THE KING'S LOVER

Chapter 8: Death Row

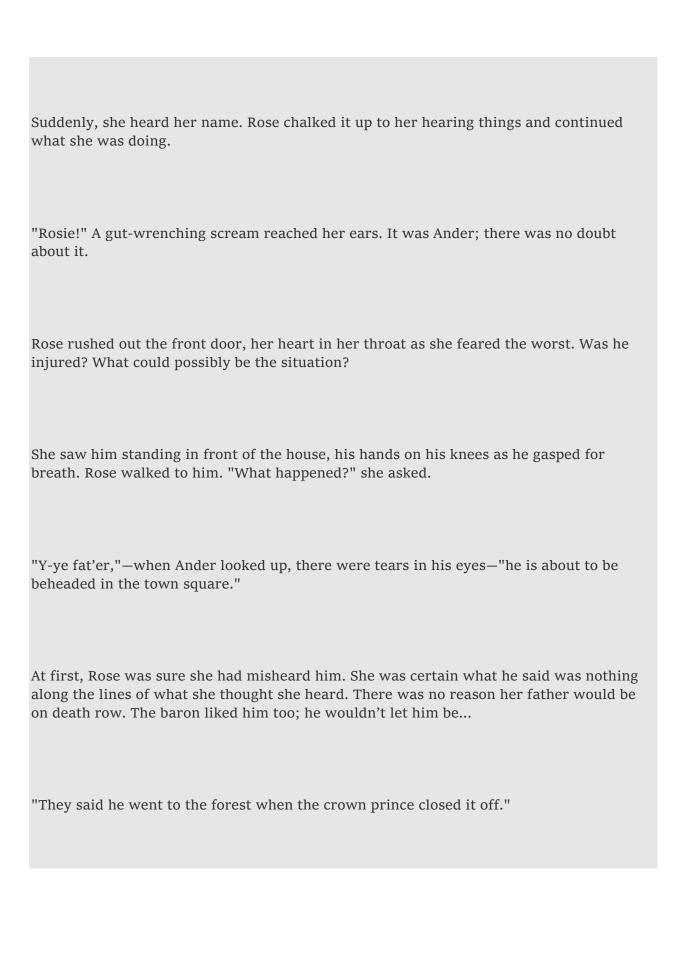
Chapter 8: Death Row

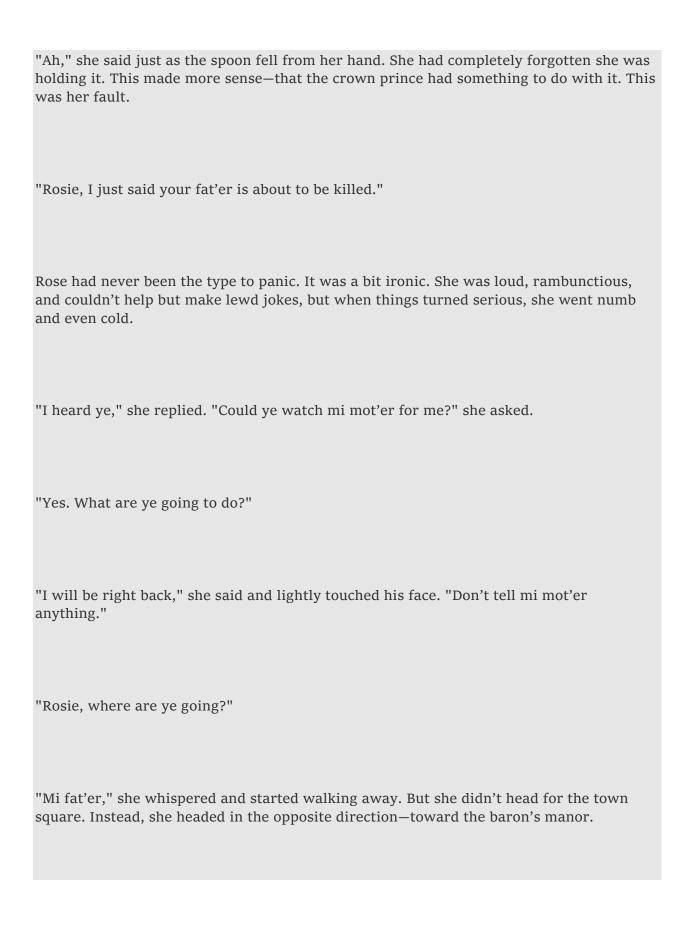
Rose stood in front of the hearth, stirring the pot. She was making some porridge, just enough for her mother and herself. Her father had already left for work as soon as it was bright enough to leave. He said he needed to start on her wedding present, and if he didn't start now, there was no way he would finish it in time, so he was going to set out early to find the perfect tree trunk.

