

# PLEASE DON'T DIE, MY LADY

## Chapter 1: Me

“Remia Adel... Adelian?”

“...Yes.”

The professor, in the middle of roll call, paused to adjust their glasses.

Clearly, they were startled to see the name Adelian.

After all, it was a family that had fallen into ruin years ago.

I answered quietly, trying my best not to draw attention to myself.

Despite my efforts, unwanted attention instantly focused on me.

Curiosity, intrigue, and hostility.

So, this is how it ends up.

I sighed inwardly, lowering my gaze.

It wasn't that I was unused to attention—no.

It was that every time eyes turned toward me, pain inevitably followed.

My body, accustomed to such outcomes, instinctively braced itself.

I gripped my left wrist tightly to control the slight trembling that began to overtake me.

Even after the lecture began, the occasional stares directed at me didn't disappear.

I gave up trying to absorb the content of the class, instead praying for this time to pass quickly.

Please, let no one approach me.

I reject kindness.

And I absolutely cannot handle malice.

I no longer have the capacity—mentally or physically—to build relationships with people.

I'll just stay hidden like a ghost until my final day.

Please, don't pay me any attention.

But, as if to mock my prayer—

“Adelian? Are you really that Adelian?”

“My, your face has aged terribly. Do you remember me, Lady? From your twelfth birthday?”

“I thought you'd died on the streets somewhere, but it seems you're still alive, after all.”

“Lady... Oh, wait. Not a lady anymore. Surely someone like you must have sold your body to survive.”

“.....”

As soon as the class ended, people gathered around where I sat.

Half were nobles with past grievances against Remia, while the other half appeared to be commoners harboring resentment toward nobles in general.

Taunts laced with malice poured in from all directions.

I didn't even have the will to respond.

I hate this.

I hate it so much.

Please, just leave me alone.

I didn't do anything.

I really didn't do anything wrong.

It wasn't me...

Lowering my head, I remained silent. The nobles, finding satisfaction in their ridicule, eventually laughed and returned to their seats.

They came only to mock me, not to do anything more. Nobles are like that.

They tear people apart with words but find physical violence beneath them, considering it undignified.

Because of that, I could endure their verbal hostility.

But the other half of the crowd was different.

“My mother... Give her back.”

“Hah, once that lofty head drops, you’re no different from us, noble scum.”

“If your family’s ruined, we don’t have to worry about retaliation, right?”

“Probably not. The other nobles don’t seem inclined to help her.”

“Then...”

“Let’s do it.”

“Yeah, sounds good.”

Ah.

I’m scared.

I’m terrified.

The lifeless eyes of the commoners surrounded me as a group.

The nobles laughed at me from afar, and the professor had no intention of intervening for Adelian.

It was painfully clear what was about to happen next.

Slap!

The first blow came from a woman who had stepped forward.

My head snapped to the side, my cheek flaring up as though it were on fire.

The hit was so strong—or perhaps my frail body was weaker than I’d imagined—that my lips split, and blood dripped from my mouth, accompanied by a ringing in my head.

Even with years of pain to numb me, the shock was enough to elicit a gasp.

Before I could catch my breath, another strike followed.

“Guh...!”

A man to my right grabbed my shoulder and pulled me toward him, driving his knee into my abdomen.

The pain was on an entirely different level.

My legs gave out, and I collapsed to the floor, retching.

“Ugh...! Cough...!”

With nothing in my stomach, only yellow bile came up.

“Heuk... Hoo...”

“Her reaction’s weaker than I thought.”

“Isn’t that because it’s just one person at a time? Let’s all do it together.”

“...Haha.”

Looking down at me, they exchanged grim words.

All I could do was let out a bitter laugh as the group descended on me, stomping on my fallen body.

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After the day’s ordeal, I dragged my battered body back to my new dwelling.

The academy dormitory.

Designed exclusively for nobles, it was nothing like the crowded six-person or four-person dorms I’d seen in my previous life.

Each individual had their own room, furnished with a soft bed, table, sofa, and even a private bathroom—a space closer to a hotel suite than a dormitory.

The floors, always spotless thanks to the maids, were now soiled with fluids dripping from my body.

Uncovered parts of my skin—my neck, arms, and cheeks—were marred with red and blue bruises.

My lips were split and scabbed over, while the sclera of my left eye had turned blood-red, possibly due to broken blood vessels.

After being struck repeatedly in the abdomen, I’d vomited so much that my mouth reeked of a sour metallic taste.

Somewhere beneath my torn uniform, unseen wounds were seeping blood, staining the white fabric red.

To sum it up, I returned to the dorms in shambles.

Despite trying to walk straight, the pain wracking my entire body forced me to stagger.

I drew the stares of everyone in the hallway—the very attention I had desperately wanted to avoid.

“...Ha.”

This is worse than I imagined.

I didn't expect all my problems to magically disappear just because I came to the academy.

But I never thought I'd be subjected to such vicious bullying.

With a wry laugh, I collapsed onto the plush bed.

The pristine white sheets were quickly stained with my dirty blood and other fluids.

Turning from my stomach to my back to face the ceiling, even that small motion sent waves of pain through my body.

This body, already in poor condition, had been further battered beyond repair.

Groaning, I found myself laughing at the absurdity of my situation.

Taking a deep breath, I raised my hand toward the ceiling.

The sight of my pale, delicate arm, mottled with bruises, entered my view.

