

The Noble First Step

By Garrett Kidd

Gabriel Hasson was thinking about Helen Doop once again, even though it was forbidden. Helen was a slave-girl with dirty ankles and tattered clothing, and had been without a shower for days. While Gabriel was a mighty prince of the land Turro on a planet far far away, he knew what he wanted. Gabriel would stand around for days reflecting on his elegant surroundings and hoping one day to share his beautiful throne room with Helen, his secret lover.

It was a dark night with wispy fog covering most of the castle grounds, without a keen eye, nobody could see anything. Gabriel lay awake staring endlessly out the high castle window hoping that his lover would appear in front of him.

“This is pointless,” He mumbled to himself as he began to walk away from the window.

“Hey!” Said a mysterious voice coming from the castle grounds below. “Don’t you know it’s me? The one you’ve been waiting for? I finally escaped my master to come and see you.”

Gabriel was shocked to hear the sweet voice of his dearly beloved Helen for the first time in years. However, Gabriel knew the rules and he took a step back from the window to collect his thoughts. He knew that he couldn’t be with her, she was a poor slave-girl and he was a mighty prince, if they were to be seen together the guard would kill her.

“Helen, it’s dangerous! I know our love is strong and powerful, but I couldn’t bare to see you get hurt because of me!” Gabriel proclaimed.

This conversation was grabbing a lot of attention from the guards and the peasants of the town below. The guards ordered Helen to stand down and comply with their commands to be

arrested. Helen screams at the top of her lungs to Gabriel to meet at their hideaway spot. Helen quickly dashed away into the darkness, avoiding the guards' vision. Gabriel was shocked, it's been years since they had last seen each other, but he could remember everything about the secret hideaway they had deep in the forest. He could feel the deep memories coming back of him and Helen playing with figs and using them as play swords, or building their treehouse high in the sky. At that very moment, Gabriel knew he had a big choice to make.

Gabriel ponders down the large golden staircase and walks out the main entryway into the castle grounds. He took one last look at his vast castle and took a deep breath.

"It's time that I choose my heart over my duty," He said proudly.

He began to walk through the castle gates into the dark forest beyond. It was cold and dark and impossible to see, Gabriel knew his journey would take days and would be treacherous but he knew what he wanted. Questions began to flood his mind about Helen the way his feelings were flooding his heart. He wondered how Helen was doing, and if she had even made it to the hideout spot they had made years back. Gabriel knew he would need some assistance from an old friend to help guide him through the dangerous forest. He took a detour to the small village just below the castle where his old friend Gregan would be. Gregan was the best weaponsmith in the land and could create a weapon for him to slay any beasts in his way along with providing him a map of the forest. Gabriel and Gregan met in the tavern and Gabriel told Gregan that Helen was back and he was going after her. Gregan was worried that Gabriel would not be able to overcome the dangers of the forest but ultimately agreed to provide Gabriel with the tools he needed for his quest. Gregan offered to go with Gabriel but Gabriel refused and stated he must do this alone.

Gabriel leaves the village with his newly forged broadsword and a scribbled map of the forest. He heads towards where he believed the treehouse to be, however, night-time was quickly approaching and he needed to rest. Gabriel pitched a tent for the night and closed his eyes. Although there was an eerie feeling in the back of his mind and he knew something evil was fast approaching. He could hear a battalion of footsteps of which could only be the sound of guards coming to bring him back to the castle, and end the life of the woman he loves. The guards towered over him, he could see the black in their eyes through their stainless steel helmets and he knew this would be a fight to the death. Gabriel unsheathed his broadsword and planted his feet sturdy into the soft soil he was standing on. The battle was on. Outmatched, Gabriel took blow after blow to his head and chest as he swiped his broadsword across the thick surrounding fog hoping a hit would land. He could feel his energy fading but Gabriel never stopped thinking about Helen and he pressed the attack. Gabriel used every last ounce of his strength but continually had to dig deeper into his mind to find more. Slicing down foe after foe until he was the only one who was still standing. Bloody and weak, Gabriel fell quickly to the ground as his knees had given out. His eyes lay open, staring up at the morning sky just as the fog cleared. He lay there surrounded by those who tried to end his life but Helen was the only thing on his mind.

“What could she be doing, is she okay?” He muttered to himself.

He stood up and began his travel once again, knowing his journey was near complete. Days had passed and Gabriel finally had come across the old tattered treehouse that he and Helen had crafted years back. It was falling apart with branches growing in and out of the walls and hand-crafted windows. Gabriel began his search for Helen and see if she was there but could not find her.

“Helen! I’m here Helen!” He shouted.

Out of the shadows came the figure that Gabriel knew so well and a large grin came across his face. Helen’s presence warmed his soul and he knew his feelings for her were true.

Helen and Gabriel embraced for the first time in years.