

Brave New World

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Kapitel 1: 01. Could I have a cup of tea now?

"Could I have a cup of tea now? Please? I would like to have a cup of tea now. This whole situation is horrible enough; you could grand me at least a cup of tea to calm my nerves! Might it be possible to find at least a few leaves of tea here? I doubt you drowned all the tea of all colonies in Boston..."

The Lieutenant nods at his subordinate who then takes his leave.

"And the good one! Not the cheap stuff you might give your soldiers!"

"You make a lot of demands for a prisoner."

"And you act pretty rude and primitive for calling yourself the dawn of a new era. It's true what they say, the rebels have no manners. Not to mention that you live here in the wilderness, in the cold and wide nothing."

The Lieutenant rubs his temple and sighs. "The General will send a Major for interrogation, today."

"You can spare him time because I know nothing, like I already told you several times. I had the correspondence of my father with me because he asked me to bring them with me from home; he tries to write his memoirs, now that he is promoted. I have no clue about any military stuff, how should I, seriously, I am just a woman. Do I look like I would know anything about it? Maybe if you let me go my father will show mercy upon you."

"And if not?"

"Then he'll make sure that I'll be brought back, no matter what it'll cost. You will regret it, I swear."

"And I thought a Lady wouldn't swear."

"Are you one or why do you think you know us so well?"

To see the anger on her opponent's face satisfies her. Such a rude. To capture her on her way to her father, shortly after they left New York. After a horrible travel per sea. Yes, the New World, she sees how wonderful the New World is indeed... Rude rebels and freezing cold. And above all these blue coats bound her hands onto her back because she scratches everyone who comes too close to her. Several amongst them are already marked on their faces. She could also hit the one or other knee with a good solid kick. She hates those shoes, her feet are hurting, but in this one point the heels were very practical. Binding her hands together, on the back, how uncomfortable and rude! Did they ever have their hands bound on the back while wearing a stiff bodice? Obviously not.

At least the soldier, she has no clue at all about ranks, they are all soldiers for her, comes back with a steaming cup of tea. The steam tells her that it is really freshly brewed and as he placed the cup in front of her on the desk, she can smell that it is one of the good kind. "Thank you," she says with a forced smile. 'Always be polite, no matter the situation', her mother taught her. She looks at the young man, looking at the cup and back at the young man again. "It's true what they say... blondes are not really the smartest one around..."

"The rope, Daniel," sighs the Lieutenant, "the rope... under the promise to keep your hands by yourself."

"I won't dismiss a cup of fresh tea."

With a nod of the Lieutenant the young man unties the rope that holds her hands together, but still he keeps as much distance as possible.

She sighs and rubs her wrists at the relief. "Thank you, finally..." Putting her hands around the cup she sighs again through the warmth that crawls over her hands. "Again, as I said, I have no clue about such things at all. The interrogation by your dear Major will be totally pointless. I am happy enough to know at least the rank of my father, but there my knowledge about the British army ends."

"I thought your father, Miss, would be in the Navy."

"You see... Where's the milk? You tell me you would drink it without milk?"

"I know, we are rude and primitive, we don't even have milk for your tea..."

"It's getting more and more horrible." She lifts the cup and takes the first sip. It's better than nothing. "When will your dear Major arrive?"

"It won't be long until he arrives."

"I wish to have a bath afterwards."

"Excuse me?"

"A bath, have you heard of it? I wish to have a bath afterwards, a hot one. Only because I am surrounded now by rebels doesn't mean I have to smell like one. Or are you not even having fire and water?" She can hear the Lieutenant grumbling. Oh, he is already regretting it capturing her, she can tell by the look on his face. "And I want at least a proper shelter. As proper as it's possible out here," she murmurs, pulling a face while letting her gaze wandering around. "And if I take that bath..."

"I never said you..."

"If I take that bath I hope you'll keep all your men off my shelter, I guess otherwise my father would castrate every single one on his own. When I am not faster. I expect at least a hint of proper behaviour from you and your men... Sir. Be aware that I will tell my father every single bit that happened here."

The man on the other side of the table rolled with his eyes. He hopes that Major Tallmadge will come quickly with further instructions of the General on how to handle this special prisoner. It was more or less an accident... They thought it was the carriage of a royalist General. False information. That's exactly the reason why everybody in their service should be able to read.

Kapitel 2: 02. Send my greetings to your almighty General

"How is she?"

"Well, she has an appealing appearance." It takes a moment for the Lieutenant to recognise the expression of the Major and he jumps shortly. "Oh! Well, I mean, she hasn't complained for the last two hours, she is calm as long as she has her tea I guess... We tried to be as careful as possible as we saw that it was indeed no loyalist General but well... just a woman... I guess she is... well."

