

K Lover 196

Chapter 196: Women Shouldn't Drink

"Oh, you're not disagreeing with me," Lady Delphine smirked. "Usually, you would have said something along the lines of it being impossible. What has changed?"

Rose glanced at Lady Delphine. She was right. She slowly looked away. "I don't know," she whispered.

However, she still didn't agree with Lady Delphine, but she could accept that perhaps the crown prince might be willing to listen to her requests—except if she asked to go home. It didn't mean anything, and it certainly didn't make him less cruel.

"The royal family hasn't arrived yet," Lady Delphine said, changing the subject.

She could see Rose's expression saddened, and she didn't want that. She knew, more than anything, Rose wanted to go home, and having the favor of the crown prince didn't matter. Rose would still choose to go home.

Lady Delphine was almost envious. The crown prince was a powerful man. The only reason things had gotten better for her these past three years was because of him. If he hadn't arrived at her doorstep, she might have spent the rest of her life indoors, as the chances of her being stoned to death outside of her manor were pretty high.

However, no one would dare do that now, as it was widely known that the crown prince patronized the services of Lady Delphine. His presence also helped her business, bringing more customers, especially nobles.

Lady Delphine had laid with Caius enough times to know there was a raging storm inside the young heir. Most nobles knew the crown prince didn't like the king. Most reckoned it was because he was sent away from the castle and the kingdom at such a young age—and they would be right.

However, King Gaius hadn't sent his son away to some kingdom to learn. No. The king had sent his twelve-year-old son to join the mercenaries. Lady Delphine only knew this because of her dead husband, Lord Hendrix Elrod.

"I am sure the queen would be 'ere," Rose replied. She doubted the queen would have painstakingly arranged the ball and then not attend. Rose was almost sure she would make an elaborate entrance.

"And the crown prince?" Lady Delphine asked.

"I don't know," Rose said, looking towards the three chairs towering in the corner.

They were high enough to be seen from any corner of the hall, and even though the chairs were empty, guards were dutifully guarding them.

"I doubt he would ask you to attend if he had no plans to make an appearance," Lady Delphine said at Rose's expression.

She turned to look at Lady Delphine. She didn't know what sort of experience Lady Delphine had with the crown prince, but hers was filled with him humiliating her every step of the way.

He must have known it was a bad idea to have her come to the ball, but he still made her appear. Rose shut her eyes—she didn't want to imagine the queen's expression when she found out she was here. Rose was rightfully terrified of her.

A servant carrying a pitcher of wine passed very close to them, and Lady Delphine was quick to call his attention. He nodded but didn't go to her, even though she had called him first. Lady Delphine wasn't bothered. She was here on invitation by a member of the royal family—they had no option but to make sure she was attended to.

Lady Delphine stared at the lord who was getting served instead, and she caught his gaze on her. He didn't look away; rather, he stared even harder, his eyes blazing and his nose scrunched up in disgust.

Lady Delphine turned away immediately. It was no surprise that he was in attendance, but at the same time, his presence always caught her off guard.

"Is everything alright?" Rose asked.

Lady Delphine lightly grazed her shoulder with Rose's. "My pipe isn't here," she whispered. "I have to make do with wine."

"Lady Delphine," Rose said, her tone serious. "Isn't it bad for you?"

It can't be worse than living, but Delphine kept this thought to herself. Losing her husband a decade ago was harder than Lady Delphine had ever admitted, and the pipe just made it a little easier.

She shrugged in response to Rose's question, but she didn't need to reply, as the servant was now heading for them.

He bowed and lifted the pitcher to pour deep red wine into the goblet she held. Rose watched the liquid gently pour out. The servant did a good job—not even a drop spilled.

He bowed again and retreated, but Lady Delphine paid him no mind, as her attention was already on the contents of the cup.

She brought it closer and took a deep breath before taking a healthy sip, all the while noticing that Rose was watching her closely.

"Is that wine?" Rose asked.

"Yes. Would you like some?" she asked.

Rose shook her head immediately. "Women should not drink."

"Who told you that?" Lady Delphine said with a laugh. "Look around—I assure you more than a few ladies will indulge in the taste of wine."

Rose shook her head again. "That's not the only reason. I know drinking can make you lose sense of what you're doing. I've seen husbands beat their wives because they were drunk, and I've seen even more husbands spend their time drinking and neglecting their family."

Lady Delphine took another sip. "That I cannot disagree with. However, I don't think drinking was what made the men that way. I would say they were always that way—drinking was just a good excuse."

"I suppose you're right," Rose said, her expression solemn as if in deep thought. "But I will still 'ave to decline."

"Fair enough. However, if I don't have some wine, I might not be able to find the ball bearable."

Lady Delphine's grip on the goblet tightened, and Rose saw a dark look in her eyes, but there was also a hint of sadness. She wanted to ask about it, but it felt intrusive.

A loud trumpet caused Rose to jerk her head up. She wasn't the only one—everyone turned their attention to where the sound came from. Movements stopped, and whispers hushed.