

Tyrant 103

Chapter 103: What You Can't Buy

The cafeteria of Velkaris Academy was alive with sound.

Trafalgar stepped inside with Zafira at his side. Dozens of eyes followed them for a moment before turning back to their own meals. It wasn't every day that two members of the Eight Great Families walked in together, or even walked into an academy cafeteria.

They collected simple food—bread, stew, and steaming cups of coffee—before settling at a quieter table near the tall arched windows. Sunlight spilled over the polished wood, making the moment feel oddly normal.

Zafira stirred her drink slowly, her curved horns catching the light. "Humans are so noisy," she said, glancing at the crowded hall.

Trafalgar smirked. "And demons are quiet, I suppose?"

Her lips curved faintly. "Hm, I think so actually."

Trafalgar leaned back, letting the steam from his cup warm his face. For once, there was no looming danger, no political schemes, no blades at his throat. Just food, coffee, and conversation. The simplicity of it felt almost foreign.

He took a sip. Bitter, earthy, stronger than what he remembered from Earth, yet it grounded him. "I'll admit, this isn't bad. Guess magic improves everything—even coffee."

For Trafalgar, the mundane moment was enough. After the labyrinth, after Caelum's report last night, after the constant weight of expectations, this quiet meal felt like stolen time.

He didn't know how long it would last, but for now, he allowed himself to breathe.

The peace didn't last long. A group of three boys approached their table, their trays left behind as they closed in with eager smiles. One leaned on the edge of the table, trying to look confident.

"Zafira, right? From the house of Zar'khael? I've heard demons are even more enchanting up close. Want to sit with us instead?"

Another cut in quickly, flashing a grin. "I could show you around the campus. My family owns estates near the northern district—you'd have the best view in the city."

The third tried to outshine them both. "If you need magical supplies, I can get anything. Runes, gems, potions—just say the word."

Trafalgar sipped his coffee, unimpressed, watching the parade of arrogance.

Zafira listened in silence, eyes half-lidded, her expression unreadable. When the third finished, she set her cup down with a soft clink.

Her voice was calm, almost too soft for the boys to hear. "What can you offer me... that I don't already have?"

The question hit like a blade. The boys froze, glancing at one another, struggling for words. In their minds, every answer was wealth, status, possessions—and she had all of it already. Their faces paled as realization set in. Without another word, they muttered excuses and left, their confidence shattered.

Zafira exhaled quietly, watching them retreat. "This is what I meant. Humans are too noisy."

Trafalgar tilted his head. "Don't you think it's normal to try and flirt with a beautiful girl?"

Her eyes flicked toward him, calm and unwavering. "It's normal to try. But all they think of is material things. There's far more one can offer than money or titles."

Trafalgar leaned back, studying her in silence. For once, he couldn't argue, she was stating facts.

Their conversation lingered for a moment, but the sound of the academy's bell cut through the cafeteria. Students began clearing their tables, enchanted trays floating back toward the counters as the hall emptied.

Trafalgar pushed back his chair. "Looks like that's our cue."

Zafira nodded, finishing the last sip of her coffee. "Classes won't wait."

They left together, the quiet rhythm of their steps contrasting with the noisy crowds flowing toward their next lessons. The sun filtered through tall windows along the corridor, painting shifting patterns of light across the polished stone.

Soon, they reached a large lecture hall. Dozens of seats curved upward like an amphitheater, chalkboards at the front glowing faintly with mana inscriptions prepared for the lesson.

Students filed in quickly, filling the rows with the hum of chatter. Trafalgar and Zafira found seats near the middle. He leaned back in his chair, adjusting his sword at his side, while Zafira neatly placed her hands on the desk.

The door opened. Silence followed.

A woman stepped inside—tall, dressed in simple dark green robes. Her black hair was tied back, and her eyes, a clear hazel, moved calmly across the room. Unlike the eccentric appearance of Professor Rhaldrin, she was unmistakably human. No horns, no strange aura, no theatrics. Just a composed figure whose presence commanded attention.

She set a book on the desk, its leather cover worn from years of use. "Good afternoon," she said evenly. "My name is Professor Selvara. Today, we begin with the foundations of power: the theory of Talents, Bloodlines, Classes, and Skills."

The last whispers in the hall died down as every student straightened in their seat. Trafalgar leaned forward slightly, his mind sharpening.

'This should be interesting...'

Professor Selvara opened her book, though she barely glanced at it as she began to speak.

"Every path begins with awakening your mana core. It is at that moment that your class first appears. A class depends on many factors—your ancestors, the talents passed down to you, and your bloodline. In most cases, it reflects what your family has been for generations."

She paced slowly across the front of the room, hands folded neatly.

"There are two awakenings. The first comes when you form your initial core of mana. The second... well, it is rarer. It can happen naturally when someone reaches their third core, or it can be forced under special circumstances. Either way, a second awakening may reveal greater potential—or even a different path entirely."

The room filled with murmurs, students scribbling notes.

"Let me give you an example," Selvara continued. "The Morgain family has long produced swordmasters. Their class passes down through generations, tied to their bloodline. Trafalgar du Morgain, for instance, would almost certainly awaken as a swordsman... though it is always possible for a child to deviate, to awaken something different."

A ripple of laughter spread through the hall. The word bastard floated on a whisper, cruel but not shouted. Trafalgar sat still, eyes half-lidded, unbothered.

Selvara blinked, realizing her example had struck too close. She bowed her head slightly. "Forgive me, Trafalgar. I didn't mean to—"

He raised a hand lightly. "Don't worry. You didn't do it on purpose."

The professor exhaled, then continued. "Next is Talent. Every individual is born with one, and it defines how quickly they grow. A high Talent allows faster progress through mana cores. It is, perhaps, the single most important factor in determining potential."

She shifted smoothly. "And finally, Bloodline. This is tied to race. Humans, elves, demons, dwarves, all races—each has their own nature. Skills are determined mostly by your class, but your bloodline grants racial traits, often in the form of passive abilities. For example, a merfolk might awaken the passive skill Aquatic Breath, allowing them to breathe underwater. A lycan could awaken Lycan Wolf Body, strengthening their senses and physique beyond human limits. These abilities are inherited, shaped by blood, and add to the path your class defines. Each living being may only awaken one true skill from their class—but the bloodline provides its own gifts."

Trafalgar tapped his fingers lightly on the desk.

'So that's the structure... Classes, Talents, Bloodlines, Skills. I figured most of it out on my own. I understand why I won the Primordial Body now. And my talent and everything Trafalgar has is probably all from Trafalgar's mother.'