

His Personal Maid

Author not credited

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About this edition

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Hi everyone, please take note of The following;

This book is about a fictional world that I created called Region of the Light and this might be a series depending on the feedback I get.

This world is somewhat not English and not Chinese but something in between. No country was mentioned in the book to avoid any confusion.

Both English and Chinese names were used for the different characters and this doesn't in any way mean anything specific or special.

No other languages aside from English were used as well.

The book was set in the historical period when the region was not yet as civilized as others.

Thank you.

Chapter 01

Desire stared at the mirror in front of her, observing her curves and how long her legs had grown since she clocked 18, two years back.

How time flies!

She smiled at the memory of her eighteenth birthday that also happened to be her first day out of the mansion ever since she was brought by the master of the house.

Every year, a new girl is brought to the mansion as a slave and gradually ranks up to a servant till she becomes a house maiden which is the highest rank ever held by a slave girl.

The slave is the lowest rank in the mansion and it's usually held by a set of girls who were brought from the southern part of their region that is plagued by poverty, diseases, and hunger.

The servant rank is usually for girls who had served the house for more than four years, they're believed to have more experience and insight on how to please the master.

While the house-maiden rank, also called the House maids is held by girls who have spent more than 7 years in the house.

Even though none of the girls living in the mansion has seen Mr Ho up close, the only thing they're familiar with is his voice, side views and really loud intimate sessions his friends have with girls brought from the Harem.

Desire picked up the love letter in front of the mirror stand and smiled at the memory of Chang, the guy who had been secretly sending her love letters after they had met on her first day out of the mansion. She'll be thrilled to see him again.

It has been six years and eleven months since Desire was brought into the house and a month to her becoming a house maiden. She longed for the outside world and would love to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse rather than stay in the mansion and become a house Maiden.

She had always wanted to learn under the great physician and become a helper or a nurse under his service.

From Slavery to slavery' her subconscious self reminded her.

She hissed at the sudden thought that came to her head. At least, one had a length of freedom more than the other.

She quickly put on her dress and went out of the room before the court lady came barging in and cursing at her for being too late to the kitchen.

Once when she was only five minutes late to the kitchen, she had been punished for three days by not giving her food nor water.

“Good morning, Lady Nor” she greeted the court lady’s assistant who was in every way nicer than the court lady.

“My dear child, Bless you. Hope you slept well?”

“Yes, I did, and thank you for the green tea you gave me, it aided my peaceful sleep”

“No need child, I do what is expected of me as a mother to you girls” Desire smiles at her as memories of her mother come back to her.

They stopped talking immediately when the court lady entered the room and they resumed their daily chores almost immediately, out of fear for the woman.

With Desire cleaning around the kitchen and Lady Nor getting the utensils ready to serve the table while the others in the kitchen cooked the master’s breakfast.

“Master has requested for his breakfast in his private suite, is it ready?” The court lady asked in a stern voice.

“f-f-few minutes is required to get everything ready, my lady” the cook answered with fear lacing her words.

“Do you mind explaining what you have been doing all day!?” She barked at the young girl.

“We were looking for the spices to add to his breakfast and it took a while before we found it, my lady”

Desire froze at that moment, she had been in charge of getting the spices at the market yesterday and she had forgotten to put it at its normal position.

The court lady turned to Desire and she knew she was going to die at that moment. Smirking wickedly, she called her name, “Desire darling, how long is it till you become a house-maiden?”

“One month, my lady” she couldn’t look at her in the face.

“Well, how about you begin your duties immediately as a house-maiden?” Desire could hear gasp around her. At that moment, everyone feared for her life and no one dared question the court lady, not even her assistant, Lady Nor.

Normally, before a servant becomes a housemaid, she's introduced to the ropes and most precisely, to Mr. Ho. If he pleases, he'll order for them to keep her and if not, send her to the Harem.

Any slave or servant that appears before Mr. Ho without prior notice might be beheaded or stoned to death at their village square. It all depends on his mood.

With shaking hands and an unknown fate, Desire took the food, accompanied by two other housemaids to serve their Master his breakfast.

After the door was opened by the knights in charge of protecting the prime minister, who is also their master, she stepped in and placed the food on the table.

"Who are you? and why are you in my suite?" The loud voice spoke behind her and if she could lean a little bit, she'll be resting on his torso.

"I'm Desire and the court-lady asked me to bring your food up, my lord"

She was still not looking at him and had her eyes fixed to the ground.

After a few minutes of checking her out and seeing if she wasn't any form of danger, he moved closer to the food, inspected it, and sat down in front of it.

"Go stand at the corner" he directed her and told one of the ladies to get the court lady.

Shivering from fear, she stood at the corner and almost couldn't breathe so as to not make a sound that'll disturb him.

"You asked for me, my lord," The court lady said as she entered the suite.

"Why did you send her up here?" He asked, pointing to Desire.

"She exchanged some of the ingredients purchased for the preparation of your food with poison and I thought it would be better if she explained herself about why she had to give you something that could kill you. Maybe she was planning to get rid of you all along" Even though Desire knew the court lady was evil, she just didn't know she was that evil.

She watched huge feet stop in front of her and suspecting it was her master, she refused to look up and confirm her suspicion.

"Look at me, Dove" Her Master commanded.

"I can't, My lord" She was scared, too scared to look at him.

"Why!?" He demanded loudly. "Why have you refused to look at me in the eyes?"

"Because it is forbidden my lord, for a mere servant like me to look you in the eye" He laughed wickedly.

“You’re too scared to look at me but not too scared to give me poison”

“I didn’t try to poison you, my lord, I can’t do that. I swear on my life, my lord” At this point she was crying and shivering suddenly from the coldness radiating from his body to hers.

“But at least, you tried” Next thing she knew was him grabbing her by the hair so tight she felt some of her thick hair removing.

She was screaming from the pain.

He dragged her through chairs and tables, running her body down the long stairs down to where all of them feared the most; the dungeons.

He opened the gate of one of the rooms and pushed her inside.

“You’ll be spending three days in here, without food not water nor sunlight and till then, pray that God changes my mind or else, I’ll kill you once you’re out”

Chapter 02

Desire tried to cry but she couldn't anymore. The tears she'd cried the first day she was thrown here was more than her body could carry. She was scared of the darkness and whatever lies within, not knowing that wasn't even half of what she would go through during the night.

Even though it had been two days since she had been subjected to the dark hole situated at the lowest part of the mansion, Desire felt life running out of her. She was exhausted and felt the punishment was tough enough to end her life.

Without food, without water, and she prayed to the heavens to quickly kill her rather than subject her to this type of punishment.

The dungeon is usually cold at night and hot during the day. She had to endure the cold nights without an extra cloth to keep her warm. The only thing that gave her a ray of hope was the little sunlight that penetrated through a tiny hole on the wall. She had often heard tales of the dungeon from the other girls in the mansion but she never thought of experiencing it.

During those two days, she had thought too much about her life, her childhood in her father's tiny hut with her twin sisters and a brother. Their mother had died when she was seven, her brother ten, and the twins, Five. She had managed to take care of her family after her mother's death despite her young age.

She loved her sisters like her life depended on it and had always managed to protect them from the webs of evil and the dangers that lie in the darkness.

Desire was fourteen when she was taken from her family to serve at the prime minister's house while some of her friends had been sent to the King's castle. Desire never saw her family again after that day. Not even one of the girls ever brought to the mansion ever saw their families. They were only allowed out once and it's usually during their eighteenth birthday.

The privilege they had at the mansion was not in sight for others who resided at the King's palace. The tales being told to them were that some of the girls took to the palace, never got to see the light of the day and some even died before they became a house-maiden.

She sat straight from the floor that she had rejected herself to and rested her back against the wall. She winced in pain as her hand mistakenly hit her wounded leg.

During the process of dragging her down the floors, she had sustained injuries, and also, her body was in severe pain. She was a broken mess. She wished she had the strength to last through the night but she doubted if she could.

A lone tear rolled down her eye. She wished she had it differently. She wished she hadn't been preoccupied with Chang's letter when she was at the market, maybe her head would have been in the right place and she wouldn't have had to suffer like this.

Startled, she quickly stood up from the floor when she heard heavy footsteps approaching.

Through the darkness, she was able to see the door of the cell she was in opened suddenly and something or maybe someone was pushed inside and the door was locked back.

When she turned to her side, she could feel the presence of a person beside her. Whoever it was, breathed heavily.

"Who are you?" Desire asked wearily.

She got no answer in response.

She gave up hope and sat back on the floor.

A few minutes later, she could hear whimpering and she deduced that the person was crying and also was a girl.

"I've been here for two days without food or water. My only offense was misplacing the ingredients for the Master's breakfast. I guess we slaves means nothing to them." Desire said, trying to break the silence.

The girl only started to cry out loud at that and went on with the tears for minutes.

"My Name is Sandra" it was only when she talked that Desire knew she couldn't be more than 13.

"I'm Desire. How old are you Sandra?" Desire starts to move closer to her voice.

"I'm twelve"

"So, that means you're new here" She confirmed her suspicion.

"Yes, I was brought in from the south" She replied. That made Desire wonder if she knew who this little girl was.

"I'm also from the south"

"I tried to run away. I did that because I don't want to be here" She suddenly said

"What! Why would you do such a thing? That's dangerous! They could have killed you"

"After I was taken from my parents and brought here, I bit one of the guards by the ear and tried to run. I was almost at the gate when I got dragged back to the mansion. I've been kept here till the

Prime Minister decides my fate” Desire didn’t have a choice than to acknowledge the little girl’s courage. She could imagine what the girl had gone through since she had been in her shoes once.

“You’re strong and courageous, no one has ever done that before. I can’t make any promises to you girl, but I know you’ll be fine. You’re strong enough for this”

“How long have you worked here?” The girl asked

“Six years”

After that, they both became silent, engrossed in their individual thoughts. Sandra’s tears had subsided and she silently hummed a song.

Suddenly, for the second time that day, the dungeon door was opened and light penetrated into the cell room as one of the knights opened the gate and dragged Desire to her feet.

“W-what’s going on?” Desire asked him

“The Prime Minister wants you in his private suite and I’m under no obligation to answer any of your questions”

“Will you be fine?” The little girl asked

“I don’t know Sandra, I can’t make any promises to you but this might be a journey to death”

Chapter 03

Desire found herself standing in the middle of her Master's room as if she was a dancer on display. The scene reminded her of how ladies from the Harem were made to perform in front of senior ranked citizens.

The only difference was the clothes she was putting on, the prostitutes were said to be made to dance naked. The Harem is a place where prostitute stays and the only place where prostitution is legal.

She looked around the room and realized there were mirrors everywhere, at almost every corner of the room. Something was glaring back at her. It was her reflection.

She observed herself for a while and realized she had lost some weight within the past two days, her hair was all over the place, her eyes swollen from the tears and her clothes tattered from dragging her down the stairs. She wished the ground would open up and swallow her.

The Knight that was standing beside her was the one holding the chain used to lock her hand and leg. The height of the punishment made her wonder what she actually did to deserve such punishment. Angry, she was but she had no right to voice out her anger.

After standing for what seems like hours, she was feeling dizzy and anytime she staggered, the chains were drawn to keep her standing. She was thirsty, hungry, and tired despite wondering the sort of punishment this was exactly. She hoped they had left her at the dungeon, where she could at least sit down.

She had received all types of punishment in the past but none was as bad as this. The court lady had made them sleep in the rain, because the meat prepared for the Prime Minister was not tender enough. They were beaten terribly and refused food nor water and also made them sleep in the rain.

Their region had two seasons- the rainy and dry season. The rainy season was one to look forward to as it was always cold and refreshing for their souls and even their farm products flourished at such a period. The dry season was the worst of all, dry crops and even dry humans. Many people die during this period as a result of lack of food. This was the period when the servants at the Prime Minister's house were grateful for being there.

Desire was pulled out of her thoughts by the heavy sounding of footsteps. She quickly diverted her attention to the floor, looking down so as to avoid the gaze of her Master. She hadn't really looked at him ever since she had been at the mansion as it is forbidden for any Slave or Servant to look at the Master. Only the HandsMaiden were allowed but only when permitted.

"You May leave us alone" He instructed his Knights. They bowed before leaving the room. He looked over at the tiny girl standing in front of him and wondered what could be so special about her that the assistant to the court lady could risk her head for.

"Someone came to plea for you" His voice resonated throughout the room.

"The person risked her life to report how you had been a great servant and how you never broke any rules. If you had been a good servant, then why did you decide to poison me?" He asked.

Desire couldn't find the voice to respond to his question.

"Answer me!" He barked

"I'm sorry my lord but I swear on my life I didn't poison you. I only misplaced the ingredients, I'm sorry" She trembled.

"Look at me and explain yourself," Desire thought of how he was trying to get her killed by all means. She couldn't take it anymore.

"It's forbidden, my lord" She mumbled out.

"Look at me, Dove, and don't you dare question my authority"

"My Name is Desire, my lord, and I didn't question your authority. It's the rules and I'll be killed if I look at you. I'm deeply sorry my Lord" She bowed her head lower in Submission.

He moved closer to her and touched her neck before moving his hand to touch her shoulder.

Desire jerked back at the sudden contact and tried to pry away from him but that didn't stop him from placing a finger on her chin to try to lift her head up to him.

"Why do you defy me, little dove?" He demanded and Desire was torn. Torn between pleasing her Master and bending one of the rules holding their region together.

Deciding to take fate as whatever it'll be, she allowed his hand to move her chin up and when she finally looked at her Master after staying in the same mansion as him for seven years, after breathing in the same air and drinking from the same source of water for years, she almost couldn't breathe. He was beautiful.

So beautiful, she could hardly take her eyes away from him, he was mesmerizing. The dark mark that crossed his face only made him more beautiful and he was so young. Probably in his mid-30s and that made Desire wonder how he became a Prime Minister so early.

His blue eyes bored into hers for a while before Desire finally looked away again, waiting for her judgement, her dead judgement for breaking a rule.

He quickly cleared his throat and moved back from her a little bit.

“You have a decision to make, little Dove. There are three options available, three things I could do to you, it’ll be better if you’re wise enough to pick the better option”

Fearing what the options could be, a lone tear found its way down Desire’s face.

“The first option is to have you killed by hanging, the second one is to send you to the Harem while the third one is to make you my private maid and you’re the only person who has the privilege of this rare chance. So, my dear little Dove, what do you say?”

Desire knew the second and third option was a death sentence, a life sentence that could get her killed at anytime, so why not take the death right now?

Much to his disappointment, Desire looked at him without thinking about the rules.

“I’ll pick the first option, let me die at stake or by hanging. Whichever option suits you, My lord but please just let me die a quick death”

Chapter 04

Sylvester Ho looked at the tiny lady in front of him and realized just how much he'll love to see her crumble in front of him, begging for mercy and regretting her decision of accepting death as her favorite option.

He was supposed to be angry, yet, he was puzzled at the sudden decision of his dove.

Sylvester had seen her in his Mansion once and when he asked the court lady, she had replied with an answer that he wasn't sure of.

He needed something from her and in every way, he'll get it!

"I'll choose death, My lord" She repeated the second time, affirming her decision. Desire knew picking this option might first subject her to suffering but still she'll do just that. It's easier to die once than always.

Sylvester Ho was well known for his Lucifer's attitude, he showed no mercy to whomever he met, this made him the king's favorite subject through the years. Not even his father got the privilege to be that close to his King.

Sylvester became the Prime Minister two years before Desire was brought into his house, he was eighteen when his father died and that made the King declare Sylvester as the new subject of his.

Through the years, Sylvester has shown his dark side to the king and won his heart through the various heartless decisions he has made for the kingdom.

But no one knew what the metal went through before it became a sword.

"Well, I see what you're running away from" His words were dark and this sent shivers down her spine.

"My lord.." She couldn't find the right word to say.

"I receive your answer, Dove but I just won't accept it. You chose death and death is what I'll make far away from you. You'll live but you'll always beg for death and death will not come. I'll make you beg for that which you wish for"

Fear crept into Desire's heart and tears streamed down her eyes, she knew she could have gone for the better option but she didn't regret her decision. She looked up at her Master and when their eyes met, she saw an emotion different from what she had expected.

He was sad and before she could look further, the sadness turned to fear and then to anger before she looked away.

Sylvester hated the fact that she wanted to get away from him. He wanted to punish her and make her regret her foolish decision.

"That leaves us with two options, Harem or personal maid?"

Desire looked up in surprise and she couldn't find the word to say, why is he doing this to her?

"My lord?" She asked with blurry eyes. He smiled at her and she knew it would be difficult to make a decision.

"It appears to me that you need time to think about it, well till then, why don't you stay at the Harem till you're officially qualified to be a House-maiden. Maybe your decision will be clearer when you get back"

That was when Desire realized his smile was sinister and nothing like a normal smile.

"Please, My lord, Don't do this, I beg of you, I'll rather die than stay at the Harem " She cries out, begging for his mercy.

"I do not have a choice other than taking you to the Harem and before I do that, let me feed you first" Sylvester said, ignoring Desire's call for mercy.

She was rather too skinny for his liking and he knew he had to fatten her up before sending her away like that.

Even though she's stubborn, he just wouldn't succumb to her wishes and be just as stubborn as she is.

"I do not wish to eat, my lord" she declared through tears.

"Your opinion was never needed"

Later on, while still standing, Desire saw one of the maids walk in with a large tray of food.

She almost salivated at the sight of it but she controlled herself even though her stomach rumbled.

"Eat up, little Dove" Sylvester proposed but Desire couldn't eat. Not only because her hands were bound with her legs but also because her heart did not wish for her to feed.

Tears streamed down her face, she looked back and forth between her master and the food.

"Do not make me repeat myself, Dove. Sit and feed" He commanded, losing his patient with her.

Even though Sylvester was not the type to be patient, he never loved his decisions or demands being thought through before fulfilled, he didn't have a choice than to wait and watch himself being fascinated with this little one.

"My lord..." She started, unable to get herself to talk.

"Food or dungeon?" Sylvester asked.

Why is he so full of options? She asked herself.

"My lord.."

"Make your decision quick, my dove" He walked towards her and looked into her eyes as Desire tried to not look into his.

"Dungeon, My lord" Her reply stopped his movement and yet, he was surprised again at her decision.

She was stubborn and he would love to see how far she could go with her stubbornness before finally yielding and submitting to him totally.

"Dungeon, it is" He walked towards the door and instructed the guards to move her to the dungeon.

"You'll stay in there for two days before going to the Harem, the same place you belong and until it pleases me, will I ask for you to be returned back to this place" He roared angrily at her.

"Okay, my lord" Desire trembled at the hard tone he used.

"You're aware of the different sort of atrocities going on in that place, right?"

Sylvester Ho knew what the Harem was used for and he couldn't imagine such an innocent girl going through such a life.

Knowing he couldn't let his guard down and show the girl mercy, he still stubbornly made up his mind about the difficult decision and looked away from her as she was dragged away to the dungeon still bounded legs to hands.

On getting back to the dungeon she realized it was empty, the rabbit was no more in its hole.

Sandra, the tiny beautiful girl had disappeared and there was no one to ask about her whereabouts.

Chapter 05

Desire had just a few days left to become a housemaid and how her destiny changed in the past few days left her bewildered and baffled about how she had been forsaken by her creator.

The image left on her head was that of her being hanged or worse, burnt at stake. She couldn't stop the tears from rolling down her eyes.

After she had picked the death wish, Mr Ho had her sent to the dungeons for two days and when a tiny bowl of food was given to her, she consumed it hungrily and wished she could ask for more or perhaps had eaten the food her master ordered for her in peace.

After she had spent two days at the dungeon; two lonely, cold and dreadful nights, she was sent to the Harem.

The place reeked of sex and alcohol and for the first three days of being there, Desire was disgusted and threw up every minutes she could find. The ladies glared at her at intervals, concerned and angry about why a maid would be brought into the Harem for no just reason.

She always watched the different set of men waltzed in there like they own the place and enter any room of their choice to pick any woman they desire and sleep with her no caring if the woman wanted them or not.

Desire cringed at the sight always, was she scared for the way women are treated here?

Was she angry at how some women are subjected to this type of life just because their families are born to serve the Harem from generation to generation?

On getting to the Harem, Desire was introduced to the Head lady, the woman in charge of the activities of the court and even though Desire couldn't hear what the knight who had brought her from the mansion was telling the Head lady, she knew it was something bad. The woman eyed her with disgust after that and took her to the far end of the house, a room that belonged to rats and rodents.

Desire could barely sleep through the night.

Even the Dungeon was far better than this room, she had thought.

The next two days were occupied as all she did was clean the whole building; every room available in the house including hers.

The head lady of the Harem had made her do it out of hatred and disgust.

Just as much as Desire was disgusted by the Harem so was the court lady disgusted by Desire's presence in their abode.

The ladies all gossiped about her most of the time and Desire would hear their conversations and wondered if those ladies wanted her to actually hear what they were all saying about her.

She was finally able to sleep peacefully on the third day; away from dirt and gossip.

It was past midnight when Desire heard noises coming from outside her door, she first thought it was the one of the men coming to visit the ladies once again but got scared when the noise began to become clearer, nearer and she realized it was heavy footsteps coming closer to her room.

The noise suddenly stopped at the door of her room and before she could stand up to check what it was, the door of her room was opened and she realized who it was.

A dazzling young lady who looked a few years older than her was accompanied with guards as she entered Desire's room. She was beautiful and her blue eyes reminded her of her Master's eyes. Her elegant dress resembled that of royalty and so does her hair. It was shining bright and the pins used in holding it down were so beautiful you could look at it for hours.

Before she could look away, the lady walked towards her and sat on her bed.

"You're Desire"

"Yes, My lady" Desire answered even though it didn't sound like a question.

"You should stand properly and look at me, Desire" The lady demanded.

"The rules forbid————"

"Forget the rules, it's an order and failure to follow my command——" Desire whipped her head in her direction and the lady smiled as their eyes met.

"Good girl" she praised her act and patted a seat beside Desire's bed, signaling her to sit.

"I heard you came from the Prime Minister's mansion"

"Yes, my lady"

"How's it at the mansion these days?" Desire was baffled by her question and didn't have any other choice than to answer.

"Same old, My lord"

"You're free to say anything you want to say"

"Have you ever been in the mansion?"

“Yes, for a few years” Desire wondered how a celestial lady like this could ever live in the mansion. Could she be a Slave? It just wasn’t possible.

“The court lady is still the same and her assistant is just as amazing as ever”

“Lady Nor is still working there” Her eyes were sparkling as she said those words. Lady Nor is just a special lady who everyone loves.

“And how’s your Sylvester?”

“Who?”

“Pardon me, I meant your Master” Desire never knew him other than Prime Minister or Master, she didn’t even know his name was Sylvester despite being in his house for years.

“He’s the same” She replies shortly not wanting to say something that’ll put her in serious trouble with her Master later on.

“Well, I heard he sent you here. Why?”

“I offended him, my lady”

“How?” Desire didn’t want to go into details but after much pestering from her, she ended up telling her everything.

She didn’t leave out any details.

“I can see he hasn’t changed at all even after so many years. But this is strange somehow. How can he do that and then ask me to do such a huge task?” Desire wondered what the lady meant by her statement but she decided against asking her about it.

The Nobles were never to be questioned no matter what. She knew her boundary and she knew never to cross it.

“You’ll see me more often from now on, especially at this hour and when I’m not able to come, someone will always be here”

“I don’t know why you’re doing such a thing, My lady, but thank you”

“I’m only performing my duty, Desire. I also enjoyed your company. Till next time darling” She made her way for the door and before walking out, she turned back.

“I’m Naomi Chen, formerly known as Naomi Ho, the Second queen and the younger sister of your Master”

Chapter 06

Desire was left in awe and bewilderment even after the Queen had left her room. She didn't have any good reason to convince herself of the fact that the event that took place a few minutes back was real and not that she was dreaming.

She was the Queen and also her Master's elder sister. Why will such a royalty come to a filthy place like this? Even though the Harem was the closest building to the palace, she still couldn't believe the fact that the Queen of their Kingdom will stoop that low to mingle and befriend a Servant girl like her.

The whole visit was strange. Maybe she was about to be killed for disobeying her master. All sorts of thoughts ran through her head and she couldn't think straight.

It was recorded that the Harem was built so as to allow the king's men to satisfy themselves after their bloody wars and all day stress. Though it wasn't built for royalty, still some useless Ministers and their friends patronized the Harem like it was their second house.

The late Prime Minister and his ancestors were the only one who hadn't visited the Harem from the start of their lives. Little did Desire know that things were about to change.

She walked gingerly back to her door and locked it up before settling on the tattered bed given to her to rest for the day, hoping tomorrow will bring in a new light and maybe wake her up from her dream.

She still couldn't believe the fact that the queen visited her. She was dazzled at how royal and majestic the lady was. She didn't even know if she'll be committing an offense by referring to her as Queen Naomi and not Her Royal highness.

Not long after, she got lured into a deep slumber with different thoughts going on in her pretty head.

The new day came in with a bright sun accompanying it and Desire stirred from her sleep to block the sun from entering her eyes. She couldn't believe she slept till sunrise.

She stood up from the bed to check herself out in the mirror. Her skin was already getting whiter and she had lost a ton ever since that morning, her green eyes were dazzling and still had its shine while her long black hair ran down her back to settle on her waist and bounced anytime she walked. She ran her hand through her hair and tried to fix the locks.

Her beauty was hidden behind her darkened eyes and the tattered servant's clothes she was putting on.

She quickly took her bath and headed out of her room to see what was going on around her.

On getting to the center of the building, she saw some girls about her age circling around another girl who was dancing to the beat of a drum.

Little kids, belonging to unknown fathers, about ten in numbers were seen running around the Harem, chasing each other and laughing as if there's nothing worrisome going on around the world.

Desire laughed bitterly, hoping they didn't end up the way their mothers did and hoped they had a better life than theirs.

She joined the girls sitting in a circle and settled on the back of one of them. The girl sitting closer to the one Desire sat behind turned her head and smiled at her. Desire smiled back. Though it was a strange gesture, still Desire could make use of a friend.

"Hi, I'm Kim Chui, what's your name?"

"I'm Desire" she replied curtly.

"You're new here" She observed

"Yes"

"What's going on?" Desire inquired, pointing at the girl dancing in the circle.

"That's Freda, she'll be performing at the King's banquet coming up and she's practicing. We're a group though and it'll be lovely if you could join us"

"I don't know if I can but let me see the way it goes. I'll make a decision and let you know before tomorrow"

"Make sure you do that. I'll help by teaching you the rest of the dance steps so you'll catch up with the rest of us" Kim faces her group back.

Desire couldn't help but envy the happiness on their faces. Even though they're instruments to any man, they still find a way to make themselves happy.

Desire got pulled out of her thought when suddenly she heard ruckus coming to the direction of where she was.

Kim quickly pulled her to her feet and made her bow her head.

"Do not look him in the face, Desire. You don't want to be picked. He's dangerous and not only does he rape women, he also makes his men rape them in his presence" Kim warned her as the man walked towards them.

“Who’s he?”

“He’s the king’s youngest brother. The worst of all animals God created” Fear crept into Desire’s heart and she feared what might happen if he picked her up.

“What do we have here?” She felt a hand on her shoulder and Kim held her hand, stopping her from turning or raising her head.

“She’s new, right?” He asked, placing his hand on her neck.

“Yes” the Head lady spoke up. “But she’s claimed and she’s not like us, she’s just here to serve a punishment”

“Well, I’ll very much love to help in a way. I can help with the punishment too” His hand was already messing with her hair, twisting her ear and pushing her lip out of her mouth.

“Her owner asked for her not to be touched, my Lord”

“Well, he can go to hell for all I care” he lifted Desire’s head and shifted it sideways to get a better view.

“Beautiful little thing....I can’t wait to have you laid out on my table for dinner” he forced one of his fingers in her mouth, forcing her to lick it

Desire almost threw up from the disgusting finger being forced inside her mouth.

“Her Master will not appreciate this, My lord” The Head lady advised.

“Who the hell is this person who wants to deprive me of something that I desire the most at this moment, who the hell is he?” His hand grabbed the neck of Desire’s cloth and tore the outer layer.

He was about to proceed to the next layer, when he felt a dagger miss his hand by an inch, landing on the wall next to him and before he could turn around, he heard the voice that caused him nightmares, gave him headaches, the voice he wished never existed.

“If you do that one more time, I swear on my life, You will not see the sun set!”

Chapter 07

Sylvester Ho was in his suite when he received a letter from his King to attend a banquet held by the Royal Household.

Sylvester wondered about why a banquet was being held at that time of the year.

“Read it out loud!” He commanded the knight who had brought the Royal letter.

“Yes My lord” He clears his throat before he proceeds with the reading.

“I, King Wang Wei, and the Royal Household invite the household of Ho to the banquet held in Honor of the return of the Royal Prince, Li Wei in three days' time. I'll be pleased with your presence”

He was beyond shocked at the sudden arrival of Prince Li Wei in town after so many years of leaving.

Prince Li was the most hated animal, the most useless of all and how much Sylvester hated his guts is inestimable especially after what had happened between them years back.

Prince Li didn't just leave, he ran away from the wrath of Sylvester. If Li Wei had managed to escape the last time, Sylvester wasn't sure he'd be able to contain his emotions and not run a dagger through his heart.

Flashback

“What happened to you Fang? Who did this to you?” Sylvester roared at the young lady crying on the floor before him. She was rolling in pain as blood pooled around her.

She was too terrified to answer. She had lost everything including her voice and was even too weak to talk.

“I swear to God almighty that I'll kill whoever did this to you, I'll kill him” Fang dragged him down to her level with the little strength she had in her.

“You can't!”

“Why?” Sylvester screamed before gathering her into his arms and using his hand to stop her from bleeding any further from her stomach.

But it was too late, the worm had fallen into the pit of salt.

“L—Li Wei” she managed to voice out before she finally collapsed and embraced darkness.

Sylvester screamed and wished he could do everything in his power to bring her back to him and take the life out of Li Wei.

Flashback ends

“When did he come back?” He asked his knight.

“I heard from one of the Royal Knights that he came in yesterday, My lord”

“You May leave”

The knight left his suite and Sylvester continued with the work he was doing. He had no intention of going for the banquet because **so help him God**, he might lose his sanity and finally get rid of Li Wei once and for all.

He heard another knock on his door and when he gave permission to enter, it was his personal and closest knight, Ying.

Ying grew up in the Ho’s household as the grandson of the previous assistant court lady who served the household for years before her death.

Ying and Sylvester grew up together and this prompted their closeness. They were always going for training together at the Royal court and through the help of Sylvester, Ying was able to complete his martial training before proceeding to becoming a knight.

Even though the poor were not allowed to become a knight, Sylvester’s father adopted Ying so he could fulfill his greatest wish of becoming a knight.

After Naomi got married to the Royal Household, Ying asked to follow her and protect her from all the webs of evil dangling through the palace and even though Sylvester didn’t like the idea, he didn’t have a choice than to let go of his closest friend.

“Ying, what brings you here?” He asked abruptly

“At least, offer me a chair!” Ying retaliated

“Would you mind sitting on a floor?” Sylvester jokes.

“You’re brutal”

“Only to you, Brother” they both had a good laugh and Sylvester gestured for his dear friend to have his seat.

“What brings you here?”

"I brought a new knight with me, he'll be serving under your household. He's a brother to a friend of mine and I want him to be safe, which is why I brought him here. The other knights will introduce him later to you" He replied.

"What's going on in the Royal Household? I heard Li Wei is back"

Ying pauses for a while and examines his friend's face.

"I could read your mind through your eyes before but now it's void of any emotions, what's going on with you, Sylvester??"

"Nothing at all"

"Well, Li Wei came back and you know how he is, trouble follows him everywhere. Will you be coming for the Banquet?"

"No"

"I guessed as much," Ying replied. "The Queen asked me to deliver an urgent message to you.

"The one you hate the most will be visiting the place you loathe the most. If she's important to you, don't just sit down and watch him mess things up for you. Get up and come for the banquet but not without breaking protocols" Ying finished reading the small note from the Queen and before he could blink, Sylvester had risen from his seat and made his way down the stairs leading to his horses.

"Sylvester? What is wrong with you?" Ying asked worriedly.

