

Chapter 12

Salum

Salum's eyes blink open revealing the harsh bars of white light overhead. He groans as he gets up. His eyes go wide. He forces a croak to escape his mouth. He starts croaking out more sounds. A smile plasters itself across his face. Derk enters the room. Salum stops excitedly croaking and stares down Derk. Derk walks to his side.

"Sorry if turning the lights on woke you, but it's almost midday." Derk says.

"Midday?" Salum signs.

Salum looks down at his the tube protruding from the center of his chest.

"Now, I'm gonna need you to stay still during the check up. So can we come to an accord. I make sure you don't die within the next few days, and you don't kill me." Derk says.

Salum nods. Derk sits on a leather chair with wheels. He wheels the chair until he is right in front of Salum. He opens a drawer in the metal side table and takes out a small box of implements. He takes out a small pair of metal tweezers to pick at the hole in Salum's chest. He picks and prods then nods. He puts the tweezers away.

"Lift up your arms." Derk says.

Salum lifts his arms. Derk takes his hands and runs them over both sides, feeling in his armpit. He nods then starts poking both sides of his face.

“Is the feeling the same on both sides?” Derk asks.

Salum nods. Derk starts poking down the face, then he massages his neck. He frowns then his eyes go wide.

“Try making a sound.” Derk asks.

Salum opens his mouth and a croak comes out. Derk laughs.

“That’s amazing!” Derk yells.

Salum lets a smile through, then quickly schools his expression.

“I always assumed that inquisitors were never able to recover their vocal cords, but it seems that your body has healed then when severed. Therefore, reversing the operation.” Derk says.

Salum smiles wide.

“Will I be able to speak again?” Salum signs.

“Assuredly, but you will need to reassert your control over your vocal cords.” Derk says.

“How do I do that?” Salum signs.

“I’ll be back.” Derk says.

Derk rushes out of the room. He is only gone for a second when he grabs a small glass pad with glowing letters on it.

“This pad has a program on it that will prompt you to make sound. When you make the sound, the pad will either correct you or will say you made it. Make sure along with your physical exercises to do these every day.” Derk says.

Salum eyes the pad, then scowls.

“This is a trick.” Salum signs.

“What?” Derk says.

“You are trying to insource me with your sweet false promises. The sorcerer ornaments themselves with false promises to convince you to stray away. Look past from the veneere and see the black ichor beneath.” Salum signs.

Salum throws the pad at the wall causing it to shatter to pieces.

“Leave me.” Salum signs.

Derk looks at the shattered pieces of the pad, then sags and walks out of the room. Salum lays back down on the bed. Then grabs the red book. He opens it and tries sounding out the next few words. He eeks out a croak, but nothing more. Tears pool in his eyes then drip down his face. He snaps the book shut, then closes his eyes. He cries himself to sleep.

Salum shoots awake when the metal door crashes open. A little girl no older than ten sits with a chest covered in blood soaked bandages. She is sitting in a similar carriage to Salum.

“If this doesn’t work I’ll kill you.” Bryden says.

“It will work.” Derk says.

Derk rushes her into the center of the room slotting her next to Salum. He grabs the implements in the right cabinet. He pulls off the bandages revealing a hollow in her chest. The bones are shattered and her heart is ripped to pieces. Expertly Derk slices the arteries around the heart. He pulls out whats rest of the heart, then starts attaching tube to the arteries connected to the heart. He runs to the other side of the room and grabs another black bladder. This one is clearly stitched together, and the seams are imperfect. Derk hangs the bladder from a rope in dangling from the ceiling. He plugs the tubes into the bladder, then plugs the bladder into another metal machine. Derk presses a button, sweat dripping onto the floor.

The bladder green and red lights turn on, but the red light never catches the green light. The bladder gives a last squeeze then stops. Derk looks around frantically through drawers as the red light next to the girl start blinking slower. Derk keeps feantically looking through cabinets. He starts tossing them to the floor, they clang against the hard smooth stone. Salum gets up from his pod and walks to the edge of his tube. He taps Derk on the shoulder. Derk turns around. He holds his portion of the tube out to the girl.

“No, you’ll die.” Derk says.

Salum nods, then holds the tube out again. Derk curses, then leads Salum to the girls side. He lays Salum down on his bed, then carefully removes the tube from his chest leaving a portion still embedded. He takes Salum’s tube and hooks it into the girl. The red and green lights start blinking closer and closer. They blink in unison once as Salum’s vision starts to darken. Salum gives a last smile, then tumbles off his pod onto the floor.