

# **Hellbound Heart Chapter 1 - Over her dead body!**

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"Who are you and what are you doing in my room?" a cold, masculine voice jolted Izabelle from her stealthy movements the moment she closed the secret door to the room she had just sneaked out from.

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This room she had just entered was supposed to be empty! This luxurious room had always been reserved as the ultimate guest room, only accommodating other country's kings and presidents. No one holding positions lower than those ranks were allowed to ever use this room before.

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Elle had been confidently certain that this room was empty since there were no kings or presidents visiting their country today. So how come someone was here?!

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With her heartbeat thudding wildly, Elle turned around with a start.

A tall man stood there. His posture relaxed while having his arms crossed over his chest and his head was slightly tilted as he stared at her. He was wearing a black robe and his hair was damp. Little beads of water were still dripping from the ends of his hair.

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Elle's eyes flew wide and then she swallowed. Not because the man before her was so strikingly gorgeous he almost didn't look real – that he certainly was, she had to admit – but because she knew him. No, to be precise, she recognized his face.

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This man was no other than the prince that the world was going so crazy over. Sebastian Reign, the crown prince of Viscarria. This prince was so famous because of his unrivalled good looks. And paired with a towering height and a gorgeous muscular body to boot, it was certainly a surefire recipe to be considered a male god amongst men.

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"Take off your hood and answer me. Now." his commanding voice sounded out, nearly making her scurry backwards like a frightened rabbit. He did not raise his voice, but the way he spoke still made Elle experience a shiver like a cold stream of spring water that ran down her spine.

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Something mysterious and dangerous clung to him so strongly that had she met him like this three years ago, Elle was certain that she would have probably been sent scampering away from him by now. She had never met a man so beautiful yet so terrifying.

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But Elle was no longer the girl she used to be. This man, who looked as handsome as the devil himself and as scary as hell did not scare her. Maybe because right now, there was a monster that she feared even more than the devil himself or even hell itself. And that monster was not this man.

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Lifting her hand, Elle slowly and gracefully lifted up and allowed her hood to fall back to her shoulders. Her light red hair gleamed against the dim light and her large and striking eyes, as blue as the midwinter sky, stared at him intently.

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"I am truly sorry for the intrusion, Prince Sebastian," she said in an apologetic tone. "This is —" Elle broke off and froze when she heard a commotion happening just outside the door of the guest room.

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Wide-eyed, she looked at the prince in horror then stared at the door again. They already found out that she was gone?!

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Desperation shook her to the core, knowing that it was over for her once they caught her.

Fueled with panic and fear, Elle suddenly strode towards the man and unceremoniously grabbed his hand. "H-hide me." She ordered, but with a shaky voice.

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"I- I am Princess Izabelle, I –" Elle decided to reveal herself, thinking that she would perhaps be able to make him listen to her if she revealed her true identity to him. But before Elle could even finish her statement, their attention was pulled away by a knock that sounded on the door.

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She felt the ripple of that one knock on her heart.

This special room only had one key made for it, and the key was being kept by her father, the king himself. She knew her father would order his men to turn the palace upside down just to find her. But they will not search this room since everyone knew no one could enter it without the key. No one would suspect that she was inside since her father did not know about the secret passage. Elle was quite certain about that because she was the first to have discovered it!

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But now that it was actually occupied, this place wasn't safe anymore.

Everything seemed to be going up in flames. All because of this prince. Did he just arrive tonight without any notice? But her father don't accept guests without notice except for that monster of a man!

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Clenching her fists, Elle tried hard to think. She must not be caught! She could no longer return to the secret door where she came from, because it could only be opened from the other side!

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Desperate, Elle stared into the prince's eyes again. "Hide me, please." She pleaded this time.

"I don't think there's a place here for you to hide, princess. If the king, the owner of this palace decides to search this room – and it seems that they're about to do it very soon – a mere guest such as myself can't possibly say no, can I?" He reasoned it out with her, and Elle knew that he was right. They would definitely search the entire room even if the guest inside was another country's king. Simply because, her father was insane. And he would do whatever it takes for this plan of his to succeed.

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But if he was insane, she was hellbent on escaping and nothing could stop her.

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And so Elle suddenly grabbed his arm and pulled him towards the bed. "Then hide me... under your body." She said, her intense blue eyes brimming with nothing but determination. "They won't possibly dare to disturb a very important guest if they see him with a woman in bed –"

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Another knock echoed on the other side of the door, making Elle jump in panic. Her body moved instantly, and she hastily snuggled under the blanket without any intentions of letting go of Sebastian's hand. "Please... now!" she hissed and begged, eyes desperately pleading as she laid on the bed, tugging his hand, urging him to climb over her.