"Nothing but I swear to God, something will happen in the next hour if care isn't taken. Go with me Ying, please" This was the first time Sylvester had asked his friend humbly to do a thing for him and Ying couldn't reject his proposal.

He nodded at his friend and mounted his horse.

"Tell the court lady to prepare my ceremonial dress and send it down to me with three of your men, I'll be going ahead to the royal court to attend the banquet of the soon to be thrashed bastard called a Prince" He left his instruction and off he and Ying went.

He knew his destination and he knew the first place he was going to stop.

The Harem!

For years, the Ho's Household has been known to have a strict protocol that every of their generations had respect for and one of them was to never visit the Harem for any pleasurable reason.

Well! Sylvester was sure it wouldn't be a happy visit.

Chapter 08

Sylvester was almost at the door leading to the inner part of the Harem when he heard a voice that made his blood boil. He was ready to kill and double ready for his consequences.

Prince Li Wei angers Sylvester naturally and when Li Wei has run away from the country to the Qing dynasty after committing such a terrible act, Sylvester tried everything possible to catch up with him and take life out of him. But one thing stopped Sylvester that night; it was the eyes of a slave.

The voice roared one more time, “Who the hell is this person who wants to deprive me of something that I desire the most at this moment, who the hell is he?” The next thing he saw was Li Wei tearing off his Dove’s clothes and at that moment, he saw red.

Before he could draw his sword and attack him, when he felt a dagger pass his side from Ying’s hand missing Li Wei’s hand by an inch.

“He was about tearing the other cloth” Ying whispered and Sylvester nodded, acknowledging his action.

Sylvester has always trusted Ying with all of his decisions as Ying is always more vocal than Sylvester.

“If you do that one more time, I swear on my life, You will not see the sun set!” Sylvester roared and walked towards Prince Li Wei. His eyes red from anger.

“Who do you think you are to go against the Prince of the kingdom?” Li Wei questioned looking around, searching for the owner of the threatening voice.

Even though his senses had hinted that it could be Sylvester Ho, he had dismissed the thought with the question of why would Sylvester Ho; a descendant of the prime minister’s house come to an Harem.

“Your nightmare!” That reply alone sent shivers down the body of the prince and he knew Sylvester had the key to make or mar him. He knew Sylvester knew about his darkest secret, the reason why he left.

He quickly changed his demeanor and masked his fear with a bitter laugh.

“You’re nothing, Sylvester. Just like before when you were nothing” He claimed.

“Do you want me to prove that to you? Do you, Li Wei? Even if I’m loyal to the King, your brother, my loyalty has a boundary. Should we test the length of it?” Sylvester threatened and that got the prince to shut up.

He moved closer to Desire and touched her face with his hand, she was already shaking with tears. His little dove was scared and Sylvester Ho was concerned for her.

Alerted, he saw a hand holding Desire’s hand tightly and when he looked over at the owner of the hand, he calmed down once he saw that it was a frail, looking girl.

“Why do you always attract trouble, Dove?”

“My lord” She couldn’t find the right words to give to her Master.

Desire was relieved when she heard his voice. She knew he was the only person who had the right to punish her. That had been made clear after the Head lady of the Harem had told the prince that her Master would not like him touching her.

“I didn’t know he could pick you but when I realized how charming you are, I knew something like this could happen. You’re too pure for a man like this”

She couldn’t find an answer to her question—- why will he travel all the way from the mansion just because he thought the prince was going to select her.

“Answer me, Dove. Why do you always attract trouble?” He screamed at her.

“I do not know my lord. I don’t have an answer”

“You don’t have answers to a lot of questions, do you?” He removed his long robe and placed it on her shoulder, shielding her dignity and innocence from the world.

“My lord?” Desire was astonished by his action.

“Look at me, Desire. You’re safe now, okay?” She nodded. Desire had never known this soft side of his Master. Today was also the first time he had called her by her name.

Sylvester had every intention of ruining the whole Harem when he was on his way but on getting to the Harem and seeing his Dove’s eyes, she calmed him and his anger evaporated into the air.

“Go get all of her stuff for me” Sylvester ordered the Head lady, who quickly carried out her assignment like her life depended on it and dropped the bag of clothes at her feet.

“Ying, please take Desire and her friend to the Queen’s Chamber, I’ll meet you there in a few minutes”

Ying hesitated for a minute but knew he couldn't refuse his orders. He led the two ladies away from the Harem and his horse too and they made their way to the Palace.

"Let this be known, Li Wei, you can have any other lady you want in this kingdom but the moment your attention drifts to either my sister or any of the ladies in my mansion, I would not hesitate to kill you by myself. As you already know, killing you would be the easiest of all things despite the fact that you're a prince after all"

"You will do no such thing, Ho. She's just a slave girl and as you know, all slaves belong to the throne and yes! I am the throne"

"Well!, why don't you try and see if I can do such a thing or not. A slave girl she is, but she's my slave girl. It'll be better for you to tread carefully Li Wei, the grounds are more slippery. See you at your banquet, Prince Li Wei" He mockingly bowed in respect and walked out of the mansion.

Prince Li Wei saw red and started thrashing around the Harem, breaking things in his way while the women tried to avoid his wrath.

Once Sylvester was out, he heaved a huge sigh of relief.

"Fang! I did well"

Chapter 09

Ying gingerly led the girls to his horse, he knew just how to treat a lady right.

He knew they were still scared and shaken from what happened at the Harem, especially Desire and he knew not to rush them into doing anything.

He helped both ladies to mount his horse while he pulled at its ropes and made the way to the palace. He wanted to stay and wait for his Friend but he had to leave.

“Sylvester will be fine” he assured himself.

On sighting the heavy and big gates of the palace, he quickly looked for his pass so as to grant him and the ladies easy access into the palace.

The palace was built in the middle of the city, surrounded by heavy fences that’ll block their enemies from penetrating into the walls of the palace during war and if anyone was to enter the Palace, they would need their pass.

This pass was in the form of a rectangular wood designed to have the name and the rank of each official. Only these officials can come into the palace and take their slaves with them.

“Can I stop here, please?” The request came from Kim Chui and Ying was surprised.

“Why?” He asked

She smiled before responding “Prostitutes are not allowed into the palace except on the order of the king” She quickly climbed off the horse and stood close to Ying.

Staring at her eyes, Ying felt he was being strangled and his heart was beating so fast he could swear he'd never felt that way before.

“But I’ve seen some prostitutes in the palace with the Queen. We could actually tell them you were requested for by the Queen”

Ying quickly makes up the excuse just to keep her in his presence and find a way to learn more about this mysterious girl who was making him feel like a child.

“The guards must have been informed before any prostitute could be allowed into the palace” She explained but Ying was still not buying it.

“How will they know if you’re a prostitute or not, it’s not like you’re branded or something?”

Already getting agitated and angry, Kim Chui glared at him before responding.

“You don’t get it, do you? The life we get to live because you royals needs to have a life controlling others. Do you even understand what it’s like growing up in a house where everyone is branded useless and called dogs? Do you even understand how difficult it is for me to breathe right now? Do you even know how hard it is when men of every caliber come into that place and behave as if we belong to them?

Stop pretending as if you’re not one of those animals!”

“What animals?” Sylvester suddenly asked from behind them. They didn’t even notice his presence or knew he could catch up with them that fast.

Desire looked at her Master on his horse and couldn’t stop herself from gushing about his beauty. She looked from him to her friend and knew Kim was still shaken from what had happened just as she was. But still, she was grateful he helped her out even though a part of her still hates him.

She didn’t know if she could call Kim a friend, they had just met today but she knew an acquaintance cannot hold your hand that tight during the most trying moment of your life.

“Kim Chui is my friend” She assured herself.

“I thought I asked a question. Which animals were you referring to?”

Mr Ho roared and Desire knew trouble was looming over them. Before Desire could say any word, Ying went before Sylvester. Both her and Kim Chui couldn’t raise their heads up to meet his eyes out of fear.

“I asked her about why she wouldn’t enter the palace and she explained that the animals at the gate won’t allow people like her into the palace. The guards were the animals she was referring to” Kim Chui raised her head suddenly at the sudden intervention of the man she had insulted.

She was angry yet grateful for the way this man had saved her life and she couldn’t stop the tears this time from rolling down her face. Desire too was surprised at how this mysterious man had lied to her Master but she was grateful that he did so.

Sylvester knew his friend was hiding something but he refused to question further rather he let the issue go. The surprise on the girls’ face also gave Ying away.

He cleared his throat and said “If that is the case, Ying can take the girl back to the Harem and Desire, you’ll go with me to the palace” He instructed and Desire was scared to stay with her Master all alone.

Ying carefully helped Desire mount off the horse while replacing her with Kim, even though Kim wanted to stop him from touching her, he gave her no chance of doing that.

After Ying had helped Desire to mount Sylvester’s horse, he departed with the lady to the Harem.

Sylvester mounted his horse and sat closely behind Desire. His chest was pressed against her back. She could feel his hard chest all over her back and the way his huge body enveloped her gave her tingling feelings in between her thighs.

She felt stupid for feeling this way towards her Master.

The ride to the palace was not so good for Desire as she couldn't concentrate.

His hand that was holding her firm around her waist to prevent her from falling stopped her from thinking straight as well.

She wanted the hand to stay there forever but then, she wanted a dagger so she could chop off the same hand that had dragged her by the hair down to the dungeon.

"Your pass, please?" One of the guards at the gate requested.

Sylvester gave him a stink eye before proceeding to remove his pass and gave it to the guard.

The guard was shocked to see the prime minister alone without his entourage and just with a horse and a frail looking girl.

"I'm sorry my Lord, I didn't recognize you"

Sylvester ignored his apology

"What about her, My lord? I cannot open the gates for her without a pass"

"Open that gate before I behead you for disrespecting my order" He threatened.

Desire was even more scared than the guards who timidly opened the gate for Sylvester before he could truly do as he said.

They entered into the palace and Desire could nothing but stand in awe of the beauty of this palace.

Her eyes met the garden of flowers for a while before they rode past it. The ministers hall stood in the middle of the palace and was adorned with statues and artifacts. That was the one place that told the story of their region. Where they came from and how they came to be.

The region of the Light!

Desire was still looking intensely at the palace of the Light that stood tall above every other building, when Sylvester stopped suddenly.

He helped her down from the horse and didn't give her a chance to say anything.

Well! He couldn't! If he had tried to let her get his attention, then she would have noticed how hard he was.

For her!

He quickly walked in front of her and gestured for her to follow him. Desire couldn't get a good look at the Palace of the Light. But the few details she could get, she promised to share with Kim and every other girl at the Prime minister's mansion.

They stopped at a section of the Palace and before the royal guard at the door could announce his presence, he barged into the room.

"You should have knocked, brother. What if I was dressing?" Queen Naomi chastised her brother's attitude upon seeing him.

He glared at his sister and pulled Desire away from his back. She had been standing behind him.

"She'll be attending the banquet with us. Make sure she gets prepared for it" He left just as he came.

Chapter 10

Sylvester left Desire in the Queen's care and left just as he came; without a notice.

Desire looked at the door from time to time, hoping her master would come back in and take her to his mansion but nothing of such happened.

Queen Naomi gestured for Desire to take a seat in front of her. She had been facing some challenges lately and she didn't know who to tell or why she should tell someone. She was really glad to be able to see someone to talk to. Someone who had promised to take freely to her.

Dressed in her royal regalia, she sat with her leg tucked under her thigh, the long and huge dress hiding her long, beautiful legs.

"How have you been, Desire?" The Queen asked, attempting to start the conversation with the girl.

"I've been fine, My Lady. Thank you for asking" She replied respectfully. Even though it was expected of her to respect the queen as a norm of the Region of the Light, she still wants to always respect the lady willingly.

Queen Naomi called for one of her handmaidens who were standing outside the chamber. She instructed the young lady who came in to get her and her guest a tea.

Desire never dreamt of a day like this, where she'll get to drink tea with the Queen. A slave like her had never had such a terrific thought.

A royal tea was not something Desire had ever thought will go down her long neck someday.

The young maiden returned with two cups of tea and after tasting the tea by herself to confirm if it was poisoned or not, the Queen dismissed the young lady.

Queen Naomi noticed Desire was staring at the girl as she left the room. Desire was only looking at the dress she was putting on, wondering if all royal handmaidens dress like this. Seeing the cloth the girl was putting on made her question all the stories she had heard about the palace.

"Had they all been lies?" She asked herself.

"You're curious about something, Desire" Queen Naomi asked

"No, My Queen" She lied.

"I've already told you that you can tell me anything. I'll listen to you" Naomi wanted to question her words, ask her why a Queen like her would worry about nobody like her. But she knew better. She knew better than to run her mouth like a fountain.

"I don't want to bother you, My Queen" She replied quietly.

"You're never a bother, Desire. Talk to me"

Desire finally succumbed to the pressure knowing she couldn't trouble the Queen any further.

"I was only admiring their dresses and wonder if every handmaiden here dresses like this" She answered truthfully.

"Only my own handmaiden dress like that in this palace, when I got here, I didn't like the way others dressed so I told the King and he agreed that I give them any clothes that I want as long as they're under my services" Desire couldn't help but respect the Queen more.

How could someone be so noble, nice, caring and respectful?

"That is really nice of you, My Queen"

"You think so?. Would you love to become one of my handmaiden?" Queen Naomi asked. As much as Desire would have loved to jump that opportunity, she knew she shouldn't try it. Her Master will be very furious and angry at her.

"Only my Master can allow that, My Queen"

"Sylvester would usually do anything for me. But sharing you or giving you away will be a problem. I'll have a talk with him and see if he'll agree. Okay?" Desire nodded even with being confused at her words. "Look at me Desire and tell me about how you spent the day at the Harem"

Desire didn't look at her directly, she only raised her head and looked everywhere else except at the Queen. She narrated her story. Her eyes shone when she talked about how she met Kim and what she did for her. She didn't leave anything out till the point where Ying took Kim Chui back to the Harem and how she came to the palace with her Master.

"Where's Ying now?" The Queen asked curiously.

"I don't really know, My Queen. Only My Master can answer that question"

"So, this girl that Ying took back to the Harem, do you think there's something going on between them? Did they know each other? Do you think they're related?" All of these questions made Desire suspicious but she knew she couldn't voice out her opinion.

Could it be that..... she quickly swallowed the stupid thought coming into her head.

"I'm sorry, My Queen, I don't have an answer to those questions. I've only met Kim Chui today and I do not know anything about her family or anything about Ying. You mentioning his name just now is why I know he's called Ying. I'm sorry, My Queen" she apologized

“It’s okay, Desire. I’m only worried about Ying. We grew up together and he happens to be your master’s best friend. He’s like a brother to me”

Even though the Queen didn’t have to explain herself, Desire couldn’t stop herself from thinking about how she had reacted to just that part of the story.

She called herself back to order and concentrated on her Queen.

She was so deep in thought she didn’t notice when the Queen ordered for the royal seamstress to be brought into her palace.

Few minutes later, the seamstress came into the room and she reminded Desire of the court Lady back at the mansion.

Desire stood up for the lady to take her measurements and even after she was done, the seamstress still had complaints.

Complaining bitterly to the Queen about how it’ll be difficult for her to sew the dress as Desire was too thin and also the limited number of days.

The Queen instructed her to stop complaining and do as she had instructed.

Desire stayed in the Queen’s chamber after that. Sleeping in the room reserved only for the guests and having breakfast, lunch and dinner with the Queen was a norm for three days. She ate alone only on days when the Queen was requested for by the King.

For these three days, she didn’t see her Master and she didn’t bother to ask after him.

She still hated him!

Or has his three days absence from her life, dissolved the anger building up in her.

The Queen had only told her he was attending to national issues once and after that, his name was never mentioned again.

On the day of the banquet, her dress was brought into the Queen’s chamber.

They both arrived at the banquet together. Once the arrival of the Queen was announced, everyone except for the King and the First Queen stood up as a sign of respect. All eyes were fixed at the Queen’s direction and at the mysterious, beautiful young lady standing behind her.

Even the Prime Minister, Sylvester Ho didn’t recognize her.

Chapter 11

Desire walked into the banquet, a hand holding the side of her dress gracefully, right after the Queen with shyness overshadowing her.

She couldn't look up to the seat of the royals as she was too scared to make eye contact with any of them as she followed the Queen closely behind to her seat.

Desire sat right beside the queen on her throne and almost collapsed from her disbelief of the position she was sitting at. It was a seat preserved for the loyal subject of the Queen and even though it was just a small stool placed for her to sit on, Desire still felt it was the greatest position she could ever find herself in.

Even though she was grateful, she still couldn't believe she was in that position. She stylishly looked around her to see the king on his huge, powerful throne for the first time, he was flanked by two slaves who kept on fanning him while another had gone down on all fours for the king to place his legs on. Desire frowned at this act but quickly composed herself so she wouldn't get herself in trouble with the royals.

The first Queen was sitting on the right side of the king while Desire and her queen were on the left side. Also on the king's right hand side was Sylvester and prince Li Wei.

Her eyes met that of Sylvester and she smiled at him. Instead of Sylvester smiling back, he turned his head away from her direction not without frowning at her in the first instance, making the poor girl worry about what she had done.

Desire was disappointed and she couldn't explain why. She thought it could be as a result of longing to see him for days and when she finally did, he wasn't sparing her a glance.

Prince Li Wei kept on staring at the beautiful maiden who had accompanied his most hated person in the palace but wouldn't care to have the girl in his chambers tonight.

He licked his lips as he thought of what he could do to the girl and how he'll make himself feel better by making sure he makes her his own even if she doesn't like it. He could imagine himself inside her, banging her as she moans out in pleasure.

His attention was fixated on the girl even when his favorite dance group took the floor to render their astonishing performance that even got the approval of the king and of both queens who kept on smiling as a form of satisfaction.

Sylvester Ho noticed the way Li Wei was staring at Desire with passion and it fueled the anger that was already raging inside of him.

When Desire had entered, her appearance and beauty hadn't gotten unnoticed by everyone and Sylvester almost cursed at his sister for bringing out the girl's beauty like that for the world to see, especially the filthy Li Wei.

Once Sylvester realized that Li Wei wouldn't stop looking at the girl like a dog looking at the bone of a meat, he called his loyal subject and brother, Ying, to him.

"Bring Desire here. Let her sit at my feet till the end of the night" He instructed Ying.

Ying hesitated for seconds, "Don't you think that'll be putting her at more risk?"

"Look over at Li Wei" Sylvester instructed him

Ying turned and what he saw made him concur with Sylvester's opinion. "He's looking at her like a predator looking at its prey. I'll bring her over her"

Ying walked quietly to the Queen's side to inform her of the new development.

"Sylvester asks for Desire's presence on his side, my Queen"

"Why?" Queen Naomi asked out of curiosity.

"To avoid any problems from Li Wei tonight" He relayed

"Okay Ying but I need to see you in my chambers later tonight. Make sure you show up, it's a command and not a request" She requested sharply giving Ying no space to say no to her request.

Ying wanted to tell her that it was forbidden for him to visit her. They were no longer teenagers who played all day but he couldn't tell that to her face. His Queen had commanded and he only needed to obey her.

He moved closer to Desire and told her to follow him. Desire felt the request was strange. She looked at her Queen who only nodded at her. She felt relieved because of that and followed Ying without restrictions.

The dancers were still performing, gaining the positive reviews of everyone present.

With every step that Desire took to the right side of the King, so did Li Wei's eyes. He was following her every step until she stopped beside Sylvester.

Once Desire got to Sylvester's side, Li Wei and Sylvester's eyes met and Li Wei's mouth twitched in anger. He was angry because Sylvester had managed to claim his prize again this time.

"Sit beside me" Sylvester told Desire without looking at her.

Desire wanted him to look at her, to see how elegant she looked tonight but was again disappointed when Sylvester spared her no second glance. She sat as she was told and watched the dancers perform their last dance for the night.

Everyone clapped with smiles on their faces as the dance group descended from the stage.

The king rose from his throne, about to give a wish and every servant fell on their face. It was customary for every slave and servant to bow and fall on their face whenever the king rises.

As every other servant bowed, Desire was about to get on her knees when Sylvester held her tightly on her thigh, stopping her from kneeling.

Desire turned to look at him and he shook his head, still not looking at her. She sat back properly but still lowered her head and tried not to look up at the King.

“Today is a day of celebration. My brother had returned to the palace and to the land of his ancestors safe and sound. He has made the nation proud of his accomplishments as the prince of this kingdom”

Sylvester smiled dryly at the king’s speech. He was the only other person who knew Li Wei hadn’t gone on a journey but rather was in hiding for all those years.

“As a result of the happiness and gladness that I feel in my heart today, I will grant Li Wei anything that he wishes for before nightfall. Tell me brother, what do you desire the most?” The King asked his brother with a huge smile plastered on his face.

Prince Li Wei walked towards his brother and kissed him on the cheek, glad that he was helping him out in a way that he hadn’t expected.

He looked over at Sylvester Ho and smiled, knowing fully well what he was about to do. He pointed over at Sylvester before he moved his finger a little bit to his side.

“I want her brother! I want her as my bride”

Chapter 12

The moment Li Wei pointed at Desire and asked for the king to make her his bride, Desire heart skipped its regular beats. Her eyes went wide and she kept on swallowing her saliva to keep her throat from being too dry.

Unknowingly she had held on to the hem of Sylvester's ceremonial uniform, the one he had worn to celebrate with the royal household.

Desire had thought about how powerful he looked in the ceremonial dress and wished she could tell it to his face that he looked good. Desire's opinion of her master changed after he saved her from the hands of Li Wei even though she had mentally corrected herself to know her place as the servant.

"I want her brother" Li Wei repeated his need to the King and his brother, the King nodded repeatedly at Li Wei's choice.

Desire's head snapped up to look at both the King and his brother but quickly bowed her head once she realized that she was about to break a rule by looking the king in the eyes.

"Be on your feet, young maiden" The king instructed. Desire was about to stand when Sylvester forcefully pulled her back into the seat.

He turned to look at her and when their eyes met, he saw tears glistening at the corner of Desire's eyes and so was fear evident in her eyes and in turn, Desire saw fire and anger in Sylvester's eyes and this scared her to the bone.

"I will handle this, do not fear a thing" Sylvester Ho assured Desire and she nodded, telling him she trusted him even with her life.

"My King" Sylvester stood up and walked towards the King.

"It would have been a thing of great joy for me to submit this beautiful young maiden to the royal palace but I'm afraid, I'll have to say no to your request, My King" Sylvester lowered his head in submission.

"Sylvester—-" Li Wei roared at his words. He knew Sylvester was going to stop him in every way from getting the maiden and he as well was ready to fight for her.

"My Prince" Sylvester called out mockingly.

"You dare defy the king's order. Have you forgotten that next to God is the king? How dare you go against what he wants" Li Wei spat at him.

“My hands are tied here, Your highness and there’s not much that I can do. I can’t sit still and watch the royal household take my betrothed away from me, my king. Through the years I’ve been your loyal servant, for once, repay me of my kindness towards the throne” Sylvester pleaded.

“Your loyalty to the throne is a duty, Sylvester not a self made proclamation. Stop using it against the King. You have done nothing to deserve his mercy” Li Wei screamed.

Prince Li Wei knew Sylvester couldn’t probably threaten him about the past in front of everyone sitting out there. He knew he was pushing his button but yet, he was angry at Sylvester,

Sylvester looked up and smirked at Li Wei before turning back to the king.

“What do you say to this matter, my King?” One of the king’s royal cabinet members asked. The king was deep in thought, he was thorn between giving in to his brothers request or accepting Sylvester’s plea.

“Who else is a witness to the betrothal of this young lady to my loyal prime minister?” The king asked.

“I am a witness, my lord. It was the wish of my father to get her married to my brother and for years, she has been leaving under his care” Queen Naomi replied while on her feet.

She was the King’s favorite and he smiled as he heard her voice.

“I will not disrupt an already made plan for the Prime Minister. Li Wei, kindly make another wish and I promise to grant it. Till then, let the merry continue” The king returned to his throne while Li Wei kept on glaring at Sylvester.

He knew Sylvester and his sister had just lied about the betrothal but who could blame the siblings; nobody in the kingdom can trust their female dogs with Li Wei.

Sylvester went back to his seat but not without passing an appreciative look to his sister. She might have helped the matter but she had complicated things the more. Sylvester was sure that Li Wei would not stop at anything to find out the truth and expose them both.

If the King found out that they had just lied to his face, his wrath would be deadly.

Desire couldn’t look Sylvester in the face even after he sat right beside her. She was embarrassed and sorry that she had caused him trouble the second time. Sylvester also ignored her act and focused on the performance.

Li Wei still didn’t stop looking at her like a predator.

After the banquet ended, the King was the first to leave according to their customs, the Queens followed behind while the Prime Minister was next.

Before Sylvester walked out, he drew Ying close and gave him a solid instruction.

Once it was time for the minors like Desire to leave the hall, Ying followed closely behind and didn't fail to notice one of the prince's vile disciples trailing after her as well.

Desire was about to turn to the direction of the Queen's chamber when Ying stopped her, held her by the hand and started walking without talking to her about anything.

"Ying! What is going on?" Desire asked as Ying held her hand to lead her to an unknown place.

"You will understand soon enough" He smiled as he replied, trying to calm the scared girl down.

His smile worked like magic making Desire calm her nerves.

"How's Kim Chui?" Desire asked the question that had been on the tip of her tongue ever since she saw Ying again.

Ying paused at her question for a few seconds before composing himself and replying, "She should be fine, I guess. I haven't seen her ever since I dropped her off at the Harem" Ying replied honestly.

"Thank you for helping us that day" Ying nodded and didn't say anything anymore.

They stopped in front of a beautiful, ancient chamber that was embellished with beautiful red roses. The roses made the chamber smell so nice and made Desire fall in love with it so fast.

The door leading into the chamber suddenly opened, revealing Sylvester Ho.

"Thank you Ying, I'll take it from here" Sylvester collected Desire for him and they both watched Ying walk away.

He gestured for her to go inside and when she entered, the inside was better than the outside. Scented candles decorate the room with light and great scent. Desire almost purr at the arrangement of the candles until Sylvester said something behind her. She turned to hear what he was saying and also gave him her full attention.

"You'll be staying here till we leave this place, together with me"

Chapter 13

Desire kept on staring at Slyvester even though it was several seconds after he had told her they'll be staying together.

"My lord, I can stay with the Queen for the time being. I wish not to be an inconvenience to you" Desire whispered loud enough for him to hear her.

She couldn't understand why she had to stay with her master alone in his chamber. What would the people think? What would they say about her?

She was afraid of the reaction that people would give when they found out that a slave like her was staying alone with the prime minister.

"We do not have any more choice at the moment, Desire. Do you not understand the gravity of what happened over there at the banquet?" He asked her, with his voice rising already.

Desire was still scared of him, scared of what he could do to her whenever he's angry. She flinched at the sound of his voice and kept on playing with her dress just to calm herself down.

"We lied to the king and that was the only thing we could do to save you from the hands of Li Wei. To live up to that lie, you have to stay here till we leave this place and when we get back to my mansion, we'll know what to do next" He explained.

"Okay, my lord. But I can still stay with the Queen, she's your sister and that wouldn't even cause any questions from anybody" Desire replied, trying to convince her master about staying with him alone in the room.

"You do not speak anymore Desire. Don't get me any angrier than I am" He screamed at her and walked into the inner section of the chamber, leaving Desire alone.

Desire crumbled to the ground, she picked up the hem of her dress and adjusted herself closer to the wall. She pushed the dress down to cover her legs, after which she hugged her tiny, beautiful legs closer to herself.

Getting uncomfortable with how her hair was, she removed some of the pins used in holding it down and let the hair fall down her waist. She ran her hands through her hair to straighten out any knot at the edge or in between her hair.

She began humming to the music in her head, it was an old folklore song that the assistant court lady at the mansion had taught them during one of their fun times and Desire being a lover of music, didn't forget it easily.

The sound she was making was what first attracted Sylvester's attention. He was in the bathroom when he first heard the sound, it pricked his attention and he listened carefully to know where it was coming from. He took his bath silently, enjoying the sound he was hearing.

After he was done, he left the bathroom and followed the sound to the outer part of the chamber to see it was Desire humming happily while using her finger to draw nothingness on the ceramic floor.

"What are you doing out here?" He asked, getting the girl's attention. Desire wanted to stand up quickly so as not to address her master while sitting as it was a sign of disrespect but the dress she was putting on, got tangled in her legs and sent her tripping.

Before she could fall with her face flat on the ground, Sylvester held on tight to her. His hand was around her waist as his other hand had crossed over her chest to hold her tight.

She looked up and their eyes met. Sylvester swallowed hard at the way her eyes pierced his. His body was reacting in an unusual way to the contact.

He quickly helped her to stand properly before he moved away from her as if she was a disease that he needed to avoid.

"Why are you putting on that dress?" Sylvester asked the most awkward question his head could get.

"The Queen dressed me up" She simply replied, looking at the hard floor and avoiding his gaze.

"That dress is the major cause of the problem. She should've allowed you to stay in her chambers and not bring you out for the world to see. You should have rejected the offer yourself" Sylvester said.

"The Queen is quite persuasive and I can't say no to her. I'm just a servant" Desire replied

Her response caused Sylvester to actually feel bad about the way he had blamed her for what happened. He had been angry at her because of the fake betrothal that he had declared and had to live up to but one thing he failed to realize was that Desire never was given the opportunity to say yes or no to any offer.

"You can go in and take your bath, I'll be outside until you're done" He instructed. Desire was surprised at the fact that she had to use his bath.

All she had ever had an access to was the traditional bath tub that everyone in the mansion used.

"I can't my lord. It is forbidden, I'll be beheaded if I do that" Desire rejected the offer.

Sylvester moved closer to her, removed the upper buttons of her dress and left the left one that kept the dress still hanging on her body.

“Use it as my future wife and not as a slave” He gave her the push to go on and take her bath but Desire was too stubborn to give in.

“But I’m not your future wife, my lord”

Getting irritated by her stubbornness, he screamed at her, “Go use the bathroom this instance or so help me God, I’ll kick you in there and bathe you myself” That was enough for Desire to sprint into the inner chambers without any further interruptions.

Sylvester sat outside his chambers and watched the night sky filled with stars. He was bothered about what he had done today and how he’ll have to explain to the girl that it wasn’t just a word anymore, as the Queen even attested to it and the King believed it.

How could he tell such a tiny girl that it was more than just a small lie?

After spending several hours outdoors, he later moved into the house to see Desire curled up in a corner far from the bed. She was sleeping soundly and half of her hair was covering her face.

Sylvester’s hand itched to place her hair back to its original state but he ignored it and went on to sleep on the bed, ready for whatever tomorrow brings.

Desire woke up the following morning to find herself on the bed; the same bed meant for her master. She didn’t know how she had gotten there so she sprinted off the bed, looking around for her master but he was not in sight.

Episode 14

Desire sprinted off the bed and tried to check her surroundings to see if any other person was not in sight to see that she had done the abominable during the night.

She tried to run through her head to see if she could remember how she got there but nothing came up and she deflated back into the bed in annoyance.

Desire noticed a large mirror on the other side of the room, it was larger and more clearer than the one she had in the servant's room she shared with three other girls at the mansion.

She stood in front of the mirror, touched it slightly as if trying to touch herself. She noticed she had changed drastically from the last time she saw herself in a mirror back at the Harem. She smiled at herself, impressed by her new look and she loved how her skin was so shining and radiant as a result of the beauty ointments that the Queen gave to her.

She only got the queen to thank for that.

A knock resounded on the door, startling Desire. She left her position and went on to open the door to seven some of the Queen's handmaidens with a smile plastered on their faces.

"Good morning, my lady" One of them sang, scaring Desire off. She was surprised that this lady was referring to her as my lady. She was just Desire, an ordinary slave.

"I'm not that! I'm just Desire. You shouldn't use courtesy with me, I'm more like you" The girls looked at each other, surprised at what the woman had said.

"We can't remove the courtesy, my lady. The tradition requests for all royals to be regarded like that. Can we come in my lady?"

Desire moved out of the way and watched as the girl placed a beautiful dress on the bed and walked into the bathroom to do what Desire was not looking forward to.

"The bath is ready to be used, my lady" Desire groaned, getting angry about the courtesy they were using for her.

"Call me Desire, please" She pleaded.

