

THE RING OF POWER

Futuristic Story

"Humanity is a social structure, into which each Man voluntarily aspires with all his spirit and soul." [1]

Since this morning a strange unexplained excitement gripped me, it was a vague expectation of something extraordinary. My heart was racing, and I felt that something very unusual was going to happen today, perhaps even an event that would change my destiny.



Or no, not changing, but on the contrary - directing in the right direction. Yes, yes, that's more accurate. The day passed very quickly in various worries, and in the evening the Wizard knocked on my door and showed up, bringing me in a crystal decanter of his wonderful fresh spring water, sparkling and glittering like Dedicato Prosecco Millesimato sparkling wine. And the decanter itself looked rather unusual; though, with the Wizard, everything always looked unusual.

"How are you feeling today? - he asked, looking at me in his usual manner, and at the same time there was something unusual about his gaze today. "Oh, come on, you're being all 'commonly unusual' today, calm down, you're winding yourself up," I hissed to myself.

And, turning on my heels, exhaled as if to say, "All day long something vague has been lingering, I do not understand where the excitement comes from. I'm sure you know what it is." I looked into his familiar, radiant eyes, but today he wouldn't let me in. It had sometimes happened before certain events concerning my destiny that I was not allowed to know ahead of time. I looked at my heart inwardly - it was beating rhythmically, and all of its energy centers were surging in a coherent algorithm. Despite the early evening, Wizard looked tired, and he had been unshaven for two or three days. "Busy doing things all night again," I subconsciously sympathized. I ran my fingers sympathetically over his stubble and mussed his hair, and asked quietly: "Why did you call me?" The wizard took my hand, with which I ruffled his hair, kissed my wrist, and silently pointed me to the large box and several small ornate boxes that had materialized on the couch.



The largest one turned out to be a wonderful silk dress of my favorite dark blue color, with a black lace border around the edges of the skirt petals, and silver-black embroidery with large sea pearls on the bodice. Other boxes contained shoes made of the same silk, a black lace shawl and long gloves, a mother-of-pearl purse, pearls and fresh flowers for my hair, as well as a bottle of my favorite perfume. "Dear me, it looks like you've gone to Oreya for all these things. And all this beauty is for tonight?" – I raised one eyebrow questioningly. He nodded and said briefly: "Today is a special day that you will

remember for the rest of your life," and then began to help get wardrobe items out of boxes. I retreated behind the screen to put on all that lovely evening wear, wondering if my excitement today might have had more to do with it than I had originally thought, and if we were going to have to do some serious work with some secret dynasty on a hidden planet in Outer Space, or something like that.

A few minutes passed, and finally I was fully dressed and had the intricate construction of my hair of curls, pearls, and fresh flowers almost perfected. "There's someone I need you to meet today. It's important," the Wizard said in a nonchalant tone. I stepped out from behind the screen and whirled around the room, "So, how do you rate? Too bad the shoes aren't crystal. Are we invited to the ball? Shall we ride in a carriage made of pumpkin? I'm dying to know what you're up to this time. Are you preparing a contract to supply synthesized bio-matter to some developing colony in the Black Eye galaxy? Or do I have to turn back into a mosquito and fly to the World of the Dead?" But because of his centuries-old habit, Wizard rarely responded to my chirps and mischievous assumptions about where we were going, and only muttered a short "you'll see for yourself. In addition to business trips, he quite often took me with him to all kinds of meetings, gatherings, and festive balls in various exotic places of our galaxy and beyond, so sometimes I had to dress up in rather unusual and even strange costumes and outfits, and communicate not with just representatives of the human race. That's why, when I saw this beautiful evening outfit, I sighed happily, hoping for human – or close to it – society.

The wizard looked at me closely and critically, straightened a curl in my hairstyle and stuck a large sapphire hairpin into it, and then in his velvet baritone with steel notes said "let's go" and pulled me by the hand.



Stepping forward, the space collapsed, and we found ourselves in some brightly decorated and strangely familiar secret reception room leading to a huge hall. I started feverishly going over in my memory how I knew this place, and suddenly I remembered: I have seen this reception room and this whole mansion more than once or twice — in a dream. Or rather, I didn't sleep at all then and it was more like a waking dream.

A small reception room contained a lot of different things, and the purpose of some of them I did not know, but they were familiar to me, as if I had already seen them once, and not only saw them, but also touched them.

"Look over there," the Wizard nodded toward the arcade of large windows that overlooked the ornate waterfront. There was a man standing at the window, half-turned, and the sight of him made my spine tingle and a chill ran down my spine. "Is it really him?" - I thought feverishly, and the blood drained from my face as the Wizard continued the introductions as if nothing had happened. "Allow me to introduce you to an old acquaintance of mine with whom we have done many glorious deeds. His name is N." No, of course his name was different, but at that moment I did not hear the name or title that had just come off the Wizard's lips, though the man was clearly familiar.