Rose smiled to herself as she wondered what her father would carve for them. Imagine if it was a sculpture of the two of them. Of course not, that would take more than a week, and her father didn't sculpt humans—he preferred animals, especially birds. It was also the only thing she was a little good at.

Any minute now, it would be time for lunch. It was almost noon. She had to hurry; she always made sure food was ready by noon for her mother. The old woman didn't eat much, but at least she ate, even if it was a little. Her mother was getting sicker, and every now and then, she worried she might wake up and her mother wouldn't.

Rose smacked both sides of her face with her palms. What was she thinking? She had more important things to worry about and a wedding to plan for. She had to snap out of the bad thoughts. This was a happy time for all of them. Rose frowned as she recalled what had happened at the marketplace. Hopefully, he would be gone from Edenville, and she would never hear from him again. After all, royals rarely came to this backwater town.





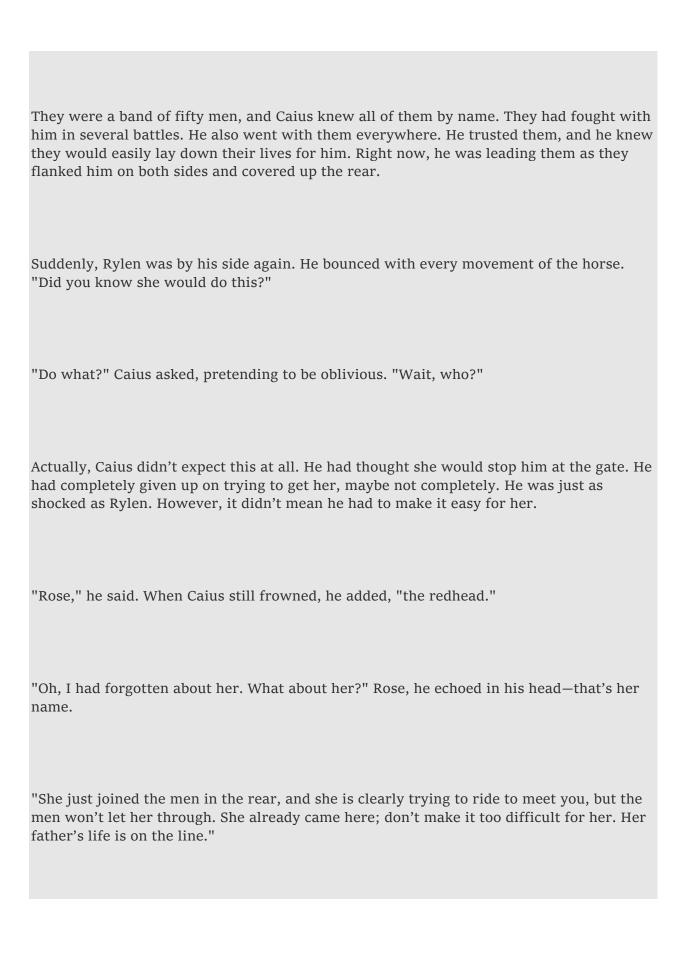
She knew exactly how to stop this, and what was a little sale on her body for her father's life? What she was worried about was that it might be a little too late. It took some time to get to the baron's manor and even running at full speed didn't help.
Her father would most likely be executed at noon. More than anything, she was hoping the crown prince was waiting, giving her time to stop this. She stopped in front of the manor gates, panting hard, but it didn't feel like enough air was getting to her lungs.
There were three guards at the gates, and they stared at her with pity in their eyes. The news had gone around, but somehow, she was the last to hear. "I-I want to see the crown prince. Please tell him I'm 'ere. He'd want to see me, I promise."
"The crown prince already left Edenville. He left a while ago. Even if ye ran, ye could never catch up with him."
Rose tasted bile. Her mother was going to die, and there was absolutely nothing she could do about it except watch it slowly happen. Her father, on the other hand—his death would be sudden, and it would be every bit her fault. She could stop it but failed to do so.
"What's going on here?" A guard on a horse strutted toward them.
Rose's eyes widened immediately. She knew the guard in question. He was highly ranked in the baron's manor and was one of the ones who had tried to hit on her—and she had kicked him in the nuts. He didn't like her anymore, and she felt the exact same way about him.