"We cannot call you by your name because you're the prime minister's future wife and we are expected to accord the same respect we have for him, for you as well" The girl insisted.

Desire started removing her dress to use the bathroom when she suddenly turned around to see the girls still staring at her.

“Can you kindly leave?” Desire asked and the girls turned one by one and filed out of the room.

‘I’m not his future wife, I’m just a slave. All he did was lie to the king. Desire wanted to scream out but she stopped herself before getting her and her master into any more trouble.

Desire got into the bathroom and saw the different bath ointment, roses spread across the surface of the water and hissed. She wasn’t used to that type of attention and she wasn’t enjoying it one bit.

She tossed the roses out of the bathing water and refused to use the bathing tub of large water. Instead, she scooped the water with her hand on her body and bathed the way a regular slave did.

She wouldn’t get used to this kind of life and later yearn for it when she returned to the mansion later.

After bathing she got into the room and put on the dress. It fitted her shape perfectly and she wondered if her master would not appreciate her wearing something that accentuated her curves this time as well.

She looked for the pins from the previous day, ran a comb through her long hair and gathered it together to fix them properly with the pin.

She used some of the beauty products that the maidens had left behind just like the queen had taught her but she didn’t use it too much. Just a tiny bit was enough to make her look good.

Another knock resounded on her door and she opened it to see it was the handmaidens. Her eyes widened in surprise because she had expected them to return back to where they came from.

“The Queen asked you to take your time but I guess she’ll be waiting for you, my lady” The girl reported.

“I don’t seem to understand you”

One of the girls suddenly nudged the other out of realization of their mistake.

“I’m really sorry, my lady. Please forgive me. The Queen has requested for you to join her at breakfast” Desire nodded

She went back into the room and brought out the shoe she had worn the other night. Knowing that it matched the dress, she put it on, checked herself once more in the mirror before going out.

She felt uncomfortable with her new way of dressing but she knew she didn’t have a choice. She couldn’t go to the Queen looking shabby.

The house maidens led the way to the royal dining area. Dread filled Desire once she spotted the first queen on the table with Queen Naomi sitting opposite her.

Once Queen Naomi saw her, she beamed with a smile and Desire smiled back.

Without wasting much time, Desire sat next to Queen Naomi on a seat facing the first queen directly.

“Good morning, my Queen” She greeted. She didn’t want to feel awkward or unwanted but still the Queen’s presence made her feel so little.

“Is that formal greeting enough?” The first queen spat.

“I’m sorry, my Queen” Desire stood up from her seat and bowed to her queen. Queen Naomi was fuming and kept on glaring at the first queen.

“Since the law and orders of the land had allowed the child of no one to wine and dine with the Queen, I’m quite not surprised at your nonchalant attitude” The first queen said, not sparing Desire a second glance.

“She is my guest and I don’t remember inviting you to this hall. You can’t just barge into my breakfast and insult my guest” Queen Naomi fires back.

“Insult your guest, you say! Have you forgotten your position in this palace, Naomi? Do I need to put you in your place again for you to get it? You are a second wife, his latest conquest and once he gets tired of you, he’ll toss you right back to where you belong to”

“You’ve wished that for years and you’re still angry and disappointed that none of your evil wishes came to pass. Come off your horses, Queen Beibei” Queen Naomi was almost moving over to claw out the eyes of the first queen.

“If you call for fire, Naomi, you will get hell, I promise” The first Queen threatened.

Desire was confused about what to do, she didn’t know if she should call for help or maybe keep on looking but how will she be able to pacify both Queen’s and make them stop fighting each other.

“Can you please calm down, my Queens?” Both Queen’s turned from glaring at each other as Queen Beibei glared at Desire.

“You are in no place to tell me what to do, lowlife wench” Queen Beibei dragged Desire by the hand on the table, trying to pull her close and hit her before Queen Naomi pulled her back and stopped the assault.

“The last time I checked, you’re no better than a wench yourself, Queen Beibei” Naomi spat, making Queen Beibei see red. She lunged towards Naomi and before she could get to her, a loud sound resonated across the room.

“Do you two wishes to face dethronement?” The angry voice of the king roared, causing desire to cower in fear.

Chapter 15

The threat of the King made things to calm down a little bit. Both queens had stopped glaring at each other and both faced the king, ready to hear their punishment for publicly disgracing themselves.

Desire had only later on realized that Sylvester had arrived with the King and this was only when she was able to lift her head up once she heard his voice. Their eyes met and she quickly looked away not wanting to melt under his intense gaze.

She wanted to stop lusting after her master but no matter how many times she cautioned herself, she still couldn't get to stop thinking about him even though she thinks she hates him.

"Can someone explain to me what happened here?" The King's angry voice brought Desire out of her reverie and she lowered her head so much that her neck ached. She was in no position to say a word before the king.

"She started it, your favorite pet started it by bringing this lowlife into the dinning area meant for royals" The first queen said pointing at Desire.

"I requested for a private time alone in the dining area before it was granted. I didn't know it'll end up with the Queen insulting my guest" Naomi replied.

"Sylvester, can you give me the permission to talk privately with your woman in the throne room?"

Sylvester was surprised at the king's request and he hesitated for a moment not knowing what the king's real intentions were.

Desire froze at a spot not wishing to be alone with the king as she feared she could spill and tell the king they had lied to him.

"Do not worry Sylvester, I'll make sure she returns to your chamber without a scratch" Sylvester nodded and gave the King the right to leave with Desire .

The King would've taken her if he wanted, forcefully or not but he respected Sylvester too much to treat his woman without respect.

"Both Queens can return to their chamber, I'll call for you when needed" The King started walking towards the throne room while both fighting women walked out leaving Sylvester and Desire alone in the room.

Sylvester moved closer to her and ran a finger down her arm, getting Desire's attention to the spot. She didn't realize she had sustained an injury during the fury road both Queens had taken her on.

“Come back straight to my chambers once you’re done, understood?”

Desire nodded and walked after the king, but looked back once to see Sylvester retreating figure walking out of the building.

“My King” Desire bowed as she walked into the throne room, avoiding the mistake of making eye contact with the King.

“Please sit, little one” The king gestured for her to sit but Desire refused.

“I do not have the right to sit in the presence of a great King like you. I’ll rather stand and listen to the words of greatness coming from your heart rather than sit and dine with you, your highness” Desire replied.

Her response satisfied the king, increasing his interest in the strange girl who had managed to get the attention of his most loyal subject and his little brother.

“I insist, sit with me”

If it had been Sylvester, Desire would have found it easier to argue with me but knowing the king was a ruthless man, Desire sat quickly while she was still being respected.

“I would like to know more about you, little one but that’ll definitely be on another day as the reason why you’re here differs from the one I would’ve loved to pursue” The King started.

“What happened over there, today? What caused the fight between my Queens? I want to hear the truth from you” The King requested.

Desire was torn between telling the King the truth or telling him another lie. She was torn between supporting Queen Naomi or going against Queen Beibei.

Supporting Queen Naomi might invoke the wrath of the first Queen.

She knew the truth could cause a problem in the royal household while a lie could also fuel the hatred that was burning already.

“My King, I wish to tell you the truth but then, this truth might cause a problem in the royal household and I do not wish to be the center of that problem, my king. But from what I saw today show that there’s no love between both queens and each one of them is ready to kill the other or maybe hurt one another. Please forgive me that I’m not able to help any further, my king” Desire stood from her seat and bowed so low the king could view her back.

“Stand straight, little one. You have done well, you can go back to Sylvester, he’ll probably be waiting for you”

Desire thanked the King and left the throne room almost immediately. She got out of the building and started walking towards the Prime minister's chamber.

She was about to step out when she saw Sylvester. He was resting against the wall of the building closest to the throne room with his arms crossed against his chest. Once he spotted a Desire, he started walking towards her the same way she walked towards him.

“How was it?”

“He didn’t ask anything about us. Maybe he isn’t suspicious of anything” Desire replied.

“What happened there?” Sylvester asked and Desire narrated the entire story from the moment the two Queens started arguing to what her response has been to the king’s question.

Sylvester suddenly felt proud of his little dove and he patted her hair, and kept on telling her she did well as they both stood on a spot, under the sun, with Desire smiling widely at him, not scared of her master this time around.

Chapter 16

Desire and Sylvester returned back to his chamber in silence and Desire wouldn't stop staring at her master once in a while. He had patted her head and she had loved it even though she dare not speak it out.

Desire knew the changes happening in her life might be drastic, it might even be dangerous but no matter how much she enjoyed it, she wished it could go past fast enough so she'll be able to return to the mansion and back to her normal life.

"When are we going back to the mansion, my lord?" Desire asked her master as they were about to get to his chamber.

"Soon" Sylvester simply replied.

He felt he didn't owe her any further explanation even though it was his fault that his little dove was still in the palace. He knew he wasn't being fair to her but nevertheless, he'll try his best to make sure she gets back to the mansion safe and sound.

They began to hear whispering voices as soon as they stepped into his chambers. Desire quickly identified one of the voices as Queen Naomi's while Sylvester knew who the other person was.

"What is going on here?" Sylvester didn't bother knocking as he opened the door forcefully to reveal Queen Naomi and Ying in an heated argument. Why bother knocking in his own part of the palace?

"Nothing brother. We were just talking about something personal" Queen Naomi explained while Ying just kept on looking so guilty as if he had just been caught stealing food.

"And you couldn't do that in your chambers?" Sylvester frowned at them both. His voice was already high and Desire was aware that the master she knew and feared was about to surface.

"You know the walls have ears, we were only trying to be careful" Naomi explained further.

"That is none of my business. What the hell is going on between you two?" Sylvester boomed. His eyes had turned red, the veins on his neck were about to burst.

"Nothing brother. We were just talking about what could happen to Desire if the king finds out that she's not really your betrothed" Naomi revealed while Desire felt she just lied to her brother.

"That is my business and you two should remove yourselves peacefully from that issue. Let me bother about it" Sylvester warned and forced his way into the house not caring if his sister would fall into the ground or not.

Before he went into the innermost part of the chamber, he turned and faced his sister.

“Let today be the last time you’ll ever get Desire involved in your stupid palace affairs. The next time such repeats itself, it wouldn’t be funny. Nobody asked you to drag yourself into this madness in the first place. You asked to be Queen and nobody forced you to be queen. He who can bear the weight should wear the crown without letting others feel the burden”

Queen Naomi’s cheerful expression turned sore and her eyes were glistening with tears, even Desire felt bad at the way her master just talked to his sister. If only she could reprimand him and let him know that what he did was wrong.

Ying later followed Sylvester into the inner part of the chamber, leaving Desire and the Queen at the outer part of the chamber.

“My Queen, I’m sorry he talked to you that way” Desire’s voice made her Queen finally look up from her embarrassment. She smiled at Desire and made her sit down with her.

“Don’t worry about that, Desire. My brother had always been like that, though, there’s a little exception this time”

Desire didn’t want to go beyond her boundary and start asking her Queen questions.

“What? Your eyes tell me you have something to say” Queen Naomi held Desire’s hand to ask her.

“My eyes? I do not have anything to ask, my Queen”

“This past week that I’d spent with you has made me know a lot. Your eyes move around a lot when you’re trying to stop yourself from being curious. Tell me, what is bothering you?”

Desire never knew she had that type of attribute until the queen mentioned it to her for the first time.

“Why is master mad because of your royal status?” Naomi asked.

“Your master is usually mad at everything and sometimes he’s mad at anything. That’s who he is, you shouldn’t let that bother you. But since you seem to be on his good side lately, why don’t you try and stop him next time he gets mad?” Queen Naomi suggested playfully.

“No, I can’t. I’ve been on his bad side once and that landed me in the Harem. I do not wish to go back there so I’ll try to avoid his wrath from now on” Desire explained and Queen Naomi laughed, telling her she was only teasing her even though she knew what she said was true.

Queen Naomi hasn’t seen her brother care so much about someone like that in a long time and she couldn’t wait for the story to progress.

Queen Naomi removed her hand from Desire as Ying reappeared from the inner part with a sore expression and an angry Sylvester right beside him.

“What happened to you, my Queen? Where is that blood from?” Ying panicked and almost ran to Naomi’s side.

Naomi looked at her right hand to see blood. She was first scared, then she looked at Desire and saw that the blood was from her hand. It had dripped into her palm before Queen Naomi held her.

“Desire, What happened to your hand?” Queen Naomi panicked

“Your madness happened” Sylvester replied instead, earning a glare from his sister.

Sylvester pulled Naomi up to her feet and led her into the room. He took some ointment and leaf before leading her into the bathroom.

“Don’t ever put yourself in the middle of that madness ever again. When they start being dogs, you walk out, do you understand me?” Sylvester asked and Desire nodded.

He made her sit gently on a small stool and first washed the blood off her hands before applying the ointment and crushing some healing leaves in his hands to put on the surface of the wound. It would’ve stung on a normal day but because he applied the ointment first, it helped relieve her pain.

Desire kept on looking at her master who was treating her as if she was a doll but she didn’t care, all she yearned for was to run her fingers through his beautiful hair, down to his face that made all the ladies———

“Remove your dress” Sylvester’s voice drew her out of her deep thoughts.

“Master?” Desire called out, wishing he’ll repeat himself.

“Remove the dress so I can get it washed. It’s stained with blood”

“I can wash it myself, master,” Desire insisted.

“Not with that hand, little dove” Desire couldn’t believe her ears. He hadn’t called her that name ever since they got to the palace and she never knew she yearned that much for it.

“I will wash it later then, my lord” Desire suggested and Sylvester wasn’t having it.

“The blood stain would become difficult to wash off later on so I suggest you remove it now and let’s get it washed”

Desire knew her master was right so she did as she was told, she started removing her dress and when she realized he wasn’t leaving, she turned and begged with her eyes.

Their eyes met and Sylvester got the message, he left her in the bathroom and went into the room.

Once he got there, he placed his hand on his rapidly beating heart, surprised that his heart could still beat that fast and it was as a result of the effect that Desire had on him.

Chapter 17

Once Desire was done removing her dress, Queen Naomi was already at the door with another. She collected it and quickly put it on. Discarded her stained dress into the washing basin and before she could start washing it, Naomi pulled her out of the room.

“Let’s go back to my chambers. These girls would wash the dress and make sure it is dried by the time you return” Queen Naomi explained.

Desire looked around the room for her master but she couldn’t find him. When still looking around, she met Queen Naomi’s eye and the look she gave her, made Desire ask what she wanted to ask.

“Where’s my master? I can’t see him out here anymore” Desire asked.

“He was summoned by the king for some important work. I’ll send you back personally before night falls but till then, let’s spend some alone time in my chambers”

Not waiting for her to say yes or no to her request, Queen Naomi dragged Desire out of the house. Still, Desire looked back once in a while to see if she could get a glimpse of her master.

“Do not worry, Desire. He’ll be back safely” Queen Naomi assures her as they move towards her carriage that’ll get them back to her chamber. Desire climbed in with the Queen and they were moved to her chambers.

On their way to the chamber, Queen Naomi suggested they stop to explore the garden of flowers. Desire had always been eager to see that place, so she smiled at her Queen.

The carriage stopped and they both stepped down. Immediately they did, they were met with the appealing fragrance of the flowers planted. Desire fell in love with the place already.

A young girl dressed in royal robe ran past them, laughing and giggling with another boy her age but as soon as the young girl saw Queen Naomi, her expression turned sore and she kept on sending daggers to the queen with her eyes.

Before Desire could ask who they were, Naomi explained, “These are the children of Queen Beibei, let’s just say their mother planted the seed of hatred in them too early”

The young girl stuck her tongue out at Naomi, causing Desire to smile a little. Naomi leaned forward to flicker the girl on her head but Desire quickly stopped her, to avoid another clash with the first queen. A fight was enough for a day.

"I think we should go to your chambers like you suggested, my Queen" Desire asked with a head bow.

"You haven't even explored the gardens of flowers yet" Queen Naomi whined.

"That's okay, my Queen. I can do that at any time. I'm just a little bit weary and I think you also need your rest as well"

"If that is the case then, let's go to my chambers"

The Queen suddenly held Desire's hand and out of shock, Desire withdrew her hand and stepped back a little.

"Stop being so stubborn, Desire. You're a friend to me and not a slave. Holding your hand isn't forbidden" Queen Naomi explained and Desire nodded in understanding but she still moved back and let her queen lead the way.

The meeting that Sylvester Ho went for was with the King and other important officials. Even though prince Li Wei was present, Sylvester still doubted how his uselessness was needed.

Li Wei kept on staring at Sylvester Ho wickedly while Sylvester kept on smirking at him anytime their eyes met.

Sylvester had the power to destroy him and that fact was not stopping either of them from hating each other nor was it stopping Li Wei from wishing he could kill Sylvester Ho.

Sylvester suddenly raised his hand during the meeting to give a suggestion, "If we need to prepare for war, the first thing to do would be to increase the number of our army as we have less than a thousand soldiers presently. Also, there'll be a need to give those at the outpost better training equipment. Also, enough food and necessities should be sent over to them as a push to keep working hard"

"Preparations would start immediately to recruit new soldiers who are ready to fight to their last breath for their region. That's a brilliant suggestion, Minister Ho, we would take it into consideration" The king praised Sylvester.

This inturn enraged Li Wei and he couldn't wait for the meeting to end so he could attack Sylvester Ho.

The meeting ended after several deliberations.

Sylvester didn't understand why they had to prepare for a war that was not in sight. Every other surrounding region had already signed a treaty in a large meeting where Sylvester had represented his region last year for peace to reign in all regions.

All regions had agreed to not raise a sword against the other not to talk of waging war. Sylvester Ho was just as surprised as to why the issue of war is being discussed.

After the meeting ended, Sylvester was about to go in to the king to discuss with him and remind him of the treaty signed when Li Wei appeared behind him.

“Must be feeling so lucky, Sylvester Ho?” Li Wei taunted but Sylvester only ignored him.

“Now you’ll play deaf and dumb, right?” Li Wei asked and still Sylvester was silent. Li Wei hadn’t realized he was speaking loud and most of the officials left behind heard what he was saying.

“Let me remind you of a little story in simple words. The same way I made it happen the last time is the same way it’ll repeat itself. I even learnt this one is a Virgin, I can’t wait to have her buried beneath me, moaning and struggling as I pound into her” Sylvester’s fisted hands were turning red from anger, his eyes darkened at the memory of what Li Wei had just said.

Sylvester turned and punched Li Wei directly in the neck, sending him to the ground, struggling with pain and walked out of the ministers hall without looking back.

He got back to his chamber before nightfall to see that Desire wasn’t there. He went into the room to wait and once he realized that it was getting dark and that anything could happen to her, Sylvester walked out of his chambers and waited outside, hoping he’ll hear her scream Incase anything happens.

At some point, Sylvester got agitated, worried and angry at how stupid Desire was to stay out that late. He got up to go look for her and when he took his first step, he saw her walking towards him with Ying right behind her and they were laughing about something.

He didn’t know why or how it happened but he got mad as he set his eyes on her.

“Why are you so irresponsible? Why would you stay out late not giving a care for what lurks in the darkness” He screamed at her even before she got to his side.

“My lord, I was with—” Sylvester wasn’t going to hear any of her explanations so he shut her up.

“How many times do I need to explain to you as well, Ying?” Before Ying could reply, he turned back to Desire.

“Is it until I chain you up in the dungeons again for you to know your place? Stop acting like your life got better because I got you here. You’re still a slave and my Personal Maid, get that into your senses”

His words affected Desire so much that she wanted to cry. She tried stopping herself from crying but she couldn’t help it as a lone tear made it down her face.

Sylvester Ho not knowing the gravity of his words, glared at her and Ying and walked back into his chamber.

Chapter 18

Ying later bid Desire a goodnight after making sure she entered the chamber safely and locked the door behind her.

She walked in and refused to join Sylvester in the inner chambers, she sat on the floor as every of Sylvester's words kept on coming back to her.

She kept on questioning why she had forgotten her place that easily, she was a slave. No matter what type of lie they had told the king, she was still a slave who had been promoted to a housemaiden.

What difference does it make?

Desire looked at her injured hand and remembered how Sylvester was so sweet and caring. How he had taken care of her wound and even got mad at the Queen for getting her involved in the royal problems.

How can someone switch from being cold to sweet then to being as hot as hell? Desire couldn't quite place a ring around her master's behavior but what he did this time only affirmed to it that her master was just nice to her out of pity, he was still the same man who dragged her through the stairs by the hair and locked her up in the dungeon without hearing her own side of the story.

Desire shivered at the thoughts of the dungeon, she didn't like it and she never wanted to go back there again.

She started humming a sad song, Desire couldn't remember the whole lyrics but she could remember the tone.

Sylvester was in his room, ready to sleep for the night when he heard the song. He sat up in bed and thought along with the tone.

It was the sad story of a girl who was forcefully married to a rich man who happened to be a stranger in their town. No one knew where this man came from but everyone of them wanted a taste of his money, to the extent that their chief offered the girl who was his daughter to the man as a wife so he could pay him abundantly.

Suddenly, the man stood up one day and decided he was going back to his town, the villagers all cried because their source of income was leaving but this girl wept more, she kept on telling her father that the man was not who he was, he was a serpent but no one was prepared to believe her. As the man set out on his ship, ready to go back, few villagers sacrificed themselves to become his slave and leave with him.

As the remaining villagers stood at shore, waving goodbye, there suddenly, a great serpent, evolved from the ship and swallowed everyone including the girl as the rest that were at the shore watched and screamed out in horror.

The snake descended into the water and disturbed the villagers for years; Killing and destroying anything that was in its way. They were not able to get water to grow their crops. Even other ships wouldn't sail in their water out of fear. This went on for years until someone powerful came and destroyed the serpent. This story was about Desire's hometown, the southern region and it was one of the reasons why it remained the poorest in the entire region of light.

By the time Sylvester stood up from his bed to the direction of the song, Desire had stopped singing and humming interchangeably.

She was already talking to herself, "I'm a slave, I'm nothing more than a slave. I come from the southern region, that's who I'm meant to be"

Sylvester leaned against the door and kept on listening to everything Desire was saying about herself. He felt a pang of pain in his chest and for the first time, he felt bad for what he said.

"It was a snake and a whale" Desire lifted her head fast to see it was her master.

"My lord?" She stood up, not understanding what he had meant.

"The story you were humming. It was a snake at first but a whale later joined it and together they frustrated both strangers and home owners. The snake terrorized on land while the whale managed to capsize each ship bringing in resources to the region" Sylvester explained.

"I never heard that part of the story, my lord but my father—" She realized she was getting too comfortable so she quickly shut up.

"Your father did what?"

Sylvester sat on the floor and gestured for Desire to sit but she refused.

"I cannot sir while you sit my lord, it is forbidden" She insisted.

"It's a command, Desire. Sit down" He asked

"I'm a slave, my lord. A slave who should know her place" Desire repeated

"Is this because of what I said?" He asked and Desire ignored him.

He stood up to look into her eyes.

"Little dove, you are not a slave, you are a housemaiden and also my Personal Maid" He gently placed a kiss on her forehead, making Desire blush.

Then, Desire remembered something, “I never promised to become a Personal Maid to you, my lord”

“It was never a bargain. Now sit Desire, don’t make me command you twice” He threatened.

Desire quickly sat, trying not to invoke his anger and wrath once more.

“What did your father tell you about the story?”

Sylvester asked.

“He said it was only a snake and that the whale was never a part of the story. He heard the story from his father’s father” Desire replied, feeling proud of herself for the first time.

“Since it happened in your region, then I’ll believe your own side of the story” Sylvester concurred.

They both remained silent, each deep in thought.

Sylvester wasn’t enjoying the type of effect that Desire was beginning to have on him. He was supposed to be in control but these days he doesn’t know if he can still control himself around her. He always longs to be by her side and listen to her humming or talking.

He turned to look at her and realized she had dozed off already. Her lips were pouted as a slight frown appeared on her face.

‘She’s beautiful’ Sylvester told himself.

He gently removed the pins used to pack her hair and let it fall down her waist. He patted her hair softly and tried waking her up, but Desire was too tired to wake.

Sylvester knew she had a really difficult and long day and he wasn’t planning on disturbing her beauty sleep.

He picked her up bridal style and made his way into the room, he gently placed her on the bed and used the woven thick blanket to cover her from the cold. He sat gently beside the bed and watched her for a few minutes before sleeping right beside her like he did the previous night.

Chapter 19

A slight stomach cramp hit Desire like a wave, and she woke up to see that she was on the bed again, she tried moving away but she couldn't.

Something was stopping her. A hand was thrown over her waist, stopping her from moving. When she traced the hand back to the owner, she realized it was Her master. She gasped loudly out of surprise.

She gently removed the hand from body and rushed into the bathroom. She flicked her head twice to punish herself for sleeping on the same bed with her master.

Just like the previous day, she tried remembering how she had ended up in bed with him but then she couldn't remember anything. She almost cursed herself as a result of her stupidity.

Desire heard a knock on the bathroom door, she jumped a little before gently opening the door. It was Sylvester.

His eyes were still droning in sleep with his scattered hair and his tired look. Desire though of how good he looked even in the early hours of the morning.

"Good morning, my lord" She greeted with her head bowed

"Okay, little dove. Are you okay? Are you hurt anywhere?" Desire was surprised at his question and she couldn't understand why he would ask if she was fine.

"I'm fine, my lord" Desire replied, still puzzled at his question.

Sylvester ran his eyes through her body to see where she was hurt, because if not, how can they explain the blood that was staining the bed.

"My lord?" Desire called out once he wasn't saying anything but just studying her.

"There's blood on the bed," Sylvester finally said.

Desire's eyes went wide in realization of what had happened. As a result of the different things that had been happening, she had forgotten that it was her time of the month.

She quickly moved back and locked the door sharply out of embarrassment .

"I'm deeply sorry my lord. I didn't mean to stain the bed, I promised to clean it up. I'm sorry" She kept on apologizing profusely.

"What is the matter exactly?" Sylvester asked, surprised about why she locked the door like that.

"It is nothing you should worry about, my lord" Desire told him.

"Little dove, is it your time of the month?" Sylvester guessed the only possible reason why she could be bleeding.

"Yes" Desire replied silently.

Soon after, the whole house was silent and Desire felt like drowning in her embarrassment.

She had stained the bed that her master was sleeping on and now she'll have to regret ever doing that. He probably left because he hated her for doing that. Tears rolled down her eyes as she realized her mistake.

She pinched her soft, white skin to see if she'll wake up from her nightmare but nothing happened.

She had crumbled to the floor of the bathroom not caring if she was staining the dress that her Queen had given to her. She just wanted the ground to open up and swallow her.

Few minutes passed and the next thing she heard was voices, it was Sylvester and Queen Naomi.

"You should leave, Sylvester. I'll handle this. You can take your bath at my chamber" Queen Naomi suggested but Sylvester was adamant. He needed to be sure that Desire was fine.

He stubbornly knocked on the door.

"Little dove, it's me. Open the door" He called out and Desire did as she was told. She opened the door but couldn't look her master in his eyes.

She was dying from embarrassment. Sylvester lifted her head with his fingers when he realized she wasn't going to look at him. He saw that her eyelashes were wet even though she closed her eyes. He longed to see her emerald eyes.

Sylvester suddenly stepped back and let his sister take over. Queen Naomi has come with one of her maids, who had already removed the blanket and went into the bathroom to wash it.

"It's fine, Desire. It's nothing to worry about. Stop the tears" Queen Naomi patted her cheeks and led her into the bathroom.

"How many days will it be?" Queen Naomi asked.

"Three days"

"That means you'll not be able to go out in those three days. Sometimes I hope the tradition was different"

Queen Naomi was referring to the custom and tradition of their region about the women during their time of the month. They are never allowed to mingle or associate with others as they believe

that women on their period are filthy and dirty. Most women do not go out of their rooms until it ended and some stupid men would refuse to see their wives or mothers during those times.

Any woman who goes out would be because of an emergency purpose and she'll have to tie a tiny pouch of sweet smelling herbs around her neck to absorb the smell. Most women had tried to kick against it but that hadn't changed the mind of the people.

"You'll have to wait for three days before seeing her again. You can stay at my chamber, Ying is there as well"

"Why?" Sylvester asked, irritated about her options.

"It is the tradition. You can't see her until after three days"

"I've already seen her this morning so what difference would it make?" Sylvester asked.

"Sylvester, please leave and come back when she's less embarrassed about this whole situation" Queen Naomi mumbled to him, trying not to let Desire hear what she was saying.

"Whatever Naomi" Sylvester hissed, picked up his necessary things and left.

When Queen Naomi returned to the bathroom, her maid had already helped Desire to remove her dress and she was already bathing with the warm water.

After she was done, Queen Naomi gave her the lint she would use during her period and Desire looked at it in admiration as they weren't allowed to use stuff like that back at the mansion.

"Thank you" Desire appreciated everything her queen had done for her.

"If you're really grateful, then stop with the tears. Why are you crying, Desire? Does it hurt that much? Do not worry about the pain, I've already ordered some of my maids to make you a soup that'll help relieve the pain" Queen Naomi explained.

"It's not the pain. I just feel like my master hates me now. I was stupid enough to stain his bed and get him so angry"

"You still don't understand anything that's going on, right?"

Queen Naomi asked with a wide smile on her beautiful face.

Chapter 20

Desire was indoor for three days without leaving the room or walking around the palace. It was only at nighttime that she'd come out and look at the stars with Ying insight and after that, she'd go back indoors.

Even though Queen Naomi was too busy to visit her during these three days as a result of the upcoming celebration of the King's birthday, she still sent some of her housemaiden over to the chamber to give her breakfast, lunch and dinner. Queen Naomi even made her maidens wait for her to finish eating and also engage her in some conversations.

Desire felt bored to death, she could only look out through the window during the day but she was not allowed to go out of the door. At that moment, she wanted to go back to the mansion, where other girls would check it on her once in a while or even sit to grieve about what was happening around the mansion.

On the third day which was the last day, Desire felt lighter and better. She was looking forward to the moment where she won't be put indoors for days. She knew she'll have the chance to go outside by tomorrow, so she slept with a happy heart and smiling face.

Sylvester walked into his chamber in the early hours of the morning from his sister's chamber. He had occupied one of the vacant rooms for his use as the place was much larger than his place.

He had dismissed Ying when he saw him still standing guard a few meters away from his palace and Sylvester even thanked him for having sleepless nights because he asked him to.

Sylvester entered the room and saw Desire sprawled out on the bed, gently snoring and sleeping soundly. Even though he longed to touch her, yet he didn't want to wake her up.

Sylvester made his way to the bathtub and washed himself off. Thinking about how hard he had worked at recruiting new soldiers and making quick trips to the outpost and back, he knew it was high time for the King to select a defense minister.

Sylvester felt something was off and fishy about the King and his new obsession of wars. He still couldn't pinpoint why they needed to prepare for war when a peace treaty had been signed successfully with more than fifteen regions a year back.

By the time Sylvester walked out of the bathroom, Desire had woken up. Desire smiled widely upon sighting him as he made his way out of the bathroom. He ignored her smile and went on to pick up a comb from the side of the room.

As he turned back, he saw Desire looking at his half naked form intensely. He frowned at her action and decided to call her to order even though he found it cute.

“Desire” He called out, getting her attention. She whipped her head up at the mention of her name.

“My lord” She called out, blushing badly, she knew she had been caught red handed, listing after her master.

“How do you feel?” He asked.

“Much better, my lord. I’ll love to apologize for the previous day. I’m so sorry I stained your bed. It was never my attention and I’ll accept any punishment for it”

Sylvester smiled at how naive she was and because she wasn’t looking at her master, she didn’t notice that he was smiling like never before.

“The only punishment suitable would be to send you back to the Harem ” Desire’s eyes widened at the mention of the place that She feared the most.

“My lord..” She looked up when she felt a side of the bed being pressed in. Sylvester was sitting right beside her.

“Look at me, Dove” Desire didn’t want to but he assured her that she’ll be fine. “Don’t ever again say sorry for something that you’re not capable of controlling. I’ll never chastise you for that type of thing”

“I thought you were angry”

“No, I wasn’t angry” Sylvester kept on staring into her emerald green eyes that kept him captivated.

His eyes ran through her face, getting him aroused like never before. He wanted her, he knew he couldn’t hide it anymore. This little girl was messing with his senses and he needed to get her out of his system.

