

# Heart's Betrayal

By : AnnaChase

In the 1920s, the ambitious Lord Raidan manages to take power in England and turns the country into a totalitarian regime under his dictatorship. This forms perfect ground for a forbidden romance between the rebellion leader and the daughter of one of Raidan's main ministers.

Published on  
**Booksie**

[booksie.com/AnnaChase](http://booksie.com/AnnaChase)

Copyright © AnnaChase, 2013  
**Publish your writing on Booksie.com.**

## **Table of Contents**

Heart's Betrayal Chapter 1

# Heart's Betrayal : Chapter 1

## HEART'S BETRAYAL

### Chapter One

The palace was dormant but for the sound of my bare feet hurrying across marble floors. It had been hours past bedtime when a maid hurriedly awakened me with the message that Lord Raidan wished to see me. No one ignored a summoning from the country's leader, no matter the time, so I went at once. The message had startled me so much I had forgotten to put something on over the thin, white nightgown I was wearing, leaving me shamefully unlike a lady.

My heart was beating so fast I feared everybody could hear it, and running through the palace's many corridors made me pant for breath audibly. Finally I arrived at Raidan's chambers. The absence of guards surprised me: I did not know whether it should terrify or relieve me. With a trembling hand I knocked, unaware of what would await me on the other side of this door. What could such a man possibly want with a girl of barely sixteen summers? I could not imagine he had summoned me here to arrest me, for I had never disobeyed a command. In fact, I had always behaved exactly as was expected of the daughter of Lord Raidan's main advisor. My father, Malcolm Delavelle, was almost as well-known among the people as Lord Raidan himself.

Like all other ministers and their families, I too lived at the palace with my parents and my older brother, Tristan. Despite that I had never been alone with Raidan before. I had caught glimpses of him at public occasions, and once, at the celebration of my brother's promotion I had been personally introduced to him. But had that one introduction been enough to invite me to his private chambers in the middle of the night? The sound of a deep voice shook me out of my thoughts.

"Enter"

That mere voice sent shivers down my spine. The voice, though, was nowhere near as bad as the eyes which rested on me upon entering. They seemed to penetrate my very soul, making me stand almost paralysed in the doorway.

"Come here, girl" Lord Raidan addressed me.

Slowly I approached, the Persian rug feeling surprisingly comfortable under my cold, bare feet. When the dictator reached out his hand, I kneeled down and kissed his ruby ring.

"My Lord" I all but whispered, inclining my head as a sign of respect. "You wished to see me?"

"Yes, Julia, have a seat" Lord Raidan nodded toward a chair opposite his mahogany desk. Anxiously, I took my seat there.

"Forgive me the late hour, I fear I could not wait with this plan until morning".

I said nothing, but merely stared at a spot on the rug. There were so many thoughts filling my mind that it would be difficult to form a coherent reply.

"How old are you now, girl?"

At the direct question I did look up, but not straight into his eyes. "Sixteen next month, my Lord".

Lord Raidan acknowledged my reply with a nod and started pacing through his office, making me even more nervous than I already was.

"Nearly sixteen" he repeated pensively. "Old enough to do your duty to the country and myself, I should think".

My duty? Hopefully from this I could conclude that I was not to be arrested. Yet I was completely clueless of what he meant with the word duty in this context.

"I will do anything you tell me to, my Lord" was the only correct response I could give. I had no idea what I could possibly do, though. After all, I was only a girl.

"Tell me what you know of the rebellion" Lord Raidan commanded.

I furrowed my brow. Like every dictator in world history, Raidan too was opposed by a rebellion. I knew a fair bit about them from the newspapers and from what I had overheard from some of my father's conversations, but it was probably not very wise to tell all that. He might think me a spy.

## Heart's Betrayal

"A little bit, my Lord" I replied cautiously. "That they are calling themselves the White Lotus, and their leader is a young man. I believe his name is Archer. William Archer, is it not?"

I was rewarded by a small, appreciative nod. "Very good, Julia. William Archer is what I wish to speak to you about. You must have heard that the White Lotus is causing more and more trouble nowadays.

In agreement I nodded, but I could still not see what this would have to do with me. After all I could not read minds, though Lord Raidan seemed to be able to read mine, for he went on to explain things. Nothing could have prepared me for what was coming.

"I want you to seduce William Archer. You are young, and attractive. Make him fall in love with you. If you succeed, let us hope he will tell you everything I want to know. "

Where I had been relieved first at not having done wrong, my anxiety now fully returned at the word seduction. Such a thing was definitely not for me. Like with all noble, young ladies, my father would choose a husband for me whenever he deemed the time to be right. I would then marry a wealthy man high up in Raidan's ranks. But no such man would want me anymore if my reputation were sullied like that. The most important virtue in a young woman was purity. To accept this task and seduce the rebellion's leader would rob me of all chances of getting the life I was born for. Again Lord Raidan seemed to have mastered the art of mind-reading. Or perhaps it was just my face that could be so expressive at times. Either way he knew exactly what to say to put me at ease.

"You need not worry about your reputation. Every man would be thrilled to marry a girl that has served me well".

It did put me at ease a little, but there were few things I could do. Any form of protest would surely lead to much worse. Lord Raidan was not the kind of man that was used to being rejected.

"I promise I shall not disappoint you, my Lord" I said, my brain already running fast speed thinking of seduction. For a few years now, I had felt men's eyes upon me as I danced at balls and other festivities. I had been flattered, but never responsive to their stares. That would not have been appropriate.