"It's Rose," a guard started to explain. "Oh, yer father is getting executed." He giggled. "I heard ye said yer too special for a prince. Serves you right." It took only the speed of a raindrop falling to the ground for Rose to make her decision. As soon as she did, her hand moved, she grabbed the reins and pulled. The horse panicked, the rider panicked, losing his balance, and he fell off—exactly what she wanted. Rose moved quickly, lifting herself off the ground and onto the back of the horse. She was glad she let Ander teach her how to ride, and this was possible because he worked in the baron's stables. Though this had angered the baron when he found out, the only reason he let her go without any consequences was because of her father. But it didn't matter, as she had learned enough to be able to ride any horse. "Hiya!" she yelled and shook the reins. The horse set off, and she could hear the guard curse behind her, but his voice soon faded as she galloped away. Chapter 9: To Trap Her Chapter 9: To Trap Her

"I thought you did this to trap her," Rylen asked Caius. "You're just going to kill her

father?"

"Don't look at me like that," Caius said. "If she had done what I wanted, this wouldn't happen." Caius shrugged as he casually held onto the reins of his horse.
"You didn't give her a chance to correct this. You even made us leave earlier than scheduled," Rylen scolded. He rode closer to Caius.
"Yes, so we can get to the capital on time. Even on horseback, it will take us no less than two days. If we leave early, we can get to the capital by dusk on the second day."
Rylen didn't reply to this; he just rode past and left Caius alone. There was no point in trying to speak more on the matter. He wouldn't listen, and he knew better than to anger Caius. At least, he was amused, but Rylen couldn't help but worry about the girl's father.
Caius watched Rylen ride off, and an odd thought popped into his head. He frowned and turned back, refusing to let his thoughts stray to places he'd rather not think about. Right now, the redhead that got his loins in a frenzy was far more important. Caius frowned as he was met with an empty path. He was riding as slowly as possible, yet she wasn't here yet. If she wanted to rescue her father, she had to work hard for it. Refusing his offer had consequences.
From here, he could no longer see Edenville again, just a path lined with huge trees on each side. Caius turned his head to the front, then shrugged and picked up the pace. They had a lot of riding to do. It was her loss at the end of the day.
Caius heard it before he saw it. The gallops of an incoming horse—it didn't sound like it came from his men. It sounded faster. Caius would recognize that anywhere, but he didn't even flinch, didn't turn around. Instead, he picked up the pace some more, forcing his men to increase their pace too.



Caius lifted his gaze to look at him. "Aren't you the righteous one? She already made it this far; I'm sure she can handle even more. She should reach me before noon, else how would she save her father?" Caius laughed. Caius didn't need to look at Rylen to know what expression he had on. The air hummed with it, but all Caius could think about was that she was willing to do this for her father, and she couldn't adhere to his request—the crown prince's request. Rose had water in her eyes, and her rear was also bruised. The saddle wasn't her size, and with how fast she was going, it was only going to get worse. She couldn't help the relief she felt when she saw the prince's group. She sped up immediately. She didn't have a lot of time left; she didn't even think he would leave with her father's life on the line. She should have asked more questions. How would he save him from here? The thoughts that churned in her mind were enough to make her lose balance, but she held on. Rose tried to pass them to get to the crown prince, but they wouldn't let her. She tried the other end, but the guards suddenly appeared in her way. "Let me pass," she cried, but no one spoke to her. No one even looked at her. The tears were already falling. Rose didn't know when, but she could feel her face was wet. Was she a joke to him? Was this how minimal a life was to him? Her father! He was aware of her presence, she could tell, but he wasn't calling his guards off. Rose's face hardened, and she wiped at her tears with one hand. Taking a hard left, she rushed into the trees. She would like to see them stop her now. The terrain of the forest

was different, and the cluster of trees made it a bit hard to ride, but she had to ride even faster than before. She needed to overtake them and get to the front.

