

Tyrant 206

Chapter 206: Night Roads

Armand looked at the two girls, his tone calm but heavy. "Are you both all right?"

Mayla and Garrika nodded almost at the same time.

"I'm sorry," Armand continued, his gaze softening. "The Velkaris Council should have acted sooner."

Mayla lowered her head slightly. "Please don't apologize, Lord Armand du Morgain. You're an elder of Velkaris—surely you have countless duties. I'm just grateful Trafalgar noticed what happened and came for me in time."

Armand gave a quiet nod. "I see. Then that's enough."

Trafalgar stepped forward and met his grandfather's eyes. "We'll be leaving now."

"Be careful," Armand replied. "You've done enough for one night."

Trafalgar nodded once. "Good night, grandfather."

"Good night, Trafalgar."

With that, Trafalgar turned toward the exit. Garrika followed without hesitation, her posture relaxed now that everything was over, while Mayla lingered a moment longer to bow respectfully before joining them.

Behind them, Armand gave quick orders to his soldiers to finish cleaning the area. No one argued—when an elder spoke, orders were followed.

By the time the three stepped outside, the cool air of Velkaris had already swallowed the noise from the warehouse. The streets were quiet. The glow of mana lamps lined the road ahead, guiding them through the near-empty district.

None of them spoke for a while. There was nothing left to say—only the silent relief of surviving another night.

The three walked down the long streets of Velkaris in silence. The night was calm, and the dim blue glow from the mana lamps stretched across the pavement, outlining their shadows as they moved. Most of the city slept, unaware of the chaos that had taken place only an hour ago.

Trafalgar walked ahead, hands in his pockets, his thoughts still lingering on Armand's words. Behind him, Garrika and Mayla followed at a steady pace—two women who had seen far too much violence for a single evening, but well Garrika is used to it.

After a few blocks, Garrika broke the silence. "You know I'm stronger than you, right?" she said, glancing at Trafalgar with a smirk that didn't quite hide the exhaustion on her face.

Trafalgar didn't turn. "I know. But I'd rather make sure you get back safely tonight."

"Oh?" she teased, tail flicking lazily. "Since when do you play bodyguard?"

"Since Lucien decided to make trouble again," he said simply. "He left a mark tonight. Better to stay cautious."

Garrika's smirk softened into a quiet grin. "Fine. Do as you like."

They continued walking, their footsteps echoing faintly between the stone buildings.

Mayla, walking beside them, kept her eyes on the ground. Her hands were clasped tightly together, knuckles white. Even though her breathing had steadied, she couldn't shake the lingering fear of being trapped again. Trafalgar noticed.

"Are you all right, Mayla?" he asked, finally slowing his pace to walk beside her.

She hesitated, then nodded. "Yes... it was just a bad scare. But thanks to you—and Garrika—it's over now."

"I told you," Trafalgar said, tone calm but firm. "I wouldn't let anything happen to you again. That's a promise I intend to keep."

Mayla looked at him, a small, grateful smile finding its way to her lips. "I know. Thank you."

Garrika chuckled lightly. "Lucky girl. Having someone watch your back like that."

Mayla's smile deepened. "Yes... I suppose I am lucky."

They finally reached the familiar street where Arden and Marella's shop stood. The shutters were closed, and not a single light remained inside. The faint smell of metal and herbs still lingered from earlier, carried by the air from one of the side vents.

Garrika stopped in front of the entrance and placed her hands on her hips, exhaling softly. "Well, home sweet home."

Trafalgar stopped beside her, scanning the quiet street before answering. "I'll come by once in a while—make sure the place is still running properly. Maybe even pick up a few jobs if something interesting comes up."

Garrika raised an eyebrow, half-smirking. "You? Taking requests?"

"Can't let myself get rusty," he said simply.

Her tail swayed once, amused. "Do that. And next time, try not to turn the city upside down before visiting."

That earned a faint laugh from him, quiet but genuine. "No promises."

Mayla stood beside them, watching the exchange with a soft smile. "Thank you, Garrika. For helping me."

Garrika waved a hand dismissively. "Don't mention it. Just... take care of yourself, both of you."

