

The Duke's Passion

Chapter 5 - Born Stupid (?)

"How can he call this romance?" I murmured, hugging my knees as the sun peeked through the horizon. I had been outside all night long. I couldn't muster enough energy to even stand or crawl back home.

Well, not that I wanted to go inside. What happened last night... I hoped it was just a nightmare and that I'd soon wake up.

As I watched the bleak rays of the new day shine upon the world, I chuckled bitterly. How could I think it was just a nightmare when I didn't even sleep? Although, maybe I fainted from exhaustion even before I could get home?

I tried to convince myself that what happened last night was just a horrible dream and that I would definitely not find that man inside my house.

Definitely... If I went in, silence would be the only thing to welcome me. Right... that's right, Lilou. It was just...

"Ahh... bloody rise and shine!"

I was almost successful in lying to myself when I heard the familiar voice of that man. I wept inside, hugging my knees tightly. "This can't be real..." I whispered, chewing my lower lip in distress.

"Hey, my fiancé, you've been out all night. This light hurts my eyes. Let's go in!"

From a distance, I heard him complain and nag. He reminded me of my late father and how he used to nag me to go inside to keep myself safe.

However, the person calling me now wasn't nagging to keep me safe. I knew his intention was the opposite. I had never felt so unsafe thinking about my own home.

"Hey, can't you hear me?" he asked, annoyed, but I didn't dare look in his direction.

'I can hear you loud and clear! The more reason I should feign being deaf!' was what I wanted to scream at him.

However, I was too scared for my life. I didn't have a bright future — not that I had the ambition to be successful and achieve something remarkable even before all this.

I'm not a fool to even dream of something that could get me out of poverty. I knew, deep down, no matter how much I despised it, I was and would always be at the lowest class in this society.

Still, the thought of losing my life terrified me. Even a peasant like me still wanted to see tomorrow.

How ungrateful of me... I did witness the sun rise again. But the question was, until when? That man had claimed me as his reserved meal. He would fatten me until I'm good enough to fill his stomach. The thought of it made me shudder in fear.

"Huh? Are you cold?" he asked from close by and I almost jumped out of my skin.

Wait a second... He could stand the sunlight?

Seeing him in the sunlight, grinning brightly at me, my body instantly went cold and my vision shook slightly..

"No," I answered under my breath. "I'm not cold. I'm..." I choked, not realizing I was holding my breath. My entire body was shaking and no matter how hard I tried to stop it, I couldn't.

My mind raced. How could he stand the sunlight? Was there truly no escape? I couldn't help when my thoughts turned primal and I wondered if ending my life to avoid one of prolonged torture and suffering was the answer. I stopped my thoughts there. Father would never forgive me if I took my own life, no matter the circumstance.

"How are you...?" I managed to stammer out. Unknowingly, as I trailed off, I was only staring at this man who seemed annoyed but curious.

"Mesmerized?" He asked, tilting his head to the side and smiling ruefully. "Or did the sunlight on my beautiful face make you fall in love with me?"

I hoped he was joking. That was just utterly ridiculous.

"I'm just scared, milord." My words flew out of my mouth, along with my faint exhale. "I'm torn between taking my own life or living in terror and suspense for the rest of my days." Wow. I didn't think I would successfully relay my thoughts aloud but I had no regrets being outspoken.

He would kill me either way. Therefore, being honest and outspoken wouldn't make a difference. I would meet my end sooner, perhaps, but I'd prefer that.

"Huh? Why is that a problem? You'd die either way." Giving me a baffled look, he uttered nonchalantly with a shrug.

Don't make fun of me. I'm well-aware of that, but you'd never understand even if I tried to explain.

"Oh right!" he said happily, "You have a third option. Just marry me!" His crimson eyes sparkled and the smile on his face stretched into a broad grin.

Marry you and get drained on my wedding night? How was that an option? It was still the same!

"Milord," Out of ideas, I mustered my courage and knelt down. My forehead literally touching the ground, I pleaded. "Milord, just kill me now. I know I am not enough to fill your stomach, but please treat it as an..." I choked, swallowing down air as I clasped my fist tightly. "Treat me as an appetizer, milord."

For the nth time, I was asking him to take my life. I never thought I would come to a point in my life where I'd repeatedly plead for someone to kill me. It hurt my pride as a human being. However, I was too desperate and I couldn't think properly.

"Tsk," he clicked his tongue, annoyed. "I think I'm wrong for calling you stupid because it sounds like that's not the case." He paused.

I couldn't see him with my forehead on the ground but I felt his strong presence approach and I saw his muddy black shoes in front of me.

"Be honest. You're actually suicidal, aren't you?"

His last remarks were the last straw that broke my restraint. Abruptly, I raised my head and saw him squatting down in front of me.

"Were you born stupid, milord?!" I scoffed, truly irritated.

He looked at me, surprised.