“My lord, is everything——” Sylvester smashed his lips on hers swallowing her words. Desire was surprised as to what was going on.

Sylvester pulled her into his hands, his arms woven around her, his lips not leaving hers. He bit her lower lip lightly to gain full access to her mouth.

Once their tongue met, Desire shivered from the intense passion that ran through her body. She still couldn’t believe that her master was kissing her this way.

He soon lifted her up by her ass and placed her on his lap, his hands still holding her. He squeezed lightly getting a whimper from Desire in response.

He removed a hand from her ass and cupped her breast, making Desire moan out in pleasure. He stopped kissing her and started spreading kisses across her face, making her giggle until he got to her neck and started sucking, biting and licking. She bent her neck slightly giving him full access to her neck.

This turned Desire into a puddle. She was wet and she needed her master like she needed air.

'You still hate him' her subconscious reminded her and Desire fires back at herself that she never hated him.

Sylvester lifted up her dress and cupped her ass underneath the dress. He playfully ran his longest finger in between her thigh and Desire shudder.

He was about shifting her undergarment when the door was suddenly opened sending Desire into a state of panic. Sylvester still held her close, not letting go.

Queen Naomi bursted into laughter immediately she saw the position they were in. She knew she had a head with her brother from that moment on. He had always acted as if no woman had any effect on him after his first love but now, he was about swallowing Desire up.

"Sorry I walked in without knocking, but I need to take Desire with me" She apologized and still laughed after.

"There's a thing called knocking, which I guess you know about" Sylvester glared at his sister.

Desire had already buried her head in his shoulder out of embarrassment.

"I'll try it next time, for now, Desire needs to come with me, please"

"Fine! Leave first, she'll meet you outside"

Grudgingly, Queen Naomi walked out of the room.

Sylvester gently lifted her off his lap and helped her adjust her garment. He raised her chin up so she could look at me.

But Desire averted her gaze and was too embarrassed to even look at him

"Don't stay out too long," Sylvester instructed and he got off the bed.

Chapter 21

Later, Sylvester left his little dove in the care of his eccentric sister to make one of his little trips down to the outpost that was closest to the South of the region of light also known as the Southern region. Sylvester didn't really want to go, he wanted to stay back and spend all day indoors with his Personal Maid.

By the time Sylvester got there, the condition he met the soldiers was the poorest he could find. How can soldiers be dispatched to a place like this? The whole place looked more like a disease infested area and not a soldier's barrack.

As soon as he got here, he went on to look for their military head and let his presence be known. He felt sad at the gory sight of wounded soldiers, and dying ones.

"How May I help you?" The military head asked as soon as Sylvester stepped into his office.

"What happened to these soldiers?" He asked

The military chief gave him a weird look, he was surprised as to why a stranger was questioning him about the military work.

"I'm Sylvester Ho, the Prime minister" Sylvester quickly introduced himself to clear his suspicion or confusion.

"My lord, to what do we owe this visit?" The man quickly stood up and bowed in respect.

"We have successfully recruited some more soldiers and before we start dispatching them, I decided to make small trips to all outposts to see the condition they were in and what they'll need. But this is the worst I'd seen. What's happening here?"

"We've contacted the palace several times to ask for help but we got nothing in return and we're glad that you're here right now, my lord"

"Why are the men so wounded and sick? Are there no able bodied soldiers in here?" Sylvester asked.

"We do have able bodied soldiers but they're not more than a fifty and they all are on the training ground. We usually have the Barbarians attacking at any moment, leaving our men wounded and as a result of the lack of medical supplies, we lost most of them. The ones who managed to survive were the ones you saw, my lord"

"The Barbarians?"

Slyvester was surprised at the news.

This is the first time he'll be hearing of such an attack. The barbarians were known for their wild and dangerous behavior, they behaved more like animals and not humans, maybe because they've lived in forests all of their lives. They only occupy about two percent of their entire population.

"Once I get back to the palace, I'll relay all I've seen to the king and ensure that something is done about it" Slyvester looked around and realized the place might fall if care wasn't taken.

Deciding to at least do something before leaving, he asked, "is there any place I can get a builder? He should start work on these buildings and repair them"

The military head smiled and quickly tried to reply, "I'll take you to the one—"

The man was not able to finish his statement when a soldier barged into the door, scared and tired from probably running.

"Have you no respect? How can you barge into my office like this?"

"The bar—baria—ns are on th—eir way" The man stuttered out, making fear to grip the military head.

Before Slyvester could say anything, all he heard was loud noise emerging from outside of the building. When he looked through the window, he saw them dressed in rags, some holding daggers while others held either an arrow and bow or a sword.

The door leading to the room that Slyvester was suddenly opened loudly and a wild looking child barged in, looking at Slyvester murderously. Before he could lift up his sword to attack Slyvester, he disarmed him by using the rod he could find in the room to hit the boy hard on the hand.

The boy fell to the ground while Slyvester held the rod close to his neck and the only thing left was to put a bit more pressure and successfully send the rod running through his neck.

Slyvester wanted to interrogate him a bit and that was his mistake. As soon as the boy's father saw what was going on, he placed an arrow in his bow and shot at Slyvester hurting his hand.

Slyvester screamed out in pain and the Military head had to make him escape through the back escape route, sending him off on his horse with a little soldier to help get him back to the palace.

Meanwhile, Desire and Queen Naomi have gone to the market to buy fabrics that she'll give to the seamstress to make her a dress for the king's birthday.

It was during this time that Desire knew Queen Naomi has a strange taste in cloth. They visited more than five warehouses before the Queen finally settled on one and even insisted on getting Desire a new fabric so she'll also make a new dress.

Desire told her she had no intention of attending the birthday ceremony to avoid unnecessary attention to herself.

Queen Naomi agreed with her but she still insisted on getting her a new fabric Incase she later changed her mind and decided to attend the birthday celebration.

They returned back to the Queen's quarters hours later with different types of beautiful fabric. The seamstress was invited in by the Queen who instructed her on how to make both dresses.

"My Queen, I have to go back to my master's chamber before nightfall" Desire said, preparing to take her leave.

"Can't wait to go touch him again?" Queen Naomi teased and Desire blushed.

"I'm sure my master would not want such a repetition," Desire said bitterly.

"Do not worry about my brother, I can hook you up with other fine rich people" Desire's eyes widened out of surprise.

"I was joking, Desire." The Queen Laughed at her strange expression.

"Goodnight My Queen, I wish you a goodnight rest"

"You too Desire, goodnight"

As soon as Desire stepped out of the Queen's quarters, Ying was trailing right behind her. He followed her till she got to her Master's chamber and even sat with her when she decided to sit out front and wait for her master rather than stay indoors.

By nightfall, Desire was getting really worried about him.

"I hope he's fine" Desire declared

"He'll soon be here, do not worry" Ying assured her even though he was worried himself.

"Kim Chui said she'll love to see you again" Desire gasped and was excited to hear the news about her new friend.

"You visited her" Ying nodded.

"She looks forward to seeing you again"

"I'll love to see her too. Thank you Ying"

Ying was confused as to why she was thanking him. He had gone there for himself not for her.

Slyvester's Ho's horse approaches his chambers sending both Desire and Ying to their feet. He was already dizzy and weak from the loss of too much blood.

A bandage was woven around his hand, covered in blood and upon seeing it, Desire quickly covered her mouth with her hand as tears ran down her pretty face.

Ying helped Sylvester down his horse while the other soldier left after ensuring he was safe with Ying and Desire.

“Help him get indoors while I get the healer,” Ying instructed Desire.

She threw Sylvester's better arm around her neck to help him get into the room. By the time they stepped into the chamber, Sylvester collapsed on the floor, scaring life out of Desire.

She screamed and quickly put his head on her lap, crying bitterly.

Sylvester slightly opened his eyes and saw his little dove crying her eyes out. He touched her chin lightly.

“You're even beautiful when you cry” He teased before his hands slipped off her chin as he lost consciousness for the second time.

Chapter 22

Once Desire realized Ying and the healer was not in sight, she quickly ran into the bathroom and got the same ointment and herb that her master had used on her the other day. She also took a bucket of water and two pieces of cloth.

By the time she got back to his side, he had woken up again, looking so frail and weak.

Desire helped him up to rest against the wall. With tears in her eyes, she put the cloth into the bucket of water, wriggled the water out and placed it on his head, trying to reduce his temperature.

“What are you doing?” Sylvester asked weakly

“I don’t know but I just can’t sit still and do nothing” Desire replied with tears running down her eyes s

Sylvester wanted to tell her that she shouldn’t cry so much, that he was going to be fine but he was too tired to open his mouth.

Desire removed the bandage woven around his arm to see that he was seriously bleeding from the spot.

“Was it an arrow?” Desire asked and Sylvester nodded.

“How did you get yourself shot? You always yell at me for being careless, for walking in the dark, why didn’t you also yell at yourself to stay off dangerous places” Desire screamed at him bitterly earning a smile from a weak Sylvester.

She glared at him for thinking it was funny.

Desire used the other piece of cloth to clean the blood off his arm until it was clean enough to put an ointment on. She also used her hand to squeeze a large amount of herb and applied it on the wound spot to avoid infection and excessive bleeding.

Once she realized that she had successfully stopped the blood from flowing as much as before, she got one of the lint that the queen had given her and placed it on the wound, used a tiny piece of cloth to wrap around it to avoid it from falling.

By the time she was done, Sylvester was already sleeping. She didn’t know how she’d get him to the bed and at that moment of confusion, Ying barged in through the door.

“The healer was not in his place and I tried looking for him but no one knew where he went,” Ying explained, looking worried.

"I've managed to stop the bleeding and I need to get him into bed" Ying nodded and helped her lift him up to set him on the bed.

"I can stitch him up but I do not have the necessary equipment" Desire confessed, making Ying look at the tiny woman in admiration.

Ying knew Sylvester to keep stuff like that around the house, so he checked through his belongings and finally found the little pouch where he kept it.

"Is that enough to do the job?" Ying asked as he gave her the pouch, she checked it and nodded.

"I need a bucket of warm water" Ying dashed out of the house to get hot water from the palace kitchen and by the time he got back, the water had turned warm.

Desire threw the suture into the water first then removed the lint on the wound and also got rid of the herb on it and began stitching him up. Sylvester tried struggling when she started because of the pain but Ying was there to hold him down.

Not long after, Desire was able to finally stitch him up and use her last bundle of lint to cover up the wound. They washed up their hands and everything used.

Ying left her in the room with Sylvester to go sit at the outer part of the chamber where Desire later joined him.

"Where did you learn to stitch like that?" Ying asked her.

"My master only just got paid back for his goodwill. My master usually let his servants pick up a skill while attending to the house chores. Most girls go for weaving while some chose cooking or maybe fighting but I'd always admired the healer who was living in the mansion with us. I was allowed to learn under him for two to three months" Desire explained.

"Now I understand why the stitching wasn't neat" Desire could have laughed on a regular day but she only smiled.

"I hope he gets better," Desire confessed her fear with a shaking voice.

"He will be better. Go back inside the room and sleep, just scream my name if you need anything"

Ying advised but Desire wasn't ready to go back yet. She was scared she'll start crying when she gets back inside.

"How did you two meet? I mean you and my master?"

"We've been friends since we were little boys and it has stayed that way since then" Ying explained.

"I don't imagine someone sticking to his side that long. He's strange; one minute he's cold, the next he's as angry as a wild bull and the next he's the nicest person you've ever met in your entire life. You're such a good friend, Ying" Desire lamented.

"You're also a loyal servant, Desire. Go to bed, I insist" Ying dismissed her.

As she walked back in, Ying could only praise her strength. He was surprised that such a tiny woman could take control of a scary situation like that and fixed everything. No wonder Sylvester was so protective of her.

Desire didn't want to sleep on the bed, afraid that she'll hurt him even more by mistakenly touching his wound.

She placed an extra cloth on the floor and slept on the cold floor. By the time it was day break, Desire had cuddled into the wall, hugging her legs tight to her chest. She had shivered from cold through the night and her hands were as cold as ice.

She suddenly felt someone rubbing her hand, trying to make it warm. She grudgingly opened her eyes and saw that it was her master.

Suddenly, she threw her hands around his neck and started weeping. Sylvester was wriggling in pain but he didn't show it as he couldn't make himself push her off.

"You're alive! You're fine" Desire cried.

"I couldn't leave you looking as if I died for more hours. Also, If I die, you'll have to be someone else's housemaid and I can't afford for that to happen" He joked and smiled.

Sylvester smashed his lips on hers, kissing her passionately, taking her breath away.

Chapter 23

Slyvester walked back to the bed, unable to handle Desire's tears anymore. He had done everything possible to make her stop crying but Desire wasn't yielding.

"Why are you still crying?" Slyvester asked her for the umpteenth time.

"I was so scared that something terrible had happened to you"

It was after Slyvester stopped kissing her that Desire saw that it was day time already, she had slept all through the night till midday. It was a first for her and it got her thinking about how she could sleep so peacefully when someone was dying right beside her.

"But I'm here and there's nothing wrong with me. I'm not going to die just like that" Slyvester argues

"You can't talk like that. You almost died yesterday, do you even know how scared I was?" Desire cried out.

Slyvester laughed at her words; he was still surprised and caught off guard about how his little dove could stand up to him this way.

"Stop laughing, it's not funny" Desire glared at him and stood up to start walking towards his room.

Sylvester pulled her back with his other arm and made her sit on his lap.

"You're beginning to disrespect me too much, Little Dove" He jokingly corrected her and before he could blink, She stood up from his lap.

"My lord, I'm so sorry. I was out of line and I never meant to disrespect you. Next time you should try to kill yourself and see if I'll be there to respect you in heaven" Desire screamed at him and barged into the bathroom.

Slyvester, despite the pain he was going through, couldn't contain his laughter. It was weird how she could change from being so submissive to being so stubborn and angry. She looked like a fury cat when angry and she was so beautiful.

Queen Naomi barged into the room, earning a glare from Slyvester.

"Naomi, we talked about knocking. I could be doing something private" He chastised his sister.

"Is that important right now? I know you don't like me anymore but then you shouldn't hate me enough to keep your health status private" She cried out.

“That’s not the point, Naomi. Try knocking when you enter—” Before he could finish his word, Naomi slapped him hard on the cheek.

“Shut up! Shut up! You almost died and all you want me to care about is knocking. I can even break the door for all I care. For years, I tried reaching out to you but you never showed that you care a bit about me and then you get hurt and you think I’ll act like you, never Sylvester. Never!”

Ying had already walked into the room oblivious of what had happened while he watched Queen Naomi crumble into the floor.

“You can see that I’m fine, Naomi! There’s nothing wrong with me. I was hurt, yes, but now I’m fine, okay? You shouldn’t worry about anything” Queen Naomi threw her hands around her brother’s neck, hugging him tightly while crying into his neck.

When Ying had told her about what happened to Sylvester, she had first rushed to the King’s quarters to lash him for sending her brother on a journey of death and still didn’t care if he died or lived. The king tried to pacify her but nothing worked. She ran out of his quarters and walked all the way to Sylvester’s chambers.

Desire came out of the bathroom to see Queen Naomi hugging her brother and crying. She felt sad for them both. She had no clue about why Sylvester hated his sister but she wished he got to love her as before.

“The king is on his way here” Ying informed Sylvester.

He nodded at Ying and tried removing his sister from his body, “Take her back to her quarters. I’ll be there later”

Before Ying and Queen Naomi could walk out of the room, the King walked in with his entourage of ministers in tow. Before the King could sight her, Desire ran back into the bathroom. She wasn’t ready to face the King all over again.

“My King” Sylvester stood up and bowed as soon as he saw the King.

“Sit, Sylvester” The King commanded. He later checked on his wound to see if it was something serious.

“I thought you were near death for Naomi to make such a fuss about it” Desire couldn’t believe her ears. “It’s nothing serious and your sister wanted to kill me”

“I’m really sorry for making her bother you, your highness. It was never my intention. You should have summoned me to your palace and I would’ve been there without hesitation” Sylvester explained.

“What happened in the south?” The King asked. He also looked around to see if any other person was present aside from him and his ministers, raising Sylvester’s suspicion.

“My betrothed is in the bathroom, your highness but I don't think she'll hear any of our conversation”

“If that is the case, can I go in and watch her bath naked? That'll be a good sight Sylvester. I love pretty and smart girls”

Sylvester clenched his fist out of anger. He couldn't let his anger show but he clenched his teeth so hard it hurts.

The King suddenly laughed out and most of its subjects laughed along with him.

“It was just a joke, Minister Ho but it might not be a joke, next time” Sylvester remained silent, with a storm starting in his head.

“Tell me Sylvester, what happened in the south?” Sylvester clenched his jaw and started narrating what happened over there to the King. He mentioned the state of the buildings and the condition he met most soldiers, how the Barbarians had attacked them and how they attacked while he was there.

“Okay, I will see you in three days at my banquet” That was the only comment the king made before leaving Sylvester’s chamber.

Desire finally came out of the bathroom several minutes after the king left, pulling Sylvester out of his deep thoughts.

“I don't like him at all. He's your king, but he's not my favorite person, my lord” Desire nagged and sat down on the bed, far away from her master.

“He's not my favorite person either” He replied.

Before nightfall, Desire had helped him to dress his wound and also took his bath. Sylvester had insisted she follow him to the bathroom but as stubborn as Desire was, she refused.

The argument went on for minutes, until Sylvester decided to give up knowing how stubborn his little dove was and just how much he wanted to stop threatening her into doing things for him.

One of the Queen's housemaiden brought dinner for the two and waited till after they finished eating before leaving. Desire was surprised about how her master had made her eat from the same plate as him.

By nightfall, Desire helped Sylvester to get ready for the night.

“What are you doing?” Sylvester asked when he saw Desire hoofing an extra blanket to the floor

“Sleeping, my lord” she simply replied.

“Come here” Sylvester patted the side of the bed

“I don’t want to hurt your arm, my lord”

“I insist”

Desire gave up this time and went on to sleep on the side of the bed. Sylvester pulled her close and kissed her hair.

“I sleep better when you’re beside me. Did I ever say thank you for saving my life?”

“It’s not necessary, my lord”

“Thank you, little dove” By the thing he finally got himself to say it, Desire was dozing off already and she could only hum in response.

“You’re my favorite person” Sylvester whispered to an already sleeping Desire.

Chapter 24

The day of the king's birthday finally arrived and before then, noblemen, dignitaries, the rich, wealthy and powerful had already tripled into the palace to celebrate the king's birthday.

It was a massive celebration as different dance groups, display groups, those who performed with peacocks, snakes, lions and dragons all came out in their full numbers to wish the king a great and happy birthday.

Desire wasn't able to see Queen Naomi during those past three days because of how busy she was. Even though Sylvester Ho was hurt, the King didn't care, he still made sure he sent him on errands. Either to attend to a dignitary or make sure a powerful magician is given a nice place to stay.

Whenever he arrived at night, Desire would've been sleeping already and all he'll do is sleep next to her and by the time Desire wakes up by morning, he's gone.

Desire longed to talk about what happened between them but she never had the chance. She felt him distancing himself from her but she kept on giving an excuse that it was because of how busy he's gotten.

"You May come in" Desire called out after she heard a knock on the door.

The same handmaiden that the Queen had always sent to her came into the room, holding an elegant ball dress in hand with a pair of beautiful sandals and a necklace that shines like Gold.

Desire couldn't stop looking at the dress and everything they were holding. She loved it already.

"The Queen said you should wear it to the ceremony and that we should help you to get ready as soon as possible, the ceremony would soon start and she'll love to walk in with you" The handmaiden relayed the message to her.

"Okay, shall we begin?" Desire asked and the girls nodded, smiling at her.

Desire went into the bathroom, took a thorough bath. This time she didn't scoop the water with her hands, she actually used the traditional bath tub, soaked herself in the water so that her skin could shine brighter and better.

Once she emerged out of the water, she let the housemaiden moisturize her skin with the ointment, dress her up in the beautiful, elegant dress, decorated her hair with flowers and used some of the beauty products on her face.

After they were done, she checked herself out in the mirror, and she was satisfied that her look would please her master. He would be so happy once he sees her and she'll be happy that he was happy.

Desire left with the housemaidens to join the Queen at the entrance to the hall. She bowed in respect to both Queen Naomi and Queen Beibei that she met there.

"I see that you're still alive, Naomi" The first Queen said, glaring hard at her.

"Since I didn't die like you wanted, I'll always be here to torment your soul" Naomi returned the bad words of the first queen.

"You wait until I finally kill you. It would be the least of the time you expect" Queen Beibei threatened and Naomi laughed.

Desire didn't see the reason why it was funny to Naomi when she was scared by the threat.

"Let's hope I don't tell the king about your secret affair by then. I might even make it my will, you know. If I die, Queen Beibei, you'll go down too"

The first queen wanted to say something but she couldn't as her name was called for her to enter into the ceremonial hall.

"This isn't over, Naomi"

"I never even said it had begun" Ayeen Naomi replied glaring at the First Queen.

It was only after the Queen had left that Naomi could breathe perfectly. The first Queen had always managed to scare Desire and turn her into a puddle of mess anytime she saw her.

"You shouldn't let her affect you that much, Desire. She's just an empty can. That wench!"

Before Desire could say anything, Queen Naomi's entrance into the ceremonial hall was announced and she entered the same way she had done during the banquet organized for the prince.

Queen Naomi was a beautiful woman who had always managed to gain the attention of noble men wherever she went but the fact that another beautiful woman was right beside her, it made her appear more beautiful and powerful.

Queen Naomi made her way to her seat at the left hand side of the king as usual while Desire joined Sylvester at the right hand side of the King. She sat quietly at his feet and when she turned to look at him, he was looking everywhere but her.

His attitude bothered Desire. She had looked this beautiful for me and again, he wasn't even sparing her a glance.

The town crier started by introducing the various important guests that had come, bearing gifts for the king.

Different ones trooped in one after the other, introduced themselves to the king and also showed him the gifts that they bought with them.

Some came bearing arrows, some came with the skin of tigers, some came with Swords made from far away countries where civilization was already at its highest peak while others came with money, different currencies to appease and celebrate with the king.

The performers were called in one after the other as well, to give their best for their king. Once the performances were over, the king stood up to give an appreciative speech to everyone who came.

“The people of my land had shown me so much respect today and I’m glad to be your reigning king. To everyone who gave me gifts of different kinds, I will return the favor as well someday. I will implore each and every household to make sure a son of yours joins the army because it is time for this region to grow in power. It is time we take over the surrounding regions and make us the most powerful and greatest region ever in the world. On this day, I, King Li, declare war on every region that refuses to submit to me”

His speech caused gasps and worry from everyone present. Sylvester wasn’t surprised as he knew the King was planning something and he only used them as a part of his scheme.

“Let everyone who do not wish to be a part of this glorious fight leave and never show their faces in my palace anymore”

The whole hall was silent as everyone was scared to leave, fearing the king might kill them if they left.

“I, Sylvester Ho, prime minister and son of the first Prime Minister of the land, remove myself from being a partaker of such. Not after I signed a peace treaty and promised to keep the other regions safe. As a noble and loyal man, I shall not go back on my promise”

Sylvester walked out, without fear and without looking back to hear if the king had anything else to say.

Chapter 25

“My lord,” Desire rushed into the room to see Sylvester packing up his clothes and every other thing he had brought to the palace.

“Pack your luggage, we’re going back to the mansion” He commanded.

Desire noticed his jaw was clenched, knowing he was really angry at how things had turned out, she wanted to pacify him and calm him down a bit.

“My lord,” Desire called out gently this time. “Please, can you sit for a while?” She asked.

Sylvester turned to face her and once Desire saw the look in his eyes, she realized she had made the mistake of trying to calm him down.

“If you call my name one more time, Desire. You will see my wrath. I gave you a really simple instruction and all you do is ask me to sit. That person over there just turned a work of years into waste. I worked so hard to make sure there was peace with each and every surrounding region and that man just declared war on them. If he thinks this war would only affect others, then he’s mistaken, because we, the people will suffer just as much as they would” He finished talking, turned from Desire and continued packing.

“If you know what’s good for you, start packing or I might leave you here to whatever fate you’ll have”

Desire moved closer to him and before he could turn, she hugged him from the back, her hands woven around his body to join together just above his stomach.

She gently placed her head on his back as she could feel how heavy his breathing was. Her eyes were already filled with tears for fear of what Sylvester could do when he’s angry but she didn’t care, she just needed him to calm down.

“What are you doing, Sylvester?” Queen Naomi yelled out, making Desire remove herself from his body, instantly missing his body warmth.

“What does it look like?” He said, glaring at her. He turned to face Desire and told her to start packing her bags again.

Desire obliged and started packing.

“Sylvester please, do not declare a war on yourself. He might harm you, brother” The Queen pleaded.

“Harm you say. He knows that I know too much for him to hurt. He has done enough damage to our family and I wouldn’t sit back and watch him destroy this region while I watch with folded arms. War never ends, Naomi. All you know is the start of it, you never know the end”

He picked up his packed bags as Ying collected Desire’s bag and walked her out of the room with Sylvester and Naomi behind them.

“I can’t protect you here, Naomi. You need to come back to the mansion with me, that’s the only way I can save and protect you from any harm” Sylvester suggested and Desire wished Naomi would say yes to the offer.

“I can’t go with you, Sylvester. My place is here now” Naomi replied.

“Then good luck to you. I’ll be taking Ying with me and you’ll never see me again sister. Don’t you dare come running to me when there’s trouble? Because you keep on choosing that bastard at all times” He threatened.

“What about her?” Naomi said pointing to Desire. “Can she stay?”

“Choose Desire” Sylvester commanded.

Desire was torn between both siblings; she loved Naomi with all her heart but she knew she couldn’t stay in the palace. She couldn’t betray her master like that.

“As your place is here, my queen, so also is my place right beside my master. I have an obligation to pay for the mansion and I can’t betray it like this. I’m sorry, my Queen”

Queen Naomi threw her hands around Desire, hugging her tight to her, before a lone tear dropped from her eye.

“Take care of yourself, my queen and please be careful always”

“You too, Desire. Stay safe out there as well”

Both friends waved farewell and left the spot teary eyed.

Sylvester placed Desire right on his horse before climbing to sit beside her and they started the journey back to the mansion.

Desire wasn’t feeling giddy as she felt the first time she rode with Sylvester. This time she was emotionally drained and angry at the turn of events. They spotted the Harem at a short distance from them when an Idea suddenly came to Desire.

“My lord, can we please stop at the Harem? I wish to see a friend before I return to the mansion”

“No!” Sylvester replied sharply, shutting Desire up.

As they got to the front of the Harem, Sylvester stopped his horse, making Ying stop his own horse as well.

He got down from the horse and helped Desire down before mounting the horse back.

“Ying will stay with you, be back before night falls” He said, not looking at Desire. Before Desire could say thank you, he rode off faster than they had cane.

“Let’s go in” Ying tied his horse up at a corner and led Desire into the Harem. They asked the first woman they saw who led them to Kim Chui’s room.

“Desire” Kim Chui lunged herself around Desire’s neck upon sighting her.

“I’m so happy to see you again, Kim Chui”

“You look so radiant, Desire. You look more like royals now”

Ying had already rested his back against a wall as he watched the two women admonishing each other.

“You look amazing yourself, Kim Chui. I just wanted to see you again before I go back to the mansion”

“I hear the cry of war at every corner, Desire. I’m scared for our region”

“Me too, Kim. Can I change my dress here?” Desire asked, cutting both Kim Chui and Ying off guard.

“Why?” Ying asked

“I can’t go back to the mansion looking like this. I need to put on my regular clothes right now so as to resume my position as the housemaiden” Desire explained.

“Did Sylvester instruct you to do this?” Ying questioned.

“No, but I just feel it is the right thing to do” Desire replied

Ying excused her from the room and waited outside the Harem. Both Desire and Kim Chui came out later holding hands and smiling. By the time Desire reappeared, she looked like a regular servant and not who she was when she entered.

“Please keep the dress with you Kim Chui, it’ll be useful someday” Kim Chui nodded and hugged her. “Thank you for helping me that day”

“I’ll do it a million times” Kim Chui replied and hugged her once more.

“If you ever need help with anything, just come to the mansion, I’ll make sure to help in any way that I can” Ying promised Kim Chui who in turn blushed at his comment.

“Goodbye for now, Kim” Desire mounted the horse with the help of Ying and they both left for the mansion.

Kim Chui waved at them until they were out of sight and she quickly joined her hands together in prayer for their safe return to the mansion.

Chapter 26

Desire and Ying got back to the mansion hours later and Desire couldn't hide how happy she was to return to this place. The mansion might not have had good memories but this place was home. Her friends were here especially the assistant court lady, Lady Nor who was like a mother to her and all other girls.

Unknown to Desire, the Mansion had increased in number and out of those new faces were those that welcomed her and those that didn't.

Immediately Desire stepped into the house, about five girls ran to meet her, held her hand and told her of how much they've missed her.

"You look so beautiful, Desire" one of the girls, named Fei complimented and Desire could only smile.

"So do you, My friend" Desire politely replied.

"Where have you been? I thought the master banished you. Even some evil people said the master had killed you or have you sent to the Harem " Another girl asked.

They were all curious to know where Desire had been for her to look so radiant and beautiful. She was not as bony as before, her cheeks were now rounded, her boobs bigger and her hips had widened. Even her white skin was glowing.

"I've been fine, everyone. I'll tell you all about it later" Desire replied politely while smiling at all of them.

Ying suddenly appeared in front of her and gave her the bag that contained all of her stuff, once more, the girls were curious as to why Desire had such a bag. It was rare to be seen among the poor.

"Thank you, Ying" Desire thanked him, not just for the bag but also for everything he had done so far. Ying nodded in understanding and walked away.

"Who was that man that just came here? Is he your lover? He's so handsome"

They all asked one question after the other and it was difficult for Desire to answer them all. They hadn't even allowed her to move an inch or sit. They all were eager to hear her story.

"He's not my lover and don't let our master hear you say that. He's our master's very good friend and he's a nice person but no, he's not my lover" Desire explained strictly and the girls nodded.

“Your hair is so soft and shiny, what type of cream have you been using, Desire?” Another set of questions came in, getting Desire exhausted already. She needed to rest from the long journey but she knew it wasn’t going to be possible at any time.

“Do any of you wish to spend the night in the dark room?” The girls all trembled at the sound of the voice.

They knew who it was but they didn’t dare to turn around and look.

It was the court lady,

Out of fear, they remained standing still at a point and even a particular was shaking in fear as a result of the bad memory she has of the dark room.

“We’re sorry, my lady. We were only trying to welcome Desire back into the mansion” One of them explained.

“Because she just came back from the mission of saving the King’s head, right?” She asked screaming at the naive girls.

“I apologize on their behalf, my lady. We’re sorry we caused such a ruckus in the mansion, we’ll all get back to our duty immediately” Desire intervened, trying to put out the fire.

“I never asked you to speak, you little wench” The woman insulted Desire, reminding her of the first Queen.

Desire smiled and said nothing in return.

“We’re sorry, my lady” They all chorused together hoping that’ll calm her down.

“Now back to your duties and you, Desire, drop your bag in your room and join those cooking the master’s dinner” Desire nodded and left with the rest of the girls, each separating on the way to attend to their various activities.

Desire washed her hands and face before joining them in the kitchen. She thought about Sylvester for a minute but quickly controlled herself and reminded herself that she was back at the mansion and she should know her status.

She threw her hands around the waist of the first person she saw, the one person she misses most in the mansion; Lady Nor.

“Bless me God! Is this my girl? Desire! I thought something bad had happened to you, little one” Lady Nor cried out, glad she was able to see Desire again.

“As you can see, I’m fine ma” She replied smiling.

“Yes, you are and I’m so glad. Bless you my child. You look just as beautiful as always”

“Thanks ma” the woman touched her face with her palm and kissed her forehead.

“Now let’s get to work before the snow queen freezes us with her coldness” She joked earning a laugh from Desire.

She instructed Desire on what to do; she had to chop the vegetables properly at precise sizes to avoid annoying their master.

She was washing the vegetables when a strange girl walked into the kitchen, looking around suspiciously at everything they were doing.

She was putting on a different housemaiden uniform, with her blonde hair tied with a rope that had the same color as her cloth. Her face was heavy with different colors reminding Desire of the peacock she saw at the king’s birthday.

