

Tyrant 30

Chapter 30: The Demon's Castle

The sky outside Trafalgar's cabin had changed.

The snowy peaks were long gone, replaced by misty hills and distant black stone. The ship sailed smoothly above a sea of drifting clouds, its wings slicing through the air without effort. Inside, Trafalgar sat in a chair he'd dragged next to the window, feet propped up on the polished table, arms crossed behind his head.

He wasn't reading, meditating, or training.

He was just thinking.

'Still can't figure out what that pill was. I mean... I jumped from Origin to Spark instantly. And I was still thirty, maybe forty percent away from filling the core. That shouldn't be possible.'

His eyes narrowed slightly as he watched a distant flock of birds dive through the clouds.

'It must've been loaded with mana. Enough to overload my body and knock me out... which means it's probably still in me, circulating or dissolving slowly. Shit... it's like those Murim novels. Some freaky internal cleansing elixir that pushes your core forward.'

He leaned forward, resting his elbow on the window frame.

'But why me? Why Trafalgar? She didn't say a word. She just... forced it down. No warning or motive.'

The clouds broke.

And there it was.

The castle.

'Wait—what?'

It rose from the valley like a mirage, sunlight bouncing off its immaculate white spires. Massive gardens stretched around it, bursting with vibrant flowers and perfectly trimmed hedges. Fountains danced across marble courtyards, and birds circled lazy patterns overhead.

'Okay... this is not what I was expecting.'

He stared at the elegant gothic arches, the pristine black-and-gold rooftops, the magical lampposts lining emerald paths.

'Mood killer. I was expecting cursed gargoyles and bleeding statues, not a demon-themed luxury resort.'

A static hum came from the wall, followed by the scratchy voice of Alfred.

"We'll be landing shortly. Prepare for some turbulence."

Trafalgar barely reacted.

'Turbulence, huh? Whatever. Nothing happened during the sparring match—'

The ship dropped.

Not tilted. Not shook.

Dropped.

Straight down like a rock from the sky.

Trafalgar lurched forward, arms flailing as he grabbed the back of the chair for dear life.

'What the actual fuck is this?!'

And yet—none of the furniture moved. Not a vase, not the bed, not even the table he'd kicked out of place earlier.

Only he was flung around like a ragdoll.

The descent smoothed out just before impact. The ship thudded gently against the ground like it had never been falling at all.

Trafalgar was the first one out.

The moment the doors opened, he stepped onto solid ground with a grim expression, dragging his feet a little like he'd just survived a near-death experience.

'I am never flying with that old man again.'

As Trafalgar stepped off the ship and onto the stone platform, he looked up—and froze.

Two figures stood waiting for them at the base of the landing zone.

One he recognized immediately.

Her skin was porcelain pale, with two black horns curving elegantly from her forehead. Long purple hair cascaded down her back like silk, and her greyish eyes sparkled with something between amusement and quiet power.

Zafira du Zar'khael.

The other... he didn't recognize. But his presence was suffocating.

A tall man stood beside her, dressed in dark crimson robes embroidered with silver thorns. His horns were longer and sharper, and his eyes glowed a deep red. Every movement of his fingers left faint trails of mana in the air, like smoke from a fire that refused to die.

Trafalgar straightened up quickly and brushed the dust off his coat.

Zafira chuckled softly at the sight.

He stepped forward, extended his hand with practiced formality.

"My apologies for the entrance. I come by order of Lord Valttair du Morgain. I am Trafalgar du Morgain, and the one descending the ramp is my elder sister—Lysandra du Morgain."

The man beside Zafira didn't move at first. His expression twisted slightly with disdain.

"So Valttair sends the bastard. Is this his way of mocking our agreement?"

Zafira's voice cut in like a dagger—sharp, firm, and unforgiving.

"Father, behave. Trafalgar is my friend."

The man let out a low tch, then turned as Lysandra arrived at the bottom of the ramp. His demeanor shifted instantly. He extended his hand toward her with forced politeness.

"Lysandra. Welcome."

She took it calmly.