"I indeed hope you shall not. This mission is of great importance for the both of us, Julia. It will be the making of you and the certainty of my continuing reign. You may leave now. Do not forget I will expect frequent reports. "

Anxiously, and eager to leave so I could think things over, I sank into a deep curtsy and bowed my head. "Of course, my Lord. I thank you for giving me this opportunity. ". With that, I left, my heart beating fast upon making my way back to my chambers.

After this suddenly came a feeling of almost desperate loneliness, and a desire to share this momentous news of my mission with someone. It was too late now to wake any of my friends, and my parents would scold me for feeling frightened. I was my father's darling, but I was never more important than Lord Raidan. This left only one person I could go to, and mere moments later I found myself knocking on my brother Tristan's door. Tristan and I were not very close, quite the contrary. He had always been jealous of my good relationship with father, who had often been hard and demanding toward his firstborn and only male heir. In a way, I was jealous of his good relationship with mother, for she in turn was very distant toward me. Supposedly all this rivalry made us more enemies than siblings. Yet somehow I was glad he opened the door, looking very sleepy in his pyjamas, his blond hair tousled.

"Can I stay here for a while?" I asked immediately, shocked at my own straightforwardness. I quickly added: "for a little while" to make it sound better.

"What for?" he stepped aside to let me in, probably more out of curiosity than anything else.

I resisted the sudden urge to burst into tears, and instead I kept playing my part, as a Delavelle would always do in public. I held my head up high and pretended to be proud of this new task I had been given. I ought to be proud, I could not allow in the thoughts of fright, and the prospect of failure and consequences.

"Can't a sister simply visit her brother?" It surprised me how calm I managed to make my voice sound.

"Not in the middle of the night" Tristan said logically, to which I had no reply.

"Well," I started, "I have very important news to share that can not possibly wait" I took a seat on his dark red coloured sofa. It matched the Victorian style of the rest of his chambers, as well as the rest of the castle.

"I doubt that, dear sis, but you might as well tell me now". Tristan ran a hand through his already untidy hair and seated himself on the chaise-longue in the corner.

## Heart's Betrayal

"Lord Raidan has summoned me to his rooms earlier tonight" I started haughtily. This at least seemed to spike Tristan's interest. He suddenly seemed a lot more awake.

"And he has given me a mission" I sounded so proud, but right now I felt none of it. At least I was a good actress.

"A mission?" Tristan repeated, his response disappointing me. I had hoped to see jealousy in his eyes, or some kind of admiration, but instead there was only worry. Such an emotion was new to me, at it was least when it was reflected on my brother's face.

"Yes. I can't tell you what it is, of course". My act was still going strong.

"Ah, so you have come all this way to my rooms, just to rub that in my face haven't you?"

Tristan poured himself a glass of whiskey, the Jack Daniel's he was ever so fond of. Too fond, according to some of the maids.

On this occasion I ignored social laws and poured myself a glass as well; perhaps some courage would come in handy now I felt such a coward. I had never drank anything with so much alcohol in it before. Carefully, I took a sip and tried to look as if I was used to drinking whiskey every day. That proved to be hard, for the alcohol seemed to go straight to my head. Of course I had drank it much too fast, and within minutes I was warm and flushed as if with fever. It did have rather a tranquilizing effect.

Tristan in turn was remarkably silent, which meant neither of us spoke. I wondered perhaps if he suspected I was not quite as proud as I showed.

"All right then" I finally gave in. "Lord Raidan wants me to seduce the rebellion's leader, and I have got absolutely no clue how to accomplish that".

Again there was a silence. My words had shocked us both; it was so strange to say it out loud like that.

"For heavens sake, Julia!" Tristan eventually bellowed. His outburst sounded harsh in the quiet night's air. He must have noticed my fright, for he spoke softer after that. "You just keep surprising me, do you realise that? I have no idea how I'm going to solve this for you".

"You need not". I was put off by the idea that my brother thought I could do nothing on my own.

"I can solve this all on my own, you know. And it's not as if you could seduce a man for me. I do not need your help, Tristan".

"Please, would you stop being this obstinate for once!" he protested, his anger returning. There was an unfamiliar expression of rage on his young face. It caught my off guard, resulting in my easily letting go of the well-rehearsed act I had put up.

"Then what am I supposed to do?!" I sobbed, burying my face in my hands. "Father would have chosen me a husband, I would have never need to bother with any kind of seduction until my wedding night!"

Neither of us had much to say to that, and the only noise in the room was the ticking of an old grandfather clock in the corner until I suddenly felt Tristan's arms around me, holding me tight to him. We were never this close as siblings before; always quarrelling but never making up or agreeing with each other. Yet still this strange, new comfort felt good in the state of neglect I was in. I buried my face on his shoulder as I let tears run down my face. What would happen now to that girl I was once? A girl as good as a princess, the apple of her father's eye? She was reduced to being Lilith, with no man to want her when it was all over. But refusing would be worse.

"It's all right now" Tristan murmured, stroking my hair. "I will find a way for you to do this. It doesn't have to ruin you altogether".

I looked up at my brother sadly. It was evident he meant well, but right now I hardly had much hope left.

"You need sleep" he concluded quite truthfully, for I had never felt as exhausted as tonight. Without a single word of protest I let Tristan pick me up and carry me over toward his bed. It was so indulgently warm I fell asleep almost immediately while listening to my brother's kind words that sounded like a much-needed lullaby. He tucked me in snugly before I reached the wonderful land of dreams. I could not help but feel that even so small a gesture of kindness were a sign that our relationship had taken a new turn entirely. From constantly arguing and jealous of the attention the other got, it seemed that now we were capable of kindness. That did not mean we did not have so much to learn still, as well as a lot of secrets to uncover. At least now the first step was made.

## Heart's Betrayal

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2013-05-23 03:59:24