The first branch almost sent her flying off the horse. She had seen it a little too late. She cursed at the pain, but that didn't matter. The second, she was able to brace herself for it. Unfortunately, there was no way to avoid it.

A fallen tree caught her eyes; it was blocking the already clustered path, but Rose didn't slow the horse down, afraid that it might lose momentum and wouldn't be able to jump. She pulled the reins, urging it to leap. The horse jumped, and Rose had to hold on for her life. It landed, and she almost slipped off. She leaned forward to support herself, grabbing tightly onto the reins.

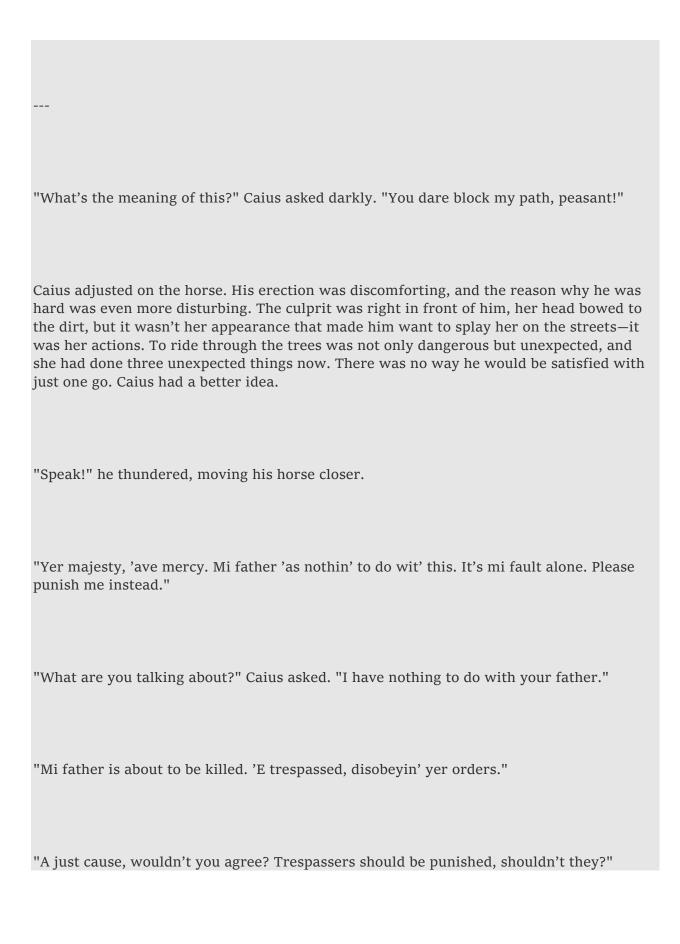
After securing her balance, she led the horse out of the forest, bringing it to the middle of the path. She got off the horse immediately, making it stand sideways so it would block the path, and she kowtowed in front of it. Her head to the floor, her palms face down on the ground in front of her head.

"What's the meaning of this?"