"Malakar."

He nodded once. "Let's go inside. We have a deal to finalize."

With a clap of his hands, a group of demon attendants appeared from the sides, ready to carry bags, and anything else needed.

Alfred's voice echoed from behind them as the ship's engines powered down.

"See you when you're done, kids! I'll stay here and recharge this beauty."

Trafalgar followed Zafira and Malakar alongside Lysandra, the demon servants falling in line behind them.

They moved through the outer courtyard in silence—groomed hedges, crystalline fountains, and marble walkways leading toward the castle's interior. The architecture remained flawless, elegant, and far too pristine for what Trafalgar expected from a demon stronghold.

Lysandra walked beside Malakar, speaking with calm authority about the logistics of the mine inspection. Trafalgar couldn't hear the details; he had fallen a few steps behind.

Zafira matched his pace, hands clasped behind her back.

"I didn't expect you to come," she said softly.

"Neither did I," Trafalgar muttered. "My father sent me here as a 'punishment'... though I'm still waiting to figure out which part is supposed to be painful."

She smiled. "Give it time. Not everything that hurts starts as pain."

He gave her a sidelong glance. "So... no clues about what happened when we were kids?"

Zafira's expression didn't change.

"Nope. I told you—if you want to know, you'll have to remember it yourself."

"...Alright," he sighed.

She looked forward again, silent, the smile lingering.

They reached a grand hall with three ornate chairs placed at the far end. One for Malakar, one for Zafira, and a third—empty.

Malakar gestured.

"Take your seats."

Lysandra sat without hesitation.

Trafalgar remained standing.

Malakar leaned back in his chair.

"The agreement was simple: your father offered full mining rights to us... in exchange for ten legendary-grade items."

Trafalgar blinked.

'Ten legendary items?! How powerful could you get with that kind of loot...?'

Malakar continued, voice like a slow-moving blade.

"Here are the contracts—two copies. Both require signatures. I was told you've already visited the mine once before. I want you to guide us through it after this is done."

Lysandra gave a light nod. "Fine. As for the items, I expect full payment on signature."

"Naturally," Malakar replied. "Once it's signed, I'll summon them and hand them over."

He picked up a quill and signed with a flick of his wrist. The parchment absorbed a thin line of red mana as he sealed the contract.

Lysandra followed, her signature neat.

They shook hands.

Then, without a word, Malakar placed his hand on the table.

A glow pulsed from his palm, and three seconds later, ten items materialized one by one. The delay was subtle but noticeable—no ordinary magic.

Swords. Rings. A gleaming spear. A polished bottle of unknown liquid. A pauldron. Two rare-looking artifacts Trafalgar couldn't name.

'These aren't just flashy... they're diverse. Gear, support tools, even weird stuff. His inventory must be absurd.'

Lysandra placed her hand over each item, and with a faint shimmer, they vanished into her inventory system.

"Very well," she said, standing up. "We can head to the mine whenever you're ready."

Malakar rose slowly, his crimson eyes scanning the room one last time.

"Very well. A carriage is already prepared."

The group exited the hall, stepping back out into the open courtyard. The gardens were just as immaculate as before, though now the lighting was softer, shadows growing longer across the stone paths.

Waiting for them at the gates was a black carriage—sleek, sturdy, with silver-accented trim and thick wheels that hovered slightly above the ground thanks to embedded mana runes. Two obsidian-colored horses stood perfectly still, armored and silent. The coachman was a demon with pale skin and two sharp horns rising straight from his forehead.

As they approached, the butler stepped down and bowed deeply.

"Good afternoon, my lord. My lady," he said, voice low and composed.

He opened the door without another word.

Lysandra stepped in first and took her seat beside Malakar.

Zafira turned toward Trafalgar and tilted her head slightly. "You're not going to faint on the way down, are you?"

"That was one time," he muttered as he followed her in.

She smirked as she took her place beside him.

The carriage door shut behind them with a soft click. A moment later, the vehicle began to move—smooth, quiet, and heading toward the mine that waited below.