

K Lover 93

Chapter 93: A Bitter Dose

Rose sat anxiously in Lady Delphine's room. She didn't want to wait alone, and even though business for the day had started and customers were already rushing into the building, Lady Delphine kept her promise to stay with Rose until it was time for her to leave.

"Do you think the crown prince 'as gotten the letter?" Rose asked for the umpteenth time, her fingers twisting as she waited anxiously.

Lady Delphine chuckled. "The answer hasn't changed from the last time you asked, Rose."

Rose nodded and looked at the wall. She wasn't really looking at anything, she just stared.

Slade had been gone for quite some time now, and according to Lady Delphine, the manor wasn't that far from the castle—yet no one had arrived to take her there. Her thoughts were spinning in every direction.

Why was rejection frightening? It would be a good thing if the crown prince didn't want her anymore. She would have a mountain of debt, but at least she would have freedom. Besides, this was a different kind of captivity now that money was involved. She was practically being sold to the crown prince.

He had treated her no better than a slave when she was with him. Now that she really was a slave, how would he treat her? Rose didn't want to find out, but she also couldn't let Lady Delphine regret helping her.

"Your anxiousness is getting to me too," Lady Delphine said as she prepared her pipe. Lighting it with the lamp, she went back to lie on the long chair.

"I'm sorry," Rose said immediately.

"I don't fault you," Lady Delphine replied, pausing as she inhaled, then blew the smoke out. Rose watched it float to the ceiling. "I am also anxious too. His Highness is unpredictable, and I'm sorry this is the only option we have."

Rose shrugged. She wished she had more comforting words, but she didn't. She was too worried for herself to ease anyone else's fears.

"Lady Delphine," the voice of a young woman rang out, followed by a knock on the door.

Lady Delphine turned to Rose. "Answer it. It should be for you."

Rose's heart dropped to her stomach. The crown prince was really here for her. It took her a moment to snap out of the horror of realizing the time had come.

She slowly walked to the door and opened it. She was met by one of the girls in the manor.

"Rose," the girl said in surprise. "Give this to Lady Delphine." She handed her the item she held and sped off.

Rose stood in the hallway, dumbfounded and numb. She had thought it had something to do with the crown prince, and discovering it didn't was a bit underwhelming. The emotions she had gathered in anticipation dispersed, leaving her empty.

"What is it?" Lady Delphine asked when she didn't move.

"Oh," Rose replied and turned back to Lady Delphine. "She brought this."

It was a tiny glass jar, the top sealed. Rose peered at it, but the contents were too dark to make out.

"Hmm," Lady Delphine said, looking to the ceiling. "It's for you." Her voice sounded slower than usual.

"For me?" Rose asked, genuinely surprised. "What is this for?"

However, as soon as she asked the question, her eyes widened, her expression a mix of shock and horror. It took everything in her not to drop it.

"Do you really need me to remind you? I'd expect you wouldn't forget something like this when you're the one who asked for it," Lady Delphine said, eyes closed as she kept smoking her pipe.

"I remember," Rose said.

Lady Delphine peeked at her with one eye. "Good. Keep it safe. I had to pay extra to get it ready in time."

Rose's expression dulled. Everything truly involved money.

Lady Delphine narrowed her eyes. "Don't look like that. I don't expect you to pay me back, and it didn't cost anything compared to how much you were sold for. Remember what I said about the dosage?"

"One teaspoon?" she responded.

Delphine nodded. "I'd say twice a month, but with how active the crown prince's loins are, it's best you drink it every week—or more, if you feel up to it."

"Can I take it now?" Rose asked immediately.

Lady Delphine didn't speak for a moment, then slowly asked, "Are you sure?"

"Yes," she said.

"Well then, by all means. But as I said, if you've already taken in, it will be a little more—"

"Don't worry. I prefer it this way."

Holding the jar, Rose walked closer to the dining table where a teaspoon lay. She placed the jar down and picked up the spoon. Removing the covering, she poured the contents onto it.

The smell hit her first. It was strong, and if Rose cared, her first thought would have been that the liquid wasn't for human consumption. It was a little thick, with tiny pieces of herbs in it. They floated to the top, and she watched them for a bit. It was just a teaspoon—she didn't need to be so worried.

Rose brought the spoon to her lips, wondering if this would be enough. It felt a little too small. However, if there was anyone with expertise in the matter, it was Lady Delphine, and it would be suicidal not to trust her words.

Rose brought the spoon to her lips and swallowed. It felt like someone had smacked her. It was a mix of sour, bitter, and hot. It reminded her of the ale she had snuck to drink as a child—but worse.

She pulled the spoon from her lips, panting heavily, her eyes red and her mouth watering from the nasty taste. She swallowed again, hoping to ease it, but it only got worse.

"Has quite a kick to it, doesn't it?" Lady Delphine asked.

Rose turned to her. "It tastes awful."

"I know, but it's quite potent. You don't need to drink a jar to get results, and this can last you months. Hopefully, you'll be out of the crown prince's clutches before you need more."