

PRT 348- "Princesses of Hope 1: Once Upon a Time Travel"

"Cindy, are you ready?" Charming called from the hall.

I slipped on my shoes and opened the chamber doors, "Ready as I'll ever be."

"What's wrong my Princess?"

"You know how nervous these meetings make me. I love to meet the villagers, but they treat me like I'm..."

"...royalty? You are!"

I laughed, "I know I am; I just don't think I'll ever get used to it."

"My sweet Cindy, you are the most humble and gracious princess I've ever known and the people see that too...that's why they love you. And I know you like making a difference in their lives."

"Of course I do. That's the best part of this job...I get to make decisions that help people."

"And you're great at it. Now, let's go. Our people await." Charming said as he kissed me. He took my arm in his and we headed for the throne room.

"I present their royal highnesses, Prince Charming and Princess Cinderella." The Grand Duke announced.

That was our cue. Charming and I went into the throne room and took our seats. We waited for the Grand Duke to bring in each villager. Some needed conflict resolution in land disputes or other disagreements, others were seeking assistance in their livelihood in either money, livestock, or other means. I did what I could for each of the people seeking assistance. It was the same requests time after time but I knew that, for each person, it was dire. The only request that stood out was from a woman I'd never seen. She had hair black as a raven and her eyes had a darkness to them I couldn't explain.

"Princess, I seek your assistance." She whispered.

"Good citizen, I will do what I can. Might I inquire your name?" I asked.

"Amelia."

"It's a pleasure to meet new citizens in the kingdom. I have not seen you before Amelia. What can I do to assist you today?"

"I am in grave danger good Princess."

"If it is protection you need I can send out the royal guard."

"No Princess Cinderella. It is not that kind of threat...it is much more serious...it is of the magical nature." Amelia whispered to me so that only she and I could hear the rest of our conversation.

"A magical threat? Oh dear. What can I do? I'm not magical."

"You have ties to the magical world. I can feel it. Only one who is pure of heart can assist me with this threat. Please Princess, I need your help."

"What can I do?"

"It is too dangerous to talk here. Please, meet me in the pumpkin patch behind the palace tonight upon the stroke of 12. I will explain everything then. Please come, my life depends on it." Amelia said as she turned and walked away.

"What was that about?" Charming asked.

"I'm not sure...but I think I should find out." I said.

After we finished with the villagers, Charming and I had dinner and then retired to our quarters. I explained Amelia's request to him.

"I don't like it. Not at all." He said.

"I agree it is an odd request at best, but what harm can it do to hear her out?" I asked.

"And what if it's a trick of dark magic? We should consult your Fairy Godmother."

"She's away at that fairy conference."

"Yes, but she said if she was needed to summon her."

"I will not summon her for this. I will hear Amelia's request first, and if I feel she is needed, then I will call Fairy Godmother."

"I don't like it. I'm going with you."

"No Charming. If this is a trap then I can't let you get involved. I'm sure I'll be fine."

"Cindy, I can't lose you."

“You won’t. I promise. I love you.” I said as I kissed him.

Midnight was near so I headed out to the pumpkin patch, as Amelia requested. She was already there.

“Amelia, are you ok?” I asked.

“Yes.” She said.

“Ok, now tell me, what is going on? You said you were in magical danger?”

“Well, sort of.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well there is magical danger...but I’m not the one in trouble.”

“Who is?”

“You Princess, you.” She said as she grabbed my arm.

I screamed and struggled to get free, “Let me go!”

“Not a chance.” Amelia said as she opened up this portal and pulled me through.

~17th Century, France~

“Lumiere, will you please hold the latter still?” I asked as I reached for a book on the top shelf of the library.

“Sorry Princess Belle, I was distracted.” He replied, steadying the latter.

“Fifi walked by didn’t she?” I asked.

“She did. I’m truly sorry.” Lumiere replied; I could only imagine how red his face must be.

I grabbed the book I wanted and climbed down the latter, “Thank you.”

“My pleasure Madam.”

I took my book and went to the garden to read. It was a quiet afternoon and I intended to enjoy it, because tonight would not be so quiet. We were holding a ball at the palace and I needed some ‘me’ time before everyone arrived.

“Having fun my beautiful Belle?” Adam asked as he entered the garden.

I looked up from my book, “I am. Would you like to sit with me?”

“Of course.” Adam said as he slid behind me and pulled me back into his arms. I reached my hand back and ran my fingers through his long blonde hair.

