

PLEASE DON'T DIE, MY LADY

Chapter 5: Original Sin

Throughout human history, torture has been an inseparable companion.

The methods are as varied as the people who invent them, ranging from simple techniques anyone can perform to highly specialized procedures requiring elaborate preparation.

I doubt it's much different in this world.

After all, human nature tends to be consistent, regardless of the setting.

The only significant difference here is the convenience of magic.

With a single spell, most of the preparation can be bypassed, making things incredibly efficient for the torturer.

Like Ariana, who now aimed her sparking hand at me with a sinister smile.

"If she struggles, hold her steady but don't touch her directly.

Unless, of course, you have a penchant for pain," she said, her voice laced with mockery.

The commoners tied me up with a rope they'd brought from somewhere and stepped back, complying with her command.

The rope was unnecessarily thick—overkill, given that the noblewoman's body was far too weak to resist.

To complete the scene, someone had shoved a handkerchief into my mouth, serving as a gag.

What would happen next was painfully clear.

Ariana would press that sparking hand against my chest, and I would scream, shiver, and beg for mercy, just as she expected.

My only hope was that it wouldn't hurt too much, but it obviously would.

From water to electricity—how painfully predictable.

The worst part wasn't even the pain but the fact that it was lunchtime, meaning dozens of other students might be watching.

Imagining myself crying, possibly wetting myself, in front of so many people was enough to make me want to die right then and there.

For a noblewoman, this was akin to demanding I bite my tongue and end it all.

"Lady Adelian, I must apologize," Ariana said suddenly, her hand hovering near my chest.

What could she possibly be apologizing for?

It wasn't for the torture, obviously.

It had to be another mocking remark, meant to humiliate me further.

Since I was gagged, I couldn't respond, not that she expected one.

Unbothered, she continued, "I don't particularly enjoy physical torture.

But yesterday and today were so sudden that I didn't have time to prepare anything better.

From tomorrow, I'll be more thorough. Please look forward to it!"

In a twisted way, that was good news.

At least it suggested less physical pain.

The noblewoman had plenty of other ways to torment me, but as far as I was concerned, anything that wasn't physically painful was tolerable.

When I didn't react and merely blinked at her, Ariana smiled wider and added, "Oh, and do try not to run away, will you?"

This is a rare opportunity at the academy, and I'm quite excited.

Though I may appear calm, I'm actually quite thrilled.

If you provoke me in this state, I can't guarantee how I'll react."

Run away? Where would I even go?

She knew that and was taunting me deliberately.

Despite the situation, I found myself surprisingly calm.

Perhaps it was true what they say: extreme fear often leads to an eerie sense of tranquility.

Or maybe I'd simply resigned myself, like watching an unstoppable natural disaster unfold.

Was this a good thing?

In a way, it meant I understood my place and had given up delusions of control.

The faint resistance I still felt must have belonged to the noblewoman.

When will she finally let go of her attachment to her past self?

Her inability to do so keeps us both shackled.

Ariana seemed done speaking.

She finally moved her hand closer and pressed it against my upper chest.

What followed was far more intense than I had anticipated.

My vision went completely white.

Electrical torture is something I'm familiar with—not from experience, but from media depictions.

Movies and dramas often show scenes where someone is strapped to a chair, and the flick of a lever sends them convulsing and screaming.

But experiencing it firsthand was different.

For one, I didn't scream.

My body just froze as an overwhelming current coursed through me.

The sensation was unmistakably electric—a sharp, jarring pain running through every nerve.

But beyond that...

It just hurt.

There's no other way to describe it.

Unlike water torture, which combines the physical pain of suffocation with psychological fear, electrical torture is pure, unrelenting agony.

When the surge finally stopped, and Ariana removed her hand, my body hung limply in the ropes.

I twitched involuntarily, gasping weakly as my muscles spasmed.

I couldn't think, move, or even scream.

"Ugh... Hngh... Uh..."

"Don't worry. I've adjusted it carefully, so you won't die."

There's no need to be scared. Just think of it as a massage and relax!"