Yes, it was the Man of My Dreams! Many times, I'd seen him watching me, always remaining in the shadows, with only the outline of his silhouette visible. And now, just as in my dreams, with his legs spread wide apart and his hands deep in his pants pockets, he stood quietly waiting for us. His shirt collar and cufflinks were unbuttoned, and his vest was buttoned. He wore an oddly shaped black beret with patches of emblems, badges, and symbols unknown to me. With a military nod of greeting and without saying a word, N took one hand out of his pants pocket, and in it was a small box of black leather with silver embossing, which he opened and showed me a ring with a large, rare red diamond in the center, framed by black diamonds. "It's very



beautiful, it must be a gift. She'll love it, I'm sure," I said, smiling politely. N took a step toward us, and suddenly held out the ring box to me, speaking in a ringing tenor: "It's for you. It's not just any ring, it's a Ring of Power. It has chosen you, and now it belongs to you. Take it!"

A hot wave hit me, as if someone had opened a window on a train rushing through a red-hot desert. "Sir," I said puzzled, "if this is a prank, you've cheered me up quite a bit. I am well aware that a Ring of Power can only be given by a Ring-bearer, and such things are not given for nothing — they can only be earned through hard work for the Cause, and as far as I know, I have yet to do anything extraordinary for such a Ring. I am sure that I am not yet old enough, and that I still cannot be trusted with the Mysteries of Creation — they are incredibly heavy! And if you are the Keeper of the Ring of Power, who is spoken of only in whispers, I beg you not to tempt me a moment longer. You — or the Ring — have made a mistake, I do not deserve, and therefore I cannot accept such a gift.

My pallor vanished, my face flushed, my eyes glittered in excitement, and even my palms were wet with sweat. I bowed briefly, lifted the hem of my dress, and strode confidently toward the door through which the Wizard and I had appeared only a few minutes before, showing that the joke had failed, and that I did not wish to continue this conversation.

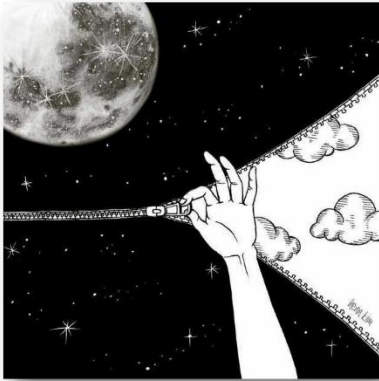
But I could not go back — the Wizard had "forgotten" to tell me the musical code, and he was comfortably seated in an armchair by the fireplace and placed his unusual decanter on the chrysolite table, poured a glass full of water, and watched with unconcealed interest what was happening with no intention of leaving!



"Why did he bring that decanter here?" - inappropriately flashed through my mind. There was a tense pause in the room, and the two men continued to stare at me expectantly, clearly emanating their intention to continue.

The silence was first broken by N: "LeFay, my dear, forgive me for my indiscretion — I had hoped that your companion would inform you of the purpose of today's visit, and so I proceeded without further ado to the Transfer of the Ring, without the proper preliminary ceremonies. This is the first time I have had the honor of performing such an unspeakably thrilling ceremony, and as an unsophisticated actor, I have left the most important part out of it. He glanced quickly at the Wizard, who was enjoying his ripe cherries as if nothing had happened, tossing the pits into a crystal flute. That was the Wizard — he never said when, what, or how to do anything, but "just" was in the right place at the right time, letting the participants of the event gain invaluable experience of their own — or other people's — mistakes and optimal solutions.

N continued, addressing me again: "You must not doubt, the Ring is deservedly yours, and it always chooses its owner, whether the new owner is ready for such an ordeal or not, in their own opinion. The ring KNOWS when and who is ready," he said quietly, coming very close, almost breathing in my face. I glanced over at the Wizard, who smiled and winked, looking me in the eye. N's voice took on a ringing tone: "Once you merge with the Ring, it will cease to exist as a physical ring, and will return to me to await its next claimant, but it will become an integral part of you. Are you ready for initiation?"



I glanced at the Wizard again, but he was looking away, deliberately busy looking at some ancient folio, completely unresponsive to my struggles. With undisguised excitement, I opened my palm and accepted the Ring. It was surprisingly heavy and cold. As I closed my hand on the Ring, I froze. Nothing happened. Then, with a sigh of relief, I relaxed, and at the same instant a mega-flash of light shook my structures with its tremendous power, and its rays seemed to splash through my eyelids – because I could see in my vision as N put his hand to his eyes, as if to shield himself from the bright light.

And at the same moment, the echo of an ineffably beautiful symphony rolled through me, filling every part of my being with new vibrations. I was in the midst of an unprecedentedly beautiful scene and pattern, accompanied by a wonderful bouquet of smells and tastes.