She turned toward the door and pushed it open slightly before glancing back one last time. "And Trafalgar," she added with a grin, "next time someone touches what's yours—try not to level half a warehouse."

Trafalgar smirked. "I'll keep that in mind."

"Good." She slipped inside, the door closing quietly behind her.

Now only Trafalgar and Mayla remained, the street silent again. He glanced toward her and gestured lightly. "Come on. I'll walk you home."

Mayla nodded. "Thank you."

The upper district of Velkaris was silent when they arrived. The streets here were clean and wide, lined with tall buildings and golden mana lamps instead of blue. Mayla's new apartment stood there, modest, with pale stone walls and a small balcony overlooking the quiet street below.

They stopped at the door. For a moment, neither spoke. The exhaustion from the night seemed to sink into their bones now that the danger had passed.

Mayla turned to face him, her fingers brushing the small pendant at her neck. "Thank you... for coming for me, Trafalgar," she said softly.

He met her gaze, calm as ever. "It's the least I could do. After everything you've done for me all these years, I owe you that much."

Mayla hesitated, eyes lowering. "You don't owe me anything."

"Maybe not," he replied, voice low, "but I wanted to."

A faint silence followed—one that felt heavier than any words they could add. The city's hum seemed distant now, leaving only the sound of their breathing.

When Mayla unlocked the door, she didn't step inside right away. She turned again, her hand trembling slightly as she reached for his. "I'm... scared," she whispered. "Can you stay with me tonight?"

Trafalgar studied her face for a moment—those trembling eyes, the faint fear still lingering from what she'd gone through. He nodded once. "All right."

They stepped inside together. The apartment was warm and quiet, lit by a single crystal lamp. The faint scent of tea and new wood filled the air.

As Mayla turned to close the door, Trafalgar spoke her name softly. "Mayla."

For a brief instant, he hesitated. 'Is she really scared... or does she want me to stay for another reason? Is she hinting at something?' he wondered. 'Mayla matters to me, so I'd stay if she asked... but will this night turn into something else? My head's a mess. I'm drawn to her—should I do something? She's not my maid anymore... so...'

The thought lingered as she turned to face him, her expression soft beneath the warm light.

She froze, the sound of his voice alone making her heartbeat quicken. Truthfully this was her intention from the beginning. When she turned, Trafalgar was closer than before—close enough for her to see the faint uncertainty in his dark-blue eyes. For a moment, neither of them moved.

'Fuck it.'

Then, almost without thinking, he reached out and pulled her gently toward him. Their bodies brushed, hesitant, awkward, unsure of what to do with the closeness. Trafalgar's hand trembled slightly where it rested on her arm.

It wasn't graceful. It wasn't the practiced poise of a noble. It was clumsy.

He leaned in and kissed her.

The contact was unsteady—more a collision than perfection—but it carried something raw, something real. Mayla's breath caught as their lips met, her hands instinctively clutching at his shirt. Trafalgar didn't know what he was doing; he'd never done this before—not here, not in his previous life. Yet, somehow, it felt right.

Their lips moved again, slow and uncertain, learning the rhythm together. It was messy, warm, and a little desperate—the kind of moment where emotion overtook instinct. The faint scent of her perfume filled his head; his heartbeat was so loud he could hardly hear anything else.

When they finally parted, both were breathing unevenly. Trafalgar exhaled, his forehead still resting against hers. His voice came out quiet, almost uncertain.

"...It was my first time," he admitted. "I'm sorry if I did it wrong."

Mayla blinked, surprise flickering in her eyes before soft laughter escaped her—warm and genuine. "You didn't," she said gently. "It was mine too, and I'm glad you did it."

Trafalgar looked at her, a faint smile tugging at the corner of his lips. The tension in his shoulders eased at her words.

"Then," he murmured, his tone softer now, "I guess we both learned something tonight."

Mayla nodded, eyes shimmering faintly in the dim light. "Yes... we did."

The room fell quiet again, but this time the silence felt comfortable—two hearts steadying together after chaos, sharing warmth neither of them had expected to find.