

Fit for a Queen

Screams and wails haunted Sable's sleep, and shocked her awake with the sound of something slamming above her head. Flying to a sit, she slammed into a hard surface and fell back to her prone state, rubbing her forehead.

Who was that man? Where were my big brothers?

Opening her eyes, she could see nothing but dark. Reaching out in front of her, she felt a push back from something cold and hard, not too far in front of her. Reaching out frantically now to her sides, and kicking down beneath her, Sable banged around in a desperate attempt to punch a hole in her prison.

Screaming as loud as she could, she coughed blood, and barely a whimper as her throat burned for the effort.

As she touched her throat and found it bandaged, she heard the creaking of stairs and voices growing closer.

"You sure it's her?" A male voice asked,

"Yeah, I'm sure." Their voice was more androgynous, and Sable couldn't tell if they were male or female.

"Where is she?" The man asked.

"In the coffin, I had to slit her throat...that shriek is nightmarish for her to be so pretty." His partner responded.

"Don't tell me you killed her, we need her alive for delivery."

"She's alive. Just quiet."

Delivery? I'm being hunted? By who?

Sable was afraid in her confirmed state of danger now, and began beating on the inside of the box furiously.

"Well, let's go then. Ironic packaging but, at least we won't have any trouble." The man said, and shuffling followed.

She felt the box shift and tilt, jostling her around as her captors lifted the box to carry it out.

The dark afforded no comfort, and her captors made no attempt to be gentle when they dropped her again.

Her container shuddered and bowed as it hit another surface, sending a shock of pain through her.

What's going on? Where are they taking me?

The sound of hooves and creaking wheels told Sable that she was on a cart. She continued beating on the inside of her prison until a warning slam against the top, made her stop.

"So, why are we taking her? Wasn't she married to the prince?" The man's partner asked, after a while of silent travel.

"Yeah, but things change I guess. He didn't really explain much. He just said, 'She woke up.'" The man answered.

"Hell does that mean? 'She woke up'?" A question that Sable wanted to know the answer to as well.

"Apparently she was in a magical sleep until a few days ago. He's not into lively women." The man said, and the sound of silence and hooves took control again.

"I don't know what to say to that." His partner answered, and going quiet for a time.

Listening quietly, Sable felt her eyes burn with tears at the realization. Her home hadn't been overwhelmed at all. She must have been abducted by this prince.

How did this happen? I don't remember any prince, is that who he was?

"It's better not to think about it. Just accept that not every prince is as charming as they look. Trust me." The man advised, and the snap of reins cracked through the air

"What about the other one? The older blonde. The dark-haired one isn't not the only one we got from that kingdom, right?" The man's partner asked, curiously.

"Same thing from the king...she woke up. He shipped off *their* kids to some village, and sent her to us. Apparently, it runs in the family." He answered, giving a short answer.

"Their kids? She was asleep too though right? How...nevermind I don't really want to know. They sound more like monsters than what we have to watch for in the forest."

"I told you not to think about it. The royalty in this region definitely have a pattern, but we're not paid to analyze those monsters. Just to make deliveries to our clients from them, and other degenerates with the money to pay." The man sighed.

"Makes this job sound shady. So, what are we supposed to do with them then?" His partner answered.

"We drop them off at the *Tailor and Seamstress*, and then we leave. No more involvement."

The sound of weeping distracted Sable from their conversation, and alerted her to another prisoner. It was a woman, and she sounded close.

Who's that crying? Is she who they were talking about?

"Keep quiet and accept your fate, your majesty." One of the captors ordered, and the sound of slamming against a nearby surface was heard this time. The man commanded.

"Please let me go, I didn't do anything wrong. I don't want to go there. Please!" The woman pleaded, crying inconsolably.

The woman pleaded again, "No, you can't take us there. You don't know what they do there."

A horse neighed at the snap of reins being pulled back on and Sable felt her prison jolt as the cart stopped.

"They make dresses for princesses. You should feel lucky to have found something so lucrative and comfortable as modeling, after being discarded from royalty. You, as an older queen, should definitely feel lucky." The man's partner retorted.

"I'm no queen and that's not true!" The woman shrieked anger and fear tainting her voice.

"Tell us then, what do they do?" The partner asked, their voice sounded amused.

All ears were waiting for the woman's answer as she sniffled, "They don't make dresses for princesses...they make princesses into dresses."

Sable was struck with fear, and if she weren't already muted, she would have been speechless.

There was silence, and the wind could be heard through the boards of the cart. Everyone was speechless, before the captors spoke again.

"And the Blue Butcher sells the meat of orphan children to the nearby village and calls it 'veal'. What's your point? Did you think this was going to have a happy ending and rescue? We deliver to them too." The man said, after a few more seconds of silence.

Sable curled up in her prison, as the cart started moving again. All the strength was sapped from her at that moment, her voice was gone, and she could only quietly wait for death. She actually found herself wishing for it, if it allowed her a way out of the perverse reality she was facing.

Feed me to the wolves, send me to the butcher, anything...just don't make me a dress.

"I'm not going." The woman whispered, barely audibly and a chilling choking followed it.

The cart stopped again, and this time the weight shifted and released. Sable guessed their captors must have dismounted to investigate the sounds.

Wood and nails being ripped away, pierced the night as the top of the coffin came off.

The captor swore, staring at the now dead queen whose face froze in agony, her blonde hair tight around her neck from strangling herself free of the nightmare.

"Dammit, one less stock for the client."

