

Mistress 1

Chapter 1

Five years ago...

(The Duke of Devonshire's mistress.)

The word that people called Rowena Philone, Hair blonde as honey, green eyes that shimmers like midsummer greens.

Newspapers praised her beauty, but only for a moment, before spreading that she sold her beauty and painted her as a vicious woman who was luxuriated with the duke's property.

Beautiful and luxurious Rowena Philone.

However, whatever the public perception was, Rowena was the hidden goddess of the Ethelwood social world. Whether it was an event, a concert, or an outing, invitations piled up in front of her, Adding to the fact that Numerous artists have created works using her as a muse.

The noblest and most vulgar woman.

No matter what she was called behind her back, no one dared to insult Rowena Philone, Who had the Duke of Devonshire backing her.

At least not in front of her.

"....I mean Rowena Philone....."

It was a voice full of malice. Rowena's hand stopped while fixing her makeup in the powder room.

"The bag she brought this time, the one designed by Madame Eledi! was a limited edition bag delivered only to the royal family, right?"

There were many voices that came between the walls. Another woman answered the subtle question.

"That's right. What about the clothes she was wearing? It's the Herden wardrobe dress that I've been waiting for three months to get it"

"The earrings and the necklace as well. It's like a treasure that's only been handed down from the royal family for generations."

"Isn't that ridiculous? What if all the men drool when she shows up?"

"And so, does she care? No matter how powerful the duke is, isn't she too shameless?? Even if she was wrapped with the finest item! In the end, She is just a mere mistress"

"I know right. A vulgar woman with an undistinguishable origin, it even makes me embarrassed"

It was the next moment that the gossip, which seemed to go on endlessly, suddenly stopped.

"Miss Philone."

A familiar voice called her name. At the same time, the disparaging voices calmed down.

It's okay. It happens all the time.

Rowena, barely breathing in the rat-dead silence, looked in the mirror and checked her face. Her hair and makeup were not disturbed at all, as if she was touched up by a professional.

"I'm coming."

As she opened the curtains and came out, she felt the presence of women holding their breath in the next space. As soon as she stopped in front of them for a moment, an attendant urged her outside the door.

"He is waiting in the carriage."

A carriage passed through the entrance of the crowded opera house across the new road. The fluffy leather made the carriage feel comfortable without much noticeable rattling, but on the other hand, it was colder than anywhere else in the world.

The ice-cold air was from the end of the break and the beginning of the second part. Killian, who had not spoken all the time, broke the heavy silence.

"What are you complaining about this time?"

"...what?"

Rowena turned her head slowly as she looked at countless passing gas lamps and streetwalkers.

"didn't I do what you wanted?"

The irritated voice made her soft shoulders cringe. At this time, Killian hated her avoiding his eyes.

Rowena barely raised her head and looked at the duke.

Black hair and pale blue eyes.

He was a man who had wealth, honour, and power in his hands since birth, and he was a man with arrogance and pride. A snake-like man, with a beautiful smile that is mesmerizing for a moment, but sharp and deadly poisonous.

When their eyes met, an apology popped out immediately.

"I'm sorry if I made you feel uncomfortable. I don't have any complaints.... I'm rather grateful."

The opera they just watched was Prim donna's first domestic performance, which was popular from abroad. From seeing the real-life actress whom she's a fan of, to the magnificent stage and the songs that make people's ears flutter, everything made her happy.

They also watched it from the best box seats. It was definitely a night to remember. She was grateful to him for taking the time to be with her even in the midst of her busy schedule.

Had it not been for the glaring gazes and gossip in the powder room as soon as she stepped away from this man side ...

"then why are you so quiet?"

Tsk

Killian clicked his tongue, reached out and grabbed her chin.

“Tell me. Do I have to look at my mistress’ sad face now?”

His voice was soft but it was a clear warning. Rowena shook her head, with her lips trembling.

A lot of emotions filled the small face held in one hand and quickly passed away.

The eyes looking at the scene were distinct.

He was interested in the woman in front of him, except when she avoids him with her mouth closed like a doll.

