

Tyrant 109

Chapter 109: An Unexpected Visit

The first rays of Thursday morning filtered through the curtains, spilling a soft glow across the room. Trafalgar stirred awake, his bare skin brushing against the sheets. As usual, he had slept without clothes, finding the sensation of mana flowing more natural that way.

He sat up slowly, rubbing the sleep from his eyes, before bringing his hands together. Closing his eyes, he drew a deep breath. Thin streams of residual mana clung to him from the night, faint wisps of energy that shimmered like dust motes. With steady focus, he pulled them inward, guiding the flow into his mana core.

'Closer to the next rank,' he thought, feeling the core within his chest pulse with faint heat. 'I'll soon catch up to those without support. Still... Alfons, Zafira... they're miles ahead. Doesn't matter. Even if nothing's hunting me right now, I can't slack off. If I want to survive in this world, I have to keep moving forward.'

A faint sigh escaped his lips as he finished the cycle of meditation. His body felt a fraction heavier, his core a fraction fuller.

Rising from the bed, he stretched, joints cracking slightly, before walking toward the bathroom. A shower would clear his head before classes. Just as he reached for the door handle, a knock echoed from the entrance of his room.

Trafalgar froze. No one usually knocked here. His quarters were on the top floor—an area reserved only for heirs of the Eight Great Families. Visitors were a rarity.

He wrapped a towel firmly around his waist, and moved to open the door.

When the door creaked open, purple hair glinted in the light. Zafira stood there, her locks loose today, cascading over her shoulders.

Zafira's gray eyes fixed on him the instant the door opened. Her gaze trailed slowly from the towel at his waist up across his bare torso, pausing briefly at the lines of muscle before meeting his face. Her curved horns, polished like dark stone, framed her expression—half amusement, half disbelief.

"So this is how you greet everyone who comes looking for you?" she said dryly, her tone carrying a faint edge of mockery.

Trafalgar glanced down at himself, still wrapped in nothing but the towel. "I was about to shower. Do you want to wait inside rather than stand in the hall?"

Zafira raised an eyebrow but walked past him without hesitation. She sat down on his bed, ignoring the mess of crumpled sheets.

"Not exactly the neatest welcome," she teased.

"Sorry about the chaos," Trafalgar replied, closing the door. "I wasn't expecting guests."

She tilted her head, still watching him. "You look stronger than before. The training's working."

Trafalgar scratched the back of his neck. "Yeah, I've been pushing nonstop since the Council. Guess the uniform hides it most of the time."

He wasn't wrong. In recent weeks he'd grown taller—just over one meter seventy now—and though his build wasn't bulky, every line of his body carried a lean definition.

Zafira's eyes lingered for a moment too long before she looked away, pretending to study the room instead.

'Strange,' Trafalgar mused inwardly. 'Usually I wait for her before classes, or she waits for me. Why would she come knocking today?'

Aloud, he said, "I'll head to the shower. Sorry, I've got nothing to offer you—food or drink. Haven't done the shopping yet."

"Then we'll go after classes," Zafira replied simply. "I'll come with you."

Trafalgar hesitated. "Can't. I already have plans this weekend."

He disappeared into the bathroom, water starting to run a moment later. From the other side of the door, her voice carried in. "Oh? What plans, if I may ask?"

"Ah, nothing important. Just something I have to take care of."

"Will you be alone?" Zafira asked.

"Why? Are you jealous?"

Zafira fell silent.

Trafalgar, seeing the silence that formed, thought, 'Is she really jealous?'

Steam curled out from the bathroom door as Trafalgar stepped back into the room. His damp black hair clung to his neck and shoulders, drops of water sliding across his skin. He wore only a pair of black trousers, still drying his hair with a towel.

Zafira's gray eyes caught on something immediately—dark lines etched into the skin of his forearm. Her brows furrowed.

"What's that? Don't tell me you went and got a tattoo without saying anything."

Trafalgar looked down, almost forgetting it was visible. He lifted the arm casually. "Yeah, I thought I'd try something new. What do you think?"

She leaned forward, taking his arm without asking, her cool fingers brushing his skin as she examined the markings. "It's... not finished?"

"Had to stop halfway," Trafalgar admitted, shrugging. "Something urgent came up."

Her expression darkened slightly. "You know, I told you this before. You've changed too much, Trafalgar. Before, you couldn't even look people in the eyes... you were almost like Barth."

For a moment, silence stretched between them. Trafalgar's jaw tightened.

"I told you last time too. I can't stay the same if I want to live. Being a Morgain doesn't allow weakness."

'Sorry, Zafira,' he thought, lowering his gaze briefly. 'I can't act like the old Trafalgar anymore. They've already tried to kill me more than once... and I still have debts that need paying.'

Zafira searched his face, as if weighing the truth in his words. She didn't argue further. As a daughter of one of the Eight Great Families, she knew the cost of bearing such a name: expectation, power, danger, uncertainty. To survive, strength was the only shield.

Trafalgar slipped on a white shirt, leaving the collar open. Only his long, dark hair remained loose, cascading past his shoulders.

"Want me to tie it for you?" Zafira asked suddenly, her tone softer.

He blinked, then gave a small nod. "Sure."

She rose, stepping behind him, fingers deft as she gathered his hair into a neat ponytail. Her touch was careful, familiar—almost gentle.

"You should cut it," she murmured. "It's long now."

"No," Trafalgar replied firmly. "I like it this way."

'It's part of who I am. The old Trafalgar carried it long... and it suits me.'

The rest of the day passed without further interruption. By the time the academy's bells rang to mark the end of classes, Trafalgar had already made up his mind about the evening.

He returned briefly to his room, changing into something simple: a white shirt loosely tucked into dark black trousers, sleeves rolled to his forearms, and boots. His weapons remained stored safely in his inventory, invisible to the eye. At his waist, the only thing that stood out was a small leather pouch— heavy with gold coins meant for the errands ahead.

The halls of the academy were still lively with students streaming out of classrooms, but Trafalgar moved not stopping for idle chatter. His destination was clear: he had arranged to meet Garrika, the one who would accompany him on this short journey beyond the city.

Now, stepping off the train, Trafalgar found himself once again in the familiar alleys of the city. The air was thick with the scent of cut timber and fresh stone. His boots echoed against the cobblestones as he made his way deeper into the narrow streets.

And then he saw it.

His local.

The building stood taller than before, scaffolds pulled away to reveal fresh planks along its walls. New beams supported polished signs, and even the ground outside had been re-laid with orderly cobblestones. Workers bustled around, hammering and calling out instructions, finishing the last touches. The place looked nearly ready to open—its transformation in just three days was remarkable.

Trafalgar slowed his steps, studying the details with a faint nod. 'Almost complete. Good... this will be useful.'

Adjusting the pouch of coins at his waist, he spotted Garrika waiting near the entrance.