"Good, the General wouldn't be pleased to hear something different." The young Major gives the bridles of his horse to a soldier, following the Lieutenant through the camp.

"We put her into one of the officers' barracks. It seemed to be the best idea because of the weather. I ordered also two soldiers standing always guard, of course."

"Good," the young Major nods, taking a few papers, letters, that are given to him and overflows these before reaching the barrack and entering it. By doing so he takes off his hat, surprised by the comfortable warmth that lingers in the building through a burning oven. He hasn't felt so much warmth in weeks since the winter started to crawl over this country.

"And you are?..."

"I am sorry, Miss," he replies immediately at the woman sitting at the table with a cup in her hands and looking up to him. "I am Major Benjamin Tallmadge; I hope the circumstances aren't that uncomfortable for you? I can assure you that we will try our best to make it as comfortable as possible for you."

"Well... it's no St. James Palace..." She eyes him over the edge of the cup while taking a sip, how he takes off his cape and puts it over the only remaining chair in the one-roomed barrack, placing his hat on the table and sitting down.

A crooked smile grows on his lips. "No, sadly it's not. Despite our difference I wouldn't mind rather being now there than here concerning the weather and season."

"Winter in a heated Palace is much more tolerable than in the wilderness, right?"

"I never spent a winter in a Palace but I imagine it way more comfortable, yes."

"I can tell you: it is. So, you are the Major send by the almighty General to interrogate me?"

"It seems so, yes. Miss..."

"To spare us both time, Mister Tallmadge, I know nothing what can be of any use for you. And I doubt that a recipe for a hair cures that'll keep your hair soft and silky even in the wet-cold wind of winter is really helpful in a war."

He looks at her for a short moment before clearing his voice. "I agree, that wouldn't be helpful. But maybe you can answer me a few questions, Miss..."

"I already answered your rude Lieutenant questions. Ask him, Mister Tallmadge."

"Well, I would rather like to ask a beautiful young Lady than a grumpy bitter Lieutenant," he smiles.

"Too bad for you." She takes another sip of the tea in her cup and turns her gaze away. Thank the Lord that the Royalists send men into war and not women... "Maybe... you can accept my deepest apologies that it was just a terrible accident that the carriage was hijacked with you. Our men had false information. They thought that maybe a carriage with the regalia of General Cornwallis there would be someone inside with

importance to said General. And not the daughter of an Admiral of the Navy."

"My father is good friends with the General. He lends him the carriage to escort me from the New York harbour to Philadelphia to attend his promotion. I hope I am not going to miss it."

"Don't worry, my Lady, an exchange is already settled within a week. After hearing our men captured a woman the General didn't spare any effort to arrange a prisoner exchange as fast as possible."

"How generous..." She looks up as the door opens again and two men carry a wooden tub into the barrack. Immediately she puts the cup down to the table and claps her hands with glee. "My bath!"

A bath? Seriously? Is she commanding these men around here? She is, he thinks after he sees buckets of steaming water are carried in.

"If you excuse me now, Mister Tallmadge? We can continue our chat another time over a wonderful cup of tea, but for now there lies a more urgent matter for me ahead." She rises from her chair, walking around the table. Taking hat and cape she pushes both into the Major hands and shoves him towards the door. "It was a pleasure to meet you, Mister Tallmadge and send my greetings to your almighty General, goodnight."

He turns around and looks in disbelief at the door as she literally shoved him out and shuts the door in his back. Maybe they should rethink the idea of women working for the military...

She takes a deep breath and sighs as she leans against the door. Finally she is alone again. She feels uncomfortable through and through in this camp, surrounded only by men who haven't seen a women in ages possibly. With that thought, she takes one of the chairs and blockades with the backrest the doorknob, barricading the door. Why did she only send her maid ahead... why was she only persistent that she is a grown up girl and can for sure take the travel to Philadelphia on her own? If she would have kept her maid at her side... She had enough time by now to study this place; the door and a small window are the only ways to get out. Sadly she won't be able to fit through the window... even nude it would be too small for her. And as if she would with a freezing wind outside... She can only hope that her father won't wait the whole week and organises a raid of this camp on his own as fast as possible.

Kapitel 3: 03. Miss Elizabeth threw apples at me

He checked his uniform and hair one last time in a mirror before he knocks at the door. It's not only an Admiral, but also his godfather behind the door, he should look his best. With his hat under his arm, he enters after a voice from the inside allowed him to. He had no chance to salute and greet as the man behind the desk looks up from his writing and his face lightens up in an instant. Putting the quill aside, he stands up, walking around the desk and taking the younger one in a tight embrace. "Welcome, boy, good to see you finally again!" He pats him on the back before he releases him.

