

K Lover 204

Chapter 204: Cotton In His Ears

"You look very beautiful, little lady," Caius said as his eyes scanned her. "Dance with me."

Rose stared at him with huge eyes as his hand still rested under her chin. The gold band on his forehead reminded her he was indeed the crown prince, the heir to the throne, and she couldn't deny that it suited him.

His brown eyes shone as he stared down at her, his lips were slightly tilted upward like the start of a smile. The scar on his left chin added to his allure, and Rose realized she couldn't imagine him without it.

"If you do, I'll let you leave the party early. What do you say?" He added when she didn't reply.

Rose blinked as she realized she had been caught up admiring his handsome face and had forgotten what he said. She immediately started to shake her head and pull her hand from his grasp, but she couldn't step back—Welma was still behind her.

"Your Majesty," Rose said with a panicked expression. "I don't think that's a good idea." Besides, even though it seemed like he was offering her a choice, Rose had dealt with the crown prince long enough to know there was no such thing.

Rose's eyes darted to the corner and she could see a small crowd had already gathered. They weren't close enough, but she could feel their stares in this direction.

"Why not?" he asked, his hand falling to his side.

Rose knew Caius wasn't stupid. He knew exactly why dancing with her was a terrible, terrible idea. Aside from the Queen, they were also among the important lords of Velmount. For the crown prince to dance with a mere peasant would be an insult to them. She shouldn't even have been at the ball in the first place.

"I am sure Your Majesty can think of reasons why this is a bad idea," she replied with her head bent.

Caius smirked. "I suppose you're right," he whispered.

Rose looked relieved, but when she lifted her face to look at his face again, the panic she had felt earlier quickly spread. She should have known. When had the crown prince ever asked her to make a choice? The only time that had ever happened was when it aligned with his. From the moment he had asked the question, he truly intended to dance with her.

"However," he continued as she looked up, "none of that matters."

Of course, it didn't matter to him—it wasn't his life that could be in danger. Some days Rose wondered if the crown prince saw her as anything but his plaything, his little pawn that he could move however he liked. But Rose was only a pawn, she had to be careful about the moves made, else she might be captured.

Rose felt something against her face and then it was tied at the back of her head. The only reason she didn't struggle was because she knew she didn't have a say in the matter.

"Perfect," he whispered as he pulled his hands away.

Rose blinked and lifted her hand to her face. There was something over her eyes and her nose, but it didn't impair her vision nor did it obstruct her breathing. Rose followed the string that was tied to the back of her head and it only took her a moment to realize it was a mask.

"Do you have any more complaints?" he asked.

"Yes," she cried.

A mask was a waste of time; more people had already seen her. A mask was not going to hide anything. But more than a need to keep herself hidden, there was another reason why she couldn't dance—Rose didn't know how to dance. Not in the sense that one would think; rather, the ballroom dances—the dances that were meant for noble ladies and gentlemen.

"Now what is it?" Caius sounded impatient. The amusement was still on his face, but Rose knew that any longer now and he would not be amiable.

"I don't know how to dance," she whispered, looking at her feet.

"That's inconsequential. Simply follow my lead. I will make sure it is something even a little lady like you can learn."

Rose didn't like the condescending tone in his voice, and if the circumstances were different, she would have liked to prove him wrong, as she was a pretty fast learner. However, this was not the place and it certainly wasn't the time.

"Your Majesty, please recons—aahh."

Rose didn't finish her words as Caius wrapped an arm around her waist, turning her towards the direction of the dance floor.

"Your Majesty," Rose whispered as she tried to plead for her life, but Caius had cotton in his ears.

"Your Grace," a voice said as a figure appeared in front of them. "I have been looking all over for you. Her Majesty has requested that— My lady," Rylen quickly said with a little bow as he noticed her presence beside the crown prince.

This tickled Caius so much he burst out laughing. Then he leaned his head closer to her, his arm still around her waist. "If Rylen can't tell, you have nothing to worry about."

The sound of Caius' laughter made Rylen lift his head and he took a closer look at the lady on the crown prince's arm. Rylen jerked his head toward the crown prince.

"Your Grace!" he called. Then, forcing his voice down, he whispered, "You can't be serious."

"Out of the way, Prince Rylen, and tell my mother I will join her soon."

Rylen didn't budge. "I know you said you'd bring her to the ball, and that is one thing, but to dance with her in front of everyone? Your Grace, there should be a limit to your craziness."

"Now where is the fun in that?" Caius said and moved his free hand to indicate that Rylen should step away.

The young man sighed and bowed his head before he reluctantly stepped to the side. Rose looked at him with pleading eyes, but he couldn't meet hers. Not that she had expected otherwise.