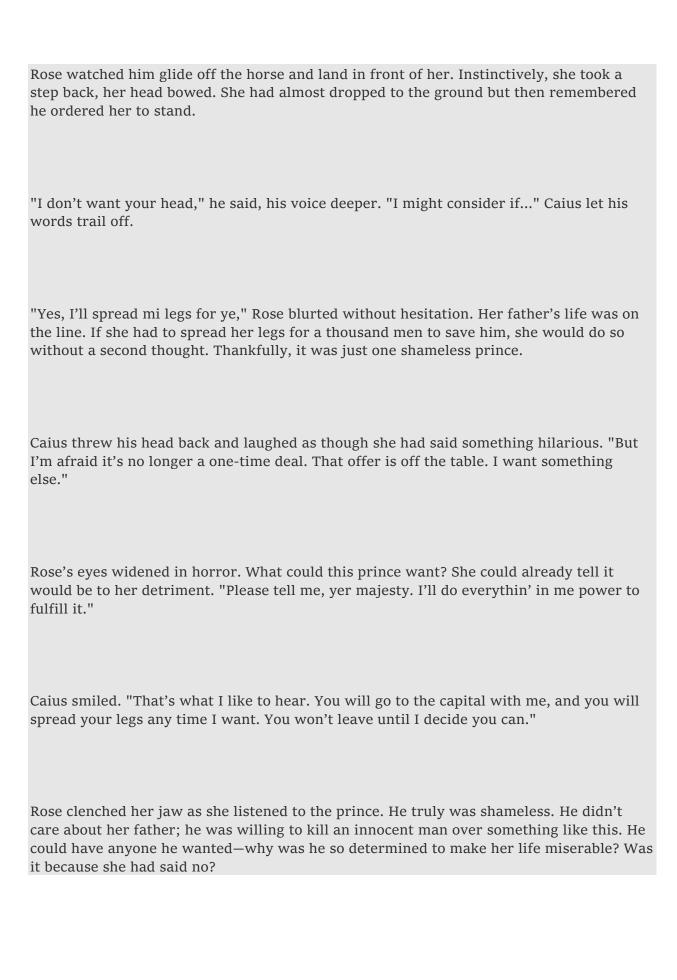
Chapter 10: Get On Your Knees

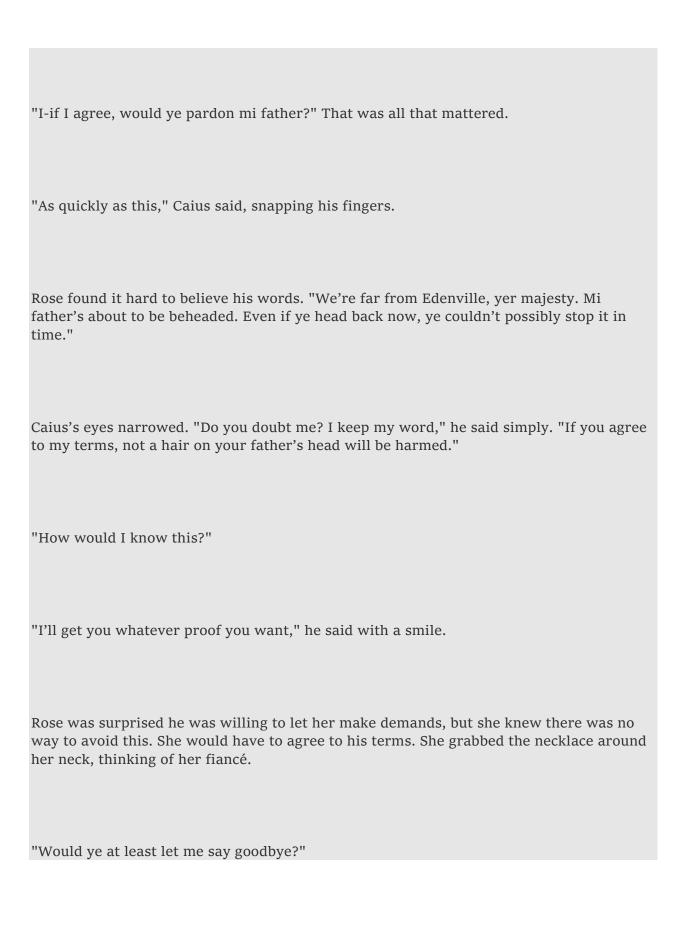
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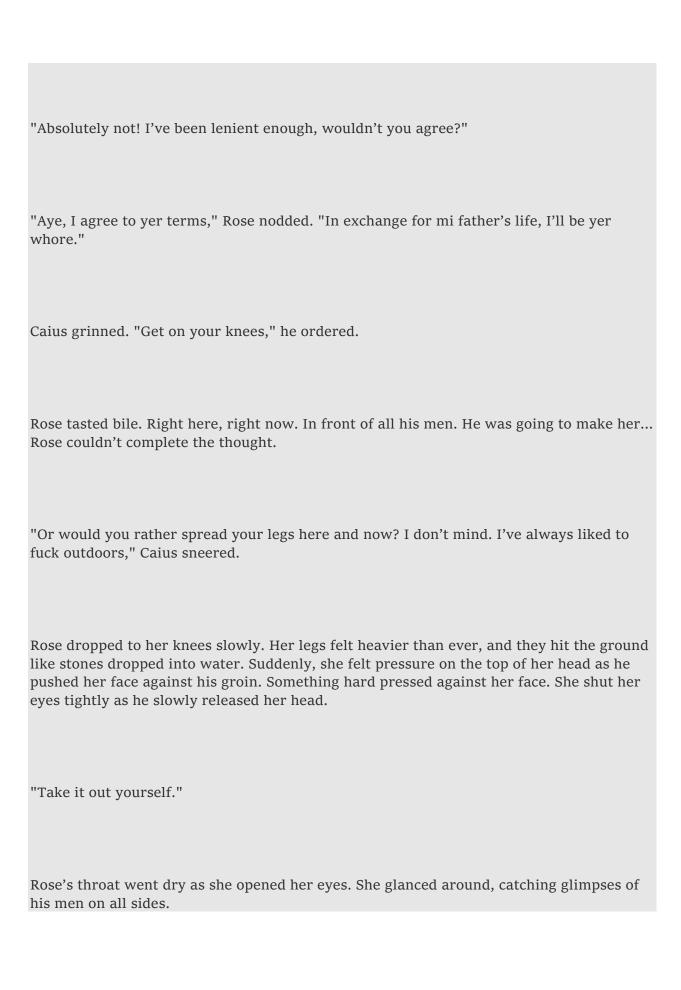
Trigger Warning: The latter part of this Chapter includes a scene of coerced sexual activity. Please proceed with caution or skip if needed.

