

FYI:
 (These were proof pages, so there was still some copy editing / proofreading done before the book was published. Hence, a few small things are different from these pages to the final, published book)

(I just write on these for our annotations because the proof pages are nice & flat, unlike the pages bound in the final book.)

Played by Angela Bassett in the Netflix film

LUCINDA

Played by Millie Bobby Brown in the Netflix movie.

Stepmom to Elodie & Floria

played by Brooke Carter

wife to Lord Bayford

played by Ray Winstone.

Scene: Inside the gold palace in Aurea, where the Bayford family has just settled in.

changed to "Lord Bayford" in the final text to remind/cue readers who Lucinda is, since she hasn't been on the page much yet & has mostly been referred to as Lady Bayford.

LUCINDA STOOD AT the window, in the room she and the duke shared several stories below Elodie's. The permanent creases between her brow were more prominent than usual as she scowled at the procession of torches up the mountainside.

"It is not fair, Richard," she said.

The duke came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist. "It is a special tradition, my dear. It will be a great honor to Elodie."

Lucinda huffed. "And would you have bestowed such an honor on me?"

Richard hesitated. "Our circumstances are . . . different."

She jerked away from him. "It's going to be a disaster. You think this is a good idea, this alliance between Inophe and Aurea, b-but . . ."

"My love, you always worry too much."

"And you worry too little!" But this was how it was between them. The duke existed on smiles and assurances—that's how he was so beloved by his people—while Lucinda thought of all the ways things could go wrong. Like, what would happen if an

Lucinda seems angry/jealous that Elodie will have an opulent wedding.

But here, I drop a hint that maybe there's more going on than jealousy. Maybe Elodie's perception of Lucinda isn't exactly right. (Just like kids very often don't fully understand their parents.)

These 2 details help

establish an early impression of Lady Bayford. Most of the book is from Elodie's point of view, so the reader's thoughts about who Lucinda is are colored by Elodie's perception. (cont.)

So here, I'm reinforcing the fussy, overly picky version of Lucinda that readers will have read in the earlier pages.

earthquake struck Inophe and the precious water towers fell and ruptured, never mind that there had never been an earthquake in the country's history? Or, what if Lord Bayford fell off a horse and broke his back and couldn't visit the tenants? Lucinda and Floria certainly didn't know how to take care of their needs, and Elodie would no longer be around to help—

Lucinda let out a frustrated cry. She whirled from the window, away from the sight of the torches, and stomped back to bed, throwing herself onto the covers. "What was good enough for me should have been good enough for Elodie! She should have had a *normal* wedding. Not all this gold, all this pomp and circumstance, all this *Aurean* tradition. We should have kept her in Inophe."

or is she just jealous??

As the author, I don't want the reader to know for sure right off the bat. We have hundreds of pages to really get to know the characters. So I "design" them like onions, where what you see on the first outside layer may be nothing like what you find inside.

Corrected to "duchy's" in the final text

-Insight into how Lucinda can spiral in her head... We will get to understand her even more as the story progresses.