced a tingle that spread from her center when he spoke to her.

"Don't fret about this morning. It is already forgotten."

The_Sweet_Sparrow

And my heart just melted. Looks like there's a bit of romance brewing between these two, after all.