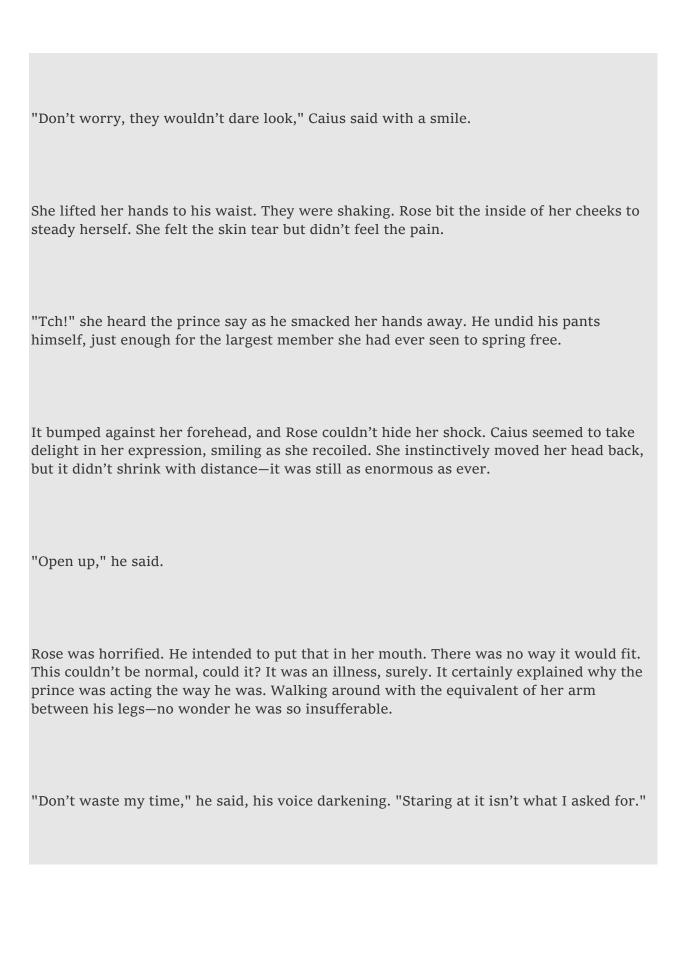












Rose nodded and slowly opened her mouth. She didn't even get to open it fully before he shoved it right to the entrance. "If I feel teeth," he said, his cock at the edge of her lips, "your father will lose a few."