

Tyrant 214

Chapter 214: Catching up

The circular mana platform hummed softly beneath their feet, descending from the heirs' dormitory level in a slow, steady rhythm.

Trafalgar adjusted the black jacket Zafira had finally returned to him. It felt right again on his shoulders, like a piece of himself had snapped back into place. "So," he said, breaking the comfortable silence, "how's everyone been while I was gone?"

Zafira rested a gloved hand on the railing, her gaze calm as the scenery slid by. "Hm. Cynthia's fine, though she's still a bit resentful toward you. She hides it poorly. Bartholomew's the same as ever—timid, but trying. He's been working hard in the practical classes, even learning attack-type skills on his own. Says he wants to broaden his combat record." A faint smirk touched her lips. "He's still terrible at it, though."

Trafalgar chuckled under his breath. "That sounds like him."

"And Xavier," she continued, "is training like a madman. He's the one who told me something important will happen today. Seems you came back just in time."

Trafalgar tilted his head. "Any idea what it might be?"

"None," she said simply, crossing her arms. "But if Professor Rhaldrin is involved, it'll probably be something strange."

He smiled faintly. "History, then."

The mana platform slowed, the glow dimming as they neared the main floor. Beyond the opening gate, the academy stretched wide and bright beneath the morning light. Zafira glanced at him sideways. "Ready to see what you've missed?"

Trafalgar exhaled through a small grin. "Yeah. Let's find out."

The morning air outside was crisp and alive. As Trafalgar and Zafira stepped off the platform, the courtyard of the Academy stretched before them in full splendor—arches of pale marble, hovering mana lamps, and thousands of students flooding the paths between the buildings.

The Velkaris Academy wasn't just a school. It was the school—the most prestigious institution in the world, where nobles, prodigies, and chosen heirs from every race converged to study. Humans, elves, dwarves, and even scaled beastkin moved together across the courtyard,

Zafira walked beside Trafalgar with effortless grace, her violet hair catching light from the floating lamps. A few younger students glanced their way and whispered in awe—two heirs of the Eight Great Families walking side by side wasn't something you saw every day.

Trafalgar ignored the stares, his hands tucked casually into his pockets. "It hasn't changed much," he said quietly.

"It never does," Zafira replied.

They passed under a wide archway. Inside, the halls were buzzing with activity. Posters floated magically near the walls, listing courses, tournaments, and upcoming lectures. The faint chime of mana bells marked the hour.

After a short walk, they reached the grand double doors of the History Department. Trafalgar pushed one open. Inside, rows of desks curved around a tall podium covered in glowing runes. Only a handful of students were present this early—but among them, two familiar figures caught Trafalgar's eye immediately.

Bartholomew and Cynthia.

Bartholomew sat near the front, his pale hair catching the light from the upper windows. As usual, he was scribbling notes furiously, even though class hadn't begun. Beside him, Cynthia sat upright, arms crossed, her long white hair perfectly combed. The contrast between them was almost comical—Bartholomew's quiet energy beside his sister's iron composure.

Trafalgar and Zafira entered silently, taking the empty seats just behind them. Zafira leaned forward first. "Good morning, you two," she said smoothly.

Cynthia turned at once, her expression softening when she saw Zafira. "Good morning, Zafira."

Bartholomew looked over too, his eyes widening as soon as he noticed who was beside her. "Tra—Trafalgar! You're back! How have you been?"

Trafalgar smiled faintly. "Relax, Barth. I'm fine—and still your friend, no need to panic."

Cynthia, however, hadn't said a word. Trafalgar waited a moment, then raised an eyebrow. "I thought we made peace last time. Are you going to ignore me forever?"

She sighed quietly, brushing a strand of hair behind her ear. "Hm. No. I'm sorry. Good morning, Trafalgar."

"That's better," he replied with a grin. "Good morning, Cynthia. How have you been? And the orphanage—still standing?"

Her expression softened. "Yes. We can visit after class if you have time. It's outside Velkaris, but the train will get us most of the way."

"I've got nothing planned," Trafalgar said. "Let's go. You coming, Barth?"

Bartholomew nodded eagerly. "O—of course!"

"And maybe," Trafalgar added, smirking, "you can help me catch up on all the history I missed."

Bartholomew's stutter vanished in excitement. "Absolutely! I'll explain everything Professor Rhaldrin covered—you won't miss a detail!"

Trafalgar chuckled to himself. 'He really loves history... almost the same way I used to talk about games back on Earth. Especially that old version, now I reincarnated into the new one... I couldn't live without it back then.'

His eyes lowered slightly. 'Funny how things change. And that word—destiny... I've come to hate it since arriving in this world.'

Zafira noticed his distant gaze. "You okay, Trafalgar?"

He blinked, exhaling. "Yeah, just thinking."

Bartholomew frowned slightly. "About your family? I'm sorry for your loss."

Trafalgar shook his head gently. "Don't worry about it, Barth. But thanks."

The door to the classroom opened with a soft creak, and a tall, slim figure stepped inside. His black clothes contrasted sharply against his pale skin, a crimson scarf wrapped around his neck like a signature mark. His hair was a deep blood-red, one eye amber gold and the other bright scarlet.

"Xavier," Trafalgar said with a faint smile.

The boy grinned the moment he saw him. "Trafalgar! It's been some time." He crossed the room quickly, his usual energy brightening the quiet atmosphere. "You look better—stronger, even. Guess the rumors about you being half-dead were wrong after all."

Trafalgar laughed under his breath. "You always notice first."

Xavier pointed to his golden eye. "Good eye for people, remember?"

"That's one way to call it," Trafalgar said, smirking.

Zafira looked up from her notebook. "He told me something important was going to happen today. Some kind of big announcement."

Cynthia turned her head toward him, mildly annoyed. "And you didn't tell us?"

Xavier held up his hands innocently. "Hey, it was supposed to be a surprise. You'll find out in a moment anyway."

Before anyone could reply, the sound of small footsteps echoed from the hall. The chatter faded instantly as the door swung open again.

A small, humanoid rat stepped through—no taller than a child, but dressed in immaculate scholar's robes that shimmered faintly with mana threads. His grey fur bristled slightly as he adjusted his glasses, sharp crimson eyes scanning the room.

Professor Rhaldrin.

The room fell silent. Even the mana lamps dimmed, as if acknowledging his presence.

He set a heavy book on the podium and cleared his throat. "Good morning, class."