

VILLAIN 101

Chapter 101 Winter's Embrace (1)

"Who~"

Danzo exhaled a warm breath, watching it disperse into the icy air as the cold bit into his hardened skin.

"It's getting colder than I expected..."

Just moments ago, they had been traveling through a freezing land where snow fell endlessly. But now, the cold had escalated to an entirely different level.

Without hesitation, everyone donned warmer clothing.

"They say if you don't keep moving, your balls might freeze solid here."

Selena's voice carried a clear note of amusement as she glanced at Danzo. Though he had the most resilient body among them, she was handling the cold better than anyone else.

Danzo smirked. "Movement, huh? I know another way to warm up—if you're interested."

Selena's expression twisted in disgust.

"You're shameless."

As if waiting for that reaction, Danzo clapped his hands together with a grin.

"I was talking about fighting, of course. Nothing warms you up like throwing punches and feeling the fire of battle."

The brief flicker of embarrassment on Selena's face told Danzo he had struck a nerve.

"What's with that look? Were you thinking of something else? Tsk, tsk... how improper."

"Shut up."

Selena resisted the urge to punch him. She had to be patient—they were on a wyvern, after all.

Meanwhile, Ghost silently observed their exchange, his lifeless eyes recording every detail.

He had little interest in their antics, his attention focused elsewhere—on Frey Starlight.

For some time now, Frey had sat in brooding silence, his expression dark as if a storm raged within his mind.

Ghost's sharp eyes caught how Frey dug his nails into his palms so deeply that his fingers bled.

As an assassin, Ghost was adept at reading atmospheres. He had a sense of what Frey was going through.

But in the end, it didn't matter to him.

What mattered was testing his judgment—confirming whether choosing Frey over Snow had been the right decision.

And in just one month, he would have his answer.

With the Starlight Family's internal matters settled, there was no need to keep everyone apart.

Their journey was reaching its final stretch—they had already crossed into Winterfell's domain.

The Starlight Family's massive wyvern flew at the rear of the formation, trailing close behind the Moonlight Clan's fleet.

Watching this, Selena found herself contemplating something.

"Hm... I know it's a bit late to ask, but isn't flying at this altitude dangerous? The skies are a nightmare in their own right."

She had a point. The creatures that ruled these skies were not to be trifled with.

The one who answered her wasn't Frey or Danzo—but Carmen, who stood nonchalantly atop the wyvern's head, completely unfazed by the freezing winds.

"You're right, girl. Normally, this would be suicidal."

Carmen gestured toward the Moonlight Family's fleet.

"But there are always exceptions."

Her meaning was clear.

"Flying at this height is usually a death sentence. But with a force like ours? No creature would dare challenge us."

A simple explanation—but a logical one.

Monsters acted on instinct, and their strongest instinct was survival. No beast would foolishly provoke a force of this magnitude.

Everyone absorbed Carmen's words—everyone except Frey. He had no need for such explanations.

As an author, knowledge of this world's workings came to him naturally.

Yet, the further they traveled, the darker his expression grew—a change that Ada took particular notice of.

And then, moments later, the awaited words arrived.

"We've arrived."

Everyone leaned over the wyvern's side, their eyes widening at the breathtaking sight below.

"Magnificent..."

Before them lay the Jewel of the West—Winterfell.

A vast sea of white stretched beneath them, where snow blanketed the land and scattered trees stood like frozen sentinels. Towering black walls rose high, defying the winter landscape.

Inside those walls, the city spread endlessly, its rooftops buried under thick layers of frost. Countless lights flickered in the dim twilight, painting the town in a warm, ethereal glow.

But the most breathtaking sight of all was the colossal azure palace nestled at the city's heart.

A palace of ice.

Vast beyond imagination, it pierced the clouds, a monument of unparalleled majesty.

"The pride of the Moonlight Family—Paradiso."

Vulcan's voice carried a rare sense of awe as he spoke.

"They say the Moonlight Family's founder, Semiramis Moonlight, sculpted it entirely with her own ice. It has stood unyielding ever since."

Hearing that, everyone fell into quiet contemplation.

For over three centuries, this palace had endured.

Just how powerful had Semiramis' ice been?

After taking in one of the world's greatest wonders, the wyverns began their descent—one by one, landing in the vast courtyard before the Palace of Ice.

Naturally, they were granted unrestricted entry for two reasons.

The first—Frost Moonlight, the Lord's own son, was among them.

And the second—Ada of the Starlight Family, a guest of considerable importance.

Yet, Frey remained silent.

-Frey Starlight's Pov-

We've arrived...

A deeper chill settled in my heart.

If this feeling meant anything...

It meant I was drawing closer to the one who cursed me.

Someone among the Moonlight Family was responsible.

The question was—who?

That question alone would haunt me for nights to come.

And now...

The moment my boots touched the snow-covered ground, I found myself surrounded by dozens of unfamiliar faces.

The Moonlight Family had gathered—their main and branch families alike assembled for what seemed to be a grand welcome.

Their sky-blue hair and sapphire eyes made them unmistakable.

For a moment, they simply observed us, their gazes filled with curiosity.

Then—

"Sister!"

"Welcome back!"

"Sister! I missed you!"

A wave of young girls suddenly rushed toward Seris Moonlight.

They were all around our age—some even older.

Some had even traveled with us from the temple.

To an outsider, the sight might have seemed heartwarming.

To me?

It was mournful.

"...What's with all these girls? 'Sister, sister, sister'—is she running an orphanage?"

Danzo looked genuinely baffled.

After all, nearly a hundred girls had just called Seris their sister.

He assumed it was just a show of affection.

But I shook my head.

"No... they are her sisters."

Danzo's eye twitched.

"...What?"

"They share the same blood. They're all daughters of the Moonlight Family."

A heavy silence followed as everyone turned to me in disbelief.

"Hold on... there's at least a hundred of them..."

"I suppose someone was very active."

Sometimes, even in a world like this, things defied reason.

As an author, I had only myself to blame.

They weren't all from the same mother, but they shared one father.

A father who no longer existed.

And then—

"Lord Starlight, welcome back."

The lively chatter halted.

The crowd parted in two, making way for a commanding figure.

"Lord Baylor..."

Ada stepped forward with a smile, greeting the man who radiated an undeniable presence.

His pale complexion, sky-blue hair, and piercing azure eyes made him impossible to ignore.