

From The Witch's Princess

By Don Zolidis

ALESSANDRA, 17, a princess

GABRIELLA, 17, her maid-in-waiting

Alessandra's father has held a tournament to see which knight will marry her, if they can kill a terrifying bog witch first.

Alessandra is not having any of it.

At the start of this scene, she's training with a punching bag. Gabriella is holding it.

Alessandra takes out her frustration on the bag.

She stops and wipes her forehead with a towel.

GABRIELLA

You can't possibly think you're going to do this.

ALESSANDRA

Why not?

GABRIELLA

Um – did you notice that she's like been severing heads of knights and rolling them in here on the regular?

ALESSANDRA

They were stupid. They went in without a plan.

GABRIELLA

Yes. But they were also good with weapons.

ALESSANDRA

I'm also good with weapons.

She holds up one fist.

I call this one Dame Judy Punch.

She holds up her other one.

And this is Lady Di.

GABRIELLA

I love you, you're my BFF, but this is still nuts. I mean maybe we just live with the curse.

ALESSANDRA

No thanks. Sooner or later one of these morons is going to kill the witch and my father's going to marry me off. By the terms of the agreement, whoever kills the bog witch gets to marry me.

GABRIELLA

Right.

ALESSANDRA

But that means the *only* person who gets to marry me is the one who kills the bog witch.

GABRIELLA

Ri-ight?

ALESSANDRA

So if I kill the bog witch...

GABRIELLA

You marry yourself?

ALESSANDRA

No one gets to marry me.

GABRIELLA

So, what you're saying is, in order to avoid marriage, you'll tromp across the entire kingdom, break into an impossible fortress, and commit murder.

ALESSANDRA

Still sounds better than most marriages I know. And easier.

GABRIELLA

Oh come on – marriage is wonderful, some day my prince will come for me and -

ALESSANDRA

It's a trap. And I'm really really good at avoiding traps.

GABRIELLA

If you say so.

ALESSANDRA

Did you get the intel I asked for?

GABRIELLA

Can we talk about this for a sec? You send me these cryptic little notes like 'meet me at the third chime in the secret room – tell no one. Burn this message after you read it.' Do you really think we're being watched all the time?

ALESSANDRA

I'm alive because I trust no one. They underestimate me. That's their mistake.

GABRIELLA

Okay so there's this stable boy who's really cute, right? And I flirted with him and I was like, 'hey cutie what's up' and he's like whatever, and then I'm like, oh you're so strong with all the

mucking of all the stables and everything can I touch your muscles and of course he's like oh touch my muscles, and I'm like ooh and he's like you smell like raspberries and I'm like I really like boys who can get information and he's like sure baby –

ALESSANDRA

Is there a point to this?

GABRIELLA

Long story short. The stable boy's brother is a scout – we had a secret rendez-vous and I managed to flirt with the scout too, and then he told me everything I needed to know.

ALESSANDRA

Which is?

GABRIELLA

You need to give up. Seriously. You won't make it. First of all, it's in a disgusting bog, which has like bugs and is super gross all the time. Second, the Bog Witch lives in an enchanted hut that moves around the bog at random – and there are guards, and each guard has a piece of a password to make the hut appear – you need to say all the words in combo, at the same time, to make the spell work. And that's before you even get inside. Because the hut is larger than it looks – it's the size of a mansion on the inside, with sensors designed to locate and decapitate intruders – no one has ever gotten past the inner ring. It's an impossible job.

ALESSANDRA

Difficult. Not impossible.

GABRIELLA

You'll never make it alone.

ALESSANDRA

Who said I was going alone? Gabriella.

GABRIELLA

Nope. Nope nope nope. I don't mind the curse, honestly. I'm used to it.

ALESSANDRA

Gabby – you're my only friend.

GABRIELLA

Because you're stand-offish. I've told you you need to branch out, but do you ever listen to me? Noooo. Look at your whole personality.

ALESSANDRA

I have to be this way.

GABRIELLA

You're a *princess*. You need to be nice and friendly and have smiles for everyone –

ALESSANDRA

Smiles are for the weak.

GABRIELLA

What. What does that mean?

ALESSANDRA

You don't get to be seventeen years old in the palace without learning how to take care of yourself.

GABRIELLA

There is a literally an entire *legion* of people who's only job is to take care of you. There are hundreds of people who guard the palace.

ALESSANDRA

But I don't trust any of them. The people who do my hair? They could try to kill me.

GABRIELLA

No one's trying to kill you.

ALESSANDRA

No one's succeeded in killing me.

GABRIELLA

Ally, this is crazy. You can't kill the bog witch.

ALESSANDRA

I'm putting a crew together. One last job. Are you in?

GABRIELLA

She will chop off our heads and eat us.

ALESSANDRA

Still better than marriage. Think about it, Gabby. Do you want to sit around and wait for someone to save you, or do you want to save yourself? Do You want to let all the boys get the action, or do you want to go out there and give it your best shot? Because we don't get to do that. Princesses and maids aren't supposed to fight for themselves.

GABRIELLA

There's literally been three movies in the past year where the princess kicks butt. It's a whole thing now.

ALESSANDRA

Are you in?

GABRIELLA

Who else is in the crew?

ALESSANDRA

Let me worry about that. All I need to know is if you're in.

GABRIELLA

Impossible odds. Certain death. Crazy Witch lady in the swamp. All right I'm in.

ALESSANDRA

Sweet. Now let's go rustle up some monsters.