

# Masquerade Ball

Oh boy, I guess this is it. The night where I surrender all my common sense and sanity. Something had a firm grip on my mind, and it didn't plan on letting go. It was cruel enough to allow doubt to seep through its fingers, making me painfully aware of the corrupt nature of my certainty. Knowing something was wrong but not being able to do anything was not a pleasant feeling, I can assure you.

As to not torture myself with the thought, I turned to look out the window of my carriage. The sky's shining centrepiece was in its full glory tonight. Never had a pale face possessed such a natural and stunning glow. That display of confidence was to be embraced as its beams looked down upon me, reaching out and kissing my cheek. It put me at ease as I continued up the winding trail. What lies ahead is not a palace but a death trap, I am sure. Yet I still come to dance with the devil. Nothing was going to get in the way of that.

With each turn of the wheels and clack of the horse's hooves, I not only grew closer to my destination but also to an important realization. There was no room for second guessing, or else failure was all but certain. Perhaps it was inevitable that I allowed the source behind my drive full control. Arriving at that decision, the carriage stopped. I stepped out, draped in an overzealous gown. Death's icy breath crept up my back. Was it a warning to snap to my senses, or was he simply getting a taste of what he would claim later that night? Still, I pushed forward.

Through the palace doors I spotted him, standing alone on the staircase. Both hands empty while the attendees happily held those of their dance partner. Surely he was above all of that. Well, he was about to meet his match.

So I hit the floor and walked towards the man himself. A suicidal rabbit headed for the hungry fox. Asking myself if he'd open his heart, or his jaws. Either worked for me, though one was more desirable. The chandelier wasn't the only thing hanging over me. Each step seemed harder, heavier than the last. Nevertheless, I didn't stop until I stood before him, and his shimmering smile. Perfectly aligned teeth seemed so crooked in the mouth of a monster. Eloquently, he offered me his hand. *You want to taste me; I know you do.*

Part of me wanted to escape, though I ignored it. Instead, I fell straight into the arms of my enemy, satisfying him with the opportunity to touch my waist. Together we owned the ballroom. Twirling in the eye of the storm we were the force of its merciless winds. Like a star being drawn into the black hole's singularity, time felt frozen, even more so than his fingertips. The star just couldn't stay away. Only a fool would've attempted such a feat, but it took a bigger fool to believe they'd be fine. Yet here I was, alive despite having no right to be.

Words spilled out of the prince's mouth. Not a single one of which without a risqué undertone. Turns out the beast had a bite after all. Dripping with confidence, he went in for the kiss. Our lips locked, and he threw away the key. When he had finished, his eyes said it all. With utmost subtlety he motioned for me to head upstairs with him. Luckily for him he wouldn't need to drag me to his den.

Shutting the door behind us, he radiated excitement. The sparkle he exhibited was unmatched by all the gold and every crystal in his house. Shame he wasn't all too bright. Before taking off anything else, he removed his mask, revealing such innocent eyes. Too bad I had pulled the wool over them. With a smile I then removed mine saying, "You don't know me at all."

