

Chapter One

Augustus Myles Dorian Arryn, Prince of Syrenne

“Have you gone mad? The king will have my head,” Markus Pentoros, my bodyguard, valet and best friend from the age of ten, raged from where he sat opposite me inside the royal carriage. Already the castle lights were visible in the distance when I peeked my head out the small window.

“We need to hurry.” I pulled the pin free from the clasp that held my royal cape to my right shoulder and tossed the length of red silk at his head. “And leave my father to me. Give me your clothes.”

“This is insanity, my friend. This scheme of yours will never work.”

I disagreed. It had to work. I needed one night to myself, one night to be just a man, not a prince. “Stop arguing with me and think of all the beautiful, noble pussy you can have tonight.”

With a grunt, Markus lifted his simple black tunic over his head and tossed it into my lap. “If you say so. I prefer hot, wild, serving wench pussy. Your noble ladies are too much work.”

“Not for the prince. Simply show them your cock and they’ll swoon.” I lifted the fine, white silk shirt from my body and threw it at his chest. “Just be sure you stay away from my father.”

Markus shook his head and guided the silk over his large frame before shifting in the seat. He kicked off his boots and slid his plain black trousers from his legs. “Easier said than done, I’m afraid.”

I was never so grateful we were nearly identical. We had the same dark hair, the same dark hint of a beard on sharp angled chins. Both blue of eye, mine a hint grayer, but few came close enough to learn the exact color. Markus and I were the same size and shape. Hours of swordplay, horsemanship and grueling training for combat had made men of both of us. And once the similarity had been noticed, Markus had been given a guaranteed place as my permanent and ever-present guardian.

“Not tonight, Markus. Tonight, my father will be too busy with his own cock to worry about where you put yours.” I laughed, sliding my white breeches from my body. The recognizable royal red stripe down the outsides of the legs ensured all recognized me, despite the masks. Clothing would become optional as the evening wore on. But the masks must remain. That was my father the king’s strictest rule for the masquerade ball. The thin veil of anonymity gave the noble lords and ladies, and their offspring, free rein to indulge their most carnal desires.

“I hope you’re right, because it won’t be your royal head in the stocks, it will be mine.”

I laughed. “It’s not my father you need worry about. Just hope he didn’t invite the werewolves again.” The creatures, well known for their lusty appetites for human women, lived in the forests on the edge of the castle grounds.

“Better a werewolf than a witch.” Markus shivered.

I had no argument as I finished dressing in the borrowed clothing and lifted two large masks from their box. Both covered the entire upper half of a man’s face and part of the lower jaw. Most of the king’s guests made a half-hearted attempt at covering their faces, revealing their true lack of desire to remain anonymous. I’d ordered black feathers to not only surround the eyes, but to

disguise the different shape of our heads; a slight variation in the angle of our jaws below the ear. None would recognize Markus behind the mask and beard. Of greater import, none would recognize me.

I handed one to Markus and placed the other over my face. When the transformation was complete, I lifted my head to study the effect.

“You thought of everything.” Markus studied me with the same critical appraisal with which I studied him.

“Well?” I asked. As usual, Markus took his sweet time making up his mind.

“You don’t act like a servant.”

“Well, you act like royalty, so no one will be surprised if the prince’s valet walks into the masquerade like a stiff prick.”

Markus laughed. “True enough.” He shrugged. “I guess the king’s guard will be our test.”

“Yes,” I agreed. Many in the royal guard had served the palace for years, witnesses to Markus and I as we grew up together, climbed trees, and dueled with blunt swords. They posed the most serious threat to our ruse. The others in attendance, the lords and ladies with their eager daughters, would not see past the red cape or the red stripes that ran the length of Markus’s legs.

The carriage rolled to a halt and the door opened. Accustomed to exiting first, I shifted forward but stopped at a hand on my chest and a stern warning. “Get your ass back in there. The prince is first.”

I fell back into my seat and nearly burst with elated laughter. The bitter old man who’d issued the warning, one of the longest serving members of the guard, didn’t recognize me. If he didn’t, no one would.

I lifted my hand to Markus and waved him to alight before me. “Your Highness.”

He stepped from the carriage, squared his shoulders, and assumed an arrogant slant to his posture I recognized well. Once he disappeared inside the castle, I leaned back and waited with anticipation as the coachman pulled around to the back of the large structure. We had timed the departure from our southern home, and arrival at the summer castle, to coincide with the start of the ball. I hadn’t laid eyes on any of these lords and ladies in over a year and I counted on this to aid in my deception.

