

K Lover 208

Chapter 208: Enjoy The Ball

Rose took her first deep breath of the night as the corset came undone, leaving her in nothing but the chemise and stockings. Rose dropped to the bed and kicked off her shoes.

Isla quickly picked them up and set them aside while Rose lay on her back, kicking her legs lightly as her hands moved up and down. It felt so nice to finally take off all that weight from her body. However, she wasn't nearly done for the night and she couldn't just go to bed.

Rose opened her eyes to see Isla standing by the foot of her bed; she was looking at Rose with an odd expression. Rose followed her gaze and noticed it was on her neck—the mask. She immediately sat upright and pulled it off.

"Was it a masquerade ball?" Isla asked.

"No," Rose said softly and shook her head.

The maid looked like she might have more questions, and Rose knew she wouldn't have the answer to them, so she was grateful when Isla didn't ask why she was wearing a mask.

"Would you like me to dispose of it for you?" she asked instead.

Rose frowned as she stared at the mask in her hand. It was golden and elaborately decorated with twirly patterns. Rose's finger traced it, and it was cold to the touch. She didn't think she was supposed to throw this away.

"No," she said and turned to look at Isla. "I will take care of it."

Isla nodded.

"Ave you and your sister been in service at the castle long?" Rose asked. She was actually curious about the sisters and it just felt a little weird for Isla to just awkwardly stand so she decided to make small talk.

Isla shook her head. "Not long, less than a month," she whispered.

Rose nodded and placed the mask under her pillow. She made a mental note to change the location when she was alone. She frowned as she realized the first place she had thought of keeping it was together with the gifts from her father.

"Ow do you like it so far?" Rose asked as she pulled at a thread on her chemise.

Isla shrugged. "It's not bad. Our chores mainly include helping in the kitchen, scrubbing the floors, and sometimes we help out in the stables. Mistress Edith says we are not ready to attend court ladies just yet."

"I am sure you'll be ready in no time," Rose said with a small smile.

"I hope so," Isla replied. "I will be fifteen soon. Our parents won't be happy if we can't keep up. Working in the castle is very important."

Rose's eyes widened as Isla said her age. She had thought Isla might be a little older, but she knew she was the youngest of the two, even though she was slightly taller than her elder sister.

"I am sure you two will do just fine," Rose said with a smile just as the door opened to reveal Chelsy. Her hands were filled with the items Rose had asked for.

"Sorry it took so long," she said as she walked in. "I couldn't find someone in time to help me."

Chelsy's chest was heaving and it was a lot harder for her to talk as she was breathing hard. It seemed she had run all the way here.

"That's fine," Rose said as Chelsy walked toward her. "I am not in any particular hurry."

Caius forgot the name of the lady who, without subtlety, was rubbing herself against him. She was saying something important, but for the life of him, he couldn't concentrate even if he tried.

Thomas had returned to the hall for quite some time, which meant Rose was in his room at this moment, and for some reason that was provocative enough to make it harder for him to pay attention to the ball.

"Your Highness," the blonde lady purred, and Caius tried to get himself to focus, but it was a losing battle.

He looked towards the podium, and his mother was still seated, clearly with no intention to leave anytime soon. He glanced at the chair next to her. It was meant for his father. Caius thought it was a bit ironic that his mother would put out a seat for the king when she knew he wouldn't be in attendance.

"Your Highness," a shrill familiar voice called, and Caius returned to his body.

"Lord Charles," he said coldly.

The lord smiled and moved even closer. Caius wasn't sure if he preferred his presence over the blonde's. They were both insufferable. Knowing Lord Charles, this wouldn't be a casual greeting.

"I hear there hasn't been good news from Futherfield," he sneered and gulped his wine.

Caius narrowed his eyes and scanned the crowd. This was the part where Rylen was usually around to handle. He hated repeated chitchat, especially from someone like Charles, whose only joy was to tear down and mock plans—without bringing up anything useful to help.

Unfortunately, he didn't see Rylen, which meant he would have to answer the lord himself. "Regrettably," Caius replied, keeping his tone neutral against what he actually wanted.

Lord Charles's sneer increased. "Then when does Your Highness intend to set out, as you have promised?"

Caius smirked, he wasn't even surprised that Charles presented such an opportunity, he had expected nothing less from the lord.

"Why do you ask, Lord Charles? Do you intend to set out with us? That would be wonderful. I am sure we can find use for your... skills," Caius said with peering eyes as he stared down the lord.

Lord Charles's eyes widened and the grip on his goblet tightened. "No, Your Highness," he said, taking a step back. "I was simply inquiring about Your Highness's plans." His expression contorted, showing several emotions at once as he tried to explain.

Caius didn't let up. He was irritated and had been looking for something to distract himself, and Lord Charles was kind enough to present himself. Caius had every intention to drive the sword in as deep as he could.

"If you're inquiring, Lord Charles, then you must have some input. You can join us. I'd prefer it if you did. To show the people that they can rely on—"

"That's enough, Your Highness," Prince Rylen said and lightly tapped Caius on the back.

Caius lifted his head and looked back. He narrowed his eyes at his cousin, but then stepped back and lightly tapped Lord Charles on the shoulder. "It would be best if you remained in the capital. Enjoy the ball," Caius smiled sinisterly.

Lord Charles looked at where the crown prince touched him and nodded before quickly fleeing the scene.