

Checkmate by Lady Magdalena
Chapter 1: Memories

Story Notes:

Story is based loosely on "The Law According to Love" By Adele & Moira, with some excerpts quoted from the original story. Permissions granted by original author for use of excerpts.

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The memory of my date with Keith that night in the restaurant will always be one I treasure, even if it was interrupted by my appointed guardians. Nanny and Coran were always watching out for me, only wanting the best for me. The three of us were like oil and water, not mixing at all.
- Princess Allura Juldea, *We Didn't Start the Fire: The Real History of the Doom Wars*

Chapter 1 - **Memories**

Princess Allura sat on the edge of her bed in her chambers, tears welling in her eyes. Lion practice had been a bit more difficult this morning and she knew why. It seemed like eternity since the event had occurred, yet only a few hours had passed. Her emotions, however, would not stop torturing her with the memory of the night before. There had been dinner and dancing with Keith, and then...and then Coran and Nanny had shown up and ruined everything. Or had they? She had returned to the castle, seeking Keith out later that evening for just one answer. Does he love me?

"Keith, I need to know..."

Keith shook his head pushing past her opening his door and walking in. "Allura, can we just not talk about this anymore? I'm really tired of it."

Crossing the room he stopped at his desk.

She followed him in, allowing the door to close behind her. "I'm tired of it"

too...tired of you and your evasiveness! Why won't you answer a simple question? Either you have feelings for me or you don't. Don't keep leading me on like this."

"Leading you on? Leading you on! Allura," He walked up to her, the frustration evident upon his face. "I have been very up front with you on this. I can't love you! Why isn't that clear?" He grabbed her by the shoulders firmly and looked solidly into her eyes. "Allura, I can't love you!"

Allura pushed his hands off. "I didn't ask if you **COULD**. I asked if you **DID**!" She turned her back to him.

"Why does that matter? Why are you playing with me like this?" Grabbing her shoulder, Keith pulled her around to face him. "You do know I have a heart...don't you? I am in fact, human!" His hands balled into fists in front of him. "You are causing me more pain with this insistent and pointless inquiry, than I think Lotor has ever inflicted on me!" He dropped his fists down to his sides, his hands moving to his hips. "The facts are...that I can't have you!"

"Facts? What Facts?!" Allura's fists mimic his, going to her hips.

"The laws, Allura! What do you mean, 'what facts'? Don't tell me you've conveniently forgotten your own stupid planet's ridiculous, outdated, archaic, self-serving and self-destructing code!"

"Keith what are you talking about? What laws! Why won't anyone tell me?!"

Keith stormed back over to his desk ripping open a drawer pulling out a stack of books. "These! These laws, Allura!" He grabbed the first one and marched up to her flipping it open to a bookmarked page and shoved it in her face, leaving her no choice but to take it from him.

She moved it away from her face out to a comfortable reading distance. "Keith...what are you..." Her eyes lock on the title of the page. "Chapter 105 of the Constitution of Arus; Article 8, Section 19, Subsection (a) Marriages of Royal Person(s) What? What is this, Keith?"

"Oh don't joke with me, Princess. You know full well what it is."

"No, Keith I don't." Her eyes continued to scan the page as she read aloud. "In order that bloodlines remain pure, untarnished, and completely traceable for a minimum of

ten (10) generations and ties with alliances and possible alliances, remain strong and undaunted through alliances, arrangements, contracts, agreements, and nuptials with other Royal Houses, it is the primary function of the Royal House of Arus (hereinafter the "Heir") to arrange, contract, and maintain ties through means of matrimonious agreements and arrangements with others befitting the minimum standards of the Royal House of Arus..." Allura felt as if her head was spinning. "Keith what is this?"

"It's your stupid planet...and you don't know?"

"No Keith, I don't. Enlighten me!"

"Ha! Very funny! You really should get an acting award, you know that?" He snatched the book away. "In short..." He snapped it closed. "It says you have to marry someone of holding." There was no restraint as he proceeded to throw the book against the wall in anger.

"What! Keith!? What does one book..."