I stepped down and waved to the coachman, who headed to the kitchens, no doubt eager for a pint of warm ale and a bowl of stew. My hunger was fixated in a different direction.

The masquerade. Once a month, beginning with the spring equinox and ending in the fall, the king hosted a masquerade in honor of the northern tribe’s fertility goddess. In the south, such debauchery and carnality were frowned upon, those partaking in such an event judged as possessed by the evils of the flesh. Here in the north, the nobles celebrated and welcomed the event.

With an eagerness in my step I’d not felt in a very long time, I hurried to the servants’ entrance and made my way through the dark and winding tunnels that once housed my family’s enemies. The old dungeons, not used in years, no longer housed prisoners.

The sounds of fucking reached me before I rounded the final turn in the underground cavern. The unmistakable sound of flesh striking flesh, of a woman’s cries of pleasure. Deep and demanding, the rumble of a man’s firm voice carried through the tunnel like the low hum of a large drum after the initial strike fades. Hundreds of candles, standing like sentinels of ivory, lined both the floor and the grooves in the wall long ago carved into the dark stone.

Old iron rings, once employed to torture and punish our enemies, now served for torture of a different sort. On the far wall, a naked woman had her dress pulled down to reveal her breasts, her hands locked above her head. Her back arched as one man suckled at her nipples. His large

hand cupped the soft mound of her pussy through her skirt, nearly lifting her from the floor as another struck her back with a flogger. Her head thrown back, she cried out and wiggled her hips, begging them to take her together. Now. Right now.

All around me, the sensual cries of the naked women being stretched and fucked by their dominant lovers filled the cavern with echoes of sensual surrender.

My cock grew hard as I surveyed the couple nearest me. The dark-haired woman was beautiful, with large breasts that bounced in time with her lover's thrusting cock. The look in her eyes made me desperate and edgy. Not once had a woman looked upon me like that, their gazes always guarded or calculating. None surrendered to my mastery of their own free will or looked upon me as just a man. To them I symbolized the crown, privilege and prestige, a trophy for their house.

I walked farther into the room and heard another woman's cries of pleasure. A large soldier inserted a plug into the restrained woman's tight little hole as she shook with need. Nearby, concentrating on every move the dominant made with rapt attention, stood the most exquisite creature. Her hair, golden as a flame, her small body, adorned in a pale blue gown striped with green, curved to perfection. The quality of her clothing marked her a servant of a noble lord's house. Her breasts rose and fell rapidly, as though viewing the carnal act brought her to the verge of release. She swayed, her hands fisted in her skirt as she gazed upon them, her sensual blue eyes locked to the woman's wet, open pussy as if her own body was starving for such sweet attention.

She turned her head, her golden mask glittering in the darkness like an enchantress's, and she swallowed as though attempting to regain her composure. Her struggle to disguise her desire came too late. The woman wanted to be fucked, dominated, and made to scream.

She was exactly what I needed.

She would be mine.

* * *

Ella

I couldn't move, couldn't look away as the massive man, wearing nothing but black breeches and a soldier's boots, pulled apart the rounded cheeks of the fair maiden's bottom and slid an oblong wooden plug into her tight hole. The maid's soft, smooth skin glistened, her pale golden hair bound by a tight center braid that hung over her shoulder. Her lover's shoulders, wide and heavily muscled, bulged along with his forearms and biceps, making my knees weak with envy.

My mind raced as I admitted what I truly wanted this night, to have a man like him for myself, to be naked and vulnerable before a dominant's strength. I needed to be conquered, fucked until I was couldn't sense anything but the power of his thrusting cock, could no longer *think*, or even remember my name.

The woman who stood before him bent forward over a padded post that came to her hips. She gasped and squirmed, her heavy breasts bare and hanging toward the floor. Her lover tied her hands to a set of heavy iron rings affixed to the wall, one of many such rings in the tunnels beneath the castle, and not the only set in use. The woman's yellow mask identified her as a submissive for the evening. She was naked now, but pooled on the floor near her lay the pale green dress worn by maids who served in the castle.

Unable to move, I stood like a statue as the large man stroked her bare bottom with his hand before spanking her, hard.

She jerked against the chains, her cry of pain transforming into a moan of pleasure as his hand struck again. And again.

The plug in her bottom would move with each firm strike and I wondered what the woman felt as he fired her blood, as the object plunged in and out of her body.