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To Elle's relief, Sebastian finally moved, but he only bent over her and whispered. "I don't know what kind of danger you're running away from, princess. But..." His grey eyes glimmered with a dangerous and suffocating intensity. So intense that she felt goosebumps prickling all over her skin. "I must warn you... since it seems that you haven't realized it yet..." he bent even closer until his cool breath wafted over her skin. "You're in the devil's den right now, and I hope you understand what you're getting yourself into by actually begging the devil to –"

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"I don't care." She cut him off fearlessly, her initially pleading and scared look now completely gone and replaced with boldness and certainty.

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This sudden show of bravado made the corners of his lips lift up ever so slightly, seemingly surprised and amused by her bold and brave interruption. No, she was not sure at all if he was surprised or amused, or both. Because despite having that slight smile hanging around his lips, his eyes were utterly unfathomable.

"Even if you're the devil himself, I would still ask you the same." She staunchly added.

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"But princess... I'll have you know... I don't ever hide women under my body." He whispered in a gravelly voice that made her feel a different kind of shiver shooting through her. One that brought on a warming aftereffect that seemed to weaken her limbs. "I only... devour them."

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Elle's heart stopped beating for a moment. Those last four words that rolled out of his lips like velvet had her entire being shivering from two different reasons at the same time – something bad and something dangerously good.

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She swallowed. Hard.

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She could see the danger glinting in those metallic grey eyes – somehow welcoming and luring her in. She then knew that he was not kidding in the least and she could somehow feel that this man was no angel.

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Her instincts told her that he was bad news through and through, and she knew deep down in her heart that the moment she gives him the go ahead to carry on and devour her, he was going to do it without hesitation. He was not a chivalrous prince on a white horse who was going to save the damsel in distress – namely, her.

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Still, she would rather give herself to the devil than marry that man that her father had arranged for her. The very same man who had driven Ellaine, her sister, to take her own life when she was still at the peak of her existence.

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That monster, Brandon Haze, the man she was arranged to marry tomorrow, was a business mogul and the richest man in Dalenn. He had the greatest influence in their country's politics and everything that was related to it. And now that the Dalennish monarchy was on the verge of collapse, Elle's father, King Markus Eves was just desperate to do anything and everything to save his throne. Even if it meant marrying off the only daughter that he had left, to the same monster who had raped his firstborn.

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Elle had hated her father since the day of her forced engagement to Brandon Haze. She had tried her best to tell the king that she had witnessed it herself when Brandon Haze, that monster, had assaulted her older sister Ellaine who was only seventeen at that time, four years ago.

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She herself, was fifteen then and had tried to tell what she witnessed to their father. But the king had asked for evidence and when they asked her sister, Ellaine had completely denied it. Elle knew that something was off, and she had tried to persuade Ellaine to tell the truth and expose Brandon. But Ellaine kept silent.

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The night before Ellaine took her own life inside her room, she had told Elle everything that had happened to her. About the fact that Brandon Haze had raped her and blackmailed her.

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After Ellaine's funeral, Elle had tried her best to expose the man but her father punished her instead. She did not have any evidence and her father did not believe her. The king, her once loving father, had gradually spiraled down into madness over the years just because he could not accept the truth that the Dalennish monarchy was on the brink of collapse under his rule.

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Izabelle would be lying if she said that she did not care for their royal household. She cared. Very much so. But she believed that it was time for their country not to be ruled by monarchs anymore. The people had voiced out and expressed that they had wanted the abolishment of the monarchy ever since she could remember. And the people's demands were getting worse by the year. And as she grew up and saw more of the situation of their country, she had started to side with the opinions of her country men. If only her father could see and accept that.

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For years, her father had been doing everything to strengthen the collapsing monarchy so that his rule as king could continue until his last breath.

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And the most certain method for his plan to work was to marry his daughter off to the country's most powerful man, his own daughter's rapist, Brandon Haze.

Elle would never accept such a fate of marrying that monster. Over her dead body!

"Then..." she finally answered. Gathering all the courage that she had in her, she stared into those pair of cold grey eyes. "Go on... Devour me."

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A/N: Welcome to my newest book everyone! This book is part of Hellbound series but it can be read as STANDALONE.

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