"One! One? What about this one or this one or these here!" He went to his bed, reached under his mattress and pulled yet another book. "This is my favorite...Ahem... Understanding the Contractual Marital Obligations of The Heir " He once again shows her the book and then flips open to a chapter that is obviously been place marked and began to read. "When studying Chapter 105 of the Constitution of Arus; Article 8, Section 19, Subsection (a) Marriages of Royal Person (s) [Cited as: 105 Arus; Artc. 8, 19(a)] one must also consider subsections (d) Failure to Provide an Heir Apparent Within One Year's Time; and subsection (g) Forfeiture of the Crown in the Event of an Unsuitable Matrimonious Arrangement; dissolutions notwithstanding. This very small, yet extremely important subsection discusses the inevitable forfeiture of the crown by any ruling Heir that makes an unsuitable matrimonial arrangement or agreement. For purposes of the Constitution and for this discussion, an unsuitable matrimonial arrangement or agreement is any matching of a Ruling Member of the Royal House of Arus (the "Heir") with a person deemed to be of lesser station, i.e. one whose lineage cannot be traced back through royal birth for the requisite ten (10) generations. For purposes of the Constitution, matrimonial arrangement or agreement includes, but is not limited to engagements, betrothals, and other promises of marriage."

"Keith...I honestly I had no idea about all this. I..." She uttered, looking around to all the books, walking up to the stack neatly placed upon his desk, running her hand down their spines. Each one a breakdown about Arus' royal

code. Each with many slips of paper hanging out of them with his scribbling all over them. She picked one up, taking note of all his bookmarks. "Keith? Why do you... why are you reading all this?" She asked him as she returned the book to its place.

He paced around the room a bit, book still in hand. "Why? Why?" He stops but doesn't face her. "Damn it, I've been trying to find a loophole!"

The future queen of Arus looked at him in utter disbelief as her thoughts ran wild. *All this time he's been trying to trying to find a way that they...* "Keith? I...I don't know what to say, you mean that you really..."

He slowly turned to look at her. "Allura...stop." Inhaling deeply he continued. "Look...all that this has proven to me is that there is just no way."

Dissatisfied, Allura took a step towards him. "Keith, we could appeal. If the laws are that archaic..."

He drops his head fingering the book in hand. "No Allura. There's just too many. It wouldn't work."

"Yes it would." She moved to him, grabbing the book from him while trying to find his eyes. "They'd have to listen. It's only logical that you should be..." Silence ensues as she keeps trying to read his eyes but Keith wouldn't let her, yet she continued. "Unless...unless..."

He finally looks at her. "Unless...what?"

"Unless, you're really just afraid?" She studied him intently. "Afraid of being King?"

"What! What are you talking about? Afraid?" Keith tried to pull away, but her blue eyed gaze trapped him.

"You are afraid of the responsibility aren't you?" she said to him, her gaze growing more piercing. "That's why you're finding all these..." She held the book up in front of him. "These obstacles!"

Keith glares at her. "Allura! How dare you! Afraid...What are you talking about? Exactly what about being the King would be different than what I am doing now?" He gestured wildly with his hands. "Am I not filling that role now? Am I not now doing all the things that your King would do?" He counted them off on his fingers as he continued "Commanding Voltron, leading your people, negotiating treaties, managing the castle, and leading relief efforts? I'm not afraid of the job now." He dropped his hands, resting them upon his hips. "So, you tell me, Princess! What would I be afraid of? What would your King do that I'm not doing

now?!"

She slowly looked up, meeting his intense questioning eyes. "Love me..." a soft mutter escaped her.

"Again, I ask you. What would your King do that I'm not doing now?!"

Allura looked at him dumbfounded. Was that a confession?

Keith shook his head in utter frustration. "Allura, look...just forget it...I...I've got a report to write! We'll talk about this...some other time." He grabbed the book away from her, took her arm escorted her to the door and opened it for her as she stepped outside.

"Keith! Don't you dare leave it like this! I will not talk about it, some other time! Do you hear me? Keith!"

Keith stepped back from the door and into his quarters as the door started swish closed.

"KEITH! I'm warning you! I need to know...Ugghahhh! That's it! When that door closes on me...this discussion is over! For GOOD!!!"

The door slid closed, leaving Allura standing in front of it...

Allura bowed her head, tears welling in her eyes. She turned to walk away when suddenly...

The sound of a swish filled her ears. The door opened as Keith stepped out, grabbed her by the arm and yanked her back inside. As the door closed behind them, he quickly turned her around pulling her up against him firmly, kissing her full on the mouth in a long, passionate kiss, one that made Allura's body go totally limp in his arms. She could feel the tingle from the top of her head, to the tips of her toes.

