



Chapter 5

A door opens on the other side, revealing a woman dressed entirely in black. Her face is covered by a lace veil, as if she must hide her identity to avoid being recognized by one of us and facing retribution.

"You'll go out one by one," she informs. "You can't see them, but they can see you. Stay still and silent on the other side of the glass. It'll be over before you know it."

Her voice sounds very mature.

She says a name, and out of the corner of my eye, I see it's a tiny, petite girl who, by the way she hunches her shoulders, must be terrified.

She walks out the door, and it closes forcefully behind her.

The woman stays in the room with us, and even though I can't see her, I feel she's subjecting us all to her scrutiny.

Maybe ten minutes pass when knuckles knock on the door, calling the next one.

Little by little, the room empties, and the air becomes heavier and more uncomfortable.

"For some of you, today will be a special day," the woman says suddenly. "I'm sure of it."

Maybe this woman is an old lady who's begun to lose her mind. A special day? Being bought like pieces of meat?

How special can it be to know that the rest of your life will be dedicated to letting them sink their fangs into your neck?

"I seriously doubt it, ma'am," I say, unable to hold back.

I know her eyes land on me, and the rest of those still in the room look at me in disbelief.

Sold to the Night Lord



"Do not dare contradict my word, young lady."

"What's so special about being bought?"

The woman decides I'm not worth her time or the effort of wasting saliva on me. The door opens again, and then she turns toward me.

It's my turn.

It's hard to put one foot in front of the other, and yet I manage.

I pass by her, and a musty smell hits me. Without needing to see her, I know she must have a smug smile on her face.

As I step out, the light is so blinding that I have to close my eyes—I'm not used to this artificial light that only a few possess.

My eyes sting and tear up, and a stranger's hand is necessary to guide me to the center.

After a few blinks, I realize I'm standing where the pulpit of the church used to be, and where now there's nothing but floors covered in plush red carpets and a massive glass pane that reflects my image.

They're there, behind it. Watching me, evaluating me, trying to smell my blood.

The lights dim, and only a single spotlight remains above my head, displaying me as if I were an expensive vase.

I don't allow myself to lower my gaze or blush, knowing that many pairs of eyes are seeing my barely covered body.

"Elara Voss," speaks a voice I recognize as the woman in the red dress. She sounds loud and confident.

"Healthy, weighs fifty-one kilos, presents no physical anomalies, her blood type is O negative, and... her virtue is intact. Bidding starts at fifteen blood rubies."

Sold to the Night Lord



I can't see anything happening on the other side.

"Gentleman number five offers twenty blood rubies. Does anyone offer more?"

My eyes dart around, searching for something behind the glass.

"Lady number ten offers twenty-five blood rubies."

Amounts continue to be announced.

Men and women. Numbers and more numbers...

My legs buckle from time to time, and I feel completely overwhelmed knowing that the control of my life is slipping through my fingers and that in a few minutes I'll have lost it entirely.

My vision blurs, and I blink quickly to chase away the sensation.

"Number twenty-eight offers fifty rubies—any higher?"

Fifty?

How ironic that I'm being bought here for blood rubies while my family will receive only a pouch of coins.

With just one of those precious stones, my family could live peacefully for years.

"Seventy blood rubies."

A shiver runs down my spine.

"Eighty blood rubies!"

This is so sadistic and inhuman.

"One hundred blood rubies!"

A shrill sound interrupts the sequence of bids, silencing the woman who kept torturing me with her voice.

I stay in place, waiting for an explanation.

Sold to the Night Lord



Seconds pass, then whole minutes.

"The bidding has just ended," the woman's voice now reflects delight.

"Miss Elara Voss has just been purchased by Cassian Draven for the price of six hundred blood rubies."

The spotlight above my head turns off, plunging me into absolute darkness.

The creak of a door opening reaches my ears, and several pairs of hands grab me by the arms, pulling me out of there.

I don't know if I should resist, but I let myself be dragged.

As they take me to another room, I realize that the lights had been warming me, and now the cold embraces me once again.

I find myself with the rest of the companions who were shown before me.

They look at me with wide eyes, and at first, I think it's because of the fear they must have experienced out there, but after a few minutes, I realize it's because of me.

"What's going on?"

None of them dares to say a word.

I look at myself, searching for something out of place—a wound, or maybe my clothes got disheveled, showing more than they should.

Everything looks fine.

I lift my eyes, seeking answers.

"Why are you all looking at me like that?"

Agonizing minutes pass until the petite girl I saw earlier, the one with hunched shoulders, dares to speak.

"We heard it."

Sold to the Night Lord



"Heard what?"

"Who bought you?"

"What about it? It was some Cassian Drakov... Drakon or something."

"Cassian Draven," she corrects me. "Is it possible you're this ignorant?"

"Excuse me?"

"Cassian Draven," says a boy. "He's a soulless monster. The worst of them. He's ruled by an insatiable thirst."

"Aren't they all like that?" I reply.

"Not like him," adds the girl again. "Your life ended the moment he bought you."

"I think that goes for all of us here."

"What we're trying to say is... You probably won't live to see the next full moon."



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