“I love you Adam.” I said softly.

“I love you too Belle. Are you ok? Nervous about tonight?”

“Certainly not. You’re the one that gets nervous in crowds. I’m looking forward to it. I love to play hostess to all of our wonderful guests. I just needed some time to clear my mind prior to the ball.”

“I understand. And I don’t get nervous in crowds.”

“Oh please. You get extremely nervous and by the end of the night you’re banished yourself to a corner.”

Adam laughed, “I do that?”

“Every time we have guests.”

“I guess being in seclusion for so long still affects me.”

“It does, but its ok, I love you anyway.”

“What book are you reading?”

“A book called ‘Utopia’. It’s interesting.”

“It’s in Latin.”

“Yes, it is.”

“You’re so smart.”

I laughed, “You are too, just in a different way.”

“Princess Belle, I’m sorry to disturb you, but your dress is ready.” Mrs. Potts said as she entered the garden.

“Oh, I suppose it’s time to get ready then. I’ll see you tonight.” I said as I kissed Adam.

“Until then my Belle.” Adam said.

“Prince Adam, I believe Cogsworth is ready for you as well.” Mrs. Potts said.

“Thank you Mrs. Potts, I’ll go find him.”

Mrs. Potts and I went to my dressing room and I started to change into my gown. These gowns were probably my least favorite part of these events. I was most comfortable in my blue jumper dress, but I was a princess now and so I had to present a certain image to the public. With Mrs. Potts's help I changed into the puffy green gown. It was beautiful, don't get me wrong, but it was a little uncomfortable as well.

Finally it was time for the ball. People were arriving and I needed to make my entrance. I went to my side of the staircase and waited.

"Ladies and gentleman, thank you for joining us tonight. Now, please welcome Prince Adam and Princess Belle." Cogsworth announced.

Adam and I walked down our respective staircases, meeting at the top of the main staircase.

"You look beautiful." Adam said as he took my arm in his and we walked down the stairs together. We stepped onto the dance floor and danced a waltz before starting to greet our guests. We had guests of all types; Duchesses, Counts, villagers, Ladies, Lords, and that was just a few. Our balls attracted many and I treated everyone the same, regardless of social status.

I was making my way around the room when I noticed a girl I'd never seen before. She was dressed in a black gown and her features were dark as well. If I'd met her I would have certainly remembered.

"Thank you for coming, I hope you are enjoying yourself." I said to the girl.

"I'm having a great time Princess Belle, thank you." She said.

"Well it seems you know my name, but I'm afraid I can't say the same. We've never met that I can recall."

"You're right, how rude of me. I'm Princess Amelia."

"Oh, you're a princess. Of what nation, might I ask?"

"A far away land known as Nemesis. I doubt you've heard of it."

"I can't say that I have. I've love to hear about it."

"I have some amazing stories I could share. I'm sure you do as well though. I was just admiring your castle. It's simply amazing."

"Thank you. We work hard to keep it up."

"I'm sure you must. Your gardens must be spectacular."

"They are. It's my second favorite part of the palace."

"Do you suppose you could sneak away long enough to show me?"

I smiled, "I guess they won't miss me if it's just for a few minutes."

I led Princess Amelia out to the gardens.

"Wow, this is breathtaking." She said.

"Thank you." I said

"It's such a shame."

"What is?"

"That you'll never see this place again."

I looked at Princess Amelia and she had opened up a gateway of some sort. I started to run.

"I don't think so Princess Belle." She said as she grabbed my arm. I pushed her and managed to get away.

"Stay away from me!" I screamed.

Adam heard this and ran out of the palace, "Belle!"

"Adam!" I screamed as I tried to get away.

Amelia grabbed me again, "I don't think so Princess."

I managed to turn and punch her, clawing her face in the process.

"That's enough!" she cried as she threw me into the gateway.

“Ferdinand, I’m going to see the Dwarves.” I said as I picked up my shawl.
“Snow, wait. I don’t like you going into the woods alone. Let one of the guards accompany you.” He said.
“I’m sure I’ll be ok. I’ve gone into the woods many times before.”
“Yes, and each time I worry.”
“Oh, I’m so sorry. I never want you to worry.”
“Will you please, just take a guard with you?”
“It’s not that far.”
“It’s not that close either. Besides, it’s likely to be dark upon your return.”
“OK my Prince. If it will make you feel better then I will take a guard.”

