

Tyrant 149

Chapter 149: Mayla

The infirmary stood just as he remembered it—cold stone walls, a single wooden door at the entrance, and the faint scent of herbs drifting from within. Nothing had changed.

Trafalgar pushed the door open and stepped inside. Rows of rooms stretched down a narrow corridor, their doors ajar, each revealing empty cots and unused equipment. Only one door remained closed at the far end. His chest tightened.

A voice broke his focus. "Trafalgar?"

He turned. An elf healer stood beside the entrance desk, her long ears twitching in surprise. Her green robes marked her as staff of the estate.

His brow furrowed. "What did you just call me?"

Her eyes widened, and she bowed quickly. "Forgive me—young master Trafalgar."

But he was no longer listening. His gaze was fixed on the closed door at the end of the corridor.

The healer shifted uneasily. "May I help you with something?"

"Yes," Trafalgar said, his tone firm. "Don't let anyone come down this corridor unless it's an emergency. And don't disturb me. That goes for you too."

The healer blinked, confused. She glanced around, unsure why he'd added that last part. Trafalgar, however, knew exactly who he was speaking to.

Caelum.

"You're watching, aren't you? Then listen carefully. This time, I want no eyes. No interruptions. Just privacy."

His heart pounded. Months of waiting, of uncertainty, of guilt pressed against his chest. Mayla.

At first, she had seemed distant, cold, more servant than friend. But as Trafalgar changed, so had she. She had become someone more—still professional, but quietly loyal, even caring.

Trafalgar's boots echoed faintly on the stone as he took a step toward the closed door. Still, he paused and looked back at the elf healer.

"Who is behind that door?" he asked, his voice low, almost steady—but inside, his chest was tight.

The healer tilted her head, her tone careful. "A young woman. Brown hair, brown eyes. Her name is Mayla."

Trafalgar's breath caught for half a second.

'It's her. I knew it... but I had to hear it. To be sure.'

The healer continued, unaware of the storm running through his head. "She's a maid of the house. She was in a coma until recently. We've kept her under care since then."

"I know," Trafalgar said flatly. His eyes sharpened as he turned back toward the door. "She's my maid."

The weight in his voice silenced the healer. She opened her mouth as if to reply, but no words came. Instead, she lowered her gaze, watching him move past her toward the corridor.

Step by step, Trafalgar advanced. His mind dragged him back to the last time he'd been here, when he'd seen her lying motionless, locked away from the world. He remembered the way the anger had consumed him, the chair he had hurled across the room, the healer who had nearly been struck.

That day, he had made a promise.

'I'll make them pay. Every single one who hurt her.'

The corridor stretched endlessly before him, though it was only a dozen steps to the final door. Trafalgar's hand brushed the stone wall as he walked, each step heavy with memory.

'Back then, all I wanted was to survive. Day after day, beaten down, treated like nothing. Just breathing was victory. But now... no. Surviving isn't enough anymore.'

He stopped midway, staring at the faint glow of lamplight leaking from beneath the door.

'I want strength. Enough to protect the ones I care about. Enough to crush anyone who dares hurt them. I couldn't protect Mayla last time. I won't let there be a next time. Never again.'

His hand tightened into a fist, knuckles pale.

But another thought cut in, quieter, unwelcome.

'Will I ever return to Earth? I still don't know how I came here. One moment I was... me. A university student, tired but alive. Then I opened my eyes, and I was Trafalgar du Morgain. My family back there—are they okay? Do they think I vanished, dead, kidnapped? My parents, my grandparents... they must be devastated.'

A bitter breath escaped him, fogging the cold air.

'And yet, I've barely thought about going back. This world swallowed me whole. Survival, fighting, power—it became everything. But if I could return, would I even want to? After all this... could I just leave?'

The silence of the corridor answered nothing. Only the closed door waited.

Trafalgar placed his palm gently on the wood, fingers trembling for the first time in months.

'No matter what answers I find—or if I find none at all—I know this much: I'll protect her. Even if that means continuing to do everything I've done until now.'

He pushed the door open.

The hinges creaked softly as the door swung open. The room was dim, painted in shades of gray by the fading light of dusk. A single window allowed the last slivers of sun to pour across the floor.

There, by the window, stood Mayla.

Her back was to him at first, long brown hair flowing loose down her shoulders. It had grown during her months of slumber, darker at the roots, catching the pale glow of twilight. She leaned lightly on the sill, staring at the snowy horizon beyond the glass.

Trafalgar froze. His chest tightened painfully, breath caught halfway between relief and disbelief.

'She's awake. She's really awake.'

Slowly, Mayla turned at the sound of the door. Her brown eyes met his, steady and alive, no longer clouded by the weight of unconsciousness. For a moment, the world shrank to just those eyes.

Her lips curved into a soft, familiar smile. "Young master Trafalgar... you've grown."

The words pierced straight through him. He had rehearsed this moment in his mind countless times—what he would say, how he would act—but now, nothing came. His throat tightened, his vision blurred.

He stepped inside, the door closing silently behind him.

'I don't even know if these are my feelings... or his. The old Trafalgar's love for her, or my own. Maybe both. But it doesn't matter. Right now, I can't stop these tears.'

His eyes stung as he blinked hard, but the tears still gathered. For the first time in a long while, he didn't care.

Mayla was back.

Alive. Awake. Herself.

And that was enough to break the walls he had built around his heart.