“Make sure you wash those vegetables properly and do not make a mistake of misplacing any of them. I heard your clumsiness sent you out of this place at first, so be careful this time because the master might kill you”

She threatened and walked out of the kitchen as Fei trailed after her with disgust.

“Who is that?” Desire asked Fei who had joined them in the kitchen.

“Someone I’ll derive joy in pushing down a well. She calls herself Gin and she’s a housemaiden for a different household but the problem is she thinks she owns this place. I’m patiently waiting for the day she clashes with the court lady, that’ll be my happiest day but since the court lady is avoiding her mistress’s wrath, we just have to seal our lips” Fei explained.

“Who is her mistress?” Desire transferred the vegetables from the washing basin to the cutting board.

“A visitor of the mansion. She sought our master and had to go on a short trip since the master took so long to return. I heard she should be back by tonight” Lady Nor explained.

“I even heard that she’s the master’s betrothed” Desire stopped cutting the vegetables as soon as Fei said the word betrothed.

“I heard one of master’s men talking to the other that they’ve been betrothed since they were teenagers”

Chapter 27

Desire hand holding the knife stopped for a few minutes, she was surprised at what Fei had just said. Her master was already betrothed! Is that why it was so easy for him to lie to the king?

Was she just being a replacement for the real person?"

Thousands of questions can run through her mind. She rubbed her chest as the pain of hurt hit her hard. She dropped the knife for a while and got herself a cup of water to drink.

"Desire, are you okay? You suddenly went pale" Lady Nor asked.

"I'm fine ma, thank you. I just feel really tired from the long journey" Desire half-lied

Even though she was truly tired, it wasn't the major reason why she went pale. It was the reality of life that hit her like a cold bucket of water.

"Okay darling, I have some of those green tea with me, you should take it before you go to bed. Now, let's get this done quickly, the master is waiting" Lady Nor instructed and the three of them went back to work.

They were in the kitchen when the court lady suddenly walked in, murmuring incoherent words with her hand folded against her chest.

"Are you done? Is his dinner ready?" She asked

"Almost, we just need to put it on plates for him. Fei, get the cutleries out" Fei nodded and started to bring out the cutleries before Desire joined her to perfectly arrange them on the trolley so Fei could take it to him.

"Nor," The court lady suddenly called out,

"Yes, my lady" Lady Nor replied.

"The next time you see that twig called Gin walk into this place like she owns it, make sure you use her head to mop the toilet's water. It's not even as if the master fancies her mistress"

Fei and Desire started laughing and for the first time, the court lady didn't scream at that.

Desire was a little bit relieved that her master didn't fancy this strange woman but still questions were still running through her head.

Fei was finally happy that the court lady was ready to give Gin her share of her snow queen attitude and she was ready to see it.

It was supposed to be another set of servants who would set the table but since it was late at night and only the housemaidens were actually needed, the rest were left to sleep leaving just a few lurking around the mansion.

While Desire and Lady Nor dished out their master's food in the trolley in perfect sequence and also added the food of the mistress separately, Fei went on to arrange the cutleries and water in his suit.

Before Fei went out, they saw Ying walk into the kitchen searching for something. It was until his eyes set on Desire that he stopped searching. He walked out back when he realized she was busy.

Fei walked up to her master's room and knocked. She had to, regardless of the argument that was going on inside the room; it was forbidden for her to stay there and eavesdrop.

"If you think you can leave and then waltz back into my life like you own it, then forget it, it's impossible" Sylvester screamed at whoever it was.

"You know why I did what I did, Sylvester"

Fei knocked again and this time, Sylvester opened the door but not without replying.

"That's not an excuse, Fang, moreover, I have better things on my hand right now"

Fei walked in with the trolley, reading to see the table for dinner.

"Take it back downstairs, I'll eat on the dining table" Fei nodded at the instruction of her master:

"Add mine too, I'll have it there as well," Fang added.

Fei wanted to put her in her place but then she remembered she was just a slave and this Fang might not be fancied by their master but she might be respected in another part of the world.

If she should be beheaded for insulting a rich woman, it should be in her father's land and not a strange land.

Before she returned to the kitchen, she arranged the dining area first, then went on to inform the others about the new development.

"Master wants his dinner served on the dining table. The mistress's name is Fang. No wonder!" She gave more than they needed.

"Fang?" The court lady pronounced the name as if it was an abomination.

By the time Lady Nor, Desire and Fei emerged from the kitchen, Sylvester Ho, Ying and Fang were already sitting, ready to eat their dinner.

The three ladies began arranging the table and Fang almost pushed Fei because she was too extremely close to her while trying to put a spoon near her hand.

The food was placed on the table next and the three ladies stepped back to give them some breathing space and have their dinner in peace.

Sylvester's eye didn't for once leave Desire as she was arranging the table. Anger arose inside of him as he saw her in that uniform. He realized that he preferred her in dresses than this. He was mad that she didn't wait for his instruction before putting it back on.

"Why are you wearing that?" He asked, ignoring his dinner.

"Same question I asked, Sylvester," Ying replied, confusing everyone as to what was going on.

"You shouldn't have just asked a question, Ying. You should have helped me to rip it off her body with a knife"

Desire wanted to smile at his comment but she quickly composed herself and feign ignorance.

"Somebody get me a knife!" Sylvester screamed and the court lady went into the kitchen to get the master a knife.

"Come here!" He instructed not looking at Desire, confusing everyone present including the maidens of Fang. No one knew who he was referring to except the person.

Desire gingerly stepped closer to her master, as the knife was given to him.

"I don't have all day, move faster" Desire looked at Ying for help but he just smiled at her, knowing Sylvester wouldn't tear her clothes off publicly like that.

Once she was close enough, he pulled her closer by the hem of her dress, held up the knife and smirked at her.

"You dare do something without my order"

"I'm sorry, My lord. I thought it was the right thing to do" Desire apologized.

"When have you ever done the right thing?" He asked, earning Desire's smile.

"I do try sometimes, my lord"

"You stitched me up like a spider web the other day, right?" Ying busted into heavy laughs at a reminder of how the stitches had looked, getting a hard glare from Desire.

"It was as a result of the situation, my lord"

"Then, cutting this dress would be my revenge" He held up the knife to show her.

Everyone present was surprised at how the two of them were easily talking as if they've known each other for years but the daggers Fang were sending Desire with her eyes were noticeable.

"The Queen wouldn't approve of such an act, my lord. She said "You are supposed to be a gentleman" Desire whined.

Sylvester smiled at her silliness. Even though he had ignored her these past few days which was unfair, he knew he missed her.

"Look at me, dove" he implored and even Desire could talk, Fang interrupted.

"You know that is forbidden, Sylvester. How is she supposed to respect you if you keep on talking to mere Slaves like this?" She screamed.

"The next time you open your mouth to scream at me, I'll be ripping your inside out with this knife. Try me Fang! Try me and see that I never go back on my words"

Chapter 28

“The next time you open your mouth to scream at me, I’ll be ripping your inside out with this knife. Try me Fang! Try me and see that I never go back on my words” Sylvester threatened Fang, embarrassing her. She quickly tied her tongue and stopped talking.

She always thought she could control Sylvester, which was the main reason why she decided to turn up at his mansion unannounced. But what she didn’t realize was that Sylvester had uncovered all of her secrets during his stay at the palace and he hates her more than any other thing.

Sylvester dropped the knife and started eating silently until Desire wanted to move back again. He glared at her, making her stop on the spot as he stared into her emerald green eyes.

“Those eyes,” he trailed off but quickly stopped himself. “Have you eaten?” He asked instead.

“Yes, my lord” even though She lied, her stomach couldn’t help but grumble out in hunger.

“You’re lying. Sit down here” He pointed to the seat next to him.

“My lord, I’ll eat once you’re done” Desire refused his offer.

“Don’t make me repeat myself or you wouldn’t like it”

Out of respect for her master, she reluctantly sat down next to him.

“Someone should get me an extra plate,”

Sylvester demanded and Fei quickly went into the kitchen to get a plate as well as some cutlery. She gave it to her master who scooped some of his food and also took the ones left in the big plate for Desire to eat.

“Eat” He commanded and focused back on his food. It was only when he turned that he realized she hadn’t touched the food.

“What’s wrong?” He had initially wanted to scream at her but when he saw the sad look in her eyes, he quickly controlled his temper.

“It wouldn’t be fair on others if I eat. We all worked hard together to make the dinner, my lord. That was why I insisted on eating later” Desire explained.

Sylvester nodded in understanding and decided to dismiss everyone of his workers except Fang’s house maids to eat their dinner and explained further that he’ll call them if he needed anything.

Fang never thought she'd see a day that a woman would have so much effect on Sylvester. Even the housemaids were so surprised at their master's new attitude.

"Thank you, my lord" Desire smiled at her master and started eating. He kept on staring at her and wondered how much her smile affected him.

By the time everyone on the table was done, the housemaids had all returned ready to clean up. Desire stood up and joined them, placing the dirty plates in the washing basin while the leftover dishes were returned to the trolley.

Sylvester stood up, moved closer to Desire, placed his hot lips on her ear, causing a cold shiver to run down her spine.

"Before you go to bed tonight, come to my room" He instructed.

"Yes master" Desire replied.

Ying thanked the housemaids for dinner before walking out of the dining area behind Sylvester. They had a lot to do and they couldn't waste more time on dinner.

"What happened between you and master, Desire?" Fei asked, curious to know why their master fancies her so much.

"Nothing really happened" Desire replied, not wanting to go into full details, afraid that it might cause a serious controversy if she did.

"That wasn't nothing, Desire. He looked at you the same way I look at food"

It wasn't news that Fei could eat anything as long as it is labeled food. She wouldn't care if it was poisonous or not but long as it is plenty enough to satisfy her, she's good.

"You better stop chit chatting and get back to work, I need to sleep early myself" The court lady chastised then as the two girls continued washing the plates used.

Fang suddenly came into the kitchen and kept on staring at Desire, making the poor girl wonder if she had suddenly grown two heads.

"You seduced him, didn't you?" She suddenly asked, gaining everyone's attention.

"I did nothing of the sort, my lady," Desire replied politely.

"Nothing of the sort, you say? What I just witnessed out there is not nothing, Slave" Fanged suddenly banged the table "Your foolishness is so funny, slave. You think you can have a chance at being his wife, never. I repeat never, he's an important man in this region and you think, he'll go for a lowlife girl like you, a slave for that matter. A mere..."

Desire continued washing the plate as Fang rambled on and on by calling her different dirty names.

No one could stop her as they were all trying to avoid trouble. Once she stopped talking, Desire and Fei had finished washing as well.

“My lady, can we go to bed?” Desire asked, directing her question to the court lady.

“Of course and make sure you are here early tomorrow for breakfast or else you both would be in trouble” The woman instructed

“I’ll bring the tea later on, my child” lady Nor informed her.

“Thank you ma”

Desire removed her robe and hung it on the wall as Fei did the same before the two of them walked out of the kitchen, ignoring everything that Fang had said as if she hadn’t said anything in the first instance.

This angered Fang the more, making her hate Desire all over again.

“How did you do that?” Fei asked on their way to the room.

“Do what?” She asked.

“I mean take all the bad words she used to describe you without replying to her”

“Giving her a response would only make the issue longer, I was just avoiding trouble” Desire replied.

She had learnt lessons from the case of the Queens who kept on having a disagreement each time. If one of them would keep quiet while the other talked, it would’ve made the issue easier.

Sylvester was about to sleep when he remembered Desire hadn’t come to him like he had instructed, he waited more but got impatient when he didn’t see him.

He needed her so he could sleep better as he always slept peacefully knowing she was right beside him.

He walked into the kitchen to see Lady Nor preparing something and decided to ask her about Desire.

“Where’s she?” He asked suddenly, scaring the older woman.

“Do you speak of Desire, my lord? She had retired for the night”

Lady Nor had gone to give Desire the tea she promised when she saw her sleeping peacefully. The girl must have been really tired, to sleep off like that in a few minutes.

“Lead me to her room” He asked

Lady Nor quickly left what she was doing and led her master to his heart desire.

Sylvester entered the room that was occupied only by Desire as the other maiden she was supposed to share the room with, Fei, had an overnight secret life that she needed to attend to.

He brushed her hair off her face to see her lips pouted as usual as she snored silently. He smiled before picking her up bridal style while the lady Nor helped to open the door wide. She was as light as a feather and it got him worried.

By the time he got to the bottom of the stairs leading up to his room, Desire awoke and tried wriggling out of his hands as she was caught by surprise.

“What’s going on, my lord?” She asked

“What does it look like? I’m kidnapping you”

Chapter 29

Sylvester reached his room and placed Desire on the bed gently before walking into his Personal bathroom to take his bath. Desire was already awake and she found it difficult to sleep back. She thought of how a good bath could help her sleep peacefully back.

As Sylvester made his way out of the bathroom, Desire sat up at the edge of the bed, because she was startled. Their eyes met and Desire couldn't stop looking at his wet hair.

He was half naked as he had only a piece of cloth wrapped around his waist. He had initially thought of her reaction if she saw him half naked but he never thought she'll be looking at him with so much intimacy in her eyes.

Slowly, Sylvester made his way towards her with the water dripping from his body each step he took. He bent down to her level and caged her between his body as he placed both hands beside her on the bed.

"What are you looking at?" A drop of water fell on her face and before she could clean it with her hand, Sylvester stopped her by holding her hand.

She looked up to meet his deep blue ocean eye and she couldn't speak when she saw how Sylvester was looking at her passionately.

"My lord," she started what she couldn't finish. "I will really like to..."

Sylvester's hand slides to her back as he removes the first button of her uniform.

"You were saying something, dove, continue" He removed the second button.

The way he was looking at her made words to elude Desire. She tried searching her mind to remember what she wanted to say but not with the way he was looking at her.

"I can't remember" He removed the third button. When his finger skimmed through her back, she shivered.

"You should remember, Dove" He removed the fifth and last button.

He removed the dress from her shoulder, exposing her to himself and the cold. He placed his cold lips on her collar bone before running his tongue up to her neck before he brushed his teeth against her tongue, making her moan.

Desire quickly covered her mouth with her hands out of embarrassment. Sylvester smiled at how adorable she was.

“Go take your bath” She couldn’t hear what Sylvester had said properly, so she looked up to meet his eyes and once she did, Sylvester stared at her pink lips and suddenly felt the urge to kiss her.

Desire wriggled her way out of the cage that he had put her and started walking towards the bathroom.

Before she made it to the door, Sylvester took her hand and pulled her back making her crash into him.

Her hands were on his wet chest and she could feel his heart beating. She looked up at him with those puppy eyes and he melted. Before she could ask him anything, he slammed his lips on her, kissing her passionately and taking her breath away.

Sylvester slid his tongue into her mouth, making her feel feverish from how she felt when their tongues met.

When she least expected it, Sylvester forcefully removed his lips from hers and held her face with both of his hands, he kissed her forehead and told her to go take her bath.

After Desire emerged from the bathroom, she found Sylvester sleeping on the bed already. One of his hands was covering his face as he was sound asleep.

Desire slept right beside him at the farthest corner of the bed, trying to be invisible and not wake him up. She looked over at the scar that the wound had left behind. She smiled when she remembered how he had mocked her stitching ability and that made her wish she could learn more from the healer that was staying with them at the mansion.

“What are you thinking about?” Sylvester asked, surprising her.

He had turned to face her on the bed and also moved closer to her side.

“Nothing of importance, my lord” Sylvester ran his hand on her face and wondered what could be going on in that head of hers.

“Talk to me, tell me what is bothering you. Do you need something?” He asked and drew her closer to him.

“No, my lord. I do not need anything, I was only wondering if I could learn some more under the healer” She held her breath after she asked, thinking he’ll reject her want.

“During the evenings. I’ll inform him by morning” Desire was surprised that had said yes.

“Thank you, my lord” She replied smiling widely at him and Sylvester couldn’t stop himself from smiling back.

“Do you think Queen Naomi would be safe in that palace without Ying?” She asked the question that had been on her mind since she mounted that horse and left the palace.

“I don’t care, Desire” He replied harshly, bringing down the girl’s spirit.

She had been praying for her Queen’s safety and now this man over here doesn’t care if his own sister was safe or not.

She wondered what had happened between them to make him hate his sister this much.

“You never care. She told me how you never visited her ever since she got married. You should care, she’s your sister and don’t make me hate you” Angrily, Desire replied and turned her back against him.

Sylvester was taken aback at her boldness at calling him out but he knew he was beginning to rub off on her or maybe Naomi’s boldness was beginning to manifest in the girl.

He turned her back to face him. He touched her hair and looked into her eyes. He noticed that her eyelashes were wet and he wondered how easy it was for this girl to cry.

“I care about her. If I do not, I wouldn’t have sent Ying to stay with her in the palace for so long but now, with the war cry resounding on every wall, I can’t risk Ying’s life anymore. He’s a brother to me and I can’t let him die because Naomi decides to stay out there even though it’s dangerous at this period, okay?” He explained and Desire nodded in understanding.

“Stop crying and get some sleep so I can sleep myself” Desire rested her head on his chest and threw her hand around his body while he held her close.

“You’re my favorite person, my lord” Sylvester smiled at her words.

Chapter 30

Desire woke up the next morning before sunrise to see Sylvester still sleeping soundly, she was surprised to find herself on top of him. She touched his beard playfully before trying to move away from him.

Sylvester held her down by the waist and opened his eyes to see her shocked expression. Her hair was scattered all over her face as she bit her lower lip in embarrassment. If only she knew what effect she had on him, she wouldn't sit so comfortably on him.

"Good morning my lord" She greeted with her eyes looking elsewhere but him.

"Where were you running to?" He asked.

Desire thought of how much her master has questions to ask her these days.

"To the kitchen to prepare your breakfast, my lord. If not, the court lady would be really angry at me. I have to get up and help others out" She replied timidly.

"You will go when I want you to go" He told her.

"My lord, please let me go. I promise to come back later, during the day" She begged

"I'll be busy by then"

"Then, tonight my lord"

"I want to ravish you and make your mine thoroughly right now. If you touch me, you'll see just how much I want you. Let me make love to you, Dove and I'll let you go after that"

Desire was dumbfounded at her master's request. She thought of it for a few minutes but the fear of what the court lady could do stopped her from saying yes. She was attracted to her master and wanted him to be her first but she couldn't at the particular moment.

"But the court lady..."

"I'll talk to her, do not worry" Sylvester replied, assuring her that she was safe. She looked into his eyes, giving him the approval to go on and ravish her like she wanted.

He grabbed her by her waist and pulled her closer to him so that she could feel him between her thighs.. He slowly inches his face closer to hers, as if he was giving her time to think this through.

Giving her a chance to say no. Sylvester knew he couldn't take her by force, he'd rather have her beg for him to take her than force himself on her. She was too fragile for him to hurt, he can't even sleep without her these days.

Desire took the first bold step by pressing her lips to that of her master, taking Sylvester aback for a few minutes before he took over and joined lips together and we moved in a unified manner.

Desire felt different from the last time he had kissed her. She wanted more this time and she couldn't comprehend what her body was telling her.

Sylvester felt her body was made perfect for his as his little dove's body fits in perfectly into his huge body. His hand suddenly grabbed her ass through the night dress she was putting on, making Desire whimper and pulled her even more closer into him.

He pulled away lightly after a while and they were both breathing heavily as a result of kissing so passionately hard for that long.

Sylvester lifted up her night dress and removed it from her body, exposing her naked breasts to him. She was an average size and Sylvester loved how they would fill his palm if he tried cupping them. Her breasts were freed and a cold breeze blew towards it, making her nipples extra sensitive.

She tried covering up with her hands, thinking she wasn't good enough for him. Sylvester knew what was happening, so he gently removed her hand from her body and kissed her once more.

"You're beautiful! Don't ever cover yourself from me again" Desire nodded.

Before She could say anything in reply, Sylvester captured one of her pink buds into his mouth and sucked lightly, biting gently before moving to the other one.

Desire threw my head back in pleasure and couldn't stop herself from moaning. She couldn't describe what she was feeling but she knew it was good and she didn't want him to stop.

"Are you okay? Do you want me to stop?" Sylvester asked

Shyly, Desire replied, "No, my lord"

"Are you sure you want this? I know it's your first time and I don't want to hurt you. I can stop if you want me to"

"Yes, I want you"

Why stop when he had taken her to the best level she could ever get sexually. She needed him like she needed air. She knew she was going out of line by letting her master touch her, it could change the respect that some people had for her but she didn't care, she wanted him as much as he needed her..

Sylvester removed all the pieces of clothing that he had on. Desire couldn't stop looking at his thick length, scared he'll be able to penetrate into her.

They resumed the hot and passionate kiss while their tongues danced seductively against each other. Sylvester squeezes her buttocks while his other hand plays with her breast.

He pushed her slightly into the bed, climbed over her and kissed her again before moving his mouth to her neck, sucking and biting her neck seductively, before hovering over me. He knew that spot always made her weak and he wasn't wrong as Desire couldn't stop herself from moaning.

He looked into my eyes intensively as he found the entrance to her opening.

"What?" Desire asked when he seemed to have stopped, scared she might have done something wrong.

"If it hurts, tell me and I'll stop" He told her.

Slowly, he slid into her opening, it was difficult at first as she wasn't yet ready to have him. He kissed her to take her mind off it and make her relax into him. It worked and he was able to fully penetrate her.

He filled her up to brim with his massive length without a chance for her to breathe through it. Desire felt a sharp pain, making her stop breathing for a second.

He allowed her to adjust to his length before he started moving inside her. Once he saw that she was beginning to feel less painful, he slammed into her, making Desire moan his name out loud.

He kept on thrusting in and out at a rhythmic pace, making her cry out in pleasure. He made her climb so high until she dropped, with his name on her lips and a few seconds later, he grunted sexily enough to drive another orgasm out of her.

Sylvester lifted himself off her body and settled right beside her, he hugged her body close to his chest.

"Get some sleep, dove" He whispered and kissed her hair watching his tired little dove doze off to sleep.

Chapter 31

Sylvester kept on watching her as she slept soundly, oblivious of what was going on around her. He stood up later on, took his bath and kissed her forehead before walking out of his suite. He needed her to rest thoroughly and to avoid any problems with other house maidens, he decided to skip breakfast.

He went on with his job of informing other regions of King's plan even though it seemed as if he was betraying his king but he knew he was being loyal to the safety of his region and its people.

Sylvester started by making a new plan for his own military men including his knights, on how to have a solid formation should Incase the war gets to them. He decided to make the front part of the house as a place where wounded soldiers would be brought, he didn't care if they belonged to the king or not. As long as they were his people, he needed to help them.

Ying felt it was too early to start preparing for this but Sylvester waved him off by informing him and the three remaining loyal soldiers that the earlier they prepared, the faster they'll be able to withstand and push back any forces or war coming into the mansion.

Sylvester had an obligation to pay to the mansion that was built by his forefathers, he wasn't ready to lose it to the King's stupidity, yet, he also had to protect the people.

"We'll start the training with the soldiers immediately, my lord" His head of guard replied and left to inform the others about the new strategy.

"We do not have enough men to make a fortress, Sylvester" Ying warned.

"We might not have them yet, but soon enough we will," Sylvester replied hopefully.

"I want us to have a complete list of everyone living in this mansion and how much more we'll be able to contain as we will have to help others Incase they come for help" Ying nodded in agreement.

"We should be about a hundred including the maids, soldiers and the guards. We should be able to take up to three hundred or if possible five hundred. The space is big enough for people to sleep on every corner"

Sylvester was satisfied with the answer that he had received from his friend. He knew they could help others as well.

"We need to stock up on food as well. You should give the court lady enough money to get to the market and get enough food as much as possible" He started. "Also, in case there are little children,

we can keep them at the safe house till the war stop and also, let two or three soldiers accompany the court lady to the market”

As Sylvester said all these things, he kept on recording them down so as not to make any mistake or forget something.

“You are dismissed for now, Ying” Sylvester concentrates back on checking out the fortress he was building with models and papers to see if there’s any mistake or not.

“Above all Sylvester, protect yourself. The King is aware that you’re against his new idea and he’ll do anything to stop you or kill you” Ying warned and Sylvester smirked.

“You too, Ying. He might kill you for lusting after his wife” Sylvester announced, startling him.

“His wife? What do you mean?”

“I know you like Naomi but you should also know that she's off limits” Sylvester warned him this time around.

“It’s not like that Sylvester. Naomi is like a sister to me even though she wants me to be more than a brother but I don’t feel that way towards her”

Sylvester placed his hand in his shoulder.

“Thank you for telling me this, Ying ” He resumed back to his work and Ying went about his.

By the time Desire finally woke up from her sleep, it was daybreak already. Startled, she stood up trying to take in her surroundings then the event of the previous night and this morning came rushing back and Desire blushed as she remembered how her skin felt against her master.

Realizing she had skipped breakfast, she stood up from the bed and took her bath quickly, got dressed in her uniform and walked down the stairs, embarrassed.

She walked into the kitchen with her head down, ready for the ground to open up and swallow her.

“Where are you coming from, Desire?” The court lady screamed, gaining the attention of everyone nearby.

“I’m sorry, my lady. I slept off” Desire explained.

“Because you’ve managed to get the master’s attention, you think the world is on your side. Now, you can sleep all you want thinking nobody would dare punish you” The court lady sneered, looking at Desire with pity as to how she’ll be once she’s done with her.

“Maybe she was tired from yesterday’s journey. Spare the child, my lady” Lady Nor apologize on behalf of Desire.

"Praise your stars that the master skipped breakfast this morning or else, you would have visited hell without a chance at returning" She spat into her face and walked out of the kitchen angrily.

"Good day Lady Nor" Desire was finally able to greet her lady.

"Hope you had a goodnight rest, my child?" Desire nodded and went to wash the dirty plates she saw lying around.

Her happy mood had turned sour.

"Do not think about the court lady too much, Desire. She's just always like that"

"It's not the court lady, ma. I feel really bad for not helping everyone out during breakfast. It's as if I'm taking something for granted" She explained the reason for her bad mood.

"Don't talk like that, Desire. You're not the first girl to skip a work hour and moreover, we managed when you were not around, trust me, it's not your fault" Lady nor pacified her, making her feel all better.

Even though lady Nor was aware of the reason why Desire skipped breakfast, she was too nice to call out the poor girl for it.

"Good afternoon Lady Nor" a tiny voice sang as she walked into the kitchen. "Here are the herbs you requested for, it was hard to get them like you said but I'm glad I did"

Desire thought the voice was familiar in a strange way but was too preoccupied with her work to turn and see who it was.

"Thank you for these, Cassandra. These would make really good soap for everyone" At the mention of her name, Desire stopped and turned abruptly before she screamed out.

"Cassandra, you're here"

"Desire!" The little girl screamed back in return.

The rabbit that left it's hole the other day hadn't really left, it just changed it's hole for a better one.

Chapter 32

“Cassandra, I’m so happy that you’re fine. I thought something bad had happened to you when I didn’t see you again after that day” Desire cried out as the girl hugged her tight.

“Me too Desire, when I didn’t see you anymore around the mansion, I thought the master had killed you” Desire laughed at her assumption.

“I’m here now, little one. I’m so glad you’re fine. Tell me what happened after I left” Desire asked.

“The men were planning to let me keep staying in the dungeon but I didn’t know my brother was already here. He trained as a soldier and he’s currently serving under the master of the house”

“You didn’t tell me you have a brother”

“I have and I’ve told him so much about you so I can’t wait to tell you so much about him”

“I’ll be glad to hear all of his stories but that’ll be later, my girl. I need to get back to work and so do you” Desire patted her by the hair, smiling widely at her.

Her heart was glad that the young girl was safe and sound.

“I’ll go back to the garden and keep working but expect me back later in the day. I’ll tell you about everything that has been happening around here and I’ll love for you to do my hair like yours, it’s so beautiful” The girl kept on rambling on and on making Desire wonder if she had always loved to talk this much.

“Isn’t this our little chit chat birdie?” Fei asked as she walked into the kitchen.

Cassandra stopped talking, turned and glared at Fei before waving at Desire and walked out of the kitchen. Desire could only laugh and waved back.

Fei gritted her teeth after the little girl, ready to be released so she could beat her up.

“What happened between you girls?” Desire asked, wondering what could have caused their fight.

“I ate her food but I swear by the moon that I didn’t know the food belonged to her. Even though I tried apologizing, the girl won’t stop hating me” Fei explained and Desire started laughing.

Desire never knew Fei had this serious obsession about food even though she was barely fat.

“You slept well last night, Desire, I was wondering if you were so tired to sleep that soundly. I even had to cover you up with the blanket when you were cold”

Both Desire and Lady Nor who had been silent the whole time shared a look.

“Fei,” Lady Nor called her. “Why didn’t you sleep in your room last night?” She asked.

“I slept in my room, ma. I wouldn’t have said all what I did about Desire sleeping if I didn’t in the room” Fei answered confidently.

“If you had slept in your room, you would’ve realized that Desire didn’t sleep in hers and that she slept with me during the night”

Fei covered her face with her hands knowing she had been caught. If only she had covered her mouth shut.

“Start talking Fei before I let the court lady know that you haven’t been sleeping in your room for the past months” Lady Nor threatened.

“I swear by the moon, my lady that it was only three times that I didn’t sleep in my room and it was because he insisted that I should stay in his room” Fei confessed.

“Him? Does *Him* has a name?” Lady Nor asked

“He said I should keep his identity hidden or else the master would get mad at us for having an affair under his nose”

“Then he must be so ugly and unattractive” Lady Nor said, confusing both ladies who were there in the kitchen with her.

“Ma?”

“Who doesn’t want to be seen with such a pretty lady like you? You should end it with him, he doesn’t deserve you”

Desire smiled at how well Lady Nor took the matter and Fei went on to hug her because she knew her secret was safe with her.

“Here Desire” Lady Nor stretched out a tray of some sweets and tea towards her.

“Master didn’t have any breakfast, you should take that to him. He’ll be in his study by now”

Desire collected the tray and thanked Lady Nor for her thoughtfulness.

She knocked twice as soon as she got to his study but got no response. She knocked again the third time before the door was angrily opened by her master.

“I told you I didn’t want to be disturbed, what do you want?” He yelled not looking at the person at the door.

“I was asked to bring this” He looked up immediately and heard that voice.

"Come in, dove. I didn't mean to yell at you, I'm just exhausted" He quickly removed important documents from his desk, collected the tray from her and placed it on the desk.

He went on to close the door behind them before cupping Desire's face in his hand and kissed her thoroughly, making her yearn for more.

"I bought some sweets and tea, my lord." He nodded and took a piece of the sweet, ate it and drank some tea as well.

"Take one more, my lord" Desire tried persuading him. "You haven't eaten all day"

"Have you?"

She nodded. "I had a quick breakfast while I was in the kitchen, my lord"

"Why are you avoiding my eyes, Dove?" He suddenly asked after he became aware of her silly actions.

"Nothing, my lord. I'm not avoiding you" She replied.

"Look at me, Dove. You make me ask you to look at me all the time" As their eyes met, he locked their lips together, kissing her once more, tasting her and wishing he could have her right in his study.

"You look exhausted" Desire noticed this after he had released her lips.

"I'm fine, Dove. You should go back to work now so I'll be able to concentrate on my work too" He kissed her forehead and released her and sat on his chair to continue working.

"I already talked to the healer, he said you should come this evening. He's willing to teach you more" Sylvester gave her the good news making Desire all giddy and excited.

She ran to where he was sitting and kissed his forehead before running out of the study, excitedly.

As she skipped down the stairs happily, she wasn't aware of the danger that lied in hiding for her. Before she could take the last step, a leg suddenly stretched out, making her fall flat on her face.

Before she could turn, the leg stepped with all the weight of the perpetrator on her neck as she cried out in pain.

Chapter 33

Moments after the evil act took place, Desire staggeringly stood up, touched her neck and felt that it hurts more than hell. She was sure it would leave a mark, so she covered it properly with her hair.

She could've gone back to report to her master or maybe leave to report it to the court lady but she brushed off the idea and moved on to the kitchen. She didn't want to start a controversy in the mansion even though she had no idea who could have hated her so much to step on her neck.

"Did he collect it from you?" Lady Nor asked as she saw Desire walked on to the kitchen.