Even though he wanted to crush her in a handful, he also wanted to put her in a glass cabinet and cherish her.

Rowena, who looked at him palely, opened her lips slowly.

“It’s just....”

“Just.”

Killian, who raised his eyebrows, urged an answer.

The lamp on the ceiling reddened his face. Rowena stared at the man in front of her for a moment, it has been three years since she was first criticized for being a noble and vulgar woman.

It’s been a long time since they entangled and lived together.

But let alone getting comfortable, she could get used to it just a little bit now, and yet to be fully used to it. When she faced the man this close, her heart still beat like crazy and all the blood ran into her face.

Even the dimples on the left cheek that dig deep when throwing obvious ridicule.

There were two cases when this man, who always respects her as a mistress, treated her warmly like this.

In bed, or when something bothers her.

“I’m a little tired. If it bothered you... I’m sorry.”

Rowena, who replied helplessly, went quite again. At such a time, she should not have touched his judgement. Never mind, however, the gossip of women who kept lingering around even though they took control of themselves bothered her.

“If you know you’re wrong.”

Killian frowned at his mistress, which went quite again.

“You should be punished.”

‘Punished ?’

“What...?”

He reached out his hand to her, who opened her eyes wide at the sudden movement. Short order was given to Rowena, who stared blankly at the white gloves.

“Take it off”

Instead of a servant maid, he wore his tie and arranged his clothes every morning by himself.

Without a word, Rowena reached out, but as soon as she tried to take off his gloves, an order similar to a thunderbolt fell on her head.

“With your mouth.”

“Ah... .. !”

Before she could figure out what he was saying, Killian pulled her slender arm.

Rowena stumbled and sank to the floor. Killian, laughed as if he was satisfied and stroked her blond hair when she knelt between the seats, the area was wide enough for an adult to lie flat in it.

“Bite it off. Miss Philone.”

Ugh. Rowena let out a short breath at the relentless pressure. Shame poured into the touch of the pet dog patting down.

Her cheeks blushed as if they were on fire, but the moment her low voice called; the hesitation ended.

“Miss Philone.”

He didn't call her name more than three times.

“Do you not like it perhaps?”

There was no such choice, the absolute underdog is always her. If she refuses, she will probably have to stay alone for more than a week, like a pet dog waiting for its owner to return.

“If you don't like it...”

“Oh, no.”

A quick response came from her side, his hand made its way down her earlobe, brushing the nape of her neck. The skin he could feel under the thin cloth was burning.

“...I'll do it.”

Swallowing dry saliva, Rowena bit the tip of his glove with her teeth. As soon as she took off his gloves, his long index finger pierced her mouth.

* * *

It was around noon the next day when Rowena, who was exhausted the previous day, opened her eyes again.

The Duke, full of greed, left her a bouquet and shoes early in the morning and when she opened her eyes alone on the spacious bed touched the empty area next to her.

“How was the opera yesterday?”

Asked Melissa, the maid who combed her wavy blond hair with an ivory comb

“It was good.”

“I’m so jealous. Ordinary people like me wouldn’t be able to buy a ticket for the singer even if they saved up three months’ salary. That was her first performance too!”

The hand that was combing her hair meticulously stopped for a while. Rowena smiled bitterly at the excited girl over the mirror she faced.

“Did you want to see it that much?”

“Yes, I once dreamed of becoming an opera actress. My brother always teased me that I will get eliminated the moment they see my face.”

“you’re cute though.”

Melissa blushed at the gentle answer.

Unlike her, a beauty whose eyes widen just by looking at her, Melissa’s appearance has always been a complex one, Unusual auburn hair, rusty grey eyes, she’s tall, and her body shape was flat, back in the countryside she might’ve become the wife of a farmer who had some land at best.

Who knew that I would come to the capital and have such a sweet, kind maid

“What was your dream back in the day my lady?”

A question popped over Rowena’s head in thought. Rowena, who blinked at the sudden question, lowered her head, grabbed the hem of her skirt with his fingertips, and answered quietly.