Older than he remembered him, but still his pats on the back stealing shortly his breath.

The hands resting on the shoulders, he looks up and down on him. "You look good, boy! The service for the Crown is doing you well. Come, sit down. I heard about your promotion to Captain, I was indeed very proud to hear of it, boy. And then shortly after, the news you would now command your own troops, the Queen's Rangers... I am very proud of you, boy. I always knew you would make your way in the army."

He was sitting down in the chair in front of the desk while the Admiral pours two glasses with a honey-golden liquid and then handing him one glass. "Thank you, Sir. I am honoured to hear those words from you, Sir. And... about receiving the call from you for today. I was delighted about having a chance to see you again, Sir."

"How could I dismiss a chance to see my dear godson again? Especially now that his career for the King really starts," the older one grins. "I would also be pleased to welcome you on my promotion ceremony."

"Congratulations on this, Sir."

"Thank you, boy."

He rolls with his eyes without the other one recognising it. For gods sake... he still calls him boy... "It will be my pleasure but I doubt this is the reason why you called me here, Sir."

"True... It is not the main reason." The Admiral sighs, leaning forward. "The truth is... Elizabeth arrived yesterday at the New York harbour."

He almost spit the drink out again, he started to pour down his throat and ended in a coughing.

"I assume by your reaction you still remember her," he smiles.

"How could I forget, Sir. Miss Elizabeth threw apples at me." And she hit. Apples can really hurt and leave bruises. An Apple a day keeps the doctor away, they say. Sure. When you throw these at them...

He sighs. What for peaceful times these were... "Well, with her she had all my correspondence. I asked her to bring it with her. But instead of my daughter and my correspondence, her maid and her luggage were the only things that arrived here yesterday. The carriage with her has been captured by rebels."

He himself is not aware of how he sits up straighter by this news, but his godfather sees it of course. "These are shocking news indeed, Sir. I am sad to hear this. I guess a prisoner exchange is arranged by now?"

"In a week, yes. But here comes the reason why I called you exactly in here for today. I don't want to wait this week to have my Lizzie back. I want her to be safe and sound. Now. I want her here as soon as possible. I don't trust the continentals; I don't trust

them to treat her right. I haven't slept the whole night; the fear for my little girl keeps me awake. I know you, boy. You'll think maybe my correspondence might be of more importance. What if the rebels can actually read and reading out of my letters harbours we want to attack, what our tactics are, places the Crown is working on conquering... But boy, trust me when I tell you that you'll understand when you'll have a daughter on your own one day. I never cared that she isn't it by nature. She always was simply my daughter. And when you hold your daughter for the first time in your arms, everything changes. You change. Your point of view on the world changes. The world changes for you. Everything changes. Nothing will be then more important than her being safe and sound. I failed in protecting her. And I ask you know... bring me back my daughter. I have heard and read of your victories. I have read about your capture. I have read about Setauket and Valley Forge. Of course I know everything. I always had my men laying two eyes on you. You're my godson, it's my duty."

He suddenly feels like a little child that has been caught doing something forbidden.

"But you were always a man of action."

"Are you asking me to free Miss Elizabeth, Sir?"

"Yes. That's what I do."

"Well... I have my duties, Sir. By the command of Major..."

"I don't care for any Majors command. Leave that to me."

"And... Sir... why should I disobey my orders? To play the white knight in shining armour on a white steed who saves the Princess from the terrible dragon?"

"Actually, yes," nods the Admiral. "This and maybe I should mention that I can promise that you'll be promoted to a Major. Not now, but for sure this year. I have a lot of friends amongst the Generals and Admirals. By the time summer has arrived you'll be a Major then. No need to listen to a command of any other Major, hm? Major John Graves Simcoe. Sounds good in my ears. Major Simcoe, commander of the Queen's Rangers... If you bring back my Lizzie I will also support you more than ever, you and your Rangers. Is that enough to change your mind about disobeying your orders?"

Slowly a smile starts to spread over his face. "What would I be for a godson to dismiss a plea of my godfather who did already so much for me? What would I be for a gentleman to leave a Lady in distress in the hands of rebels? A terrible one, I guess. She will be here by tomorrow morning."

"Thank you, boy. Thank you." He sighs in relief. Every minute that passes by is a minute too much. The unknowing about her wellbeing, the helplessness, the sheer numbness about not being able to do anything on his own is killing him.

"And... I will have permission on acting on my own?"

"You'll get all the permissions you'll need. Don't worry about that." Immediately he takes a new sheet of paper and his quill, dipping the quill into the ink and starts to write. "At first you need to be satisfied with his. The words of an Admiral confirming that you acted in the name of the Crown and King. The official form will come later. I guess everyone will be thankful when you spot with your men rebels in the wilderness and simply following them into their camp, making sure they won't do any harm to the Crown."

