

## H. Academy 910

### Chapter 910 Good Morning

Irina sat down across from Astron, her eyes briefly scanning the table before her.

It was... a sight.

Normally, when she ate alone, she didn't care about presentation. She'd just grab a plate, toss some food onto it, and call it a meal. Most of the time, she'd be watching something—videos, highlights, even just random streams while she mindlessly ate.

But now?

She paused.

The table was neatly set, the food arranged in that effortless, aesthetic way Astron always managed. Nothing extravagant, but clean. Balanced. Like something out of a magazine photo rather than a hastily thrown-together breakfast.

It wasn't intentional—she was sure Astron wasn't even thinking about the way he plated the food—but it still looked perfectly put together.

For a brief second, she hesitated.

This... felt different.

There was no screen in front of her, no background noise filling the space. Just them, the quiet clinking of plates, and the morning light spilling softly through the window.

She shook off the thought and immediately started eating.

Because damn it, she was hungry.

And, as expected, Astron's cooking was insanely good.

The eggs were perfectly seasoned, the toast crispy but not dry, and even the fruit—something she normally didn't care about—was cut to the perfect bite-sized pieces.

She exhaled in pure satisfaction.

"Damn, Astron." She took another bite, shaking her head. "Really good."

Astron, still composed as ever, simply nodded. "I'm glad you like it."

Irina huffed, taking another bite as they settled into their meal.

For a while, there was only the quiet clinking of utensils and the occasional sip of tea. It wasn't uncomfortable, though—it was easy, the kind of silence that didn't feel like a void, just something that naturally existed between them.

Then, as she casually speared a piece of fruit with her fork, she broke the silence.

"So, about today."

Astron glanced up, waiting for her to continue.

Irina chewed thoughtfully, waving her fork in the air. "I picked yesterday night for a reason. No taxing lectures today, nothing that really needs my full focus. That's why I didn't want to go in the first place."

Astron took a sip of his tea, setting it down before responding. "I see."

For a moment, she thought he might let it go.

But of course, he didn't.

"Even if skipping one lecture would not affect your overall grades," he said smoothly, "it is an act of discipline. Once you let it go—"

Irina clicked her tongue, cutting him off. "Tch. You skipped your training today. Does that mean you're going to start skipping again?"

Astron didn't flinch. "No. I took a rest day."

Irina raised an eyebrow, amused. "Oh? But we both know you don't need rest days."

Astron, as composed as ever, replied, "I judged that I did."

Irina leaned forward slightly, smirking. "Can't I do the same?"

"No."

Her smirk vanished. "Excuse me?"

Astron looked at her with that calm, unreadable expression, but there was something almost obvious in his gaze.

Irina narrowed her eyes. "Wait. Wait, wait, wait. Is this because I'm not you?"

Astron didn't answer.

He didn't need to.

Because his look said it all.

Irina scoffed, offended. "Oh, I see. I see how it is. You think I can't handle my own responsibilities, huh?"

Astron remained silent.

Irina pointed her fork at him. "I'll have you know I'm a very responsible person. I handle my own things just fine, thank you very much."

Astron tilted his head slightly. "You tend to get lazier than nearly everyone sometimes."

Irina's jaw dropped.

"What?"

Astron took another bite of his food, completely unbothered.

Irina slammed her fork down. "Name one time—"

"Your room."

Irina froze.

Astron continued, voice as smooth as ever.

"Your notes are half-written, your laundry piles up, and your study sessions usually end with you watching unrelated videos."

Irina clenched her jaw.

He was not wrong.

But still—

"That's—! I mean, sometimes I need a break, Astron!"

"'Sometimes' has an inconsistent definition with you."

Irina glared. "You—you just memorize everything at once, you don't even need to study!"

"That is unrelated."

"No, it's very related!"

Astron exhaled slightly, as if she was proving his point.

Irina gritted her teeth, narrowing her eyes at him. "So what, are you my discipline officer now?"

Astron calmly took another sip of tea. "If you need one, I can be."

Irina kicked his shin under the table.