"Yes ma" Desire replied quietly and went back to sorting out the seasonings used in the kitchen.

"We'll soon start preparing Lunch, Desire. Find Fei and tell her to report here immediately" Desire nodded and left what she was doing.

Lady Nor saw that she was acting strange and decided to question her actions.

"What's wrong, Desire? You're quiet somehow" Lady Nor asked.

"Everything is fine, Lady Nor. Thank you" Desire replied.

As she was about to walk out of the kitchen in search of Fei, she met with the court lady who was also coming into the kitchen.

"Where are you going?" The court lady asked.

"I was about to look for Fei so we can start preparing lunch," Desire explained.

"We will sort lunch out. Fei is waiting for you outside. The both of you would be going to the market to get enough food and fruits. I've already given Fei a list of what she should get and I need you to go with her" Desire nodded.

When Desire moved, her hair moved a bit and by chance, Lady Nor saw the red mark that was on her neck, shocking the poor old lady to the core. She wondered where she got such a mark.

"Desire," she called out. "See me when you get back"

"Okay ma"

Desire walked out of the kitchen in search of Fei. Once she spotted her at the outside of the mansion, she was in the company of two guards and also Cassandra.

"Desire! I didn't know you'll be coming with us" Cassandra giggled, excited to see her friend.

"I didn't know you'll be coming as well, little Cassandra" Desire gushed out, already forgetting about the incident.

"I didn't know you were coming. The snow Queen only told us we should wait for someone" Fei said

"At least Cassandra won't have to be with someone she doesn't like"

"Yes!" Cassandra shouted and Fei glared at her while Desire chuckled.

"Desire, let me introduce you to my brother" Cassandra said pointing to one of the guards who had followed them.

"Your brother?"

"Chang, look at my Desire, the same person I've always told you about" The person turned and Desire was tongue tied.

"Chang, how come you're here?" Desire cried out and threw her arms around his neck, hugging him tightly.

"I knew you were working here so I applied to work here too so I'll see you. I tried approaching you the other night when you came back to the mansion but you didn't see me" He explained.

Years ago when Desire had met Chang on her eighteenth birthday, he was just 18 himself too but now he looked manly and so handsome. Even though they never saw each other again after then, the two still kept on writing letters to each other and it wasn't just an ordinary letter, it was a love letter.

The two claimed to be in love with each other and wouldn't want to see the other with another person and waited for the chance to finally see each other again.

"I'm so happy to see you again" Desire said giddily

"Me too Desire. I got worried when you didn't reply to my letters but I'm glad you're safe"

Desire remembered the letter he was talking about. She couldn't reply because that was the day she got condemned into the dungeon.

"Sorry I couldn't reply to your letter Chang, it was a really hard time" Desire apologized.

They all kept on walking the remaining distance till they finally got to the market. They purchased most of what they wanted to buy and made a decision of coming back to get it the next day. They could have gotten them but there was no extra pair of hands to carry them nor was there a horse to help them.

By the time they returned to the mansion, it was sunset. Desire and Chang bid farewell with a promise to see each other everyday while Cassandra went on to finish her work at the garden. Fei and Desire were helped by other servants and maids in getting the items bought into the storehouse.

“Lady Nor, we are back,” Fei announced when they entered the kitchen.

“From saving the region?” A voice asked and both Desire and Fei turned to the direction.

“I thought you were gone for good” Fei asked as she couldn’t hide her shock of seeing the housemaid of Lady Fang.

“No, we are not. We are back to retrieve the master from the cheap slut standing right beside you. Since she’d spent a quality amount of time at the Harem, she’d learned enough skills to seduce a man”

Her words were not supposed to affect Desire on a regular day but with what had happened to her earlier, Desire bursted into tears and ran out of the kitchen. She stopped at a corner and kept on crying. She wanted to escape, she was tired of everything happening around her.

“Desire, What happened?” Lady Nor who had ran after her asked.

“This happened” Angrily, Desire opened her hair, revealing the scar to lady nor.

“I’m so tired...” Before she could continue talking, the court lady appeared.

“The master has requested for his dinner and Desire is to bring it to his suite”

Desire almost cursed out at the mention of her name. Reluctantly, she walked towards his suite with the food at hand. Even before she could knock, Sylvester opened the door giving her entrance into the room.

“My lord, your dinner”

Chapter 34

“My lord, your dinner” Desire placed the tray of food on the table and turned to start leaving the room. She wasn’t in the mood of talking or even looking at him tonight. She just wanted to cry herself to sleep and wake up tomorrow to see if things will get better.

“The healer didn’t see you today” Sylvester said, stopping her on her tracks.

“I thought I was supposed to start by tomorrow” Sylvester nodded and opened the food one by one to see what had been cooked for dinner.

“Sit and eat with me, Desire” he offered while already seated trying to sort her own food out.

“No, my lord” Desire replied.

“What did you just say?” Sylvester asked

“I said no, my lord. I do not wish to dine with you” Desire replied firmly.

Sylvester stood up and walked towards her and as he did this, Desire walked back until she hit a table which made her stop.

“You know I hate that word especially when it is coming from you”

“I don’t care. I just want to go back to my duties”

Sylvester was surprised at the words coming out of her mouth. When she left him this afternoon, she was happy and excited but now, she’s a different version of who he thought she was supposed to be.

“What happened, Dove?”

“Nothing happened and my name is Desire not Dove” she replied angrily.

“Look at me, dove”

“No! It is forbidden” she responded.

“Forbidden! You were moaning out my name in the early hours of the morning and now you think it is forbidden to look at him”

“It was a mistake”

“What?” Sylvester asked angrily.

“This morning was a mistake” She repeated, elaborating this time.

Her declaration sent a pang of pain through Sylvester's chest. It was as if someone he trusted just stabbed him in the back.

"Look at me Desire" he yelled at her. She jumped a little in fear of his anger but she didn't look up at him.

"No!"

Sylvester held her face and forced her head up, once their eyes met, he realized she was in pain. Her eyes weren't as bright as they used to be, she had been crying and her eyelashes were not covering up from her.

"What happened to you, Desire? I will kill anyone who dare hurt you" Sylvester threatened

"Stop, you're hurting me" Desire cried out while trying to remove his hard grip on her chin.

"Was it the court lady? or was it Fang?" Sylvester angrily, ready to kill

"My neck hurts, please stop! Please! Please Sylvester, please! My neck hurts" Desire cried out using his name for the first time.

This brought Sylvester out of his senses and looked at her thoroughly, he checked her neck and saw that nothing was wrong so he turned her to her back, pushed her thick hair to the other side and almost died from what he saw.

"What happened to you Desire? Who did this?" He asked, already losing his patience.

"It doesn't matter" He removed the first button of her uniform and inspected the redmark confusingly.

"I'll tell someone to get the healer so he could look at this and help reduce the pain" He suggested but Desire pushed him off her.

"Stop! Stop already!! I'm tired of this hellhole! I'm tired of this place! I'm tired of you! I've been trying to hold up so long but I can't anymore, it is choking me to death. Why do I have to take so much insult just because you're giving me attention? I can't anymore" Desire bursted into tears the second time and ran out of his room.

She didn't go straight to her room because she knew he might come looking for her. She went straight to the Lady Nor's room. She collapsed on the bed and cried her eyes out.

Desire wanted an escape. Her outburst was as a result of finding out who hurt her. She had seen the shoe of the perpetrator before they could walk away from her line of vision and on her way to give Sylvester his dinner, she saw the same person again with the same shoes. She cried her eyes out before sleeping off.

Sylvester had wanted to run after her but Ying who had been by the door all through stopped him from going after her.

Instead, Ying went into the kitchen to ask for what happened to Desire and nobody had a clue yet nobody knew where she was as they all thought she was still with their master.

Every corner of the mansion was searched by Ying, even the maids and lady Nor tried searching for her in her room and every other maid's room in the mansion but they couldn't find her.

They all hoped she'd turn up by morning and each person retired to their room. Ying also went on to inform Sylvester of all he had found and how Desire was missing.

Sylvester corrected him that she was only hiding and he hoped she'd be fine even though he didn't sleep a wink at night and ended up passing the aggression to his work.

Lady Nor entered her room to see Desire coiled like a rope on her bed, sleeping and snoring gently. She was frowning and the tears were still evident in her face.

Lady nor covered her with a cloth trying not to wake her up before she slept beside her, hugging her tightly like a mother would.

Before dawn, Desire awoke almost at the same time as Lady Nor. Trying not to scare her off, Lady Nor decided not to question what had happened the previous day and even gave her extra time to get her acts together and resume for her duties in the kitchen.

By the time Desire emerged from the room after taking her bath and assuring herself that she would be fine, Sylvester had already started having his breakfast.

Once she walked up to Lady Nor, Sylvester lifted his head to see her with her head down. He wanted her to look at him but she kept on staring hard at the floor.

"What an irresponsible servant! Is this the time you're supposed to come to give your master his breakfast? She lacks all sort of manners, Sylvester, I still don't know why you haven't thrown her out" Fang lamented even though it wasn't her business.

"I'm sorry my lady, but I think this is nothing of your concern. It'll be rather good if you teach some of these manners you speak to your own maids, they seem to need them more than I do. Forgive me if I spoke too much, my lady"

Fang gasped out at her words, she questioned the audacity that a mere slave had to talk to her that way.

Fei wished she could walk over to her and give her a tight hug.

Lady Nor smiled.

The court lady smirked even though she'll have to punish her later out of decency.

Ying laughed out loud, suddenly proud of her actions and glad that she was fine while Sylvester was indifferent about the matter.

"Did you hear your lowlife Maid, Sylvester? She just insulted me right in your presence. She has no respect for you or me" Fang complained

"What do you want me to do about it?" Sylvester asked, not seeing anything wrong with what she said.

"Punish her, Sylvester. Make her regret saying those words" Fang cajoled him.

"If you say so,"

"Court lady" Sylvester called out about giving his punishment while Fang looked at Desire and smirked.

"Get some of the servants and make them clear out the spare room in my suite and turn it into a regular bedroom and make sure Desire move in before nightfall"

Sylvester commanded and stood up, staring at Desire who wasn't looking at him for a long time before walking out.

Chapter 35

Sylvester got up and left the dining area without sparing Desire a second glance. Even though he was glad she was fine, he still couldn't get most of her words out of his head. They kept on coming back to him, making him wonder what had happened to her to make her say those harsh words to him.

He walked into his study and picked up the work he had done till morning to realize he had gone halfway in resolving some problems he faced during midday and this was possible because of the hard drink he had, trying to forget what Desire said and clear his mind.

"I don't see how that's a punishment, Sylvester" Ying walked into the study to see Sylvester with his face buried in his hands.

"She hates me now so seeing me each and every hour would be a punishment for her" Sylvester replied

"You shouldn't say that friend. She's just not doing quite alright. Be patient with her Sylvester" Ying advised even though he didn't know what happened to her.

He knew Sylvester was in love with this girl but today wasn't the day to tease him about anything, he'll wait for his chance.

"Forget about Desire and let's get to work. I have you some assignments yesterday, I need the reports" Sylvester demands

"The maids had started stocking up the store room while the guards had started the advance training on how to make the fortress and the builders had started working on the main gate to strengthen it" Ying explained the current situation of things.

"Thanks Ying, you can go back to work" Sylvester dismissed him.

"Don't you think Fang needs to go?" Ying asked before leaving.

"Her father was a good friend to my father and I don't think I can disrespect him by throwing his daughter out for what she did" Ying replied, concentrating on his work.

"Even after all she did to you. Don't you hate her? I can't even stand her even though she did nothing to me. Sometimes I don't understand you, Sylvester"

"That's the way life is, Ying. Full of mystery. You don't have to understand me, just trust me" He appealed.

"I do trust you Sylvester and I want to believe that you know what you're doing but if I investigate into what happened to Desire and I find her in anyway attached to it, I swear on my father's grave that I'll be the one to push her out of this house" Ying swore angrily.

"What has Desire got to do with you Ying?" Sylvester asked with jealousy.

"Desire is like a sister to me and I'm so protective of her, so caution your girlfriend who came back from the dead to control herself if not, I bite hard like a dog when I'm angry" Ying threatened and walked out of the room angrily.

He couldn't understand why Sylvester was still hell bent about keeping Fang in his house. He had hated her since they met but he had to keep his thoughts to himself because it could hurt Sylvester.

Sylvester was surprised at Ying's outburst. He knew Ying is usually protective of women especially ones closer to him after he had witnessed his father torture and abuse his mother to death.

Sylvester knew Ying's threat was not an empty ones. He usually bites hard when he gets angry.

After Ying had left the dining area, Desire had stayed rooted to a spot. She didn't want to share his suit like he wanted but she had to because she couldn't deny his command. Fang flared at her as she stomped angrily away to her side of the mansion.

"Desire, we all looked for you last night. Where did you go?" Fei asked worriedly.

"Nowhere special Fei, I was sleeping at Lady Nor's room and didn't know the time was that far spent" Desire's face was void of life as usual.

"Why do you look so pale, Desire? Did you eat yesterday?" Fei asked.

Everyone present turned to look at Fei with surprise.

"Desire must be such a special friend to Fei. She even remembered to say a sentence with food and Desire's name together" Everyone including Desire laughed.

They all couldn't believe Fei actually cared if someone ate and not the food that was left behind.

"You people should stop teasing me" Fei cried out and walked ahead of them into the kitchen.

Before Desire could start working, Lady Nor sat her down and placed two plates of food before her.

"Eat child. You need to get your strength back" Lady Nor said as she handed her a spoon.

"Why two plates?" Desire asked

"One for yesterday's meal that you missed and one for today. Don't worry, I kept it safely away from Fei" Fei whined at the mention of her name for the second time.

Since Desire knew she couldn't finish two bowls of food at a time, she looked over at Fei and pointed to the food. Fei smiled brightly and quickly sat beside her to eat.

"As if she'll ever reject food" Lady Nor commented making the other girls laugh at Fei while Fei angrily ate the food. Desire also smiled in turn before concentrating and eating.

Desire was working in the kitchen when someone suddenly called her name.

"Desire, master wants you in his study" The Maid left before Desire could ask anything further.

She wasn't comfortable with going to Sylvester while all eyes were on her. The last time she did, she knew what the repercussion was.

Taking an excuse from lady Nor, she walked towards the study with one fate.

"Going to slut yourself away as usual," Fang said, folding her arms against her chest at the edge of the staircase leading to Sylvester's study room.

"At least I got the attention you didn't, my lady" Desire replied and walked away from her. She looked back at some point to see if Queen Naomi had started out like she did but ended up being a pushover who decides to stand up for herself.

She knocked on the door gently.

"Come in" Sylvester called from the other side of the door. Desire opened the door and walked in.

"My lord, you requested for my presence"

"Sit, Desire" Sylvester commanded and Desire sat quietly.

Sylvester held a small container in his hand, opened it and placed it on the table. He walked over to Desire and once his hand met her body, she stood up abruptly.

"What are you doing master?"

"I will not take you against your will, Desire. I've already told you this and you know I'll never go back on my word. If I want to bend you over this table, slam all of me into your tight vagina, I will ask if you want me to" He moved closer and whispered the last part into her ear making Desire wet from pleasure all of a sudden.

"My lord," Desire was standing against the desk already.

"Turn and don't make me command twice" Desire did as she was told, still scared of what was going to happen.

He removed two buttons on her dress, pushed her hair away from her back, examined the scar that was on her neck and with gritted teeth, he used some of the balm he collected from the healer to massage the spot gently, trying not to hurt her.

“The healer would be expecting you this evening. Make sure you come back to my suite after that”
He places a kiss on her neck before placing another on her collarbone.

He fixed her dress back for her and she turned, ready to leave. Before she could reach the door, Sylvester pulled her back, hugging her tightly.

“I miss you, Desire. Don’t push me away, my Dove”

Chapter 36

Desire was satisfied with the little she had learnt from the healer, her new teacher at the end of the day. She was walking along the side of the road, touching the beautiful flowers lightly.

She had been shown different herbs and their functions; the ones to be used for different type of illness. Desire had complained to her new teacher about her inability to suture properly and he had promised to continue showing her the next day.

Even if the man was an old man close to the age of seventy, he still knew how to joke and make Desire laugh. Her time with him had lifted the burden off her chest a little making her feel a lot better.

Her mind wandered off to the time Sylvester had hugged her, told her how much he missed her. She had wanted to hug him back and tell him she couldn't do without him but she stopped herself, reminding herself that she was just a slave before walking out of the room.

"Desire," she turned back at the call of her name and she saw it was Chang.

"Chang, it's good to see you again"

"Where are you coming from?"

"From the healer, he's my new teacher now" Desire replied with a smile.

"How's Cassandra?" She asked

"She's fine. She had always loved gardening, when the court lady decided to put her there, she was really happy about it" Chang replied.

"She's a brave girl"

"Just like our mom" Chang replied. Desire wanted to say more or ask more, but she shut up.

"I see you're the master's favorite. That's what everyone is saying" Chang suddenly said.

"People do say that too but I don't think it's anything near that"

"Do you like him, I mean our master?" Chang needed Desire to give him a straight answer.

"Sometimes" She replied truthfully.

'Sometimes when he's not angry' she finished the word mentally.

"Does he like you?"

"I don't really know. It's his feelings, not mine Chang, why do you ask?"

"I want to court you properly, Desire. But I don't think that's the right thing to do now. Master has already taken a liking to you, courting you will be like going against his will" Desire felt sad at his statement. She wanted to keep on being good friends with Chang and not separate like this.

"Can we still be friends?" She asked

"Sure Desire. We'll always be friends" Desire smiled at him and she was glad she didn't lose this good friend.

She missed Queen Naomi and Kim Chui and wished she could see them again, those were the good friends she had in her time of trouble and wished they also meet people who will help them regardless of whatever happens.

Desire and Chang parted ways before she made her way into the kitchen.

"I'm back" she announced, getting the attention of Lady Nor and Fei who were busy preparing dinner.

"How was it?" Fei asked

"It was good. The man is still as funny as usual"

Desire went on to tell them all she had learnt from the man and both ladies listened with concentration.

"You're really learning fast, Desire. I'm proud of you and also, your belonging has been moved to the master's suite" Lady Nor complimented her.

"I have to. That's the only way I can teach Fei too" Fei held her friend's hand in appreciation.

They had both shared the dream of learning the healing job but never got the opportunity to do that but now Desire was fulfilling their dreams for them.

She ignored the part where she had mentioned her belongings. Desire wasn't supposed to be happy about it.

She only wanted to be free and safe.

"Desire," She turned to see it was Ying

"Ying, I haven't seen you all day" Ying walked into the kitchen and greeted both ladies she met.

"I went on a short trip to the palace. I saw Queen Naomi today and she extend her greetings. She gave me some things to give to you and I dropped them in your new room. I also saw Kim chui, she has some good news to tell you. She's pregnant" Ying shared the news with her.

Desire had noticed how different Ying seemed when he first came in but the news now made his strange attitude clear to her. She was pregnant!

“Does she know the father of the child?” Desire asked

“She doesn’t, Desire”

Desire held Ying’s hand tightly. She knew how he was feeling even though he wasn’t talking.

“She’s the first girl to get my attention within minutes and now because of the life our region had chosen for her, I have to let go” Ging complained.

“You don’t have to let go, Ying! This is the moment when she’ll need you most. Stay strong for her, please and it was pretty obvious that you liked her from what I saw the last time” Ying chuckled.

“Everything will be fine” Desire assured him.

“I’m in the process of getting her freedom from the region. It’ll be a long process but it should end up being the best. I’ll see if I can talk to Sylvester about it” Ying suggested.

“I’ll try my best too”

“Before I forget the main reason why I’m here, your master as he’s not mine, requests for his dinner in his suite and must be brought up by a lady called Desire” Ying announced, smiled at Desire and left almost immediately.

Desire got his food in the trolley with the side dishes and walked towards his room. Not bothering to knock because her hands were occupied, she opened the door.

As she walked in, she saw Fang sitting on Sylvester, with her arms around his neck and his around her waist, half naked.

Fang turned and winked at Desire, making Desire to ignore the dinner and ran out of the room, almost in tears.

Chapter 37

Desire ran out of the room angry, betrayed and confused. She thought Sylvester felt something for her, she thought she was at least important to him.

She hid in a corner until all the lights in the house were being put away one by one. Crying her eyes out and feeling really angry, she reluctantly returned to the room but before she did, she cleaned the tears away from her eyes to prove to him that what she saw had no effect on her.

Slowly, she opened the door leading to his suite quietly so she could enter her own room and have a goodnight rest.

“Where have you been?” A voice asked startling her, making her jump

“No where, my lord. I was just with the other housemaid”

Sylvester was sitting with his hands folded against his chest on one of the beautiful chairs placed in the suite.

“I checked with the other housemaid, neither were you there nor did any of them saw you. I’ll ask one more time, “ Desire, where the hell have you been?” Sylvester asked

“No where that is of importance to you, my lord” Desire replied already getting angry at his numerous questions.

“A place that has no name” He asked getting riled up already.

“I was with a friend”

“Male or female? Was it Ying?” He already was at the edge of both his seat and his patience. He wanted to believe Desire was only taunting him and not serious about what she said.

“It wasn’t Ying. It was another male”

Before Desire could blink, Sylvester was right in front of her, he grabbed her neck gently and smelled her. She smelled of dried leaves and seasonings.

“Liar, you were not with any man” He said as he smelled her hair.

“It doesn’t matter to you, Sylvester” She used his name and tried pushing him off.

“Yes, it does”

He smashed his lips on hers, kissing her anger away. He didn’t give her a break as he continued kissing her, making her long for his body on hers.

Desire knew she shouldn't be kissing him because she was mad at him for sleeping with Fang but Desire couldn't stop herself as his kisses affected her and made her lose her senses.

She pushed him away from her body after convincing herself that she had to.

"Stop! I do not wish for you to touch me" She moved away from him and opened her room door.

The room was bigger than the one she shared with Fei. It had a personal chair for her use and her bed was large enough for three people. She wondered about how she could use the bed alone for herself.

Her bags were already placed on the bed, she opened it to begin arranging the clothes in the wardrobe that was placed at the corner of her room. It was the first time Desire would have a room, a bed and even a wardrobe to herself.

She was supposed to be excited about it but she was just exhausted and tired.

"What you saw was wrong, Desire. I don't know what possessed Fang to walk into my room naked..." Desire interrupted before he could continue.

"I do not care for any explanation. I know what I saw, moreover I don't care if you are with someone else or not. It's not like I'm special to you" Desire replied

Sylvester grabbed her face with his hand and looked deeply into her emerald green eyes. He knew she was hurting yet she was trying to show him that she was strong.

"If you care or not Desire, you deserve an explanation. I didn't know she was going to come into the room. I was here waiting for you and the food when she walked in with her robe and before I could say anything, she removed it and sat on my lap. I was trying to peel her off me when you walked in Desire. I have no other Desire for any other woman except you. Dobe" Her eyes were already glistening with tears.

"I just don't want to be hated by anyone anymore. I just want to be happy" Desire cried out.

"The first time I saw you was the first day you walked into this mansion. What attracted me to you was your attracting smile and happiness. I waited all my life for this chance to get to know you better and now that I have it, I hate it that I have to be the source of your tears, Desire. Let me make things right, tell me what happened to you?"

Desire was surprised at the fact that Sylvester had noticed her for such a long time. She wanted to ask more questions but she couldn't as she needed to answer his question.

"Do you remember the day that you told me the healer informed you to tell me that I could come later in the evening for teachings?" Sylvester nodded.

Desire removed his hand from her face and made them sit on the bed. Before she could sit properly, Sylvester pulled her and made her sit on his lap, facing him while he rested his back to the wall.

"I was walking down the stairs when I suddenly fell and someone stomped on me with their feet for a long time. It hurt badly but not until Gin called me a slut.."

"Who is Gin?" Sylvester asked

"I won't tell you. I don't want you to hurt anyone because of me"

"At least I have a name" She rolled her eyes at him.

"I saw the shoe and I saw it on Fang's feet by evening. I couldn't say anything because I never knew hatred could go so far for others"

Sylvester knew his Dove was innocent but he never knew she was this innocent. She couldn't take the hatred which was why she had to ignore him that way.

Desire suddenly kissed Sylvester, taking him aback.

"I'm sorry, I just missed you" Desire confessed shyly

"I missed you too, dove" he kissed her thoroughly before moving to her neck, teasing her.

By the time his hands grabbed her boobs through the dress, he knew he needed more.

He looked into her eyes with passion evident in his before slamming his lips on hers the second time, taking Desire to her happy place.

Chapter 38

Sylvester fondled her breast before removing the buttons at the back of her uniform to gain full access to the twin bud that seemed to drive his senses away from him. He slipped his hand and lifted the uniform over her head. He pulled his hand into her undergarment to continue fondling her breast.

As his hand made contact with her sensitive nipples, Desire moaned out in pleasure having longed for the skinship. She placed her mouth back on his to continue kissing him as if her life depended on it.

Still kissing her, he lifted her from his lap and placed her on the bed before spreading kisses across her face, to her nose, eyes, neck before capturing her pink, soft lips. He removed his mouth from hers and quickly found a new home for it on her nipples.

Using his tongue, he flickered her nipple and sucked lightly while his hand was on her thighs, running between them and teasing her pussy. Desire threw her head back, moaning silently trying not to let everyone in the mansion know what was going on.

He moved his mouth to her other breast and also used his tongue to tease her before moving down to her stomach. He kissed her belly button and blew some air in it playfully, making Desire giggle like a toddler. While his hand that's fixed on her things moved forward to meet the wet spot between her thighs, her ears were between his mouth.

Sylvester fondled with her breast, twisting her nipples in between his fingers. He grabbed her by the ass, made her sit up before he continued kissing her.

Desire placed her hand in his hair, pulling lightly, enjoying the type of feeling he was giving her by just kissing her. He pulled her closer to him and removed her undergarment completely, making her stark naked before him. She looked away shyly, too embarrassed to look at him.

Sylvester kept on staring at her, amazed at how perfect she was shaped. She was so beautiful he could hardly take his eyes off her.

Sylvester held her hand, making her turn to finally face him and placed it on his bulge, letting her feel just how much he wanted her. Desire held her breath as she realized how hard he was for her.

"That's how much I want you, my beautiful dove" he confessed.

"Take me Master, I'm yours only" She replied as her voice and words dripped of Desire just like her name.

“You do not have to ask, Dove. I’ve always wanted you from the first time I met you but I couldn’t because of how little you were” He said, bending to capture her lips, swallowing her response.

“I never saw you for once, my lord. I didn’t know I caught your attention” Sylvester smiled and decided not to respond to her question

Even though she never saw him, he was always there to look at her every step.

He proceeded to remove his first pair of clothing and Desire watched him seductively. Before removing the last pair, he proceeded to the bed, grabbed Desire and kissed her thoroughly. As the last pair of his clothing was removed from his body, his cock sprang up, with his tip glistening with precum, making her more wet and hungry for him.

Sylvester grabbed her ass, squeezed gently and pulled her closer to the edge of the bed. He positioned himself at her entrance, looked into her eyes and kissed her hungrily.

Even though Sylvester knew it was her second time, he still tried to be careful and to not hurt her, he rubbed her pussy with his cock, trying to moisturize it so it’ll slide into her gently.

He gently entered her, earning a gasp from her as he filled her to the brim with his long, thick cock. She realized it wasn’t as painful as their first time. He started moving inside her slowly, kissing her through it all in a rhythmic way, sliding in and out of her dripping pussy. Desire kept her eyes on him, amazed at how he was looking at her with so much passion in his eyes.

He pulled her closer into him, grabbed her ass as she moaned his name loud enough for the entire corner of the house to hear.

He suddenly slammed into her, making her scream out his name the second time as she convulsed in an orgasm. He let her catch her breath before picking her up and turning her so he was facing her back. He kissed her shoulder, shifted her hair and kissed the scar. He was sorry for letting her get hurt.

“I’m sorry you had to go through this. I’m sorry that I didn’t protect you enough”

Desire was amazed that she finally got to hear her master say sorry.

He lifted her ass and slipped his cock into her tight, wet pussy from the back. He didn’t go slow this time around. He kept on fucking her hard and fast while she turned into a moaning mess. He slammed into her as he also reached his highest point as they both orgasmed together.

He turned her tired form to face him, he kissed her once more and picked her up as she rested her head against his shoulder. He took them into the bathroom and placed his dove in the bathtub to clean her up before joining her in the tub.

While washing them both, he was tempted to take her again but he knew he had to give her a break as she was too tired.

Moments later after Desire has regained some of her strength, she placed her head against his chest as they both sat in the bathtub, letting the warm water nourish their bones and make them feel all better.

That was when Desire decided to ask one of her many questions. She felt she knew nothing about this man and she needed to know more about him.

“I want to ask you something, my lord.” He smiles at how she switches easily from calling him Sylvester to being respectful with him out of courtesy.

“I know you have a lot of questioned Dove, ask and I promise to give you answers”

He promised, giving her the go ahead to investigate him.

“Why do you hate Queen Naomi?”

Chapter 39

“I was seventeen when my grandfather, the first Minister to hold the highest title in the region, died. He was a lovable old man, you would’ve loved him tirelessly and he would have adored you too” Sylvester said, and pinched Desire on her cheek making her laugh.

“We grieved for a while and then went back to our lives not knowing things were about to go bad for our family. My mother had died after giving birth to Naomi and it was just my father, my elder sister Urmi, I, Ying and Naomi”

“You have an elder sister” Desire asked rhetorically. Why hadn’t she heard of this sister?

“I just began the story, Desire. Calm down my dove” He kissed her shoulder.

“Two months after my grandfather’s death, we received a letter from the king who had decided to honor my father with a great position and wanted him to come along with his whole family. Not sensing any danger, we all went there happily. My father was glad that he was finally being acknowledged in his region and able to continue his father’s legacy. We got there and we were welcomed warmly, we merried, danced and jubilated.

By the end of the day, the king called us into his private chamber, which is also the throne room, the same one he invited you to the other day, do you remember?” Desire nodded.

“When we got there, the king asked for Urmi’s hand in marriage. My father couldn’t approve his request because Urmi was already betrothed to the son of the previous finance minister. My father disagreed and furiously, he left the palace with us after the King threatened to take her by force even if we do not like it”

“The king is not my favorite person” Desire declared, making Sylvester laugh softly. He knew he wasn’t her favorite person but her repeating it over and over again was always funny to him.

“The next thing we knew was that the son of the finance minister, the one who was supposed to marry Urmi in two moths was found dead, lying in his pool of blood after being killed. This devastated both families, especially my sister. She mourned him for days, she was in love with him and she didn’t know how to live without him”

Desire gasped out loudly at the story. She felt so sad for Urmi. She couldn’t imagine any woman to feel that way, ever. No one deserves to lose a special person.

“The king sent his condolences and the next day, he sent his proposal again. That was when it became clear that the King had killed that innocent man. So, before we could stop her, my sister, Urmi sent a message to the King through the messenger he sent. She said some wrong words to

him, disgracing his royal status. We all knew what she said was wrong but no one could blame her. She was still grieving and yet, the king had the heart to send a proposal”

Sylvester snickered before he continued the story.

“This in turn angered the king and summoned up his determination at marrying my sister by force. Then he sent the messenger back to tell us that we all should prepare for his arrival in three days time as he’ll be coming for his bride. We all lost our minds, my father was angry, my sisters sad while Ying and I could only think of ways to keep our family safe.

We waited for his arrival and on the third day, the king was nowhere in sight. My father decided to set out on his own to see if the king had laid an ambush or made a plan to destroy us while we lay waiting for him. The sunset and my father didn’t return. By morning, the knights I sent out to look for him came back with his corpse. Angrily, I set out with Ying to the palace to call the king out for the damages he had done. I was on the way when a messenger came in with the news that my sister, Urmi had committed suicide right before we left”

“My lord,” Desire rose from the water and turned to face him. Her eyes were filled with tears as she stared into his eyes. She could see that he was struggling to tell the story. He had lost two family members in a day, people who meant the world to him. Now, she could fully understand his anger, his unspoken words and how he felt indifferent about lots of things.

She placed her forehead on his as she gripped his shoulder tight.

“You’ve gone through so much, Sylvester” she cried out.

