

Tyrant 194

Chapter 194: The Real Estate of Velkaris

The northern district of Velkaris was nothing like the bustling avenues they had crossed earlier. Here, the streets were broader, the noise subdued, and every building carried an air of polish. Tall windows gleamed under the sun, trimmed with gilded edges, and ornate balconies overlooked cobblestone walkways lined with trimmed hedges. It was wealth, plain and unashamed.

Mayla slowed her steps, her brown eyes widening. "These places... they all look so expensive."

Trafalgar's gaze swept the storefronts: jewelers with glass displays, tailors with mannequins dressed in silks, even cafés where patrons sipped wine in daylight. He felt no awe—only a mild sense of scale. "They are. But don't exaggerate. This doesn't compare to Morgain Castle, or even the estate that belonged to Mordrek... now mine."

His voice was calm, almost detached. For the Trafalgar who had first woken in this world, such luxuries would have been dazzling. Now, they were little more than a standard. A bare minimum for those who called themselves elite.

He refolded the sheet of paper in his hand. "The real estate office should be close. The street name matches this area."

Mayla's gaze flickered toward a passing merchant. She hesitated, then stepped forward and lifted her hand. "Excuse me, sir—could you help us for a moment?"

The man turned, short and broad, his beard woven into tight braids. His eyes crinkled kindly as he stopped. "Well, well. Such a charming young lady. Of course—what do you need?"

Before Mayla could answer, Trafalgar held out the folded paper. "We're looking for this address. I'm interested in purchasing property nearby."

The dwarf studied the note, then grinned. "Ah, so the two of you are new neighbors. Newlyweds, eh? Looking for your first home? You're in luck—it's close. Follow me."

The dwarf walked ahead with confident strides, his boots clacking against the stone pavement. Trafalgar and Mayla followed, weaving between the slower-moving nobles of the district.

Mayla's cheeks warmed as she thought over the dwarf's words. "Newlyweds"... could we really look like that? Two young people, side by side, searching for a home—it was an easy assumption. She risked a glance at Trafalgar, waiting for him to dismiss the mistake. But he said nothing. The silence made her heart skip in ways she didn't expect.

"Ah, forgive me," the dwarf said cheerfully, turning his head. "Name's Borin. Borin au Dvergar. The woman who runs the estate office is a friend of mine. I'll introduce you."

Trafalgar inclined his head politely. "Trafalgar du Morgain. This is my friend, Mayla. And we're not married."

Borin blinked, then chuckled into his beard. "My mistake. Still, you make quite the pair—charming, I'd say."

Mayla lowered her gaze, but she didn't seem displeased.

The dwarf's stride slowed suddenly as Trafalgar's surname registered. His eyes widened. "Morgain... wait. Morgain, as in the Eight Great Families?"

"Correct." Trafalgar's tone was even, neither proud nor defensive.

Borin swore under his breath. "By the stone, I had no idea. My apologies, young lord—I should've addressed you properly."

"There's no need," Trafalgar replied flatly. "I don't look like my father, so it's natural not to notice."

Borin scratched his head, still astonished. "To think a Morgain would be buying property here... Unexpected. Though I suppose it shouldn't surprise me. Others from the Great Families keep homes in

this district too." He tapped his chest with a rough hand. "And yes, I'm Dvergar. Another branch of the Eight. What are the odds, eh?"

Trafalgar gave the faintest smirk. "Small, but not impossible. Do our houses get along?"

Borin shrugged. "Couldn't say. Does it matter? No one will know we met."

"Perhaps not," Trafalgar agreed.

They reached the end of the avenue, where the cobblestones gave way to a polished stretch of marble steps. A tall building stood there, its façade of pale stone inlaid with dark wood beams and golden trim. Wide glass windows displayed maps of districts and sketches of estates pinned elegantly against velvet boards. Even in a street full of wealth, this shop stood out—refined, dignified, unmistakably expensive.

Borin stopped at the base of the stairs, turning back to them. "Well, here we are. The office you're looking for. Tell the lady inside that Borin sent you—she'll know. And do give her my regards."

Mayla bowed her head lightly. "Thank you for guiding us here. We appreciate it."

The dwarf grinned, tugging at his braided beard. "Think nothing of it. A pleasure meeting you, Trafalgar... Mayla. Strange as it sounds, I'll remember this chance encounter."

Trafalgar gave a brief nod. "So will I."

With that, Borin raised a hand in farewell and turned down the street, his short figure quickly swallowed by the crowd.

Trafalgar watched him go for a moment before muttering, "What are the odds? Running into another of the Eight Families here..."

Mayla tilted her head, thoughtful. "Small, I'd think. But in a place where wealth gathers, the probability rises. Maybe it isn't so strange."

"Perhaps," Trafalgar agreed, though his tone suggested mild indifference. His attention had already shifted to the building before them.

He ascended the steps and grasped the polished brass handle. With a faint smirk tugging at his lips, he pulled the door open and stepped aside. "After you."

Mayla blinked, startled by the gesture. Her cheeks flushed slightly, but she inclined her head. "Thank you." She slipped inside first, the scent of polished wood and aged parchment drifting out to meet them.

The air inside was cooler, touched with the faint fragrance of lavender oil. Soft carpets muffled their steps, and polished mahogany shelves displayed neatly bound ledgers. Behind a counter of black stone stood a tall woman with pale skin, her crimson eyes catching the light like jewels. Her hair, a cascade of white silk, framed features both elegant and severe.

She looked up as they entered, her lips curving into a professional smile that showed just the hint of sharp fangs. "Welcome," she said smoothly. "How may I assist the couple today?"

Mayla's cheeks flushed instantly. Trafalgar's brow twitched, but he didn't correct her right away. Instead, he crossed the floor and produced the folded sheet of paper. "I'm here to purchase property. Arden and Marella sent me."

At the mention of those names, the vampire's composure shifted. Her smile warmed, and a glimmer of genuine recognition shone in her eyes. "Ah, the old pair. They were the first to give me business when I started. I owe them much."

"They told me you do," Trafalgar replied evenly. "Which is why I thought you might honor that debt now." He slid the paper across the counter with steady fingers. "A discount would not be unappreciated."

The vampire let out a light, melodic laugh. "Direct and unapologetic. You must truly be one of the Morgains." She studied him for a moment, then inclined her head gracefully. "Very well. If Arden and Marella vouch for you, I will honor their favor."

She gestured toward a set of cushioned chairs arranged beside a low table. "Please, sit. I'll bring the listings. We'll find you a place that fits your needs."