Shaking slightly, my arm soon gave out and fell limp.

“...Have I improved at all?”

Staring at the chandelier swaying from the ceiling, I fell into idle thoughts.

I know nothing about this world.

It wasn't some clichéd reincarnation into a novel or a piece of fiction I'd seen somewhere before.

One day, I simply woke up in a world I didn't recognize.

The sensation of this body's original memories blending into my consciousness was deeply unsettling.

To make matters worse, this body wasn't even the same gender as my own. It was frail and pale, like it would break from the slightest impact.

Even my original body, not exactly healthy, seemed strong in comparison.

Remia Adelian.

A girl with a fear of people, abandoned even by her childhood friend.

A spoiled child of a duke's family, renowned for her arrogance.

The daughter of a traitor who was personally marked by the Emperor as a ringleader of rebellion.

Unfortunately, that's my name in this world.

I was once the daughter of one of the empire's four ducal families—or so I'd heard. But by the time I took over this body, it hardly mattered anymore.

The family was already ruined.

Remia had been discarded by her parents and sold off to some suspicious, likely illegal, organization.

Not as a maid or servant, but to something much darker.

I had awakened in this hopeless situation, bound and gagged, spitting curses at the world, only to be thrown into a pitch-black cell.

They said spirited women would break quickly if left in isolation.

No food, no water, no sound, no people.

Not even the passage of time.

It was always dark—so how could I tell if a day, a week, or longer had passed?

When I was on the verge of starvation, a moldy piece of bread would fall from the ceiling.

When I was dying of thirst, a few drops of stale-smelling water would drip down.

I sat there, motionless, cramped in that coffin-like space where I couldn't even stretch my legs, deprived of sleep or rest.

I stopped pounding on the walls for release when my arms grew too weak to move.

I stopped muttering to myself when my voice gave out from lack of water.

And I stopped trying to count seconds by blinking when my mind grew too weary to continue.

Eventually, I stopped thinking about escape and started wishing for death instead.

It was around that time that I must've given up completely.

After what felt like an eternity, the door finally opened, but by then, I was half-insane.

Oh, but I still had some survival instinct left. For a moment, I felt a flicker of hope.

That hope quickly died when they clicked their tongues at my expression and shut the door again.

Damn it.

Ah, no. I shouldn't use such vulgar words.

Thoughts, too, must carry a sense of dignity to befit a noble.

At least, that's how it should be.

Anyway, after going through that process a few times, both my body and mind were utterly broken, and I completely submitted to them.

Not that I had any intention of resisting in the first place.

If I resisted even slightly, I'd just end up locked in that coffin again.

They seemed satisfied with my newfound obedience and moved on to the next step.

Although my family had fallen, they said blue blood still flowed in my veins.

Apparently, nobility in this world isn't determined solely by status.

My blood, they claimed, was useful in many ways, so they'd be borrowing some from me.

Such a refined way of putting it.

Every night, they drained half the blood from my body.

The extreme anemia left me weak and dizzy. Passing out from shock became a frequent occurrence, and death always felt close at hand.

Of course, they never actually let me die.

It was at this point that I realized this world was a fantasy.

And that healing magic was exceptionally useful.

Time passed like that.

During the day, I was forced to endure being drained like a machine.

At night, I was subjected to various forms of "education," including a return to the solitary confinement of the initial dark cell.

I couldn't breathe.

My chest felt tight.

First, my body broke down.

I wanted to die.

But I couldn't.

Then, my mind broke down.

After several failed suicide attempts, I stopped trying to escape altogether.

Eventually, what once seemed abnormal became routine, and I resigned myself to this hellish reality.

"...Academy?"

"Yes. There's a collaborator among the academy's professors. Retrieve the drug from them."

"....."

How many years had passed since then?

It seemed I was being sent to a new workplace once more.

This time, the academy.

At least I wouldn't be locked up again.

Half-listening to the instructions of the organization member in charge of me, I absentmindedly nodded.

"Once you're at the academy, we can't contact you. After obtaining the drug, escape and return to this location on your own."

"...?"

What brought my mind back to the surface was the realization that this could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

A chance to escape from their clutches, never to come again.

An entire year—a time neither eternal nor fleeting.

The plan seemed uncharacteristically sloppy for an organization like theirs.

It was as if they were deliberately opening a path for me to flee.

Could this be the final mercy granted to me by some god?

A concession to let me find peace, at least in death.

I made up my mind.



I would make this choice my own, at least at the very end.

I was tired of being bound by the traces left behind by the daughter of a noble family.

For one year, I would live without forming any relationships.

And then, on the day before graduation, I would end my life in a place where no one could find me.

Whenever the fear of death crept in, I distracted myself with other thoughts.

Who knows? Maybe, if I close my eyes here, I'll open them back in my real life.

Yes, this is just a nightmare.

What I'm going through right now is nothing more than a vivid and long-lasting nightmare.

So, I'm not running away or dying.

I'm merely testing a way to wake up from this nightmare.

I repeated this to myself, over and over again.

I thought that was enough.

But then—

"...I don't know anymore. Maybe things were better back then."

I might have completely lost my mind.

Here I am, thinking that imprisonment or torture might be better than overt violence.

After years of exposure to such conditions, I must have finally adapted.

What do I do now?

It seems pointless to hope for a quiet year anymore.

The absurdity of my situation amuses me.

Ah, should I just end it all today?

Maybe that would really be for the best.