My guard and I headed into the forest. We were about halfway to the cottage of the Dwarves when there was a large blast right in front of me. I screamed.

“Take cover Princess!” the guard cried.

“Don’t bother; it will do you no good.” A voice said.

I looked up and saw a woman in a very short dress, it was mostly black; “Who are you?” I asked.

“Sailor Nemesis...and I’m really tired of these pleasantries. The last princess scratched my poor face. This will be much easier if you just come with me.” She said.

“She’s not going anywhere.” The guard said.

“Oh please. Nemesis Dark Blast!” she cried as she blasted the guard, knocking him out.

“Oh no! Help, somebody!” I scream.

“Oh help!” Sailor Nemesis mocked me, “You are pathetic. At least Princess Belle had some fight in her. Come on.” She grabbed me and opened up a doorway out of thin air and moments later pulled me through it.

~14th Century, Agrabah, Saudi Arabia~

“Rajah, get back here!” I cried as I chased the orange tiger through the halls of the castle.

“Princess, what’s wrong?” Razoul asked as I ran past him.

“Rajah has my slipper again!” I replied as I kept running. Why this tiger thought of this as a game was beyond me.

“Rajah!” I finally cornered the tiger and approached slowly, “Good kitty, now give me my slipper!” I cried as I grabbed it away from the jaws of my pet.

“Is everything ok?” Aladdin asked, laughing, as he walked up.

“Fine. I’m glad you find this so funny.” I said.

“I’m sorry, it’s just the same thing every morning this week.”

“Yes, and if it doesn’t stop Rajah will be one homeless tiger.” I said as I glared at the cat.

Rajah let out a whimper.

“He thinks it’s a game. He’s trying to play.” Aladdin said.

“It’s not a game. I have important things to do today.” I said.

“Actually, you don’t. We have the day off. Care to go on a carpet ride?”

I smiled, “Always.”

“Come on Abu, Iago, let’s hit the sky.”

We got on the carpet and headed off. There was nothing like the magic carpet. It was amazing to soar across the sky. It was something I could never get used to. It was especially nice when we didn’t have a destination in mind and I could just sit back in the arms of my amazing husband and enjoy the view.

“You seem more relaxed.” Aladdin said as he wrapped his arms around me.

I smiled, “I am. I love flying with you.”

“And this is the only way to fly.” Iago said as he nestled in to the carpet.

Abu squeaked in his own manner of speech, which I could now easily translate after being around him long enough.

This time it translated to “You’re lazy.”

Iago could speak ‘Abu’ as well and knew what the small monkey had said. He narrowed his eyes and started to kick out his leg to knock Abu off the carpet.

“Iago, I wouldn’t do that.” I said.

“Not unless you want your wings clipped.” Aladdin said.
“Fine, fine.” Iago said as he pulled his foot away from Abu.
Abu climbed on Aladdin’s head for protection.
“It’s ok Abu.” Aladdin said as something from the ground blasted us.
“What was that?” I asked.
“Good question. Carpet, let’s take it down a bit.” Aladdin said.
The carpet started down towards the ground. On the ground there stood a woman dressed in a really short black skirt.
“What do you think you’re doing?” I cried when we landed.
“Well I had to get your attention somehow.” She said.
“Who are you?” Aladdin asked.
“You can call me Nemesis.”
“What do you want?” I asked.
“Good question Princess Jasmine. I want you.”
“Me?”
“Sorry, not happening.” Aladdin said.
“Really, want to bet on that?” Nemesis asked as she blasted Aladdin.
“Ok, that’s enough!” I said as I tried to jump kick Nemesis. She dodged.
“Nice try. And I’ll give you credit, you’re not as pathetic as that last princess, not that it will do you any good.” Nemesis said as she opened a portal.
“What the...”
“Jasmine, get away from her.” Aladdin said as he struggled to get up, obviously hurt from the blast.
“Little late for that Prince Aladdin, but don’t worry...I’ll take really good care of her.” Nemesis said as she grabbed my hair and threw me into the portal.

~18th century Europe~

“Daddy, Philip and I are going for a ride. I’ll see you tonight.” I said as I kissed my father’s cheek.
“OK, you kids be careful.” Daddy said.
“Come on Philip.” I said as I took his hand.

