

Tyrant 132

Chapter 132: The Alchemist's Laboratory

The cooking class ended. Students gathered their things, drifting out through the tall doors as the smell of roasted herbs lingered in the air. Trafalgar remained behind, wiping his hands on a cloth before walking toward the front of the room.

Selara stood there, half-bent over a cluttered counter, scribbling notes while humming tunelessly to herself. Her platinum-blond hair was impossibly long and hopelessly tangled, as if she hadn't touched a comb in weeks. Emerald eyes, bright and sharp with a hint of madness, flicked over the page as her lips curled in faint amusement. Perched on her forehead were a pair of strange, oversized goggles, their lenses tinted unevenly.

Her robes were a patchwork of green and white, layered with so many pockets that she looked like she carried half a shop's worth of supplies on her person.

"Professor Selara," Trafalgar began, stopping a few steps away. "I've gathered the materials you asked for."

At once, her head snapped up, eyes gleaming with sudden focus. "Already? Excellent." She pushed her papers aside and strode closer, her messy hair swaying wildly with each step. "Bring them to my office. I'll give you the address."

She scribbled an untidy note on a scrap of parchment, handing it to him with fingers stained faintly by ink and alchemical residue.

Before he could turn, she smirked, emerald eyes glinting. "And Trafalgar... I expect you to keep attending my class, as agreed. Someone has to cook for me."

Trafalgar exhaled softly, caught off guard. "Of course. I'll keep coming."

Satisfied, Selara turned back to her counter, already lost in her world of notes and muttering formulas. Trafalgar pocketed the parchment and left. Time to fetch the heavy pack.

The walk back to the dormitories was quiet, the chatter of students fading behind Trafalgar as he crossed the academy grounds. He slipped his hands into his pockets, the slip of parchment Selara had given him crinkling faintly inside.

By the time he reached his room, the familiar stillness was almost comforting. He shut the door, dropped his keys onto the desk, and let his gaze drift toward the corner where a large, overstuffed backpack rested against the wall.

"Right," he muttered. 'Time to play delivery boy.'

He crouched, pulling the pack forward. The weight was noticeable immediately—metallic clinks and the faint slosh of sealed jars rattled from inside as he checked the straps.

'I hope this works,' he sighed, resealing the pack.

Hoisting it onto his shoulders proved more of a challenge than he expected. The straps creaked as the heavy load settled into place. Trafalgar staggered once before adjusting his balance. 'Time to go.'

With a last glance around his room, he stepped back into the corridor. Students passing by gave him curious looks as he trudged along with the oversized backpack.

His destination: Selara's office.

Following the scribbled directions, Trafalgar wound his way through a quieter part of the academy. The halls grew less polished, more practical—lined with storage doors, rune-marked walls, and the faint scent of herbs and smoke. Finally, he stopped before a plain wooden door with Selara's nameplate crookedly nailed to it.

He pushed it open.

The space beyond was anything but plain. Shelves towered to the ceiling, stacked with glowing vials, odd contraptions of brass and crystal humming with soft energy. Runes pulsed faintly along the floor tiles. In

the center, a massive workbench overflowed with tomes, ingredients, and alchemical glassware that bubbled with faint fumes.

Trafalgar paused at the threshold. 'Looks like I just stepped into some endgame crafting hub...'

Selara looked up from a bubbling cauldron, goggles perched on her forehead. Her emerald eyes gleamed with that familiar manic light as she spotted the heavy pack on his shoulders.

"You brought them."

"Yeah." Trafalgar set the backpack down with a thud, rubbing his sore shoulder. "Getting the mythril was a challenge. The mine I went into... let's just say it wasn't empty."

Selara smirked, brushing a strand of platinum hair from her face. "That's how it is. Mythril veins rarely sit unguarded. Monsters nest near them, drawn to the mana the ore gives off. And the respawn time for a single node can stretch endlessly. You were lucky to find it so fast."

"So that's why you said I was quick with the materials."

"Exactly." She leaned closer, rummaging eagerly through the pack, pulling out jars and herbs with manic excitement. "Most alchemists wait weeks or months for a mythril vein to refresh. You, however, stumbled into fortune."

Trafalgar folded his arms, watching her with faint amusement. "If you call nearly dying fortune."

Selara only grinned wider.

Selara wasted no time unpacking the backpack. She lined the ingredients neatly on the central table, her hands moving with manic precision. Vials clinked together, herbs rustled under her touch, and she muttered to herself as though narrating every step. Her long, messy platinum hair fell into her face, but she didn't bother fixing it; the gleam in her emerald eyes was too focused, too alive.

"Wonderful," she breathed, lifting the shard of mythrill toward the light. "Do you know how many would kill just for this piece? Alchemy, Trafalgar, isn't just about potions or tricks. It's the art of bending the world's essence into form. A craft of patience and madness!"

Trafalgar stood nearby, arms crossed, watching the storm of energy that was Selara in her element. 'She really doesn't hold back. Not even a hint of shame talking about this like it's her religion.'

She finally looked up, pushing her strange goggles higher on her forehead. "Tell me, boy. What was it you needed crafted again?"

Trafalgar hesitated, then answered steadily. "An item to find someone."

Selara snapped her fingers. "Yes, yes, that's right!" She placed the mythrill down with a careful clink, her grin widening. "It will only have one use, but once you activate it, it will mark the location of that person until you reach them. Simple, elegant, absolute."

Her eyes narrowed slightly with curiosity. "May I ask... who is it you're trying to find?"

Trafalgar's gaze dropped, shadows flickering in his thoughts. He answered quietly, almost to himself:

"I don't even know myself."

For a rare moment, the laboratory fell into silence—only the faint bubbling of alchemical glass filling the air.