“Don’t even let those tears drop Desire. I don’t like it when you cry. I’m fine” He assured her and kissed her tears away.

He made Desire sit on his lap with her two legs beside his body, he weaved his hand round her body and looked into her eyes.

“I was shattered. I didn’t go back home to bury my sister and my father, instead I went to the palace with a determination at beheading him but then to my own shock, I saw my sister, Naomi already in a bridal robe, waiting with the king in his palace. I lost my stance, I couldn’t speak.

Once I regained my senses, I tried dragging her out of the palace but to my own surprise, Naomi pushed me away and she told me to my face that she had always wanted to be Queen. She had the right to tell it to my face that she had been eyeing the king for a while and now that she had that opportunity, she decided to take it.

I told her that from that moment onward she was dead to me, she will never be my sister anymore. All she'll be to me is a Queen and told her to forget that she has a brother somewhere outside the palace"

Trying to calm him down, Desire asked a different question, "Even though you went through all these in the hands of the king, why did you still became the prime minister, why did you accept the role?"

"It's a duty to my people, Desire, not to the king or to the throne" He replied. Desire kissed his forehead as she felt really proud of him.

"I don't believe what Queen Naomi said, I think there's more to the story"

"Why will there be more to the story? She betrayed her own family, she deserves to be banished or flogged at the public square..." Desire felt his shoulder tense, she knew he was mad at his sister or maybe it was at the situation.

Without Sylvester knowing and him still rambling off about what Naomi deserves, She slipped his half hardened cock into her pussy moaning out loud as he filled her own.

"What are you doing?" He asked surprisingly as he felt aroused all over again. It was difficult for him to say the words.

"Trying to distract you, master" Desire replied, smiling wickedly.

She kept on pushing herself in and out of him while Sylvester sucked her nipples, sending her to her place of pleasure.

By the time she was thoroughly fucked and tired, Sylvester moved them to her room and gently placed her on the bed.

She looked at her master longingly before asking another scary question, "What is it like to be in love with someone?"

Chapter 40

Desire looked at her master longingly before asking another scary question, “What is it like to be in love with someone?”

Sylvester looked at his Dove and contemplated giving her an answer. He knew he felt something more for her but he wasn’t sure if it was love and he was being careful not to fill her with ideas of what he’s scared of himself.

“I’ll tell you by morning. I know you’re tired, sleep Dove. I’ll be right here” He placed the blanket on her tiny form and slipped into it right beside her.

What she did in the bathroom had astonished him. He never knew she would be bold enough to take him that way. But he was glad she did.

“Promise me, my lord?”

Sylvester kisses her forehead, “Sleep first and We’ll talk later”

Morning came, Desire arose before the sun rose, she knew she had to resume her duties at the kitchen. She looked to her side and saw Sylvester sleeping peacefully. She didn’t have the heart to wake him up, so she slipped off the bed gently and walk into the bathroom.

By the time she was done, Sylvester had woken up, frantically searching for her until he heard her humming in the bathroom. He smiled knowing she was fine. He went back to bed and laid awake for her to finish.

Desire walked out of the bathroom feeling less sleepy and less tired. She turned to see Sylvester watching her step. She shyly looked away and went through her bag to wear her other uniform on her underwear.

“Wear a dress” Sylvester suddenly requested over from the bed.

“My lord, you know I can’t. I have to work and the dress won’t be comfortable doing that. I’ll just be punishing myself” Desire explained, hoping they were about to start arguing till someone yields.

“I’ll tell the court lady to relieve you of your duties so you can stay with me all day. That won’t be just for a day because you’ll no longer work in the kitchen” He declared

“That is so gracious of you, my lord, but no” She walked towards him to give him a short kiss but by the time her lip landed on his, he held on to her and kissed her passionately before letting go.

“Why do you always say no to my orders, Dove? That’s an absolute disrespect” Sylvester whined.

“Don’t act like a toddler, my lord. I still wouldn’t say yes. I can’t just stop working just like that. I used to see it as a punishment when I just got here but now, I see it as an obligation towards this mansion”

Sylvester kept on staring at Desire. She quickly moved away from him before she wouldn’t be able to control herself. She put on her uniform and got ready to leave.

“I’ll be going now, my lord”

“Come here, Dove” He held his hand open to her and she almost ran into it, he hugged her tight and kissed her hair.

“You can come up to my study if it gets too much, I’ll make sure you’ll be fine. I’ll protect you from now on, my dove” He assured her.

Desire nodded, kissed him on his forehead and waved continuously before walking out of the room.

She got to the kitchen and met Fei drowning herself in a big bowl of food and sweets on the other hand.

“Why are you eating this much so early, Fei?” Desire asked. Lady Nor walked inside at that moment and was just as shocked as Desire was.

“I need to eat something sweet because my heart is sad and bitter” She responded before stuffing her mouth with a large quantity of food.

“Why is your heart sad?” Lady Nor asked

“He broke up with me. He told me I wasn’t enough for him”

Lady Nor shook her head at Fei because she had warned her times without number to leave this guy who lives in the shadow but Fei insisted that she loved him.

Desire tried pacifying her before beginning her house chores and preparing breakfast. By the time Fei stopped eating, Desire and Lady Nor were about to begin breakfast. She joined the two ladies and they all started cooking quietly.

Once they were done, Sylvester, Ying and Fang were already sitting, waiting for breakfast. Fang tried smiling at Ying but could only meet his angry face. It was Sylvester who always dragged him into the dinning area each and every day as he hated eating with Fang.

Breakfast was served and everyone ate peacefully with Sylvester stealing glances at Desire who kept on smiling and blushing.

“Ying, did you bring a lady from the Harem into this place yesterday’s night?”

Ying looked at her angrily and refused to give her an answer.

“Or was it Sylvester? Were you with another woman last night? I thought Desire really liked you. How can you betray her like that? Because I’m so sure she couldn’t sound like that” Fang teased unaware that Desire was the one. Sylvester ignored her and kept on eating.

“Get me another spoon, slave girl” She instructed Desire and before Desire could move.

“Get up and get it yourself,” Skyvesr demanded.

“What!? Why will I get a spoon by myself when there are slaves here, especially a disrespectful one?” She yelled out.

“Desire is my woman and she has no obligation whatsoever to your household or to you. The earlier you start respecting her, the longer your life would last. Don’t tempt me, Fang. I might end up sending you on a short visit to the public town square” He threatened and dropped his spoon.

He moved closer to Desire, “Have you eaten?” He asked

“I’ll soon eat, my lord” she replied.

He dismissed every Maid from the dining area and followed Desire into the kitchen to get her breakfast. He pulled her into his study, sat with her beside a fireplace and wrapped his arms around her as he felt she was a bit cold.

“I don’t care about what your obligations are, but try to wear thicker clothes. You’re all cold, Desire” he warmed around her, rubbing his hands together for a short period and then placed it in her face, making her feel warm.

“Eat” He commanded, feeding her. Desire didn’t argue, all she wanted was to stay like this forever. He had declared her to be his woman and she was happy and satisfied.

A knight suddenly walked in with one of the king’s messengers. Sylvester frowned at the sudden interruption. Desire tried standing up to leave when she saw that he had visitors.

“You have a message from the king, my lord”

“Speak” Sylvester commanded.

“The king requests for your presence at the palace before sunset tomorrow”

“If not...” Sylvester asked.

“You’ll be removed as the prime minister, my lord” The messenger replied.

“Tell it to the king that my loyalty lies with my people and not the throne. I didn’t become the prime minister because of the throne or because of him, I did it for my people but also tell him that I’ll be there tomorrow to remove myself as the prime minister”

Chapter 41

Desire was surprised at her master's response. How could he just remove himself as the Prime Minister just like that?

"My lord, why do you want to do such a thing?" Desire asked after the messenger left.

"It's time to relieve myself of that duty, Desire. I've hold on for too long and I think it's time to not put myself way below him and take care of myself and make him regret everything he had done"

Desire was amazed that Sylvester would open up to her that way.

"Maybe you should let it go, I mean the past, so you can heal and move on" Desire advised.

"If I don't think that much about murdering him in cold blood each and everyday, I'll say I've moved on but I need to relieve myself of this post, that way I'll get the respect that I deserve"

"When will you travel to the palace?" Desire asked

"Tomorrow morning and I want you to come with me"

Desire wanted to agree with his suggestion. The joy of seeing Kim Chui and Queen Naomi was great and she really looked forward to it but she couldn't imagine leaving the mansion anymore.

"I don't think I should go with you, my lord. It'll be too dangerous and I know you'll want to protect me with everything, it wouldn't be fair to risk your life for me" Desire replied

"Then, I'll leave Ying here with you"

"No, you should take him with you. You both are brothers and you need to stay with each other. Also, watch each other's back and protect one another" Desire advised and Sylvester nodded, agreeing with her words.

"Promise me you'll come back safely and promise not to stay for too long"

He hugged her closer to his body and promised her he'll be back before it gets too long.

"Promise me you'll be fine as well," Sylvester ased., trying not to think of anything negative.

"I will be fine, my lord"

Later on that night, Sylvester held on to his little dove, trying to inhale her scent and hold on to her for a little bit longer, trying not to miss her too much.

The following morning, Sylvester was ready to leave the house with Ying and ten other soldiers, leaving both the house and Desire in charge of the court lady.

“You mean I have the right over everything, my lord, including the unwanted visitor who has refused to leave” The court lady asked, referring to Ying. Sylvester smiled and told her she had the right over everything, she could remove and she could accept.

He walked over to Desire whose eyes were glistening with tears, she looked at the ground trying not to see him leave.

He hugged her tight and whispered into her ear, “Loving is when you hate to see me leave” He said replying to the question she had asked the other night.

Desire looked up at him and smiled, nodding, telling herself that she loved her master more than anything in the world.

“Do not fight him, no matter what he does or say, just do what you want to do and come back to me”

“I will, Dove” He kissed her softly and waved goodbye. He knew her request wouldn’t be possible but he had to make that promise just so she wouldn’t get too worried about him.

Desire walked into the kitchen after waiting for him to leave her sight of vision to meet with the others and prepare breakfast for everyone else, since their master was not around.

“Desire, you’re here” Both Chang and Cassandra walked into the kitchen with smiles on their faces.

“Chang! Cassandra! What are you doing here?” Desire asked with excitement, she was happy to see her friend.

“We want to show you something,” Chang replied.

“What is that?”

“It’s a surprise, do not fret. Where’s Fei?” Cassandra asked about her archenemy.

Fei has been indoors after her poor heartbreak, she had been sleeping and eating and kept on telling the rest that she can’t do anything again other than just die. Desire had laughed in her face while Lady Nor yelled at her to move on with her life and forget about the stupid guy who doesn’t see her worth. Desire hugged her when she suddenly started crying and later left the room when she fell asleep.

“Fei will be fine. I can’t go out with you two, you know I need to make breakfast” Desire denied their request, surprising her.

“You should go with them, Desire. You need it”

Lady Mor advised knowing Desire might get withdrawn after Sylvester left. She went on to push Desire out of the kitchen with the others, telling them to have all the fun they needed.

Once Desire stepped out of the front door of the mansion, Chang blindfolded and led her by the hand to the surprise that was waiting for that.

Desire smiled on the way, excited about what was happening and kept on asking when they'll finally get to the surprise.

By the time the blindfold was removed and Desire opened her eyes to light, Desire was amazed at what was in front of her. Cassandra had planted a lot of flowers and arranged them in Desire's name.

"I thought you'll love it, Desire" Cassandra hugged her.

"I do love it cassandra, thank you" Desire gushed out and kept on looking at the flowers.

The flowers were of different colors, trimmed to be of the same height and it was arranged properly. Desire knew Cassandra couldn't do that on her own, Chang would have helped her too.

"Since when did you start this, Sandra?"

"The first time I was assigned here. Since I couldn't find you anywhere in the mansion, I decided to do this so it'll remind me of the woman who didn't let me feel alone in the dungeon. You're an angel, Desire. Chang helped me with it not even knowing who you were"

Desire was moved to tears. She quickly hugged Cassandra tight and looked at Chang appreciatively. She was glad that these two were there for her as well and she felt better since Sylvester left.

The three musketeers stayed in the garden later on to talk about life, their region and how long they'll have to spend in the mansion. Both Chang and Cassandra were careful not to mention Sylvester's name so Desire wouldn't miss him the more.

By the time Desire returned to the kitchen, she felt better and much more happy.

"I've been waiting all day for you, slut." Fang spat out as Desire walked into the kitchen.

Desire ignored her and went to stand far away from her, close to Lady Nor.

"You didn't wait for Sylvester to leave before tagging onto another man. I saw you in the garden, kissing that boy"

"I did not kiss any boy, my lady. With due respect, I'll say you saw wrong" Desire replied politely.

“You do not deserve to be here, you do not deserve to be right by his side. I will make sure I chase you out of this house before he returns, you good for nothing, prostitute” Fang yelled at her, moved closer to hit Desire.

The court lady walked in and stood in front of Lady Fang.

“I don’t care if you have a mission of sending the poor girl out of this house but my lady, please leave my kitchen as that is my own personal mission and I will not repeat myself or else I’ll have the guards remove you out of here”

The court lady threatened and embarrassingly, she walked out of the kitchen, making Desire feel triumphant for once.

Chapter 42

Desire slept alone that night and before it was probable, she cried herself to sleep. She didn't know she'd miss Sylvester that much after he had left. The feeling of not knowing where he was or how he was doing wrecked her into pieces. She promised herself she'll stay with Fei or Lady Nor at night till Sylvester returns home.

Chang and Sandra kept her company during the following three days prior to the arrival of Sylvester Ho. Fang had managed to keep off Desire after the court lady's eye was there to watch her every step and movement. Desire cooked during the morning and afternoon and by evening she went to the healer's place to continue her lessons.

Her teacher had told her she was a fast learner and he had ensured to teach her new and many things and also wrote some down in his big book that he gave to Desire.

Fei had also managed to leave her room and came out looking pale and fragile the day after Sylvester left. Even though all she did while indoors was eat, Food was still the first thing she requested when she got to the kitchen. Even though everyone laughed at her, they were all still glad that she was back on her feet.

Three days after Sylvester Ho left, a really loud sound was heard a stonethrow from the mansion, sending everyone to a state of panic. The head of the Knights sent three of his men to check what was happening outside of their walls.

Desire and every other person in the mansion waited all day for the men sent to return. The loud, sharp sound didn't stop and it went on for hours. Cassandra held on to Desire all through as the little girl was scared of what was happening.

Desire swallowed hard at her gut feeling. Even though she didn't know what that sound was, she knew the war had begun but decided to keep quiet and not say anything to avoid putting everyone in a bad state of mind.

By the time the knights returned, the loud sound was already nearer to their gates, they could hear it clearly. The knights that had been sent rode in with their horses, one wounded, one dead and the last one was unhurt.

Everyone screamed out as they watched the soldier that was unhurt drag the body of the dead soldier into the house and another person helped the injured one into the house.

"Secure the gates!, secure the gates!!" The head of knights kept on shouting. The soldiers all ran out to secure the gate with barricades and every possible item they could lay their hands on.

“Someone should get the healer” The safe soldier screamed out hoping they could help his friend out, to keep him from dying.

“The healer went to get herbs during the day, he’s outside the gate” The court lady screamed out, everyone panicked.

Though scared to her core, Desire moved closer to the dying soldier and tried inspecting his wounds.

“I can try to heal him but I don’t have the necessary things. Can someone go to the healer’s house and get me the black box that’s under his big table? A red cloth is wrapped around it. Everything I’ll need is inside” The other soldier nodded, opened the front door and ran towards The healers house.

“Fei, get me some warm water in a bowl. Sandra, I need a piece of cloth, something thick enough that I can use to stop his bleeding. Lady Nor, I need some lint as well and a tiny piece of cloth long enough to wrap around his arm”

Everyone stood still, with surprise on their faces, looking at Desire as if she had two heads.

“Hurry if you don’t want him to die” she yelled at them, sending everyone back to their senses as they scrambled off to get what she had requested.

“Lady Fang, get me one of those lamps that you’re using, it’s getting dark” Desire requested, sending Fang out of her reverie. She nodded without an argument and went up to her room to get the lamp.

“What was it, an arrow?” Desire asked the soldier who had gone with the injured man.

“No! I haven’t seen anything like it in my life, it is long, black and has a tiny mouth. The man pointed it at him and a loud sound came out of it, then, he held his arm and fell to the ground. I think something came out of it and went into his arm” He explained, still shaking from the fear.

Lady Fang came back with the lamp and Desire placed it closer to the man, she laid beside him on the floor and used a razor from the brought black box to cut off the man’s cloth. She inspected the man’s hand and saw something stuck in it. She reasoned that if an arrow needed to be removed then sure this needs to be removed as well but it wasn’t possible to just remove it like an arrow.

She searched through the box and saw a knife smaller than a regular knife, so she brought it out and first dropped it in the hot water that was placed beside her.

“Someone should hold him down” She called out and two soldiers held him down.

“You have to be strong through it all. I’m going to cut you open so as to bring this strange object out of your arm as that is the only way to stop the bleeding, so clench your teeth together and breathe through the pain” The injured soldier nodded and did as Desire had said.

Fei moved closer to observe what Desire was about to do. She knew she wanted to be a healer and turning away like the rest wouldn’t help.

Desire dropped the suture equipment into the water as well to make sure it was ready by the time she was done.

“Fei, do you still remember how to make a suture?” Desire asked and Fei nodded.

“Once I start cutting him up, remove these equipment from the water and get it ready for use” she requested.

Desire took the knife and slightly, cut the wound open at two sides to be able to remove the strange thing that was in his arm. By the time she finished cutting, the man was bleeding twice as normal but Desire was successful enough to remove the strange object. She used the piece of cloth that Sandra had brought to remove some of the blood.

Desire added the ointment and herb that would stop the bleeding. She held on for a minute to see both the ointment and herb perform its wonder before collecting the suture equipment from Fei and started stitching him up. The man cried at the first stitch, not able to hold the pain any longer.

By the time Desire stopped, he was too tired to say a word.

“Lady Nor, can you please make him some of your green tea to help him regain his strength?” Desire asked and the old lady nodded, ran into the kitchen to prepare one for the soldier.

All the used equipment was dropped into hot water before Desire and Fei went on to clean their hands. The soldier was transferred to one of their rooms in the mansion while the rest watched Desire in awe.

“We don’t even know if the master is dead or alive” One of the maids cried out, sending Desire back to reality. Her foot got rooted at a spot but she kept on changing in her head that he was fine.

‘Sylvester has to be fine, he can’t possibly get hurt. He wouldn’t do that to me’

Chapter 43

Desire wasn't her regular self by the time it was nightfall and there was still no sight of Sylvester. She sat in a corner for long, away from the others who had all cuddled up at the same spot, afraid of what was going on outside the walls.

Fei sat beside her and held her hand. Even though she didn't say anything, words weren't needed to express her emotions. She was assuring her friend that everything was going to be fine.

Trying to get her mind off the ongoing situation, Desire decided to show Fei how she made the cut and how she'll apply the healing ointment and herb before waiting for a few minutes for the bleeding to stop.

She also showed her how to properly stitch up and how the lint must be placed on the stitches wound to avoid it getting infected while healing.

The two girls later on held on to each other and slept off like everyone else in the vacant space closest to the front door. Nobody could go into their rooms to sleep for fear of the unknown.

It was during midnight when they heard a loud sound. It was different from the ones they've been hearing and this one seemed like a wall was being broken down and it was coming from the back of the house.

Everyone rushed to the direction of the sound and saw it was a large door being opened at the wall of the house in the backyard section. No one knew the door even existed until that day. Before anyone could panic about them being attacked, they recognize the uniforms of their soldiers and their knights.

One by one, wounded, hungry and tired, the ten soldiers who had gone with Sylvester trooped in, while Desire's heart leaped with joy.

"Where's the master?" Lady Nor asked one of the soldiers.

"We do not know. We only separated after he told us to use the back door. He had gone back to get Ying after we dropped him when he got hit with that thing" One of the wonder soldiers replied.

Desire cried out but quickly covered her mouth with her hands. She was so scared that she thought she was going to die.

Lady Nor held her before she fell.

"He'll be fine, Desire. I promise you that the master is fine. Hold yourself together Desire. Be strong for him" Lady Nor whispered into her ear.

“Be strong Desire. At least we have to help these wounded soldiers. Please Desire! Please” Tears streamed down her eyes as she watched every soldier cry out in pain. Some wounds were minor, while others were severe.

She stood up slowly and directed Fei to attend to the minor injuries while she called Sandra to her side to help her with the others. Still heartbroken, she sent out the orders like the last time and everyone went on to perform it but thrice the first time.

By the time Desire was through with the six soldiers that needed stitching, it was daybreak already. Desire hadn’t slept a wink, she was awake all through the night taking care of the soldiers. Even though she tried persuading Sandra to go and rest, the little girl refused and stayed with Desire all through.

The soldiers who had gone to secure their gate came back by morning to check on their friends, hear the story of what was happening around them, and also to have their breakfast before resuming back to duty. They could tell of how lucky they were since the wall surrounding the mansion was built to be fifteen feet tall and the gates strong enough to withstand the strange object.

“What was that sound? Where was it coming from? One of you said it was a long, black object” The court lady asked the soldiers. Even though the noise had stopped, they all were still scared.

“Nobody knows what it was. Not even Master Ho knew...”

“It was a gun” The spoon that Desire held dropped to the floor as she heard that voice.

She turned and saw her master looking at her and he smiled immediately when their eyes met. Desire ran to meet him at the back entrance of the house but she couldn’t hug him as he was holding a wounded Ying.

“Can you help him?” Sylvester asked but Desire couldn’t give an answer. She kept on looking at Sylvester, checking him from his head down, trying to convince herself that he wasn’t a ghost.

“She’ll help him. That’s all she had been doing” Lady Nor replied, prompting Desire to nod her head as tears rolled down her eyes.

“Help him, please” Sylvester wiped off her tears with his hand as he handed Ying over to one of his soldiers.

Ying was placed on a bed as he grunted in pain, one of those strange objects was in his leg, right leg, and an arrow was in his right arm, though the arrow had been broken, Desire knew she had to remove both almost at the same time.

She touched Ying's face as he gently opened his eyes to look at her. A lone tear dropped from her eyes. She didn't know how to feel. She had been worried about Sylvester forgetting totally about this brave man who could go extra miles to save anyone from death.

"It's okay, Desire. Do your job, I'll be fine. But no spider web stitches this time, woman" He joked making Desire laugh through her tears.

"I can't assure that but I'll manage to do better," She replied.

Desire first put the healing ointment and herb on his arm to stop bleeding while Sylvester walked over with a gin, a local strong drink and poured some in Ying's mouth.

"Swallow it, Ying. I know you don't take alcohol on a normal day but this will help to stop the bleeding fast and reduce the pain" Ying nodded and swallowed the hot drink.

Desire and Fei got to work, with the latter working on his arm while Desire cut his leg up, removed the object and stitched him up. By the time they were done, Ying was already sleeping.

Sylvester went on to check up on the wounded soldiers who were already treated by his woman and he couldn't be more proud of her.

"What is this, my lord?" The head of knights asked as he took one of the objects and showed it to Ying.

"It's called a bullet and what they put it in is called a gun. I think the barbarians got it from the countries across the oceans" Sylvester explained.

"The Barbarians? Why are they fighting us, my lord?"

"The king allowed it, he declared a war on those who were thirsty for one already. He chewed more than he could swallow"

Chapter 44

Desire sat beside Sylvester's bed and watched him get rid of his cloth to take a bath. She kept on staring at him, thinking if this was a reality or dream.

She thought she had lost him when those soldiers walked in without him behind them. She was so scared and prayed all night long that he'd come back to her.

"Do you want to join me in the bathtub?" Sylvester requested. Desire looked away as he took off his last piece of clothing, leaving him stark naked. He smiled at her shyness.

"My beautiful Dove, look at me. Do you wish to join me in the bathtub?" Sylvester asked again but this time he was close to her side.

"There's a war looming over us, taking baths together would take longer than usual. I'll take my bath once you're done" Desire replied.

Sylvester walked into the bathroom and Desire followed him. She wasn't going to let him out of her sight this time around.

"Why are you following me?"

"I don't want to lose you anymore. I can't survive without knowing your condition" Desire replied honestly.

Sylvester held her face and kissed her softly and gently. "I'm here Desire. I promise to never scare you like that again. I'm so sorry you had to go through such" Sylvester apologized.

He sank into the warm water in the bathtub and Desire sat beside him, watching him take his bath.

"What happened out there, Sylvester" She asked, wanting to hear of his journey forth and back to the mansion.

"War, Dove. A Great War that I don't see this region surviving. This could leave us vulnerable and weak for the rest of our lives. Our soldiers are dying... we do not have enough..." He suddenly stopped mid sentences.

"What happened?"

"Those guns looked like something I've seen before as I watched some of those barbarians hold it. Now I remember, a merchant from a town across the ocean came to visit my grandfather when I was a child. My grandfather exchanged those with two of his favorite white horses. But I do not remember where he could've kept them"

Sylvester knew if he could find those guns, it'll help them to fight better and secure their regions but he couldn't remember where his grandfather kept them.

"Did you see Queen Naomi?" Desire asked, trying to change the topic. Skyvter turned to look at her and nodded.

"But that was after I saw the King. We got to the palace and I met with the King right outside the throne room. I wasn't there to go in and sit with him. He already brought chains and arrows and swords to arrest me and throw me in prison for disgracing him at the party but I had gotten a little present for him on the way. We made a short trip to the Harem on our way there to get an animal in its place. We were right, prince Li Wei was there, at his most useless hours, right on top of one of those women.

When the king gave his soldiers the order to arrest me, I also brought out our little present for the king. We knew Prince Li Wei was his weakness and he would do anything to make sure his brother was safe. Just like those chains lying await for me at the King's feet, so were the ones hanging around Li Wei's neck as I pulled from time to time, igniting the King's wrath.

The King asked me what I wanted and I told him that a freedom at throwing away the position he had bestowed on me at my weakest hour and funny enough, his forgiveness for standing for my legacy at the party. He promised me all these things and even my safety" Sylvester narrated.

"Why didn't you come back that day?" Desire asked.

"I needed to stamp the official letter from the King relieving me of my post and this could only be done by the next day. Li Wei was with us through the night. I saw Queen Naomi the next day shortly before I left. She asked me to forgive her for what she did and I did, I forgave her. It was on the way back here that we saw fire. The Harem had been burnt down and the places closer to the palace has been raced down. The condition of this plavaebis unknown"

Sylvester had returned to his room by the time he finished talking. One by one, he removed Desire's uniform and helped her into the bathtub.

"Take a quick shower, my love. I'll be waiting in the room" Sylvester kissed her red, blushing cheek and walked into the room to put on his clothes.

Desire walked out naked moments later and saw Sylvester holding her dress in his hand. She collected it, ran back into the bathroom and put in her dress.

"The healer is missing," Desire told Sylvester.

"So I've been told. But there is nothing we can do about it at this period"

Sylvester held her in his arms and captured her lips. Mid kissing, they heard a heavy knock on the door and they both walked towards it.

“May I come in, my lord?” One of his knights asked

“Yes, come in” He opened the door to allow him in.

“There’s an urgent matter that needs your attention” Sylvester and Desire walked out with him out of the house.

When they got down the stairs, they met almost everyone on their feet, at a startled mood.

“What’s going on?” Sylvester asked

“Some people are at the gate, they claim their regions and villages had been burnt down my lord”

“How many are they?” Sylvester asked

“They said they’re about 35, my lord. I opened the gate to see who they were and to confirm when one of them” Skyvesr stopped him and chastised him for his careless attitude. Opening the gate could’ve been dangerous and cost them all their lives.

“I’m sorry my lord, I had to open it when one them said she had an evidence to prove that they had been invited to the mansion if they were in any danger”

The soldier went on to bring out a dress.

Desire collected the dress and inspected it, it was her own. The same dress that the royal seamstress made for her, the same dress she wore to the king’s birthday ceremony, the same dress she gave to Kim chui.

“It’s Kim Chui. The woman is Kim Chui. Sylvester, please let them in, please. We can’t leave her out there like that” Desire cried out holding on to Sylvester’s cloth.

Chapter 45

“It’s Kim Chui. The woman is Kim Chui. Sylvester, please let them in, please. We can’t leave her out there like that” Desire cried out holding on to Sylvester’s cloth.

Wrapping his arm around her, Sylvester instructed the soldiers, “Open the gate for them and take them to the northern wing of the mansion that we had already provided for them and give them the necessary things they want and also post two soldiers with them. Also, bring the woman who had the cloth to with her to us”

Sylvester explained to Desire that he knew something like that was going to happen so he had prepared for any future unforeseen occurrences.

The gate was opened and unlike what the woman had said, they were only about twenty in numbers including two little girls. They were all directed to the northern wing of the mansion before the soldier instructed the lady with the dress to follow him.

Sylvester had managed to convince Desire to have her breakfast and that Kim Chui will be back to her soon. Desire was glad that she was escape with the condition that she was in.

“She’s here, my lord” The soldier announced. Desire sprang to her feet, ready to hug her friend and tell her about how worried she had been about her and how much she missed her but suddenly stopped when she saw a strange woman looking at her.

“Who are you?” Desire asked.

“She’s the woman with the dress” The soldier replied.

“Where did you get that dress? Who gave it to you? Did you steal it? I want to know right now where you got that dress from” Desire yelled at the young lady.

Sylvester went up to her side and held her tight, “Calm down, Desire”

“Kim Chui gave the dress to me after the Harem was attacked” The lady explained.

“Where is she? Where’s Kim chui?” Desire asked.

“She’s dead. She was stabbed in the stomach before being dragged away by those animals. They threw her body into the woods, we took her away from there and buried her by the river that flows through the region” The young lady told them with tears running down her eyes.

Desire collapsed into Sylvester's hand. She couldn't believe everything this woman had told her. Kim could never die just like that. That girl had gone through so much in life, she didn't deserve to go just like that. She should've lived, she deserves to live.

Desire removed herself from Sylvester and walked into a corner. She bursted into tears, wailing for the loss of her friend. She remembered Sylvester's words about war, they only know the beginning, it is always hard to know the end. The war was not only going to affect the surrounding region, it was going to harm their people, destroy their sources of livelihood and take their loved ones away from them.

Sylvester touched her shoulder lightly after dismissing the woman. When she looked up at him with those tears in her heart, he felt her pain. He felt just how much she hurt from losing her friend. He knew what's like to lose someone special.

"How am I supposed to tell him that she died? How am I supposed to inform him of the death of his woman? He was even ready to go all the way with her despite her being pregnant for another man? He was ready to secure her freedom. How am I even going to start?" Desire cried out making him wonder about who she was talking about.

"What are you talking about, Dove? Who is he?" He asked .

"Ying! Ying is the one I'm talking about. How am I supposed to tell him that the one woman he loved is gone just like that?"

Sylvester never knew Ying was seeing Kim Chui, even though he was getting suspicious of the short trips he had been making to the palace but he had thought it was for his sister. He never knew it was another woman entirely.

"We will find a way to tell him, Desire. I promise he'll be fine" He kissed her forehead and held her close.

"My lord, Lady Fang wants to leave the mansion with her maids" Sylvester head snapped up at his direction and quickly stood up, leaving Desire at her spot, still wailing.

"Fang, What is this nonsense you're trying to do?" Sylvester screamed at her on spotting her closer to the door.

"I'm going back home, Sylvester. I can't keep on staying here. My family would be worried about me and I need to go back"

"That is impossible, Fang. There's a war going on out there and you want to risk your life. Shouldn't safety be the first thing you should think of?"

"Why are you trying to make me stay, Sylvester?"she cried out.

“To keep you safe. I still hate you for everything you’d done to me but still, I so much respect your father than to let you go out there and endanger your life”

“It is my life, not yours, Sylvester. I’m going home and nobody can stop me” She screamed back.

“Seal the gates and do not let her out of your sight. Stop this madness and find something better to do” Sylvester replied.

“If I stay, will you love me like before?” She suddenly asked.

Desire had already left the spot she had condemned herself too when she heard the loud argument. She waited for his response as well as everyone out there. Desire knew he could give her a positive response because the way he left her to attend to Fang and how much he’s trying to protect her proves something to them all.