"Oh yes, the people are very thankful when we do so. They are far too easy to spot. Even in the dark." He smiles as he hands the paper. "Thank you, Sir. It will be a pleasure to work for the great Admiral Samuel Graves."

"I have to thank you, boy."

Kapitel 4: 04. Too bad that you're on the wrong side, Mister Tallmadge

The night was horrible. Whatever this is that they call bed was hard and uncomfortable and she could hear the men outside singing and yelling until the late night. Their potty mouths were not the point, she grew up surrounded by men of the military, and she is kind of used to such language. The things she heard by the age of twelve by men who call themselves Gentlemen... The point is, that they could have done it a bit more silent... The morning was cold; the fire in the oven had almost gone out through the night while she slept. And the breakfast wasn't even worth it to be called like this. The tea was the best part about it. And the return of Major Handsome. That's what she calls him for herself from now on. He looks more like a boy than a grown man, the face still innocent with round cheeks and fair blond hair and blue eyes, like a Prince Charming out of a fairy tale. At least he is nice to look at. A little something while she stays 'imprisoned'. And said Major Handsome came to her this morning telling her she would be transferred to Fort Washington. It would be way safer and more secure for her there until the exchange than in this small camp, by the order of General Washington. And people say that it has no advantages in being born as a girl. Well, she does not see it as a disadvantage to get a real room in a real house, heated with a proper bathroom. When night has fallen, so he told her, they will start. They would be an easy target per day for Loyalist troops that are just waiting for Continentals roaming through the land, less protected at this moment than they would be in their camp. The Night gives enough shelter for them to make it safely to Fort Washington.

As if, she thinks by herself. If her father already arranged it to free her, then for sure he took the best men that serve for King and Crown and the night won't be an obstacle for these for sure. She would like to get out of here fast, but on the other hand... Fort Washington sounds nice. And obviously they think of her to be the poor, weak spoiled girl that is by the hijacking so traumatised that she won't pay any attention to her surroundings. Men are fools. Already in this camp, she counted five cannons and twenty tents, in each tent are living up to three soldiers makes 60 soldiers here in a whole. Plus Major Handsome. And now while they prepare a cart, Major Handsome already apologised but an open cart would be easier to protect and handle during the transferring than a closed carriage, also the carriage got a broken wheel from the hijacking, she watches the men how they prepare themselves. Preparing the cart, collecting their weapons and loading pistols and rifles, ten bayoneted rifles she counts. In the shine of the torches she can spot a knife blinking from the inside of a boot or on the belt of a soldier. But most trust on the efficient cause of pistols and rifles. Weapons that are stealing precious times with reloading and targeting... Not really an advantage when being attacked who had precisely planned how to attack.

"My Lady, we are ready now to leave."

Major Handsome tears her out of her thoughts. "A wonderful night for a travel, don't you think, Mister Tallmadge?" She puts her hand into his he holds out for her; let him leading her to the waiting cart. "Thank you," she smiles as he also helps her stepping onto it. He follows her, sitting on the opposite of her and a single gesture by him is enough and the whole group begins making its way.

"It couldn't have been a more wonderful night for it than it is today, Miss Gwillim, indeed. The sky is clear, the stars and moon are sharing their light with us... are you cold, my Lady?"

"Well... it would be much warmer in a closed carriage."

"I am sorry, my Lady, but as I told you..."

"Yes, a cart is much more practical for this adventure. Oh no, you really don't have to, please, Mister... Thank you very much, Mister Tallmadge. That is very kind of you. But aren't you freezing now?"

He sits back after he took off his own cape and draping it around the young woman.

"You are concerned for my well-being," he smirks. "Trust me, I lived through worse, this little bit of cold is nothing compared to it. Also... the sight of a beautiful Lady is warming enough."

"Oh you," she giggles, "I didn't knew that the Rebels could be so charming and good looking at once. You would be to the liking of my father. Young and ambitious, handsome, already a Major... Very promising."

"Are you trying to charm me now, my Lady?" The smirk stays on his lips.

"Does it work?"

"Well..."

"Too bad that you're on the wrong side, Mister Tallmadge. But it's still not too late to change the side. The army of his King would welcome you with open arms."

"Not everyone in it, I guess." For sure not everyone and he knows someone who would shoot him dead in an instant. "But how about you change sides, Miss Gwillim? You managed it wonderfully to command these men here around in these two days and letting them dancing like marionettes you pull the strings for. The General would be impressed."

She makes a waving gesture with her hand. "Oh no. It's more comfortable to cry in a Palace with velvet and silk than in a wooden house with itchy linen."

He laughs lowly. And they say British Ladies are boring.