

The Duke's Passion

Chapter 10 - Samael La Crox

I felt the beating of my heart drummed against my chest. The silence only intensified my puzzlement and shock.

What was going on?

Why was the acting duke kneeling before that silver-haired vampire? Wait, did he call him... Samael?

The same name as the regal duke of Grimsbanne? Duke Samael La Crox?

I heard that name in many tales. The Duke who established Grimsbanne after being banished from the palace and Capital.

The Duke who was in his slumber for hundreds of years.

Was this silver-haired vampire... that Duke?

Impossible...

"Rufus, how dare you interrupt our supper and steal that fickle hearted girl's attention from me?" Samael asked, glancing at me menacingly.

"I apologized for interrupting his lordship's affairs. However, we have to come and confirm that it was his lordship who infiltrated the manor." Rufus, the acting duke, explained in a polite yet blank tone.

When the knights present grasped the situation, one after another, they knelt down on their knees. Soon, everyone was kneeling before him.

While I watched everything unfold in disbelief.

"Pardon my rudeness, My Lord. I was incapable of recognizing his lordship, I accept death as punishment!" The knight who was shouting earlier apologized.

"Yes," Yet, Samael was unfazed. "You lot just better drop dead."

I flinched.

"Except you, silly." As if he was reading my mind, Samael smirked and winked at me.

"As you wish, My Lord." With my silence, I heard the knight shout as they wield their swords.

"Don't. You haven't known His lordship. He didn't mean it literally." Before the knights could pierce themselves, the acting duke, Rufus stopped them.

Yet, Rufus, the acting Duke kept his kneeling stance.

"Your Grace, please pardon our sudden interruption before your supper. We would retreat at once..."

Rufus paused as he slightly raised his head, and his gaze immediately set on Samael.

"But, will you return to your mansion tonight? A lot happened during your slumber, which needed to be discussed immediately."

Rufus added sternly. His tone told me that there were important things to be discussed.

Does that mean this maniacal vampire would leave me alone? The thought of him going back to his world made me feel relieved.

"No."

Yet, just before I could celebrate internally, Duke Samael's answer hindered that happiness from occurring.

"But, My Lord —"

"Rufus, I've seen Grimsbanne and could instantly tell it's not what it used to be." Duke Samael said in the same disinterested tone.

"Then, the more reason we should discuss it."

"Why?"

The quicker Rufus spat his argument, the faster this Duke replied.

Momentarily, Rufus was rendered speechless. Who wouldn't?

"My Lord,"

"Grimsbanne's affair is now in your hands." Samael shrugged nonchalantly, showing no intention of reclaiming his title as the regal Duke.

"I'll leave Grimsbanne in your hands until this silly girl begged me to be the duchess."

My heart instantly leapt to my throat upon hearing his remarks. Everyone, including Rufus, moved their attention to me.

Uh... it's not what you think it was!

"Then, shall we bring her back along with us?" asked Rufus, his eyes glinting suspiciously at me.

"No need. I don't like forcing people." Samael shamelessly claimed with a wave.

He doesn't enjoy forcing people? Then, his 'I refuse your refusal' last night, was not called forcing?

"If you're satisfied now, will you please help yourself out?"

After a beat, Samael spoke indifferently.

"I'm in the middle of courting the future duchess. Can't you still see what important business I'm in?"

He added with a questioning tone.

Every word he spat left me more and more speechless. I was a peasant and would always be one.

However, how could my life suddenly escalate and this duke was calling me the future duchess? Was he trying to conceal his real motives with me being his prey?

Once again, I felt terrified. I haven't had a full grasp on this silver-haired man's identity.

Yet, I knew, deep down, my fate was already set in stone when he said I'll be his reserved meal.

"Understood, My Lord." Rufus beckoned to give respect to the regal Duke I never expected the silver-haired man to be.

Slowly, Rufus helped himself up and glanced over his knights. "Let's go out and wait until our lordship conquered this peasant."

"Rufus, that's a little rude, you know."

"Forgive me, my Lord." Rufus slightly bowed his head but said nothing further.

With that being said, Rufus and all the knights inside the shack helped themselves out. Meanwhile, I couldn't even muster enough energy to help myself up.

What happened just now was hard for me to believe. I wasn't dreaming, am I?

This silver-haired man... he was that Duke?

'You see those carriages over there? All noble ladies hoped to charm me and be my bride!'

Suddenly, his speech last night flashed in my head again. He did say that last night, but I thought it was just an empty brag.

I already heard a ton of the reasons noble ladies looked forward to that time of the year. But there were only two popular versions.

The first one was, they said that if the Duke awoke from his slumber, he would take anyone he fancy as his bride.

Some version says the Duke's Bride was actually a sacrifice to replenish the Duke's vitality.

However, the Duke never woke up and some human nobles already grew old. The older generations already died before they could see his lordship.

Many believed the former tale, even the nobles. Some believed the latter.

While I believed neither.

But now, I think it was both.

How... did my life escalate up to this point?

"Dear, do you want to resume where we left off?" As I reviewed my life, his question snapped me back to the current lapse.

"You haven't told me how was your day."

He added, beaming at me as if nothing happened just now.

Oh, my days... just how miserable a peasant life could be?

"Mi — milord..." I tried to speak, but the shock I've experienced from last night and now suddenly surged inside me.

'Have mercy on this humble one.' Thus, I could only finish my plead internally.

"Samael."

Slowly, the corner of his lips stretched broader as he rested his chin on his palm.

"Your fiance's name is Samael La Crox. Hence, don't look at other men or I'll pull your eyes out."

With that same grin on his face, he stated, which only made my heart beat restlessly.

"Your man gets easily jealous, you know." And again, he winked.