

Timeless love

Von Dieur_Mind

Kapitel 1: Arrival

The late afternoon sun painted all of the gardens golden. Margareta put down her pencil and drank in the sight. The golden shimmer added something magical to the scenery. Something she could never show in her drawings, so she thought.

The girl had a strong love for everything artistic, be it drawing and painting or music, she could spend hour after hour with it, forgetting everything around her. She was now nearing her sixteenth birthday and with that the end of her childhood. She should have been married two years ago, but her father had given in to her pleas and delayed the matter. These days he often told her how much she reminded him of her late mother.

Margareta hardly remembered her real mother, she was only a faint memory to her. The mother she remembered clearly was really her aunt. She had moved in after her sister's death, taking care of Margareta and raising her together with her own daughter Marina.

It was the voice of her cousin Marina that brought Margareta back to the present. It was almost time for dinner so Margareta got up, straightened out her dress and collected her drawing-stuff. She took a last look at the enchanted view of the garden, then she turned and headed to the main house.

"We're expecting a guest and from what I heard he will stay for a while..." Marina told her as soon as she was inside.

"Oh?" Margareta raised an eyebrow. She knew Marina loved to gossip.

"Yes, well actually it's a surprise...Uncle wants to tell you about it, that's why I called you inside."

Margareta nodded and went to her father's office. She had just lift her hand to knock, when she heard her father's voice.

"Come in, dear."

"How did you know it's me?"

August von Reichenberg smiled.

"I just know. I'm your father. Sit down." he replied and patted his hand on the couch, motioning her to sit down next to him. She sat, sorting her skirts to be comfortable. Then she looked expectantly at her father.

"I am sure Marina has already informed you about our guest." he stated.

Margareta nodded. "Yes, but she didn't say much. Only that he'll come tonight and that he's to stay for a while."

Her father nodded. He looked affectionately at his daughter. Her dark-red curly hair framed her pale face. Her eyes, ever changing in colour depending on her mood, looked at him. She was quite tall, but slender and her graceful movements often made her look very fragile.

"Actually his coming here is already part of your birthday present." August said, breaking the moments of silence. Margareta's eyes were full of curiosity and questions, so he continued:

"He is a musician and will be here to entertain us and give you vocal training and lessons on the piano. I know how much you love music..." he smiled as he saw his daughter's face lighten up. She beamed with joy.

"Really? Is that really true?"

He nodded, still smiling at her.

"Oh father, thank you. Thank you so much!" She flung her arms around him and hugged him tightly. Then she jumped to her feet.

"I should go and change for dinner." she waited for a reply. August smiled warmly at her and waved her away. Margareta practically ran to her rooms, her heart racing in her chest. She rang the bell for one of the maids, already busying her thoughts with what dress to wear to impress their guest.

The carriage arrived after sundown. Margareta was still in her room. The noise from outside rose her curiosity and she went to take a look outside the window. Just as she looked down a figure exited the carriage. His body was hidden under a long black cape, but she noticed that he wasn't wearing a wig. His long dark hair was tied back in a low ponytail. A few strands had loosened and fell into his face. A handsome young face and it made her heart beat at a quicker pace. She felt herself blush and wanted to turn away, but it was that moment that the stranger decided to raise his head. Deep brown eyes locked with hers, only for a second. Then she turned away, curtains closing behind her.

Downstairs everyone was waiting already and Margareta rushed to her place, mumbling an excuse. She kept her head low, gazing at her folded hands until she heard the door open. It was one of the servants, guiding their guest into the room.

Marina giggled and stabbed her elbow in Margareta's ribs.

"He's handsome." she whispered.

He was tall, with broad shoulders but slender built. His skin had a slight olive shimmer but was pale at the same time, contrasting with his dark-brown hair.

August stepped forward, extending his right hand to greet the newcomer.

"Welcome to my house, young friend."

The guest bowed gracefully, a slight smirk playing around the corner of his mouth, taking the offered hand and shaking it.

"Darius is my name. At your service."

His voice was smooth and deep. Not a young man's voice, Margareta mused, just like his eyes. Ageless, making it impossible to guess his true age.

He sat down on the chair reserved for the guest of honour, to the right of August. That meant sitting opposite from Margareta and she found him shooting glances at her every now and then while being in conversation with her father.

After dinner they moved to the living room. Everybody settled on the various couches and armchairs and August asked Darius to play something. The musician nodded and sat down at the piano. He straightened his fingers and then lowered his hands to play.

Margareta recognised the tune and hummed along. Darius raised his gaze from the piano but kept playing as he asked:

"You seem to know the song. I'm curious to hear your voice. Care to sing along?"

She hesitated, but when her father gave her an encouraging nod she rose and stepped to stand beside the piano. Their eyes met once again and Margareta felt herself drowning in the depths of those brown orbs. He repeated the beginning and she took a deep breath.

Her heart skipped a beat when another voice joined in. She had heard him speak but had never dreamt to hear him sing. Their voices intertwined and the memory of the sound followed her even into her dreams.

end chapter one