Despite her dramatic reaction, Irina secretly enjoyed this.

The playful bickering, the way Astron called out her bad habits so effortlessly—it wasn't annoying in the way it should have been. It was comfortable.

She wasn't sure when they had gotten to this point, where arguing over discipline and responsibilities felt more like a casual morning routine rather than an actual fight.

And just like that, they finished their meal in silence, the occasional clinking of plates the only sound between them.

Once the last bite was gone, Irina stretched her arms over her head before blinking in confusion.

Astron was already standing, fully dressed in his uniform.

"What—?" She stared. "How did you change that fast?"

Astron finished adjusting his cuffs, barely reacting. "I changed my clothes."

"No, I saw that! But when? I looked away for a second, and suddenly you're done? What the hell?"

Astron simply shrugged.

Irina squinted at him. "You're not human."

Astron gave her an unimpressed look. "That is an exaggeration."

She huffed, but then an idea struck her.

A brilliant idea.



She smirked, sitting back in her chair and casually flicking her hair over her shoulder.

"Hey, come here."

Astron raised an eyebrow slightly. "Why?"

Irina grinned. "Do my hair."

There was a pause.

Astron's mouth twitched slightly, as if he refused to believe what he had just heard.

"...You are now treating me like a house servant."

Irina snickered. "Oh, come on, InfernoKnight."

Astron exhaled sharply, rubbing his temple. "I will do this only this time. Once we leave, it will not be like this."

Irina leaned back, smug. "Hmph. We'll see about that."

Astron sighed, walking over.

And just like that, he combed her hair.

Irina expected him to be awkward, maybe rough, maybe unsure—

But no.

He was weirdly good at this.

His fingers moved through her hair with ease, gathering strands, brushing them into place with an almost practiced smoothness. His motions were methodical, gentle but firm—like someone who had done this before.

Irina raised an eyebrow.

She squinted at him through the mirror.

"Alright, spill. When did you get this good?"

Astron didn't react.

She narrowed her eyes further. "Who else's hair did you comb?"

She meant it as a tease, something lighthearted, maybe even to see if he had been doing this for another girl—

But—

Astron's hands paused for half a second.

His eyes dimmed slightly.

"Someone that is no longer here."

Irina froze.

And immediately—

She remembered.

Estelle.

His sister.

Irina immediately sensed it.

That slight pause. That barely-there tension in his shoulders.

She had touched a sensitive topic again.

And she hated it.

Not because she didn't want to know.

But because she knew Astron wouldn't talk about it.

He wasn't the type to open up—not unless it was forced out of him, and even then, it wouldn't be genuine. And the last thing she wanted was for him to retreat back into himself over something she had said.

So—

She did what she always did when things got too heavy.

She changed the mood.

Immediately.

She smirked, leaning back slightly. "Hmph. You must have been a lady killer then."

Astron blinked, the faintest hint of confusion flickering through his eyes.

"What?"

Irina flicked her fingers, playing up the smug act. "Oh, you know. You were clearly good at this, meaning you must've had practice. Meaning you probably made a lot of girls fall for you back then."

Astron simply exhaled, returning to brushing her hair like she hadn't just thrown that ridiculous statement at him. "You know how I was before."

Irina rolled her eyes dramatically. "I know how you were at the academy. Who knows what you were like before you came here?"

Astron, without missing a beat, said flatly, "I just trained."

Irina snorted. "Yeah, yeah. That's what they all say."

Astron didn't even dignify that with a response.

Instead, he finished with her hair, stepping back like nothing had happened.

Irina smirked, shaking her head before standing up and stretching.

"Alright, I'm done here."

She turned on her heel and left the room, not waiting for a reply.

Just like that, they left the dorms.

Irina adjusted the strap of her bag, walking beside Astron as they stepped out into the academy halls. The crisp morning air greeted them, the usual quiet hum of early activity filling the space as students moved about.

Everything seemed normal.

Until—

"Heh?"

A voice.

Irina halted mid-step, her eyes flicking up—

And right in front of them stood a girl with silver hair, her sharp, icy blue eyes locked directly onto them.