“No, Fang. Whatever that happened between us is over. All I’m doing is out of respect for your father” He finally replied after a long silence.

“The fact that you took so long to reply speaks a thousand words, Sylvester. You’re still in love with me and you’re just fucking her for no reason” She said pointing to Desire.

They all knew Fang was an attention seeker, Lady Nor had worked in that house for so long to know what Fang was capable of. She could play Sylvester like she played her fingers. She could only hope that her words didn’t affect Desire.

“I have no explanation for any of my doings, Fang. It’ll be better if you go back inside before I change my mind” Sylvester roared.

“You cannot stop me from leaving and neither can your men. All they need is my command. I’ll give you a little gift before leaving”

She moved closer to Sylvester, whispered silent words into his ear while her eyes were looking at Desire directly, smirking at her.

“You’ve been played Sylvester, deal with that” Sylvester turned to look at Desire with blazing anger in his eyes.

Gone were the passion he felt for her, all that was left within a minute was hatred.

Chapter 46

“What happened? What did she tell him?” Fei asked Desire who kept her eye glued on Sylvester who was looking at her with so much hatred.

“I do not know, Fei. But whatever she said had changed his mind about me” she replied.

Still insisting to leave, Fang walked up to the secured and sealed gate while the knights kept on telling her that they were not ready to open the gate for her.

While one of the soldiers left to request Sylvester approval of an important issue, Fang asked her maids to attack the soldier at the gate with knives and cutlasses. As a result of their code of conduct, they knew they shouldn’t hit or touch those women, so they shifted back and let them open the gate by themselves and watched Fang walk into her death.

The soldier came back to report to Sylvester about what happened. They found him sitting at the back of the house with his head in his hands.

“My lord, Lady Fang left with her maids. They tried attacking us but we couldn’t touch them” The soldier reported

“But at least you tried,” The soldier nodded. “You may leave”

The soldier went back feeling less guilty about what happened.

Sylvester kept his distance from Desire no matter how much she tried reaching out to him. Even though she was still grieving for her friend, she still tried talking to him, to ask him what she had done, yet, he closed her off.

After checking on the soldiers that night, Desire went into his room to try and talk to him but he wasn’t there, so she got to his study and found him searching for something seriously.

“Can I help you with that, my lord?” His head snapped up to look at her, then turned back to whatever she was searching for.

“No, go back to the room. I do not need your help here” He replied aggressively.

Desire knew it was probably the guns that he was looking for and she knew she could help him search around the house as it’ll make it faster and easier for him.

“Should I bring your dinner up here, my lord?” Desire asked.

“No, I do not need you to do such things for me anymore. If I want anything, I’ll walk down the stairs and request for it by myself from other maidens. You can go about preparing breakfasts for your love”

Desire was confused about his words.

“What do you mean by that statement, Sylvester? We’re in the middle of a war and all you could do is get mad at me. I just lost a friend and all I need is your comfort and yet, you’re doing this” She said crying already.

“It’s none of my business even if you lost your parents” He spat.

“You do not mean to say that. You have no right to talk about my parents that way. You forced me to leave my home to come work for this mansion”

“No Desire, no! The custom and tradition forced you here, not me. Your region is the poorest and filled with all types of diseases, yet, making you leave your home was to keep you alive. If I had my way, you wouldn’t be here by now”

“You do have your way. Tell your men to open the gate, so I’ll leave this place, Sylvester. At least I mean nothing to you, so doing that would be easy, right?”

Sylvester snapped and walked closer to her angrily, he wrapped his hand around her neck in a tight grip, forcing her to not breathe properly while pressing her back against the wall.

“What are you doing,?” Desire cried out.

“Getting you back to your senses. The next time you refer to me as Sylvester, I’ll make sure I rip your throat out and don’t even dare think about leaving or else I’ll make sure you regret it”

He dropped her and moved back, regret evident in his eyes but quickly flickered away before Desire could notice. Desire kept on coughing until she could regain her breath back properly. She looked up to glare at him.

Taking him by surprise, Desire jumped on him. Wrapped her hands around his neck and kissed him softly. He was taken aback by her actions as he was confused and didn’t know if he should kiss her back.

By the time her tongue slid into his mouth, he dropped his thoughts into his floor, wrapped his hand around her waist and kissed her as angrily as she did. Teeth clashing, tongue fighting, the angry kisses went on for minutes until Desire pulled away from him.

“If choking me to death was your way of saying goodbye to whatever it is that we had, then that was my own way of leaving too. I’ll move out of your suite before you get back, my lord” Desire

bowed even lower than before and walked out of the room, with tears in the corner of her eyes. Sylvester was speechless.

The first thing she did was to walk into the room she was using in his suite, pack up her bags and every other thing belonging to her and walked out with an intention of never coming back.

The soldiers at the gate heard another terrible, hard knocking on the gate. They peeked out and saw it was done by the country's soldiers.

"What do you want?" They asked

"A healer. We are wounded and we heard there's a healer here. Once she treats us, we'll leave this place, help us, we are brothers, please" without thinking twice or informing Sylvester, they opened the gate for the five oldiers to come in.

They made them lie out front before going in to get Desire, Fei and Cassandra. On impulse, the three women walked up to the soldiers and inspected them.

One had been shot in the leg just like Ying, the second one had been shot by an arrow in his head and Desire knew he was probably dead, the third one hand had been cut off, the fourth had a sword slash through his face while the fifth one was only limping.

Desire asked Fei to take care of the ones with the deep slash wound made by the sword and the one that was limping.

When Desire moved closer to the first and second one, she noticed that they were smelling differently but the look on the face of the one shot was different from that of their soldiers. He looked at her with so much anger in his eyes, as he didn't look as if he was going through any pain.

She inspected the one with an arrow in his head and discovered that he was dead.

Instructing one of their own soldiers, "This one is dead, take him out please" Before she could move closer to the one without an arm, the first one with the gun shot in his leg, held her hand suddenly.

She turned back and she saw him bringing out a shiny dagger from his pocket.

"Treat him or I kill you"

"He's dead already. I'm not a magician, so I can't bring him back to live" Desire replied.

The guy stood up and started waving the dagger in Desire's face. She stood there courageously and kept on telling him she would not be able to treat him.

Desire tried removing her hand from his, but he held on too tight, scaring the girl to death even though she wasn't showing it.

“Let her go” A soldier intervened, giving Desire the chance to remove her hand and run off.

Thinking she had escaped finally, she turned and ran towards the house but before she got there, the soldier threw the dagger at her, as Fei and Cassandra kept on screaming her name. By the time Desire turned, the dagger hit her sending her to the floor. She hit her head on the stairs, losing consciousness as blood pulled around her.

Chapter 47

Desire opened her heavy eyelids to light. She closed her eyes as it penetrated, almost blinding her, before she opened it again. She looked around her and realized she was back in Sylvester's suite. A lint was wrapped around her hand and her head hurt really bad.

She sat up on the bed and that was when the door suddenly opened.

"I thought the healer doesn't have the right to get hurt" Ying walked in, leaning on a stick to support his movement with a cup of water, teasing her.

He placed the water beside her and sat as she took the cup and drank the water.

"I've been changing that water from time to time. It's like I knew you'd be thirsty by the time you wake up"

"What happened to me, Ying?" Desire asked as her last memory was unclear

"You don't remember the soldier who attacked you" Ying asked and at that point, the memory of all that happened came rushing back to her.

The soldier had thrown a dagger at her before she could reach the door leading back into the main building.

"It turned out that he was a Barbarian and not a soldier. The dagger hit your arm but you lost too much blood before others could get through to you. You've been sleeping for three days, Desire"

Three days! She had slept for that long with everything going on around them.

A gunshot was heard very close to the mansion and more followed.

"We're still at war" She asked and Ying nodded.

"But now it is getting closer to our gate. It seems our mansion is the only place they hadn't attacked yet and now it'll be their priority"

"Should we be scared for our lives? Or maybe get ready to leave this place" Ying chuckled at Desire's words.

"You do not know how much this place means to Sylvester. He will protect it with his life. Trust him to do that. He's in the process of looking for the guns his grandfather bought years back with other soldiers. The sooner they find it, the earlier they'll go beyond this wall" Ying explained.

As Ying mentioned Sylvester's name, the memory of their last encounter came to Desire, they've had a big fight about what Desire was unaware of. Even though she thought he would've told her if she did anything wrong, he still went on to hurt her with the intention of killing her.

She wanted to hate him but she knew her heart had gone too far from that.

"What happened, Desire? Ever since you woke up, you haven't asked of Sylvester"

"He's no more someone I can ask about. Everything ended a long time ago. He wouldn't even want to see me" Desire replied bitterly.

If everything had ended between them, then why is Sylvester always coming back to the room every night to sleep beside her and also during daybreak to check up on her despite how busy he was.

The tears he had cried on the second night when she didn't wake up. The look on his face when he saw so much blood, the anger in his eyes as he slayed the Barbarian to death. Their relationship was far from over.

"What happened to the barbarians?" Desire asked

"Only two of them were barbarians. The one you refused to treat was truly already dead and the other one was killed by Sylvester after he threw that dagger at you" Ying explained.

Suddenly remembering Kim Chui, Desire felt really sad as a tear dropped from her eye.

"I need to tell you something important, Ying" Desire called out by the look on her face, Ying already knew what she was about to say.

"I know Desire. Sylvester already told me. She's dead, right?" She nodded knowing there was still doubt in his heart as well as her heart.

They both wished Kim Chui would walk through the door and hugged them both. She was a good friend, a true lover and a girl who wished for the peace to reign in her land.

"How are you feeling, Ying?"

"Sad, angry, useless, confused but still hopeful. I wished I had gone back for her, I wished I'd been fast enough to secure her freedom. I wish I'd done better for her" Ying lamented

Desire could feel just how much pain he was going through. She feels useless too, thinking only about herself and not her friend. She bursted into tears and Ying had to limp over to the bed to hug her tight and promised her that everything would be fine, even though it was almost like a self promise to himself as well.

"Is she awake?" Cassandra opened the door slightly and asked.

Ying pulled away from Desire and let her in. The young girl ran through the room to jump on Desire and hug her tight.

"I was so scared. I thought you were going to leave me by dying alone" Desire laughed at her words.

"I'm not going to die and leave you alone with Fei. I'll always be here, my love" She kissed her forehead and hugged her tight.

"Most of our soldiers have recovered and we have more people in the mansion now. Most of their women help in the kitchen while some men and women train with the healer soldiers. I want to train too but Chang keep on sending me back, that evil man"

She rolled her eyes at the mention of her brother's name, making Desire smile.

Cassandra kept on talking about everything that had happened within those three days. Desire trusted Cassandra with all the information.

"I've also made a new friend. Her name is Leah, she's my age and also very beautiful. Would you love to meet her now?" Cassandra asked

"No! She won't be seeing anyone, she needs to rest, okay?" Ying replied firmly and Cassandra glared at him.

"He's too evil, even more than Chang" she whispered into Desire's ear before turning to glare at him. "I'll be back Desire" She stuck her tongue out at Ying before running out of the door.

"She's crazy for her age" Ying commented.

"And smart too" Desire replied.

Sylvester walked through the door after Cassandra collided into him at the end of the stairs and informed him that she had woken up before running off to tell others. He was glad that she finally woke up.

"I see you're awake" Ying stood up and walked out of the door with his stick so as to give them their well deserved privacy.

"I'll soon leave your suite, my lord" Desire replied.

"This isn't a matter of what or where you are, Desire. I need to speak to you about something"

"I do not wish to speak with you about anything, my lord" Desire looked everywhere except at him.

"I'll be leaving tomorrow with my men. We found the guns and I've begun training them on how to use them. We will not wait for the barbarians to get here before going out to meet them and send them out of our town"

"I do not care if you stay or leave. You've made it clear that you want nothing to do with me anymore" Desire lied.

"Some of the soldiers would be brought back here if they get wounded"

"I said I do not care" She raised her voice.

"I promise not to be one of those that'll be brought back" Sylvester stubbornly continued.

"It's not my business even if you die" Desire spat, taking him aback. He knew she was lying. He could see the tears in her eyes.

He moved closer to the bed, tried holding her by the hand but she quickly removed her hand and folded it against her chest despite the pain.

"Desire, no matter what, stay safe, please" Desire glared at him. He had no right to wish her safety.

He suddenly grabbed her and smashed his lips on hers, taking her by surprise and kissing the hell out of her.

He placed his forehead on hers and whispered, "I love you" before walking out of the door, leaving Desire to become a crying mess.

Chapter 48

The following morning Sylvester and all his soldiers and knights excluding just five of them left for the battlefield. They knew they had to save their region and not wait for the war to reach their wall before taking charge.

Sylvester had found more than a hundred guns and several bullets in one of the attics in the mansion. Through the night, the soldiers were trained on how to use it, not sleeping or eating and by morning, they packed up the supplies they could need and set out before dawn.

“Master is really courageous to face those people and many soldiers even left with them. I’ll praise the women who took it up to train and also go with them just to prepare them food and offer assistance in any way they could” Cassandra said.

Cassandra was talking more than usual and Desire knew it was because her brother was one of those who left. Desire wished she had been there to bid Chang farewell but she didn’t want to see Sylvester. She knew he’ll see just how sad she was to see him leave and she didn’t want him to have that power over her.

“Chang will be fine, my love. They’ll be fine before you know it” Desire assured her.

They had walked down to the others who were all sitting in the corridor and waiting silently for a heavy knock on the gate. Lady Nor and the court lady were attending to the kitchen matters while the rest of the maids sat. Some were crying for their families that they hadn’t seen in years and are not sure of their current status, while others felt sad about the entire situation.

When Desire looked in their eyes, all she saw was lost hope. With every gunshot heard outside of their walls, their heart leap out of their chest, sending them all to their feet.

Desire decided to take up the situation and address them all.

“Girls! I know we all are sad and worried about our families and friends who are outside this wall and I understand because I feel the same way too. But I’ll love to encourage us all that all we can do is keep the good faith and pray for their safety. Okay everyone?” Desire asked and they all nodded, feeling better.

“Let’s do somethings to keep our mind off all these, you, you and Mira” She pointed to the three girls, “Why don’t you go and help out in the kitchen or maybe help share the food?”

She continued that way and made sure she had something for everyone.

“Cassandra and Leah, can you go into the garden and see if you can get me any herb that might be useful while Fei and I check out the healers room and see if any supply can be found, we’re almost out of most of our supplies” The girls all stood up and went on about their work.

By evening everyone returned to the corridor, having a little bit of hope this time, since no one was brought back yet.

“You know he’ll be fine, right?” Ying touched her arm lightly from the back.

She turned and smiled at him.

“I know Ying”

Ying wasn’t able to go with them because of the disadvantage he had. His leg hasn’t healed enough for him to go on to a battlefield and it made him feel more guilty.

“I wish I was out there and not in here, that way I’ll be able to protect him” He nagged

“It’s not your fault Ying. It’s the situation of things” Desire tried making him feel better until Fei joined them.

“I have a confession to make” Fei suddenly announced, gaining the attention of both Ying and Desire.

“What’s wrong?”

“I think I’m pregnant” Both Ying and Desire looked at her surprisingly. Ying and Fei’s friendship had started when she was assigned to treat him after he was shot. He had liked the way she always managed to make him laugh when all she talked about was food.

“Just like that? How?” Ying asked

“How else does a woman get pregnant, Ying? I didn’t sleep with a goat” Ying and Desire laughed.

“This is not funny, you both. I’ve been vomiting all morning and I still won’t stop hating the smell of fish”

“That doesn’t mean you’re pregnant. Even if you are, who’s the father?” Desire asked

“Even though I prayed that he wouldn’t arrive safely back from the war with his two legs intact, now I think I need to change my prayer. He’s the head of the knights here” Fei revealed and both Desire and Ying were surprised.

“The same man whose head is always in the clouds”

“Don’t blame me Desire. I fell in love with a fool and now I’m pregnant for him” Fei cried out.

Desire took her hand to check her pulse like her teacher had taught her. She couldn't get any sign of pregnancy even after doing any necessary thing.

"What did you eat yesterday, Fei?"

"A lot of food" Ying looked at her disgustingly and left them both.

"Think, What was the last thing you ate?" Desire asked again

"I think the food they left by your bedside. I took it to my kitchen, heat it up and then ate it"

Desire hit her on the head, not thinking twice, making her scream out in pain.

"Why did you hit me like that?"

"You foolish girl. Shouldn't the food you eat have a limit? You ate stale food and you expect your stomach to agree with you" Desire glared at her.

"You mean I'm not pregnant"

"I think so," Desire replied.

Fei screamed out in happiness and started laughing like a mad woman.

"May he not come back with both legs" Dhe prayed out causing Desire to laugh

"Be careful what you wish for, Fei"

Two months later, the war went on, the soldiers were being brought back one after the other, but not as much as the people had feared.

Desire continued treating them despite her condition. Fei had always been there to help her ever since they realized that she was pregnant.

They knew who the father of the baby was but no one could ask her.

They could still hear the sound of the gun outside their walls. At night, Desire could hear voices, shouting outside the walls and wished to hear Sylvester's voice during those nights.

They could say they had peace until one day when a body was brought in. The royal regalia looked familiar and Desire screamed when she saw who it was.

It was Queen Naomi covered in blood. She had been shot and she had lost a lot of blood.

"My Queen" Desire cried out.

"It's so good to see you again, Desire. I can die in peace now knowing you're fine" Queen Naomi struggled to say.

“What happened?” Desire asked, knowing there’s no salvation for the Queen. She had lost too much blood and she isn’t strong enough to go through the pain of cutting her open at her chest to remove the bullet.

“The palace was attacked, my warriors couldn’t save me and I couldn’t save either of them. Sylvester managed to get me out of there and told his men to bring me here” The Queen told her with her voice low already.

She was losing her strength. Desire couldn’t stop waiting. She wished the war could stop, she had lost too much, she didn’t think she could take it anymore.

“Enough with the tears, Desire. I’ll finally be at peace with my father, my mother, my grandfather, my sister and my friend, Fang”

Desire’s head sprang up at the mention of Lady Fang’s name.

“Lady Fang! Is she dead?” The Queen nodded as tears rolled down her eyes.

“Stay with me, Desire and promise me you’ll stay alive no matter what. Promise me, Desire” Desire kept on nodding her head as she couldn’t stop the tears.

Ying got to the scene and screamed at her, told her to do something but Desire explained to him that nothing could be done. Her pulse was too weak to cut her open, she’ll die during the process. Her breathing was heavy and she knew she had reached the gate of afterlife.

“Naomi! Naomi!!” She gently opened her eyes and saw that it was Ying who called her. She smiled as the memory of their childhood played in her head. She lifted her other hand and Ying held it tightly.

Desire cried out immediately and she felt her pulse drop. The hand holding Ying’s hand slacked and Ying quickly held on to her as tears ran down the brave man’s face.

They knew it was over; their Queen was gone!

Chapter 49

Ying sent one of the warriors to tell Sylvester that their sister, the Queen, was dead. The warrior in his own capacity, went out discreetly and searched for Sylvester and after searching for two nights, he couldn't find him. He returned home!

"I couldn't find them my lord. It seems they have moved on to another part of the region. According to the word I heard from some of those outside our wall, they had successfully chased the barbarians and other regions who had joined in the fight out of this part. Maybe they're somewhere else, we do not know" The warriors narrated.

Ying knew they couldn't keep Naomi lying there anymore longer. It was time to bury her before she started to smell. He thanked the warrior he had sent and proceeded to make the burial arrangement for Queen Naomi.

That same day, she was buried the proper way according to the way a queen should be buried in their tradition as to the custom.

Desire wouldn't stop crying and she had refused to eat, despite the fact that she was pregnant.

"Desire, you need to take something, at least for the baby, please!" Fei begged, hoping Desire would change her mind and not keep on endangering the love of her child.

"We all know how hard it is to lose two friends, Desire. My own parents were killed before my own eyes but still I moved on, you can do it too, please, just eat something" Fei kept on begging, not giving up on her friend.

At some point, Desire touched her growing baby bump, trying to think of the war would be over by the time it was born. She doesn't want her child to grow up in that type of environment.

"I'll take it from here Fei" Ying collected the food from her and sat down close to Desire. He held her hand and smiled at her.

"Naomi, Fang and I grew up to be close friends, we all grew up together in this mansion. After I was adopted by Sylvester's grandfather, I was treated like a member of this family, with love, care and affection from everyone. Fang used to come from her region to play with Naomi and I. Even though I was the oldest in the group, Sylvester teased me about it day and night. Fang had taken a liking to Sylvester since the first day she had visited this mansion with her father and set her eyes on him.

Their engagement was made years later and this brought them closer to each other. Sylvester loved her more than a sister and I loved both Fang and Naomi just like a sister too but I always knew

Naomi loved me more but I couldn't give her what she wanted. She was my sister! I just couldn't love her that way. This gets her mad at me most of the time but I always managed to get through to her.

By the time grandfather died, Fang and Sylvester's love had blossomed. Then at the beginning of tragedy, the King started his troubles with the family and we lost our father and our sister. On the same day, I thought I had lost Naomi. When Sylvester begged me to stay with her in the palace, I knew I had to give Naomi a second chance. It was two years later that she revealed the truth to me; she hadn't really loved the king. She had only gone there to marry the King so as to save her family from his grip but what she didn't know was that her father was already killed and her sister had already committed suicide.

Naomi lived with that guilt for years after finding out what had happened to her family. She carried that guilt for years. Anytime she got pregnant for the king, she always found a way to abort it, saying she couldn't carry the monster's baby in her stomach. She had her own female warriors, whose main purpose was to protect the interest of women who had been disgraced or going through agony in this region. Kim Chui was one of them" Desire's head snapped up at the mention of her friend's name.

"Kim Chui was the one who informed the Queen that Li Wei was going to visit the Harem the next day and it'll be possible he took a liking to you since you were innocent and new to their way. It was the Queen who sent a message to Sylvester about what was going to happen. You weren't the only ladies they've helped around here, so many others knew an angel came to their rescue at the hardest and darkest moment of their lives but they never knew who they were. Well, I do know. If people worship goddess then I'll worship a queen Naomi and Kim Chui for the rest of my life because to me they're goddesses"

Desire cried at Ying's story. She knew he was right. She had been opportuned to know these amazing women during her lifetime. They both shared similarities but it's a pity that they both had to die just like that.

"Instead of sitting at a spot and wailing and mourning, why don't you keep on living and celebrating their lives? Tell their stories to your baby that you know some women; the warriors of light" Ying took a mound of the food in his hand and stretched it towards Desire who collected it and swallowed.

He gave her the whole food and watched her eat.

"They lived a full life, no need for tears anymore. Eat Desire, don't punish the baby for an unknown sin" Ying encouraged her to keep eating.

"Do you want me to send words to Sylvester that you're pregnant with his child?" Ying asked.

“Would that be possible?”

“We’ll just have to leave marks for him, here and there. He’ll know it is urgent”

“No, it’s not necessary”

“Why?” He asked surprisingly

“He might not want the baby. It’s best if I don’t let him know. His heart is with Fang anyways” Desire explained.

“Fang is a manipulative woman. She sees herself as a seductress whose only job is to keep on seducing Sylvester till she succeeds and becomes his wife. Sylvester didn’t mean to push you away, Desire. He was sorry he did. He was sorry he believed Fang for a minute and he regretted his actions”

Desire continued eating, drank her water and refused to give a comment on what Ying had said. Her heart, body and soul longed for him. Hearing that he regretted his actions was enough for her to relieve herself of the burden of trying to hate him for days.

“What happened between Fang and Sylvester?” Desire asked.

“Manipulation, lies, cheat, deceit and hatred. Fang made Sylvester believe that Li Wei raped her then stabbed her to death, when she was having an affair with Li Wei despite their engagement. Li Wei knew Sylvester could kill him when he found out that he had raped her, so he ran for his life. We later found out that Fang was hale and hearty, all she wanted to do was turn Sylvester into an idiot” Ying explained

“While some women try to save the world, others try to ruin it”

“Life is like that Desire and it’s all about picking your side; good or bad”

Ying returned to his post and every other person continued theirs as they all waited and waited for months, hoping good news would enter through their gate someday.

Desire whimpered when she felt a sharp pain in her stomach.

“Are you okay, Desire?” Fei asked

“I just felt this sharp pain but it’s gone already. I’m fine, Fei. Don’t look so worried”

Chapter 50

Three months later, still waiting inside the mansion for good news to come with hunger already setting in. Their food supply has reduced drastically and they could barely eat twice a day. The little farming they could do was in the garden and Cassandra weep bitterly when most of her flowers were uprooted to give space for planting crops.

“We couldn’t possibly eat flowers. Stop crying Cassandra” Fei had cautioned her. The young girl turned to glare at her.

“Why is it that everything is about food to you. I hate you, Fei” She had yelled and ran over to Desire to hug her and also cry to her.

On the day it became six months that they had been stuck in the mansion, they suddenly heard the faint sound of drums from outside their walls.

The world outside had been silent, there was no gunshot heard anymore and it was almost as peaceful as before. But the silence was scary, it was almost deafening as they couldn’t hear the voices of their loved ones.

They all wondered about who could be drumming at a time like this. The sound soon became closer and they all troop out of the mansion and moved to the gate to see who was drumming. By the time they were at the gate, they realized it wasn’t just a drum, it was tens of drums.

Ying opened the gate wide and the first person he saw was Sylvester in a horse with their soldiers and knights and some of their people, drumming and jubilation as they approached the gates.

The scene meant one thing; the war was over.

This threw everyone in a mood of jubilation as they all felt glad and happy that it was finally over. They could now live in peace and not fight anymore.

Ying and the others helped the wounded soldiers down their horses and walked them inside. Desire, Fei and Cassandra took over without caring if their loved ones came back safe and sound.

The three knew they had a new calling and it’s needed for them to not to put their personal lives and emotions before it. They knew they had to save lives as much as they had to regardless of any situation. Even if the person was an enemy, they still had to save them.

While stitching up one of them, Cassandra felt someone hugging her from the back. She didn’t need to turn before knowing who it was.

“Stop distracting me, brother. You need to move back” She said through the veil that had covered her mouth.

“Happy birthday Cassandra” The girl hadn’t even remembered that it was her birthday. Her brother had always counted it each year without missing out and through everything they’d gone through, he still managed to count it.

“Thank you for coming back safe to me. If you hadn’t, I would’ve haunt your ghost and killed you again” Cassandra threatened and tears slipped down her beautiful face. Words didn’t need to be told, they were glad to be alive.

Ying was assigned to the new female warrior who had returned with the rest. She’s the only surviving warrior from the group that the Queen had created. Her and Ying had known each other from training and they’ve always bickered and hated each other for no particular reason.

“Don’t you think you’re selfish for staying behind while the rest were at the warfront?” The girl questioned.

“I had a bit of a situation” Ying replied as he led her to a private room; the one that Naomi had used when she was still living in the mansion.

“If it was a bit, then you should have come out with the rest” Ying turned to scrutinize her and like the warrior she was, she stood straight, legs parted, a hand on her hip, the place where she kept her gun and smirked at him.

“I don’t owe you an explanation for any of my actions”

“Yet, you made the code of conduct for me and my fellow female warriors back then to always stand with our Queen and nation even if it meant death” The girl yelled at him.

“If you know I did, then you’ll know it wasn’t easy for me staying here while everyone was out there. In case you need to know,” He opened the door leading to her room and gestures for her to enter.

“This is your room and these are the wounds I sustained and for three months, I had to walk with a stick as support. By the time I was able to walk properly, you people had gone further than I could get. Don’t ever question a soldier’s action, there are more to be told than the eye can tell”

The lady felt impressed with what she heard so she thought he deserved a reward.

“Maybe more than a mouth could tell”

Before Ting could think about what she had said twice, she grabbed him and smashed her lips on his, kissing him angrily.

Ying pulled her away from his body and pushed her into the wall.

“Don’t you ever touch me again” Ying walked out of the door angrily.

“That was nice” She applauded herself.

Fei was in the middle of treating the same man who she had laid a curse on. He had only sustained a minor injury to his shoulder much to Fei’s dismay.

“I’m sorry I got myself wounded” The man apologized and Fei laughed bitterly.

She was so close to tears, she thought she had gotten over him but seeing him again had so much effect on her.

“I actually prayed that you come back with just an arm or a leg. This isn’t the answer to my prayer. You broke my heart, left and expected me to be sad because you got wounded. Your home is hell Incase you need to know” Fei yelled at him.

“I’m sorry Fei. I had to do that because I was too scared of how fast our relationship was becoming. I’m sorry I put you through all that but it wasn’t good on me either. I’m so sorry Fei, please forgive me” He begged for her forgiveness while Fei tears finally dropped.

He tried holding her hand but she pushed his hand away and he kept on trying until he was successful.

“That’s the woman you told us about?” One of the soldier’s asked

“Yes, she's my woman” He replied happily, smiling widely at Fei.

Desire was applying the only herbs they had left on the final wounded soldier when someone made a loud sound, getting the attention of everyone.

Once she turned, she realized it was Sylvester, he looked tired, worn out and as if he could pass out any moment from then. His beard had grown so much and he looked different from before. His eyes met hers as he cleared his throat and he smiled at her.

“For the last six months, we have fought physically and emotionally and I’m glad that we all are here safe and sound. We’ve all lost people who are special to us and we’ve lost our nation as a whole. The rest of us here are the only people who are still alive. The royal palace was attacked and the king is dead. Despite everything we’ve faced, we would not stop at this. By tomorrow morning, we will all go out there and start rebuilding our lives and our region. We’ve successfully gotten the barbarians off our land and they will no longer disturb us. The other regions had promised to send supplies that’ll help us to rebuild our nation. We will set out tomorrow and shine that light so the world will know we are really the Region of light. Thank you for staying alive”

Everybody cheered and applauded the man who had set his life on the line to make sure they all were safe. It was only his woman who felt indifferent about the issue.

He tried moving closer to Desire and when she saw him coming towards her, she turned and walked away from the scene. Sadly, Sylvester walked up to his room to change his cloth.

By the time she was done with her work, Sylvester had gone to his room. She picked up a new razor and walked into his room without knocking.

She met him sitting in his bed with his head down. He was thinking deeply about something. He looked up at the intrusion and his eyes lightened up when he saw her.

“Desire,”

“You look like a beggar with those hair all over your face. More like a barbarian if you ask me. Come into the bathroom” She instructed him and he follows her.

He sat down and watched Desire work on his face.

“I want to tell you about everything i’d seen on the war front”

“Well! I have to tell you about some very bad news too, my lord” Desire replied

“Ying told me” He was silent for a while before continuing his words. “ I knew she wouldn’t make it when I saw her but I had faith in her strength. It’s just sad that I wasn’t here when she breathed her last. I still can’t believe I’ve lost all my families just like that”

Desire stopped and looked at him softly knowing what she was about to tell him might break him as well.

“Don’t look at me like that, Dove. You’re the last person I want to see that pitiful look in her eyes” Sylvester held her chin up.

“I lost our child. I guess I wasn’t smart and brave enough to keep it safe. I only found out after you left” Desire looked down, trying to avoid his gaze.

“When I saw you as I entered, I knew you were carrying a burden far beyond your power on your shoulder and now it became clear, Desire” he picked her up and placed her on his lap as she buried her head in his shoulder, crying out her pain. The same ones she’d kept all through the night whenever she longed for me, the same tears she refused to cry when she lost the baby.

“Being a mother is a blessing and not a duty, Desire. You did your best and what happened was fate. I will never blame you for such but I’ll blame myself for letting Fang manipulate me into believing that you were in love with someone else. I’m sorry Desire, for hurting you and for the baby” He apologized.

Desire lifted her head and looked into his eyes, she kissed him gently on the lips.

“We have enough time to make another baby” Desire suggested. Her answer meant that she was giving him a second chance.

He hugged her tight and whispered into her ear, “How about now, my love?” Desire giggled.

He carried her into the room, took off her clothes and kissed her hungrily. He removed his tattered uniform and made love to her slowly and gently, making her moan out for her.

“Sleep my love, while we await what tomorrow would bring. You’ve tried hard enough, Sylvester” Desire kissed his eyebrow before kissing his forehead.

“We know what tomorrow would bring and that will be a new life, new things, a new beginning and a long life filled with happiness for us. You’re mine forever, Desire”

“So are you, my lord”

THE END