My eyes grew dry as I refused to blink, unwilling to look away as the guard dropped to his knees behind her and pushed the cheeks of her bottom open to expose her wet core. I forgot to breathe as he leaned forward and thrust his long tongue into her wet heat.

She bucked and moaned, begged him to touch her, to fuck her.

Shuddering now, my nipples heavy and sensitive, my pussy achy and wet, I blinked slowly, transfixed by the sight of his hand as he explored the sensitive skin of her inner thigh, moving higher, to the juncture between her thighs. He played her with mouth and fingers together, one hand teasing her clit as he worked her wet heat with his tongue. His free hand moved to the small handle of the plug in her bottom, pulling and pushing, fucking her ass as he tongued her pussy.

The woman lost control and screamed, her legs shaking as her orgasm took her over. Her breasts swung wildly as she writhed in his skillful hands, begging him to fill her with his hard cock.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. I refused to stand here all night long like a mute. My body demanded more, would give me no rest if I did not find a lover to satisfy the empty ache that consumed me with need. All around me, dominant men circled the room, waiting for a connection with a submissive, waiting for permission to take their pleasure in my body.

And give me mine.

Above us, in the main palace ballrooms, another masquerade raged; the wine and women both finer and more noble than those gathered here in the underbelly of the stone fortress. In the grand ballroom, the king, the prince, and his noble lords took their pleasure from eligible woman of the kingdom in search of a rich husband. The women, eager to lift their skirts and accept their pleasure, succumbed as they attempted to catch the eye of a wealthy spouse.

But down here, the dominant men were warriors and blacksmiths, working class men with powerful shoulders and hard faces, not powdered and pampered princes.

This night, I sneaked inside the dungeon through a secret entrance my father showed me before he died.

Now I stood to one side of the couple. He worked her again, gave her no respite from his demands as she tried to regain her composure. Shuddering from her orgasm, the woman whimpered as he once more unleashed a sound spanking on her bare bottom.

“Fuck me. Please, take me. I want your cock inside me. I need it.” Her words were breathy and desperate, but the man standing behind her shook his head and struck her bare bottom again.

My heart raced to the rhythm of the pounding as he turned her cheeks a fiery red while she moaned and squirmed under his firm hand. Her pink, wet pussy glistened in the light of the hundreds of candles lining the ledges of the ancient dungeon. My breath turned ragged as the massive man dominated her, commanded her to say what he wanted to hear.

“You do not make demands of your master.”

“Master. Please.” She gasped as he slid two large fingers into her wet pussy from behind and she tried to wiggle backward onto his hand, to take him deeper.

He smacked her ass and pulled free despite her cry of protest.

“Your master will listen, if you say please. Tell me what you need, naughty girl.” He pushed his fingers back into her core and her legs shook, unable to take her weight, and she collapsed onto the bench, her arms hanging limp from the chains.

Fascinated, I watched her pussy clench around his fingers at his harsh words. Her head dropped in defeat and she begged, "Please, master. Please put your cock inside me, master."

All around me, the wet sounds of fucking filled the long chamber. The moans and commands of the couples mingled into a symphony of sex and heat that made my pussy clench, wet with need. At least fifty couples sated their appetite while close to a hundred unmatched singles wandered. Black masked dominants and their brightly colored opposites mingled, talked, and searched for a partner for the evening.

Through my golden mask, I stood transfixed as the large man finally pulled his massive cock free of his black breeches and pressed the thick head forward, into the woman's open pussy. The long wooden plug remained in her ass and she turned her face toward me as he filled her. Her eyes glazed with pleasure as he fucked her slowly from behind.

"Like what you see?" A deep, rumbling voice whispered the question in my ear, startling me. My heart leapt into a frantic and panicked race at his words. He stepped closer when I did not move and pressed his large frame to my back, and the heat of his chest scorched me through my thin blue dress.

When I didn't answer, strong hands slid along the sides of my ribcage from behind. They dipped low, over my abdomen, and my eyes drifted closed as I swayed on my feet. His hands stung like flames singeing my flesh with lust.

Slowly, oh so slowly, with no hope of resistance, he pulled me back into his arms until the hard length of his cock pressed into my back and the scruff of his chin ran atop my head. Trapped in his arms, pulse pounding, I opened my eyes as the man before me continued to fuck the woman, his thrusts much harder now. With each thrust of his hips, her breasts swung wildly. Her head arched back, her entire body shook.

"I asked you a question."