

## K Lover 73

### Chapter 73: The Auction

Rose's first instinct was to run in any direction that would take her out of here, but she didn't get a chance to even figure out her environment before someone grabbed her arm and pulled her. They got in front of the open cage and pushed her in.

Rose landed on her front, only managing to protect her face in time. However, it didn't stop it from hurting as she had hit her sore head. The bump was down but the pain wasn't any less. She lay still for a bit as she waited for the pain to subside before she lifted her head.

The cage clanged shut, and Rose was faced with the three men looking into the cage with her in it. One of them was smiling while the other two just stared down at her. Rose couldn't read their expressions, but she could tell that if she were a box in here, it wouldn't make much difference to them.

The cage was huge; even if she stood on her feet, her head would touch the top. She also noticed a few strange things about the cage. There were strands of hair—or was it fur?—and a little bit of blood. It looked like it had been cleaned, but whoever had been in charge of cleaning it hadn't done a very good job.

The cage was locked shut, and one of the men said, "Pull her up!"

Rose's eyes widened, and she instinctively looked up. The cage lifted off the ground, and she yelled as she lost her footing and fell. She scrambled to one side of the cage and held onto the bars. It was either that or she would be tossed all over the cage as she was pulled up.

The man with the lamp grinned and waved at her. Rose turned her face away as she gripped the bars tighter. She was really about to be auctioned off. The pull didn't take too long. Rose couldn't see through the top of the cage, as—like the bottom—it was a flat square piece of metal. However, she knew she wouldn't have to wait long before she would see what was going on.

Suddenly, she could see something. Rose wasn't sure if she should call it a roof or a floor. She was being pulled through the hole of this, and some light came from this hole. It was enough to brighten the space below her, and Rose winced as the light got brighter with each pull.

The rope attached to the cage suddenly came undone, and Rose felt the cage start to fall, but before she could panic, the cage landed on the wooden floor with a soft bounce. The hole had been closed.

Rose slowly moved to a kneeling position. The cage drop had caused her to lose her balance on the bars. The place was bright, but she couldn't see anything except a man in a fancy hat. She couldn't see his face, only his smile. There was a mask across his face and a long red curtain behind his back. However, the noise she could hear told her she was facing the wrong direction.

It wasn't a loud noise, just enough to let her know a number of people were in the venue. Rose swallowed and slowly turned around. What she saw was enough to make her faint.

It was bigger than she thought, and Rose knew she couldn't count all of them if she tried. All of them wore masks. A few faces could be seen, but they didn't look to be anyone important, and they weren't seated; rather they were standing around what Rose could only figure out to be the exits and entrances of the venue. They were in front of her while she was on a stage in a cage, with all eyes on her.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have brought this show to its last event for tonight. I see some of you look disappointed. She might look like a simple redhead, but I assure you this is no ordinary woman off the street."

Rose heard grunts of disappointment from the audience, and she tried to take a guess at what kind of people they were, but she failed miserably. Anyone who would happily buy people at an auction couldn't be trusted.

"What's so special about her?" a voice rang out. "The lion was a better show than this."

The host smirked. His smile gave Rose an eerie feeling. She turned her gaze to the audience, but she only felt overwhelmed and brought her gaze down.

"Until last night, this redhead was in the royal castle satisfying the crown prince," the host said.

A gasp ran through the hall. The hall had no less than ten rows of seats, each lined up like stairs—one lower than the other to not obstruct the view of the people behind. The rows were also separated into

sections and had a wooden board separating each person from the other, except when they were in attendance together. The boards were not so high that you couldn't see their faces; they just separated them from the next person.

"Now that I have your attention, the masked auction will begin—"

"How sure are you that she is the rumored whore?" someone asked.

The host smiled and stepped forward. "Has the Masked Host ever been wrong?" he asked. "Ladies and gentlemen, you don't have to bid if you don't want to, but my job is to bring you all the best. I'm sure the ones who are interested will bid." The masked man's voice echoed in the hall. He didn't speak very loudly, but his voice carried to all corners of the hall.

He tapped his foot twice after he spoke, and the hall suddenly went silent. All the grumbling and whispers stopped as all attention turned to the stage. The masked host looked left and then right, his eyes scanning the audience before he opened his mouth to speak again.

"The auction will begin, starting at five thousand gold coins!" the masked man said.