

Captive Slave 385

Chapter

385 *www.novelworm.com*

Three days later. *www.novelworm.com*

Daemonikai had been right. Zaiper wished he had never lived to see this day.

As he was paraded through the crowded square, head bowed, chains clinking with each step, humiliation was the only thing left in him. This-this-was abject disgrace. The worst of the worst. He was clad in nothing but soiled under-briefs, thick shackles chaining his hands and feet. The bindings laced with toxins, draining him of what remained of his strength. He couldn't shift. Couldn't run. Couldn't fight.

And the people? They were relentless.

"Scumbag!"

"Evil devil!"

"May your soul rot in the nine hells!"

Their hate was a chorus, hot as the sun beating down on him.

Every step was a reminder of how far he had fallen—from a Grand Lord to this, a caged male on display for public ridicule.

Zaiper never chose death lightly. But this public disgrace was far worse.

A woman lunged through the line of guards. "You deserve mob justice!" she screamed, spitting at him.

The spittle slapped his cheek, warm, reeking of bile.

Zaiper tried to snarl, to bare his fangs. But it emerged as nothing more than a low, broken growl. He was too weak. Starved of food. Deprived of blood. Exhausted beyond measure.

Soldiers bordered him on all sides, shielding him from the worst of the assault, but it was a thin wall between order and chaos. Two separate mobs had already tried to rush him during this miserable procession—and now, another awaited ahead.

"Give him to us!"

"Let us have him!"

"He deserves to die screaming!" *www.novelworm.com*

"Stay back!" a soldier shouted, attempting to hold the tide.

But then it happened.

A hard object slammed into Zaiper's back with a vicious crack, pain detonating through his spine. Then came fists. Boots. Claws. He hit the ground, and they descended like a pack of wolves.

There were no screams from him—only choked gasps and strangled grunts. He couldn't shout. Couldn't breathe. Couldn't move.

He tasted his own blood. Heard the distinct snap of his ribs caving beneath a savage stomp. He wanted to call out to demand the soldiers do their damn jobs. But his voice was gone. Lost.

Were those bunch of fools even trying to help? It didn't feel like it.

A moment later, a foul-smelling water was thrown over him. But it was boiling hot. Dirty. Tainted.

A roar was forcefully ripped from his scratchy throat as his skin sizzled. His skin peeled before his very eyes. Tears blurred what little he could still see. The agony was unbearable. The stench of scalded skin mixed with the filth of wastewater.

At last, the bastards moved in—pulling the mobs off him, barking orders and restoring control.

Too little, too fucking late!

"Spineless curs!" Zaiper roared at them, but all that came out was a wet, gurgled hiss.

The agony made his head spin, and everywhere blacked out.

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When he came to, Zaiper was hanging upside down, suspended mid-air like a gutted animal. The pain hadn't lessened it was still there, just as brutal. Blood rushed to his head, making him dizzy and heavy. His lower body was going numb. This wasn't just uncomfortable. It was debilitating.

"Look who finally chose to join us."

That voice. The one he had tried not to dread hearing all week. The one he hated more than anything.

Zaiper groaned as he struggled to open both eyes. Blood rushed into one, burning like fire. Hissing, he clamped it shut. Through the he sa Daemonikai-seated casually in a chair at the far side of the cell, legs crossed, flipping through a news pamphlet like he was lounging in a palace courtyard instead of a dungeon. *www.novelworm.com*

"Surely you have other things to occupy your time with than being here," Zaiper's voice came out graveled and raw. "Your female just gave birth."

Daemonikai calmly set the pamphlet aside, giving him his full attention. "Worry not about me. I am precisely where I want to be."

There was no fire in his tone. No rage. No gloating for capturing him. Just... calm. Unease slithered down Zaiper's spine like a serpent. What game is he playing? Zaiper ignored it. "What happened to my men?"

"You mean the vamps?" Daemonikai's tone remained even. "Gone. The few we captured were beheaded at dawn. Their heads sent back to their king as a trophy."

Zaiper closed his eye. His throat burned as he swallowed his own blood.

"Your new head soldier was executed as well. Even your spy was eliminated; Kady identified him," Daemonikai added. "But that's not nearly as important as why we are here. Who is your dark mage, and where can we find him?"

"You really think I'd give you that information?" Zaiper smirked, even as it caused him a great deal of pain. He still had leverage. "Come now, Daemonikai. It must not be fun navigating life with all those lovely voices in your head. How about this -you let me go, and I'll give you what you want."

The grand king chuckled. "Oh, Zaiper," he said, indulgent. "Make no mistake-you will give me everything I want. hope you resist, truly. I want you to It will make extracting each secret from you infinitely more satisfying. I will take great pleasure in tearing them from you one by one until you sing them to everyone willing to listen."

"I've already prepared myself for torture," Zaiper said. "I know there's no escaping it. You may as well begin. But know this-I've already prepared my parting gift for you. You see your madness... that curse? That spell? I'll take the source to my grave," he vowed, smug. "You will live out the rest of your life with a fractured mind filled with voices. One day, who knows, they may even drive you to murder your new precious family."

"Mmm. I admire your spirit. So tell me." Daemonikai leaned forward, elbows resting on his knees. "Does it feel good to see the chaos you caused with your spells-watching me go mad while you strutted around with your sanctimonious speeches, branding me the crazy king unfit for the First Throne?"

Zaiper laughed. He couldn't help himself.