

THE MAGICIAN'S SON

THE STORY OF THROCKTON

CHAPTER 9

The summer was warm and sunny. Throckton spent a lot of time walking in the forest. He had many decisions to make. He was thinking about his future and if he really wanted to be a magician.

He chatted with Varanda almost every day. She lived far away so they did not see each other during the summer. He missed her.

He talked to her about what he should do, but she pretty much left it up to Throckton to decide what was best for him.

Abilossa was home and fully recovered from her surgery. She was busy with her friends, but when she had time, she would walk with her brother and talk.

“I’m not sure what I want to do. I’ve finished my studies at the Magician’s Academy, but I don’t think I want to be a magician. When I talked with Lundra at the hospital, she seemed happy about being a nurse. She seemed to have made a good choice in her life.

“I know I won’t be going back to the academy next year, so I don’t know what to do. Do I return to normal school? Do I go to the Magician’s University? I’m not sure what I want to do,” Throckton shared with his sister.

“I can’t tell you what to do. You’d probably just do the opposite anyway,” Abilossa began with a laugh. “You have the summer to figure it out. You can always talk to dad. He’s pretty smart you know.”

“Yeah, I know. I just don’t want to bother him about this. He has enough to worry

about with his work and everything. Maybe I'll talk to him later," Throckton gave an excuse as to why he would not talk to his dad.

Throckton knew his father would tell him what to do. He did not want to be forced into doing anything again. He wanted it to be his choice.

During dinnertime, the family would talk about what was going on in their lives. They asked Throckton many questions about his time at the school. He was a little embarrassed to tell them everything, but usually the family laughed. They even thought it was funny when Throckton was in the small rooms. He did not think it was funny at all.

He told them about how homesick he was and how badly he wanted to go home. His dad told him it was just part of growing up.

Throckton did not think so. He hated it there.

As the summer wore on, Throckton became more bored.

Finally, he decided to talk to his dad, but he wanted to know something about his father before they talked about himself.

"So dad, I saw your picture on the wall at the Magician's Academy. It had written at the bottom the dates you attended the school. You never told me that you went there," Throckton questioned his father.

His father was a little surprised at the question.

"Ah, I forgot about that. You must have been in Ms. Waterspell's class. She was one of my favorite teachers," his father answered.

"Ms. Waterspell?! She was one of your favorite teachers? I thought she was strange," Throckton said surprised. "She dressed like she was from the time of the hippies."

"Remember, I went to school a long time ago," his father joked with him.

His father continued, "All right, here is my story.

"I wasn't all that different from you when I was younger. I frustrated my parents every day. I didn't want to go to school and my grades were not good.

"One day, my father told me I was going to go the Magician's Academy. I told

them no and I ran away. I was gone a couple of weeks, when they finally found me hiding at a friend's house.

"My first day at the academy was similar to yours. Malinda was very strict with me.

"I didn't like Gossling and he didn't like me. We had many arguments.

"Then I met your mother. She was the prettiest girl I had ever seen," his father told the story of his time in the school.

"MOM WENT THERE TOO!" Throckton blurted out.

"Yes, she was a very good student. If it wasn't for her, I'd probably be in the mines right now digging and digging," his father replied.

"Did you go to the mines?" Throckton asked.

"No, but I was very close. I had a trial, but Ms. Dooligan convinced the teachers to give me one more chance," his dad answered.

"So what happened?" Throckton asked.

"Well, love has a funny way of changing a man. I wanted to impress your mother so I decided to make the best of a bad situation, like making lemonade out of lemons. We studied together and I passed my classes with the highest honors. That's why my picture is on the wall. Actually, your mother's picture should be there instead of mine because without her I wouldn't have finished my education," his father said with a look of happiness in his eyes.

"Why didn't any of the teachers tell me about you?" Throckton asked.

"They didn't want you to know. They didn't want you to get any special treatment. While you were there I received regular reports on your progress. They even told me that you were planning to escape. What we wanted was for you to learn your own lessons. In the end, you did an amazing job. I am very proud of you," his father said as he leaned forward to give Throckton a hug.

Throckton hugged his dad and then asked the question he planned to ask.

"OK, it's like this. I have finished at the Magician's Academy and now I don't

know what to do.

“I miss Varanda, but I don’t want to go back to the school. I don’t really want to be a magician, but then again, I don’t know what I want to do when I grow up. I’m very confused. I know I can go to the Magician’s University, but I am not interested in that. What should I do?” Throckton questioned his father.

“I know I can tell you what to do, but you will probably not listen. You are going to do what you are going to do.

