Prologue

Scene 1 – *Pitch darkness. Slow, melancholy music.*

???: This can’t be real . . . this can’t be the end. All we wanted was to find our love . . . to achieve our dreams . . . to live our happily ever after . . . ! We won’t let it end. We’ll try again. Please . . . grant us this last wish!

*[flash of light. Everything goes quiet.*]

???: You can have your chance. We’ll give you the opportunity to change that fate. But in exchange . . .

[*Flashes of light. Confusion, panic. Then quiet again.]*

I want to help them find their happily ever after. To do that, I need to . . .

[*End of prologue. Eyes blink awake.]*

Chapter 1

Scene 1 – *A quiet street scene. Old-fashioned houses line the cobble-brick road. A few people mingle and walk by, not really noticing you.*

You wake up, as if from a dream.

???: What? Who was that voice? What were they talking about?

Your neck hurts from having slept in an awkward position for too long. You slowly sit upright, and wince as the wooden crate you’re sitting on creaks under your weight. A yawn escapes your lips; how long have you been asleep?

Old Merchant: Hello, miss!

You turn at the sound of a croaky voice. An old man stands looking at you from behind a stall. There are some gears, tools, and other odd bits laid out on the table, apparently for sale.

???: Yes?

Old Merchant: You’ve been sleeping on that box for a while now. Aren’t you uncomfortable? What’s a decent young girl like you doing, napping in a place like this? You should hurry home before it gets dark.

???: Oh…

That’s when you notice that the sun has nearly set. A mellow orange has bathed the red cobblestone bricks of the road in a soft hue of harvest wheat. Yes, it’s time you should be heading home. … is probably worried.

???: Hm?

That’s odd. You don’t exactly have a ‘house’ to go back to. What are you thinking?

???: Sir, do you know how long I’ve been asleep?

Old Merchant: I’d say it hasn’t been more than an hour or so. Seems like you were pretty tired, eh?

Tired? Well, you suppose that’s the only explanation for why you fell asleep sitting on this splintering little box in the middle of a street. With a grimace, you stand up, stretch your arms over your head, and begin walking down the street.

???: Goodbye, mister. I hope your sales go well.

Old Merchant: Hope you have a nice evening too. Heading back home?

???: No. There’s something I need to do.

The Merchant blinks, but does not comment and turns his attention to a customer approaching his wares. You walk away without a backwards glance, your footsteps sure, your eyes staring off at a certain destination. The streets are beginning to quiet down. Slowly, the last few people disappear down shaded alleyways and closing doors. A distant knolling bell announces the evening lull.

From the far left, a cheery voice halts you mid-step.

???: Hey there, Ace of Spades.

You stop, then glance over in the direction of the voice. A distinct sound of purring greets your ears.

???: So, Ace of Spades, Spade of all Aces, how are you feeling today?