

## **S.P.E.C.T.O.R 505**

### Chapter 505: Eri's identity

"So what's up?" Adam asked after all the girls except Maya had left the room, who settled down in the space Tephe had just vacated and pretended to be asleep while actually paying attention to Adam with interest.

Eri shuffled her feet nervously and opened her mouth several times as if to say something, only to close it again as if trying to find the right words.

"Something wrong?" Adam asked curiously as he saw her struggling to speak up.

"It's complicated and I'm not sure how to raise the topic," Eri admitted with a sigh.

"Why not just tell it to me straight?" Adam asked.

Eri sighed and rubbed the back of her head before saying, "Because you're likely to start distrusting me if I do."

"Hooo, but aren't I now going to start being suspicious of you? Since you just said that."

"Fair point," Eri conceded before saying, "Okay, let me ask you this. How much do you know about the Noir Family?"

"The Noir Family?" Adam replied as his eyebrow rose in surprise before saying, "I know a little. I know they are a criminal family that takes jobs to steal objects. I know the leader is called Umeko and she resides within the ancestral family home on Felinia Six and I know I have given Umeko a warning after they tried to steal my ship twice."

"I saw."

"So why do you ask?"

Eri sighed again before scratching the back of her head and admitting, "Because I'm a member of the Noir Family."

"A member of the Noir Family?" Adam asked in surprise before narrowing his eyes and asking, "And are you also trying to steal my ship?"

"That was my original plan, yes. However, not for the same reason as the family and I have also decided that it's not worth the risk since I watched your stream."

"Is that why you got close to Lorelie?" Adam asked in a cold tone that sent chills down Eri's back and caused Maya to open one eye with interest.

"Her inviting me to be her chaperone was pure coincidence, and I truly am her fan and am incredibly grateful to her for helping me launch my social media career."

"But not grateful enough to stop you from stealing her boyfriend's ship?"

"I will do anything to cut ties with that family, even going so far as to hurt and disappoint my idol."

"Cut ties with that family?" Adam asked in surprise.

"I never asked to be a part of that family; I was just unlucky enough to be born into it. Similar to how the Nosferatu family treated Stacey as a child for being only part-brood, the Noir family treated me for being part Panthera, even though my mother is the family head."

"Your mother is Umeko?" Adam asked as his surprise increased.

"Biologically at least," Eri remarked with disgust.

"What do you mean?"

“My mother only breeds with one type of person: the strongest. It doesn’t matter what race they are, as long as they are the strongest in an aspect that is useful to a thief, then she will breed with them. It’s one of the few things I respect my mother for, since many in the family still believe that the family should stay Panthera pure.

Unfortunately for them, the family head is always the strongest and greatest thief of their generation, and as there are only two ways for a family member to become the new family head, they don’t have much choice but to let her do as she wishes.”

“It seems the two of you don’t have a good relationship,” Adam remarked as he heard the cold tone Eri used when speaking of her mother.

“You could say that,” Eri scoffed said before continuing to explain. “The reason mother only breeds with the strongest is that she believes that only someone with her blood is worthy to replace her and become the next family head, and she has apparently taken measures to ensure this happens.

Unfortunately for her, while I apparently showed talent and promise, I lacked enthusiasm since I have no interest in being a thief or assisting the family that was so rotten to me.

Because of this, my mother lost interest in me and I haven’t spoken to her in years, though she did try to call me the other day after you warned her off.”

“Why did she try to contact you?”

“A man named Ichiro is in charge of the job application department, and after the first team sent to steal your ship failed, he contacted me and offered me the job. I wasn’t interested until he mentioned that your ship has cloaking tech.

My guess is that Ichiro informed mother about this and she wanted to stop me from stealing your ship, as she fears you will carry out your threat.

Oh, also, you might be interested to learn that one of my siblings was part of that team.”

“She’s wise to back down, and you don’t sound too bothered about your siblings being dead,” Adam remarked with a cold smile.

“He was one of the ones that bullied me when I was little, so no, I don’t care, though I admit I was kind of tempted to try to steal it just so you go take revenge and destroy the ancestral home, honestly, but then I concluded that it wasn’t worth risking my life over,” Eri responded nonchalantly.

“So your real goal was the cloaking tech on my ship?” Adam asked.

“Correct. I need it in order to complete the black job and be able to cut ties with the family for good.”

“Black job?”

“It’s the title given to the hardest job the family has at any time, though it does have to reach a certain level of difficulty in order to match the reward that the family offers for completing it. It’s also an open job, meaning that anyone can attempt it, as long as they don’t mind putting their life on the line.”

“What is the current black job?” Adam asked curiously.

Eri shifted uncomfortably before saying, “I can’t reveal that until you agree to my request. I can’t risk the job being revealed and becoming something I can’t complete.”

“Are you not already incapable of completing it without cloaking tech?” Adam asked with a smirk.

“True, which is why I wanted to borrow your ship, or at least its cloaking tech,” Eri stated hopefully.

[[Denied.]] Spector suddenly stated that only Adam could hear.

“I’m not lending you either,” Adam replied simply.

“Oh,” Eri said in a downcast voice as she looked down at her feet in disappointment.

“However, I may be open to working with you,” Adam suddenly added, making Eri look up with hopeful eyes before asking.

“Really?”

“Yes, as long as you answer a few questions and agree to my terms,” Adam replied.

“Let’s hear them, though I’m still not willing to tell you what the black job is until you agree,” Eri replied as her face turned serious.

“Fair enough,” Adam replied, as he could tell she was serious about that point, so instead asked, “You said that completing this black job will help you leave the family, how exactly?”

“Completing the black job is one of the two ways to become the new family head; the other is by achieving a family score that is greater than the current family head. Remember, only the strongest and greatest thief in the family is allowed to lead them.”

“I thought you said you don’t want to become the new family head? And what is this family score?”

“The family score is the total accumulated points a person has received for completing jobs on behalf of the family. The harder the job, the greater the score; however, should someone fail a job, then they lose points.

Also, becoming the family head for completing the black job is optional, and you don’t have to accept it. Instead, you can make a request of the family, which they have to fulfil, as long as it is within their power.”

“So you plan to request the right to leave the family?” Adam asked in understanding.

“That’s correct,” Eri nodded.

"I bet your mum would love that. She has finally found a worthy successor in one of her children, only for that child to leave the family instead," Adam remarked with amusement.

"I know, it's great, isn't it?" Eri replied with a devious smile on her face.

"So I hear that you were not with the others initially during the UMB Cup opening ceremony, am I right in thinking you went to try to steal my ship?"

"That's correct. Though fortunately, another group beat me to it and so I managed to witness what happened to them along with everyone else, as well as the warning you gave my mother."

"You're very honest for a thief," Adam remarked.

"Not really, I just don't think that lying to you will help my case here," Eri replied with a shrug.

"So is Eri your real name?"

"No, my real name is Sakura," Eri replied.

"Should I call you Eri or Sakura then?"

"Eri, it's the name I chose for myself and my cover identity. Sakura is the name my mother gave me and I want to leave it behind, as well as the family, if possible."

"What do you plan to do if you do manage to leave the Noir Family?" Adam asked.