“So I’ll make some suggestions and then you can decide for yourself. I already sent you away to try to help you get your life together, I’m not going to do that again,” his father gave him some advice.

“I’m glad to hear that!” Throckton said relieved.

“Here’s an idea. You can return to your high school and finish your regular education. Then you can decide what university you want to attend after that. You don’t need to make up your mind right now about what career you want for several years. You are still a young man. You have plenty of time.

“All I ask is that you do your very best at whatever you choose to do with your life, whether you are a magician or not,” his father advised him.

“Thanks dad, I’ll think about it,” Throckton responded.

He smiled at his dad and then went to his room to think.

After he entered his room, he lay down on his bed and put his earphones in so he could listen to his music.

While he lay there, with his eyes closed, he heard a voice.

“Throckton, do you hear me?” the voice said.

Throckton sat up and looked around the room. He did not see anything.

“Who’s there?” he asked.

“It’s Varanda,” the voice said.

“Varanda? Where are you?” he asked.

“I’m talking to you through your earphones. Isn’t it cool?” she said.

“Through my earphones? How are you doing that?” Throckton asked very astonished.

“It’s a new spell I learned this summer,” she replied.

“I never learned that spell,” Throckton answered.

Just then, the door to his closet opened and out jumped Varanda.

“Surprise!” she yelled out.

“How did you get here?” Throckton asked, even more surprised.

“Our parents arranged for me to come to see you. They’ve been planning this for a week. We wanted to surprise you. Did it work?” Varanda replied.

“Yeah, I’m really surprised,” Throckton responded.

“Did you miss me?” she asked.

“Not really,” he answered teasing her.

“I’m gonna get you for that!” Varanda responded as she pushed him backward onto his bed.

They sat and talked for a long time. It was nice to see her again.

“Do you want to go for a walk in the forest with me?” Throckton asked.

“That sounds fun. You’ve told me about your forest. It’ll be fun to see where you go when you need to think,” she answered.

Varanda raced to the door, but Throckton pulled her back so he could go first. They ran down the stairs and out of the door making so much noise his mother yelled at them to slow down.

The forest began at the end of the street. There was a trail that led into the woods and then to the school. When they got to the school, Varanda sat on a swing and began to swing higher and higher.

“Come on Throckton, let’s see who can go the highest,” Varanda challenged him.

“Naw, I hate those things. They make me dizzy,” he answered.

Then he went behind her and started to push her higher and higher.

“STOP! I’m going high enough!” she yelled at him.

Throckton laughed and stopped pushing her.

When she slowed down, she jumped off, but when she did, she fell on the ground. Throckton went to see if she was OK. She looked up at him and laughed.

“It’s OK, it didn’t hurt,” she said, while brushing the dirt off her pants.

They walked around the school looking into the windows. It was summer break so no one was there.

“Do you want to see inside?” Throckton suggested.

“How do you plan to get inside? The doors are locked,” Varanda said as she looked inside one of the windows.

“A little magic and then voilà, we are inside!” Throckton answered.

“Throckton, you really want us to get into trouble, don’t you?!” Varanda said to him. “I don’t want to get in trouble on my first visit here. If we do, your parents won’t let me come back. So stop it, OK?” Varanda told him.

“All right, I was just kidding anyway,” Throckton, responded to her. “What do you want to do?”

“Let’s go into town and get something to eat,” she suggested.

“I don’t have any money,” Throckton said as he looked in his pockets.

“That’s OK. I’ll treat you. I have some money my mom gave me for the trip,” Varanda answered, as she showed him a twenty-dollar bill she had in her pocket.

They left the school and walked along the road to the town at the bottom of the hill. While they were walking, Throckton reached over and took Varanda’s hand. As soon as he took it, she squeezed his hand as hard as she could.

“Ouch!,What did you do that for?” Throckton asked, surprised at what she had done.

“Just kidding,” she said as she took his hand and held it tightly. “You’re not going to get away that easily.”

They walked together to the town and went to the small café in the center of the square. There were a lot of other kids their age in the restaurant and most of them knew

Throckton. They began to tease him about Varanda.

“Hey Throckton, who’s the girl?” they asked.

Throckton tried to ignore them, but they continued to tease him.

“This is Varanda. She was a classmate of mine last year. She has come for a visit. Would you just leave us alone?” Throckton asked.

Varanda smiled at the teasing.

“It’s OK, I don’t mind them talking about us,” Varanda said.

“What if I use some magic and make them go away?” Throckton whispered over to her.

“NO! Just leave them alone. They aren’t bothering me at all. Don’t use your magic. It will only cause us problems,” she answered.

