

H. Academy 862

Chapter 862 Desire

"You should stop projecting."

Trevor's breath hitched.

"What?"

Maya exhaled as if she was genuinely tired of him, as if she was speaking to a child who just didn't get it.

"You're projecting, Trevor," she said, tapping her finger lightly in the air before pulling it back. "This whole spiel of yours... telling me how guys think, how I don't see things clearly, how I'm the one being used..."

She let out a quiet hum. "It's all just a reflection of what you think about yourself, isn't it?"

Trevor stiffened.

His stomach twisted violently, a feeling too close to exposure.

Maya leaned back in her seat again, tapping her fingers against the table rhythmically.

"You assume every guy wants something from me," she mused. "Because that's how you think."

Trevor's jaw locked. "That's not—"

"You think Astron is using me," Maya continued, ignoring him entirely. "Because that's what you would do if you were in his position."

Trevor stopped breathing.

"You think I don't see how guys look at me?" She shook her head, clicking her tongue.

"You think I don't know?"

She exhaled, leaning forward just enough to make Trevor's skin crawl.

"But the thing is, Trevor..." Her voice dropped into something just above a whisper.

"I don't care how guys look at me."

Trevor felt something tighten in his chest.

Maya tilted her head. "But you do."

Trevor's hand clenched into a fist against his thigh.

This was wrong.

He was supposed to be leading this conversation. He was supposed to be in control.

So why—why did it feel like Maya was the one who had planned this from the start?

"Shut up," Trevor muttered.

Maya's smile widened slightly. "Did I hit a nerve?"

Trevor shot up from his seat, his chair scraping against the floor. "I said shut the fuck up!"

The restaurant fell silent.

A few people turned their heads at the sudden outburst, but Maya?

Maya didn't flinch.

She didn't move.

She just sat there, watching him, her crimson eyes gleaming with satisfaction.

Trevor's breathing was heavy, uneven. His hands were shaking.

Maya exhaled, tilting her head slightly. Top of Form

Trevor's breathing was ragged, uneven, his hands clenching and unclenching at his sides. His body trembled with an emotion he couldn't quite name—anger, humiliation, frustration, something deeper, something raw and unfiltered. His vision tunneled, his mind spinning with fragmented thoughts, each one sharper than the last.

And yet, despite all of it, Maya simply sat there.

Watching.

Waiting.

Assessing.

A slow exhale left her lips, controlled, deliberate. Then, she tilted her head just slightly, the motion almost lazy.

"There it is," she murmured, her voice like silk woven with steel. "Your true face."

Trevor flinched.

His fingers twitched before he lifted his hand and pressed it against his face, covering his expression as if that would somehow erase what had just happened. As if he could push everything back into the neat, composed version of himself he had so carefully constructed.

'No. No, no, no—this isn't how it was supposed to go.'

Maya should have wavered.

She should have hesitated.

She should have listened.

Instead, she was tearing through every layer he had put in place, peeling them back like they were nothing. His carefully crafted words, his calculated pacing, his subtle manipulations—she was dismantling all of it with a single look.

And worse?

She was making him feel seen.

Too seen.

'Why...? Why does she look at me like that?'

His fingers curled tighter against his face. His nails dug into his skin. The whispers in the restaurant were growing louder now, a dull, grating noise in the back of his mind, a chorus of attention he had unwittingly drawn to himself.

But he didn't care.

He couldn't care.

Not when Maya's crimson eyes were locked onto him, dissecting him piece by piece.

'Why doesn't she see it? Why doesn't she understand?'

He had done everything right. He had laid it all out for her, every carefully constructed truth, every logical conclusion, every warning that she should have listened to.

So why—why was she looking at him like he was the fool?

'Astron is using you. It's obvious. It's so obvious. He doesn't care about you, not like I do. He lets you fight for him, bleed for him, and he just—stands there. How can you not see it?'

His breathing hitched.

'You're smart, aren't you, Maya? Then why are you being so blind? Why are you looking at me like I'm the one who doesn't understand?'

His thoughts spiraled, clawing at the edges of his sanity, at the gnawing emptiness in his chest that only grew with every second she refused to yield.

'It's him. It's him. It's always him.'

Trevor forced himself to move, forced himself to steady his breath, forced himself to lower his hand from his face. His skin burned where his nails had pressed too hard, but he ignored it.

He needed to get control back.

He needed to say something—anything—that would turn this back in his favor.

But Maya didn't give him the chance.

She leaned forward, her chin resting lightly against the back of her hand, her gaze never breaking from his.

Maya's crimson gaze remained locked onto Trevor, unwavering, unshaken, as if she was waiting—waiting for him to say something, to scramble for some last semblance of

control. But the silence that stretched between them was suffocating, thick with unspoken truths and festering emotions.

She studied him for a moment longer before exhaling, slowly, deliberately. Then, she leaned back, folding her arms across her chest as if she had already lost interest.

"I don't like you."

Trevor flinched.

The words hit him harder than anything she had said before. Not because they were loud. Not because they were cruel. But because they were so simple, so matter-of-fact, so utterly final.

Maya tilted her head slightly, her eyes narrowing. "I don't like the way you talk to me," she continued, voice as calm as ever. "I don't like the way you act around me. The way you hover, the way you insert yourself into my business like you belong there."

Trevor's hands curled into fists beneath the table, his knuckles whitening.

'No, no, she doesn't mean that. She doesn't understand what she's saying.'

Maya's eyes flickered, as if she could hear his thoughts, as if she could see the desperate way he clung to whatever illusion he had built in his mind.

"You make my skin crawl."

Trevor's stomach twisted into knots.

'I... I make her skin crawl?'

His mind reeled, struggling to process the words, struggling to find some way—any way—to twist them into something else. But there was no malice in her tone, no spite. Just pure, cold indifference.

And that was worse.

Trevor sat in silence, his breath shallow, his entire body coiled so tightly it felt like he might snap. But he said nothing.

What could he say?

How was he supposed to respond to something like that?

Maya didn't care. She wasn't afraid of hurting his feelings. She wasn't even acknowledging his presence as something worth considering.

She was rejecting him in every possible way.

Trevor's throat was dry, his jaw locked so tight it ached. He wanted to say something. He wanted to shout, to demand why, to force her to see that she was wrong, that she was being blind, that she was throwing away the one person who actually understood her.

But he stayed silent.

Because deep down, in the part of him that he didn't want to acknowledge, he knew that nothing he said would matter.

Maya was already done with him.

And then—just as he thought she was finished, just as he thought she would leave him sitting there in his own crumbling delusions—Maya stood.

The chair scraped against the floor, the sound sharp, cutting through the stagnant air between them. Trevor didn't move, didn't look up, but he could feel her presence shifting, drawing closer.

And then—

A whisper.

Soft. Cold. Lethal.

"You are just a nobody."

Trevor's breath hitched.

Maya leaned down, just close enough that he could feel the ghost of her presence, the heat of her breath brushing against his skin, but the words? The words were ice.

"If you ever speak about him in this manner ever again—"

Her red eyes glowed in the dim light, gleaming with something ancient, something beyond human, something that sent a deep, primal chill down Trevor's spine.

A slow, deliberate pause.

And then—

"I will butcher you alive."

Trevor's entire body went rigid.

His breath caught in his throat.

A single shiver ran down his spine, an involuntary reaction—one that made his entire being feel small, insignificant, powerless.

Maya straightened, her presence retreating as if she had never been there at all.