

Tyrant 135

Chapter 135: Journey to Velkaris

The door opened with a soft creak, and Zafira stepped out. Trafalgar straightened unconsciously, adjusting the dark noble attire he always wore. His long hair was tied low in a neat ponytail, the strands catching the torchlight of the dormitory hall.

For a moment, his eyes simply took her in. Zafira's outfit was nothing overly extravagant, but it suited her perfectly—light fabric hugging her form, subtle patterns marking her Zar'khael lineage. The contrast of her light purple hair against her pale skin and curved black horns gave her the kind of presence that turned heads without trying.

And, despite himself, Trafalgar's gaze flickered for a second lower than it should have. Zafira's chest was... generous, more so than he remembered, and the cut of her outfit emphasized it. His eyes snapped back up immediately, his expression as flat as ever.

Zafira noticed. But instead of calling him out, her lips curved into a faint, satisfied smile. To her, the slip was its own compliment.

"So?" she asked, twirling a strand of her hair as if the answer didn't matter—though her gray eyes gleamed with expectation. "How do I look?"

Trafalgar met her gaze steadily. "Very good."

It was simple, blunt, but that was Trafalgar. Zafira laughed softly, the sound light and warm.

"Then let's go," she said.

Together they stepped into the corridor, their footsteps echoing against the polished stone as they made their way toward the academy station. For Zafira, every step carried the thrill of something more. For Trafalgar, it was simply the beginning of an errand.

Trafalgar walked with his hands in his pockets, his stride calm and unhurried. Zafira kept close beside him, her steps lighter, her head tilted just enough to watch his profile without being obvious.

Other students passed by, some slowing their pace to glance at them. It wasn't every day that two heirs of the Eight Great Families walked together, let alone one from Morgain and one from Zar'khael. Whispers stirred, but Trafalgar ignored them entirely.

Zafira, however, noticed. She straightened her back and lifted her chin, pride flickering in her gray eyes.

They crossed the courtyard, the evening breeze tugging at Zafira's hair, before reaching the stone steps that led to the station. The academy train stood waiting on shimmering tracks.

Trafalgar glanced once at the train, then at Zafira. "Come on," he said simply.

She nodded, her smile soft. Together they stepped aboard, the door closing behind. The inside of the carriage was spacious, lined with cushioned seats and faintly glowing lanterns that flickered to life as the train prepared to move.

Zafira sat across from him, folding her hands in her lap. Trafalgar leaned back against the seat, his gaze drifting briefly to the window as the world outside began to blur with motion.

The train glided smoothly along the tracks, the faint vibration of mana beneath their feet steady and constant. Outside the windows, fields and rolling hills blurred into streaks of green and gold. Inside, the quiet hum made the compartment feel almost private.

Zafira leaned slightly forward, resting her elbows on her knees. "So," she asked, her tone curious but casual, "what exactly are you planning to buy in Velkaris?"

Trafalgar tilted his head, his dark eyes fixed on the passing scenery. "Items," he answered after a moment. "Maybe a better sword."

Her brows lifted. "A better sword? I thought you already had one."

Trafalgar's thoughts stirred. 'Maledicta still has a long way to evolve before reaching its full potential. I can feel it, but right now it's not enough. Maybe another weapon in the meantime wouldn't be bad. There's nothing that says I can't use more than one. I still have the dagger too.'

"I do," he said finally, meeting her gaze again. "But there's no harm in preparing alternatives."

Zafira's lips curved into a knowing smile. "I see. In that case, I know a few good shops we can check. Trust me, I've been to Velkaris often enough to know where the quality weapons are hidden."

She paused, her tone softening as she leaned back against her seat. "Besides, don't forget you should buy something for your guests too. I've visited you twice already, and there was nothing in your room. No drinks, no food. It's shameful."

Trafalgar blinked once, then let out a low breath. "Right. I'll take care of that too."

Zafira chuckled quietly, pleased with herself. "Good. Then I'll make sure you don't forget."

The train slowed, guiding it into the grand station of Velkaris. The hum of mana faded into a soft hiss as the carriage came to a stop. Outside the wide windows, the capital stretched in towers of stone and steel, banners fluttering above the crowded streets, and the glow of enchanted lanterns lining every corner.

Trafalgar rose from his seat first, adjusting the strap of his dark coat before glancing at Zafira. She stood gracefully, her pendant catching the light as she brushed a strand of purple hair behind her horn. Together, they stepped out into the bustling station.

The sound hit them immediately—merchants shouting prices, trains whistling, the chatter of hundreds of people moving through the streets. Zafira walked close to his side, her expression calm, but her eyes alive with something softer whenever they turned to him.

As they descended the final steps onto the streets of the capital, Zafira broke the silence. She tilted her head slightly, her smile playful but her eyes searching.

"Do you remember the secret?"

Trafalgar slowed, caught off guard by the question. He looked at her, his brow furrowing faintly. "No. Honestly... nothing comes to mind."

Inside, his thoughts churned.

'That secret again. She's mentioned it before. Always with that same look in her eyes. I wonder if one day the memories will unlock... or if they'll stay lost forever.'

Zafira didn't push further. She simply smiled knowingly, as if holding a treasure he had forgotten.

The two of them stepped into the lively heart of Velkaris, the city spreading wide before them.