Eventually he broke the kiss, pulling back slightly leaving one hand holding her firmly to him at the curve of her lower back, the other lifting to touch her now swollen lips.

"Allura, I...I thought you knew." he whispered to her. "Listen to me. There is nothing my heart wants more than to be your king in every facet that job entails."

"Kei...Keith?" Allura could barely speak his name.

Keith placed a finger upon her lips. "Shhhhh, let me finish. Allura, I love you. I always have.

And I always will. I have always dreamed of our future, you and I, side by side, our children all around... I've imagined us growing old together, telling our grandchildren all about our great adventures. But that's all it is Allura...a dream...a silly pilot's dream. I'm sorry if I mislead you. It's its just I..." His eyes started to shimmer as he looked into hers. "I love you so much, my Princess." Keith moved in closer again. They were so close, he could almost taste her. "Forgive me for loving what I cannot have." His eyes closed as he leaned in to kiss her once again. "Forgive me"

He broke the kiss once again, pulling back before losing himself completely.

She looked back up to him with all the love in her heart, her eyes alive with ardor. She reached up to wipe the streak of a tear from his cheek.

"How can I forgive you, when I am just as guilty? Keith I..." Her sentence never finished as they dissolved completely into one another...

Deet. Deet. Deet. The sound brought her back to the present. Allura wiped her own tears as she relished in the memory. "There has to be a way." She said aloud. "There has to be a way." Glancing at the flashing light on her desk she remembered that she had asked her staff to ring her quarters once word had been received that Eva von Trapp, better known throughout the castle as Nanny had arrived safely on Earth.

Crossing the room, she touched her desk deactivating the sound which would alert her staff that she had received the message. A sudden knock at the door startled her. "Princess, may I enter?" Keith's voice inquired from the other side.

Allura straightened her gown as she turned to face the door. "Please come in."

Keith walked in dressed in his favorite red jumpsuit. Just the sight of him brought butterflies to her stomach.

"Princess, about last night..." Keith started to say.

Allura turned away from him, her skirts swishing as she did so. "You could have waited a few more days before you tried to forget what happened."

"Allura, hear me out." The Voltron Force Commander begged.

Silence continued to fill the room. When he didn't receive a response Keith continued. "Both of us were a bit off during lion practice today. We can't let what happened last night affect our job to defend Arus."

“Keith, I never said it would.”

“I know. But I also know how stubborn you can be at times. Besides our relationship is more than just a delicate issue here on Arus. Galaxy Garrison usually frowns upon fraternization amongst the ranks.”

“Keith, the team’s assignment here on Arus is not exactly the typical Garrison assignment either.” She replied turning back to face him.

“I’m still your commanding officer.”

“And I am still the ruler of this planet.” Allura touched her index finger directly to Keith’s chest as she spoke. “And if I recall that in itself supersedes all of the above if I so choose.”

“Touche.”

A small smile crossed the Princess’ face as she turned and walked over to the window observing the lion monument where black lion rested. Blue skies could be seen all around and a few clouds had recently appeared dotting the skyline like cotton balls. *How peaceful.* She thought. “Lotor has been awfully quiet as of late.”

Keith nodded his head in agreement thinking to himself. *Too quiet if you ask me.* Looking down at his watch he was disappointed. He’d hoped they would have more time to discuss the previous evening. “I’m due to relieve Lance in Castle Control. We need to talk about this further.”

“Yes we do, **Commander**. But right now we both have duties to attend to, and if I don’t get moving I’m going to be late and I promised little Tammy Waltrip that I would help her pick out a dress for the Annual Admiral’s Ball back on earth.”

“Tammy Waltrip. Not little Tammy that wore Pidge’s uniform that one time so he could remain in Green lion?” Keith inquired.

“Yes. That Tammi. Except she’s not so little anymore.” Allura replied. “She’s about Pidge’s height and the top in her class. She’s home on leave from the Space Academy for a few days. From what I hear she’s surpassing Pidge’s records by leaps and bounds. Who knows? Maybe we have a future Green Lion Pilot on our hands.”

Keith silently laughed at the thought of Tammy flying the Green Lion. Taking Allura’s arm in his the two exited the Princess’ quarters parting company at the end of the corridor.