

Begonia {part ten}

by Emily Sparkles

You may be wondering, as is only natural, about the designated husband of our dear Princess. You may also be curious as to his whereabouts during all of these recent happenings. Truthfully the Royal lad was making good time from his homeland to Begonia, unaware of the Princess's disappearance. Truthfully, he was — for once — not enjoying the speed of his smooth Royal ship. But before you judge Prince Sage too harshly for being anything less than thrilled to wed Isabella, it is only right that you learn of his life...



The land of Pasque-over-the-sea was another good country. Quite different from our beloved Begonia, it had a fine coastline, glittering with miles of golden sands. Instead of emerald green grasses, their ground was covered with tall and slender jade reeds, which bowed in the strong sea winds. In place of purple mountains majesty, they had gray-blue rock formations which rose up like misshapen bubbles that would never burst. Shiny white birch trees dotted the landscape, cheerfully waving their lime-green leaves, and willowy wildflowers danced in the fresh sea breezes.

The citizens of Pasque lived along the sea shore in curious cottages of various sizes, in order to be as close to their life-giving waters as possible. The royal castle of this land was set on a lone bluff, but not too high of a bluff mind you — they dearly loved their people and enjoyed interacting with them in their daily routines. Routines like the early morning preparations for the fish market (people traveled from miles around — even Begonia! — for Pasque fishes) where the men-folk hauled in nets of sea-food and their wives and children sorted, cleaned, and displayed them. Good-natured mischief, rhythmic tosses, and laughter created an atmosphere of enthusiasm and joy.

But back to the castle. It was a sturdy structure made of large blocks of the blue-gray slate with sturdy turrets on the outer walls and a large, open courtyard in the middle of its four square-forming wings. The sea-spray splashes as high as the uppermost windows; the sea that is sometimes gray and moody, and other times as smooth and teal as an aquamarine jewel. And at night when the stars are twinkling in the sky above, it's as deep and mysterious as a sapphire.

Now Prince Sage was the second oldest child of King Delphinium and Queen Dahlia, rulers of Pasque. The land of Pasque, much like the land of Begonia, had been blessed with good and loving rulers. The King and Queen were fairly young, and in good health, but like all Royal families must, they had to prepare their happy brood of children to one day rule kingdoms of their own. Their eldest child Edelweiss would, of course, become ruler of Pasque one day. As such, his time was divided quite evenly between all areas within the kingdom; shoreline, plains, sea, and coastal caves. He knew every family and every trade, and understood how vital each was to the survival of his beloved homeland.

Next in line was Prince Sage, as you already know, but we shall return to his daily life last. (Sometimes being last *does* mean you're most important, you know).

After Sage came three princesses: Caladium, Camellia, and Crocus. These three lively ladies were brought up to know as much about their culture as their brothers, but also about other cultures, too. For you see, just like Princess Isabella of Begonia, they were promised to marry Princes from other nations one day. And as was only proper, they learned how to be young ladies knowledgeable in etiquette and business. Although, quite often they were seen racing horses across the plains or scaling the masts of ships at sea; not exactly ladylike behavior, but endearing nonetheless.

And now for Sage. As he was not to inherit the rule of Pasque, it was the usual way of things for him to be betrothed to a Crown Princess from another land. Which is, as you know, what happened between Isabella and he. Now Sage was an obedient son,

and indeed had a wonderful soul. Yet you may be surprised to learn that he was not happy to wed. This was not due to another whom he loved — as was Isabella's case — although truly his heart *did* belong to another.

Prince Sage's heart belonged to the sea. From the time he was a very young boy he'd spent as much time as he could (and often even more time than he should) on board a ship. He loved everything about sailing; from building the boat to navigating it over the waters. By the time the marriage announcement was made he'd already had many grand adventures, but Sage knew there were more daring excursions to be had. He knew that marrying Princess Isabella meant docking his ships permanently in order to be a good and worthy king to the land of Begonia. And he would never be anything less than a worthy, good leader. Yet his heart of hearts was broken at the thought of retiring to a life of land-locked leadership.

So, both Princess Isabella and Prince Sage found themselves looking towards their wedding with hesitant hearts. Thankfully they both were honest with the good Lord, who knew the desires of their heart, and can always be trusted.