A massage? Seriously? Just kill me already.

...Wait, what am I saying?

I don't want to die yet.

Of course, you're not the one in pain!

But still.

No, that's not it.

Or maybe...

What am I even thinking?

Ah.

My mind isn't working.

Before I can form coherent thoughts, a new wave of pain—likely the electricity—floods through me.

I'm being scorched.

I never imagined I'd understand that word so vividly.

What more is there to describe?

All I can do is twist my body in a desperate attempt to escape, as my vision flashes white at regular intervals.

My ears, already muffled, now feel like they're leaking something sticky—perhaps my eardrums have burst.

Every part of my insides feels like it's being expelled, and something—drool, foam, or blood—seeps into the gag stuffed in my mouth.

Gradually, I lose feeling in my limbs.

Between the brief moments when Ariana lifts her hand and presses it down again, I babble meaningless words through the gag.

The figures surrounding me seem to grow larger, towering over me like a nightmare, before everything fades to black.

As always, my mind surrenders.

When I came to, I slumped over my desk again.

The ones who had been tormenting me had apparently left to eat.

With what little strength I had, I forced my head to turn and scanned the room.

Fortunately—or perhaps unfortunately—there weren't many people around.

Given my current state, that was probably for the best.

“Ugh.”

I sat up and tried to stand, only to collapse back down after a single step.

My legs wouldn't support me.

I considered crawling, but even my fingers refused to obey me.

It was humiliating—I felt more helpless than an infant trying to walk for the first time.

There was nothing I could do but wait until my strength returned.

Dragging my body slightly, I reduced the amount of surface area touching the cold floor.

It wasn't much, but the classroom floor was so unnaturally frigid that leaving myself against it felt like I'd freeze to the bone.

Not that it mattered much—my body already felt chilled to the core.

Despite wearing thick clothes, the cold was unbearable.

I could already tell I'd be battling a cold or fever when I got back to my dorm.

Whether my condition stemmed from my mental state or my physical state didn't matter—they were equally miserable.

As I sat there, staring blankly into space, my vision blurred.

Without warning, warm, salty tears began streaming down my face.

I blinked a few times, trying to stop them, but it was futile.

The dam broke, and the floodgates opened.

Tears mixed with the emotions I had been suppressing so desperately.

“Ah... haha... Hic... sob... hic...”

I didn't want to keep moving forward.

Just standing still felt so exhausting that I thought I might die.

What is this?

It's only the second day.

And this will continue as long as I live.

If I'm already like this, even my faint hope for a peaceful end seems out of reach.

A deep despair welled up inside me, and before I knew it, I was sobbing uncontrollably.

Each word I tried to utter sent a searing pain through my head, like an unbearable ringing.

Crying itself was exhausting, and my frail, battered body couldn't handle it.

This body is garbage. Truly.

"I want to go home... Hic... sob... I want to go home... Mom... hic..."

Ever since I came to this world, there hasn't been a single moment when I didn't miss home.

But this was the first time I had said it aloud.

I miss it. I miss it so much it drives me insane.

Awake or asleep, it's all I think about.

No matter how often I replay those thoughts, I never get used to them.

They only grow, like vines wrapping tighter around my chest.

My heart feels so heavy, like it might stop at any moment from the pain.

Could it be some terminal illness?

I wish it were.

As my mind wandered, memories of home—the familiar streets, everyday moments, cherished events, and the faces of loved ones—flashed before me.

This was what I always did when the despair became unbearable.

But as time passed, those memories grew fainter, blurred further by the noblewoman's own memories.

Even so, my past and delusions were the only refuges I had left.

And yet, even in these moments, the faces of the noblewoman's parents came to mind instead of my own.

It felt disgusting, as if they were trying to overwrite me.

Give it back.

That's all I have left.

If you take that from me, where's the proof I ever existed?

This is all your fault.

Everything is because of you.

I didn't do anything wrong—why am I the one who has to suffer like this?

Give it back.

Send me back.

I want to go back.

If not...

At least let me die today.

Please.