Philip and I went outside to where he had his horse, Samson.
“Ready for a ride old boy?” Philip asked.
Samson ‘neighed’ in delight.
“Come on Aurora, careful.” Philip said as he helped me onto the horse. He then got on himself.
“OK, ready.” I said.
“Then let’s go.” Philip said as he took the reigns and Samson started to trot. I leaned back ever so slightly into Philip’s arms. He was sitting behind me.
“This was a great idea.” I said.
“I think so too. I love our fathers but we needed some alone time.”
“Yes, I’m looking so forward to the wedding but I feel like they are smothering us.”
“They just want everything to be perfect.”
“I know. So do I...and it will be, because I’m marrying the man of my dreams.”
“I love you too Aurora, my sweet Sleeping Beauty.”
I smiled. I was so happy with Philip...to think that just a few short months ago I was a peasant girl dreaming of love... now I was a Princess with the love of the most amazing Prince to ever walk the Earth. My life was absolutely perfect.

We were trotting through the countryside when Samson heard a noise that spooked him.
“Easy there fellow.” Philip said.
“What was that?” I asked.
“Sounds like someone needs help. Let’s check it out.”
We went towards the noise and found a girl that seemed to be caught in a bear trap.
“Oh no, are you ok?” I asked.

“Hang tight, I’ll get you out in a flash.” Philip said as he dismounted the horse and went to the woman’s aid.
“Thank you so much. This is just what I needed.” She said as she reached for a club and hit Philip over the head. The force was so great that he passed out.
“Philip!” I screamed.
“Poor wittle Princess Aurora...no prince to save you now.” The woman said.
“Who are you?” I asked, terrified.
“It doesn’t matter. What matters is you’re coming with me.” She said as she grabbed my arm and pulled me off Samson. In one quick move she opened up a gateway of some kind and pushed me through.

~19th Century, Europe~

“Eric, come on, we’re going to be late.” I said.
“I’m coming Ariel, relax.” Eric said as he came running down the stairs. He was dressed in a suit, which was a rarity.
“You look great.” I said.
“I feel like a penguin.” Eric said as we went out to the carriage that was waiting for us, “You look very nice though.”
“Thanks.” I said as I looked down at the yellow gown I wore.

We arrived at the home of the ambassador we were meeting and were ushered in.
“Prince Eric, Princess Ariel, welcome.” He said as we sat down.
“Thank you for having us ambassador. It’s an honor to dine with you.” I said.
“Eric, your wife truly is a delight.”
“Yes sir, I take much delight in her.”
I looked at Eric; he wasn’t good at this...at all. It was time for me to take over here.
“Ambassador, what we all want is to avoid a war. The feud between our kingdoms is completely uncalled for. I’m sure that we can find a solution to appease both sides.” I said.
“I would like that Princess, but my Prince has made it clear, he wants the resources on the land between the boundary.” The Ambassador said.
“I understand that, and I sympathize. Our people rely on those resources as well. Would it benefit your kingdom if we split the land and the resources on it?”
“I’m not sure my Prince will agree to that.”
“Ok, my understanding is that your people rely on the mineral resources, while our people rely on the vegetation. Would it be suitable to divide the resources and split the land?”
“Yes, I believe my Prince would accept that offer.”
“Good, it’s an arrangement we can live with as well, right Eric?”
Eric nodded, “Yes, I think both parties would benefit from that.”

When we left the Ambassador’s Eric took off his jacket the second we were in the carriage.
“You were amazing in there.” Eric said.
I smiled, “I enjoy it. I saw my father do the diplomacy thing all the time back in Atlantica.”
“You stopped the war. Our people are so lucky to have you. I’m not good at this at all.”
“Oh Eric, your talents just lie elsewhere. You’re an amazing prince.” I said as I heard a noise from the ocean.
“What was that?” Eric asked.
“Something in the sea. I should go check it out.”
“Ariel, no. You aren’t a mermaid anymore, you can’t just go exploring for unknown dangerous.”
“Oh please. You know me better than that Eric. If Alantica is in danger I have to check it out. Besides, you know my lung capacity is more than an average human.”
“Be that as it may, you still need to breathe.”
“I’ll come up for air when I need it. I promise.”
“Fine, be careful.” Eric said as the carriage stopped on top of a bridge. I got out and jumped into the water. I went under the sea and looked around. It was much harder to swim without fins and at time I missed it, but I wouldn’t trade my life with Eric for anything.

I was looking for whatever caused that noise when I felt something behind me. I turned around and saw a woman dressed in black. I knew evil when I saw it and this woman was certainly evil. I swam towards her but as I got close she opened an entryway and by the time I saw it, it was too late. I swam right into it.