Unseen creatures appeared before my eyes, coming close to touch my hands or clothes, and I felt their silk fur or plumage. Thus, all the senses received an extension of the boundaries of information analysis by at least an order of magnitude. But the initiation of the Ring was just beginning! I was pushed into a new – different – reality, in which I saw Worlds where other creatures lived, and everything was different. I saw – and realized – the idea of creating the universe, the hierarchy of substances, beings, and systems. And then an image of a universe the size of a human being

appeared in front of me and it was – intelligent...

I flinched in surprise when N approached me with a question. "May I have your permission?" — he asked softly, pointing to the Ring. I, still under the impression of the initiation, turned my face toward him a little lethargically, not quite sure what he wanted. Smiling, he gestured that he wanted to take the ring from my palm and place it on the ring finger of my left hand. "Contrary to the instructions, let me do it today," the Wizard made his presence known for the first time, suddenly appearing beside N and pushing him aside as if inadvertently. Then, without waiting for an answer, the Wizard took the Ring with his right hand, and, holding his decanter of spring water in his left hand, threaded it onto my ring finger. It was too wide, and even though I was wearing lace gloves, it was very loose, trying to roll over with the stone down. I was about to give it up for good, but after a few moments, the ring sort of settled in and, shrinking noticeably in size, sat on my finger, shining proudly with the red facets of the rare diamond. "I don't seem to have a choice, and nonviolence is one of the core principles of the Commonwealth," I stared at the ring with disgust, and then the stone seemed to come alive

and burst inside with fierce flames, and the entire ring instantly glowed red, but it didn't burn me. What happened in the next instant was unbelievable: a torrent of burning lava spewed from the diamond, rattling and smoking, into the middle of the room, burning through the carpet and into the floorboards. "Careful, you'll maim your hand!" — N cried out, and the Wizard immediately flipped open the carafe of water and began to pour it over the crystal. The drops of emerald water boiled up and immediately turned into steam, and both men anxiously, professionally measured and without fuss, fiddled with the situation. Finally, the Ring returned to its original color without harming me. The glowing pile of lava on the floor was extinguished and turned into a pile of fluffy ash that vanished into thin air like a fairy tale. Unfortunately, the holes in the carpet and parquet needed considerable restoration. N wet a napkin and blotted the evaporation on my forehead with it, while Wizard carefully brought a glass of his sparkling water to my parched lips.

"He left a glass of water for me... as always, he saw things coming," I thought calmly, and drained the glass in a gulp. Both men still looked anxious, looking at each other conspiratorially, and N suggested we go into the office in a quieter environment, which we did. There, having recovered from what had happened, I turned to my companions: "Gentlemen, I am waiting for an explanation," and raised my eyebrows, clearly letting them know that they had some points



to explain to me. After exchanging glances again, the men pulled their chairs up to the fireplace, and N spoke first.

He explained that the hall was familiar to me not only from dreams – I really had been there, and more than once, however, it happened in the future. I began to see N from the moment the Ring chose me – he was just the Keeper of the Ring of Power, and it was his duty to transfer the

Ring to a new owner, whom ever it chose, then it merged with them and remained in their structures as long as it was appropriate. The ring was like a litmus test for the suitability of a Person to the next level – to the first level of the Creator. The very process of becoming most often took quite a long time, but sometimes the transformation took place faster than usual, and depended on the potential of the owner. N also explained that every thought is magnified many times by the Ring and any negativity or threat towards the Ring, even if it comes from the owner, is neutralized by It, which happened when I directed the flow of thoughts to the Ring with dislike, and it flared up, reflecting my own dislike, and at the same time protecting me from the reflection.

"Excuse me," I said, "but this only proves my unwillingness to accept this Ring, doesn't it?" "Not at all! — the Wizard's cheerful voice said, "The reaction of the Ring proves an almost instantaneous synergy [2]. You merged with the Ring almost immediately, which is something neither the Ring-bearer nor even I have ever seen or witnessed in the annals. It became yours,

and part of you — at once, without delay. It is in you, as a minimally indivisible act!" After listening to them both, I raised my hand with the Ring closer to my eyes, and began to scrutinize the structures of this amazing diamond: "A harmonious whole is something to which nothing can be added and nothing can be taken away without destroying it [3]. And in the diamond, I saw again a wonderful living universe, but this time its image was different. It was filled with a great multitude of different kinds of intelligently oriented beings.



And this perfection was so majestically beautiful that I blurted out a wide, blissful smile: Humanity, let it be!

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[1] *BASICS OF HUMANITY'S FORMATION. Part 1. Author: Research Institute Center of Preventive Strategies www.salvatore.ru B.V. Makov*

[2] *The reciprocal action of two different species.*

[3] *"Geographic psychology (Russia as harmony between man and territory) A.I. Yuriev.*