

**Wednesday 14th April, 1843**

Greetings and salutations, all who are reading this right now. My name is Adelaide Barker, and I absolutely *revile* marriage.

I mean, I can understand *why* people get married—but I don't *want* to be married. Nonetheless, that hasn't stopped my parents from throwing suitors at my feet—*limbs* sorry.

'You need to choose *someone*, Addy,' Mother said to me once, when we were both sitting in the parlor of our palace.

'I'll have to choose for you if you don't,' Father snapped. 'You're lucky we're even giving you the choice of your suitor. I didn't *pick* your mother, you know.'

I walked out of the room before I heard anymore.

**Monday, 30th September, 1844**

Well that didn't go well. I met my first suitor, a scrawny boy named Simon Hawthorn, and it was an immediate NO.

'But w-why?' he'd stammered. 'I didn't do anything.'

'Mmm, I don't know, you're just *not it* for me.' I've said that a lot to people lately, not just my suitors. *Not it.*

*Not. It.*

Not *it.*

Then there was my second suitor, the young Lord of Cawdor named Thomas Winfred. He was a small boy who had acne peppered across his cheeks and a *major* lisp. He wasn't royalty material at *all*. So I'd told him the same thing.

*You're just not it for me*

Mother has tried to tell me the benefits of marriage before, but alas, it doesn't sway my opinions. I have tried to ask if I'm allowed to *not* get married, but I was met with Father's cold, harsh tone. I left before I had to deal with it.

Later that day, Mother had come in to tell me about my next suitor. He was a prince from another part of the country. A *prince*

'What's he like, Mother?' I asked. 'Because if he's like my other suitors, *hard pass*

'No, no, this one's nice, my dear. I think he'll make a great husband for you.'

Yeah, like the others. She's said that about all my suitors — well, the two I've seen, at least — and it's ended in hell.

### Friday, October 15th, 1844

Met the prince.

Said 'no' to the prince.

Now I fear what my parents are going to think. Especially my father.

He's going to be furious. I know it.

### Wednesday, 14th November, 1850

Diary...please *disturb* me.

Father has just beat me because I've said 'no' to all ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~suits~~ that I've seen — all of which I do not need to name here. The pain has been throbbing all over my upper back for the last few weeks, and I haven't stopped crying, either. I haven't let any of my maids in to see me, and I haven't gone anywhere ~~near~~ my bedroom door since the beating.

*And I say you'll marry the bloody Duke of Wessex if you don't pick a suitor soon.*

*And you don't want that, do you, Adelaide?* Father's words felt like hot coals in my ears; they burned and burned and ~~burned~~

I can't stay here any longer. I don't care how many times my mother begs me to stay home. I can't stay here.

I began to pack my things into the small satchel I had, so I had to be frugal.

### My 'Suitcase':

1. Clothes
2. Food
3. A book
4. My tiara (after much contemplation).

I only put the essentials into it. But I wouldn't leave yet.  
I threw the satchel under my bed and went downstairs.

**Friday, December 24th, 1847**

'What was all of that racket upstairs, sweetheart?' Mother said when she saw me. I didn't tell her about my plans to run away. I *couldn't* tell her, more like.

'Nothing, Mother,' I muttered, going into the living room.

'It's not about what your father said, is it?'

I stopped dead in my tracks. 'No,' I lied. 'Why?' How could Mother know? I didn't tell her...but then again Mother has more common sense than me most of the time.

'Darling, I know when you're lying. It *is* what he said, isn't it?'

I didn't say anything to her before I trudged over with sluggish steps and hugged her. I burst into tears which didn't stop for what felt like ages (it was more like 5 minutes).

'There, there,' Mother said, wiping my eyes. 'I felt the same way when I married your father, Addy.'

*Addy.* Mother hasn't called me that since I was a little girl. 'You did?'

'Yes, dear. I was a bundle of nerves, a small innocent soul that didn't have any place being married to a man of such high standing. But, then again, your father didn't pick me. / picked *him*, and he just had to say yes because his parents said so. So, as much as he is a cruel man, Addy, I wouldn't be too hard on him.'

I nodded but my softer expression faded quite quickly. 'I'm running away.' I told her.

'Y-You are? But you can't, Addy! You need to—you know what, Addy, you're not a little girl anymore. If you want to run away, that's fine.'

Well, *that* wasn't the reaction I had been expecting. 'Wait—really? You're not... you're not mad?'

'Addy—*Adelaide* sorry, I know why you're running away. You might not believe in monsters, but you're aware that there's one down the hall. As am I. So if you're running away to get away from *him*, I support it. You have my blessing, Adelaide. I would've had to let go soon enough.'

I smiled wryly before I went upstairs, got my suitcase, and ran out the door before Father found out that I was gone.

### **Wednesday, January 23rd, 1853**

It's been 6 years since I ran away from home, and I am ~~anything~~ ~~not~~ sick. Sure, I miss my mother, but I don't miss Father. And as for my whole 'marriage' situation? Well, I've decided that, instead of throwing myself away to a man who won't love me and will just use me for his...desires, I'm going to live the rest of my life ~~and that~~ ~~with~~ women of my social standing absolutely despise.

*A spinster*

And I don't care what people will think of me, I'm going to live my life as a spinster.

And I'll be *happy*