“Why do you always say that? I want to have a little fun. Why can’t I have a little fun with these guys?” Throckton inquired.

“I don’t want any trouble. Please leave them alone. They aren’t bothering us,” Varanda pleaded.

Throckton agreed to leave them alone, even though he was not happy with the teasing.

They sat for a long time talking about their time in the Magician’s Academy and about what Varanda had been doing during the summer.

She had traveled to the Capital City and spent seven days going to museums and famous places. Other than that, she spent the summer at home with her family.

As for Throckton, he had just stayed home during the summer.

While they were talking, the boys did not stop teasing Throckton and Varanda.

They were saying, “Hey Throckton, are you going to marry her?” and “Throckton are you in love?”

Throckton got tired of the comments and began to get red in the face.

“Why are you getting mad?” Varanda asked him. “They’re just kidding.”

“I’ve had enough of this,” he said.

Then he turned to them and said, “Gondi ra fo adini.”

The boys disappeared.

Varanda looked around the room to see where they had gone.

“Where did they go?” she asked.

“I sent them to their homes.” Throckton said calmly.

“You sent them to their homes? Why did you do that?” she yelled at him.

“They were bothering me and I didn’t like it,” Throckton responded.

“That was very childish of you. It was just harmless teasing. It wasn’t bothering me,” Varanda stated in anger at Throckton.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t know you would get so angry,” Throckton said back to her.

Varanda jumped up from the table and said, “I’m going back. I don’t want to stay here with you anymore.”

She headed toward the door.

“Hey, we haven’t paid for our food yet!” Throckton screamed at her.

Varanda threw the twenty-dollar bill at him and then she stormed out of the door and headed back to the house.

Throckton paid the bill and then ran after her.

When he caught up with her he asked her, “What’s the matter?”

She turned and looked him straight in the eye.

“I asked you not to do that. Now the people of this town are going to know that you are a magician. You’ve ruined everything for your family!” she said in a strong voice to him.

She turned and walked quickly to the house. It was silent while they walked.

When they got to the house, she went to Abilossa’s room and closed the door.

Throckton went to the living room to play a video game.

At dinner all was silent except for, “Pass me the beans” or “May I have more potatoes please.”

After dinner, Abilossa went to her room to talk to Varanda.

The plan was for Varanda to spend the night in Abilossa's room so it gave them a long time to talk to each other.

"What's going on? Why aren't you and Throckton talking? Earlier you were having so much fun," Abilossa asked.

Varanda answered, "He's such a jerk! He sent four boys home using his magic because they were teasing us."

Abilossa was surprised and responded, "He did *what*?"

"He sent four boys home using magic. Now everyone in this town is going to know he's a magician. Then there will be problems for your whole family," Varanda explained.

"I have news for you. Everyone already knows that we are magicians. It isn't a secret. People have known this for years," Abilossa informed her.

Varanda sat up in surprise. "Are you serious? If the people in our town knew I was a magician they would make us leave. They would think we were very strange."

"Not here. We get along with our neighbors just fine. I'm sure the boy's parents will find out what they were doing. Parents here don't like it when their kids are bullies," Abilossa said. "That's one of the reasons why Throckton had to go to the Magician's Academy. He was being too much of a bully."

"Somehow that doesn't surprise me," Varanda commented.

After a while, Abilossa asked Varanda a personal question.

"Why do you like Throckton? What is it about him you think is cute? Do you like bad boys?"

"What do you mean by, 'Do I like bad boys?'" Varanda asked.

"You know. Girls like bad boys. There's something mysterious about them. They can be a lot of fun to be around," Abilossa explained. "Throckton's like that. He can be quite disruptive when he wants to be. I'm sure you know that."

"I've never thought about that. Maybe that's one of the reasons why I like him, but it's not the only reason. He's fun to be around. I just wish he'd listen to me," Varanda stated.

“He doesn’t listen to anyone. He’s his own person. He’ll do what he wants to do. You have to either except him as he is, or move on. He’s really a pretty great guy. Do you remember what he did for me?” Abilossa explained.

“Yeah, that was pretty special. Maybe I should apologize,” Varanda reasoned what she should do next.

“No, let him think about it for a while. If you are as special to him as I think you are, he’ll apologize to you. Just wait and see,” Abilossa advised.

“We’ll see what happens in the morning. I’m tired and I think we should get some sleep,” Varanda suggested.

“I was hoping we could stay up all night talking,” Abilossa tried to encourage Varanda to stay up and talk, but before she knew it, Varanda was asleep.