

## **VILLAIN 185**

Chapter 185 Twists of Fate

–Frey Starlight's POV–

I never imagined I'd end up like this...

Sitting between two girls, hiding beneath the princess's cloak.

Sansa had done exactly what I expected from the start.

I was sure she had her own loyal students, just like Aegon.

That made dealing with the third-years a much more manageable task.

But until all the second-years were gathered,

I had to stay here.

With her.

Sitting beside the princess, I felt... strange.

After days of fighting and running nonstop since the trial began, this sudden stillness was unfamiliar.

Adriana remained completely isolated.

She hadn't said a word since Jessica left.

Everyone was quiet.

Only the sound of rainfall filled the space.

"Is it always like this between you two, or am I the reason?"

The silence was starting to gnaw at me,

so I broke it with a question.

But Sansa simply shook her head.

"No... we've been like this even before you arrived."

Before I arrived, huh.

Does it have to do with the dead monsters outside?

The way those creatures had been slaughtered so violently—

The injuries made it obvious that whoever killed them was far stronger.

And that person was sitting right next to me.

That power Sansa had unleashed...

It resembled shadow manipulation,

but something about it felt different—its essence was off.

"Sansa... that power of yours..."

"Don't talk about it."

She cut me off sharply.

"Please."

So it was a sensitive subject.

"Got it."

I didn't pry.

I wouldn't ask why she was using something that looked like a demon ability.

I just... wouldn't.

She shifted the topic almost immediately.

"But you... of all people... going against Aegon?"

Did you finally decide to join the race for the throne?"

Given my influence within the Starlight family,

it was a fair question.

"I have no interest in interfering.

I'll leave the choice to my sister."

Backing one heir meant making an enemy of the other.

A 50-50 gamble.

And Aegon had the upper hand,

thanks to his achievements—

and the fall of the Moonlight family, who had once supported Sansa.

She, on the other hand, had a powerful story of her own—

The princess who returned from hell.

It earned her a lot of support,

especially from those who believed in fate.

Surviving something no one else had...

To them, it was a miracle.

After all, everyone who had been with her... had died.

"So... you're staying neutral."

Sansa's expression remained unreadable.

"Did I disappoint you?"

Maybe she expected me to support her—

Especially considering our quiet, unspoken friendship.

But she was surprisingly understanding.

"No...

That's just the kind of person you are, Frey.

You don't get involved in things that don't concern you."

"That's true."

Talking with Sansa was going... oddly well.

Much smoother than with most people.

Maybe it was because I didn't write much about her in the original story.

I knew very little about her personality.

In a way... she felt like me.

An outsider in this world.

I was someone who wasn't supposed to be here in the first place.

And she was someone who should've died long ago.

There was something refreshing about talking to someone whose mind I couldn't predict.

Even though...

She seemed to read mine most of the time.

Thinking about Aegon and Sansa,

there was something that had been bugging me for a while.

"What happens to the loser?"

"What do you mean?"

She asked, locking eyes with me.

"The loser of the throne race.

What happens to them?"

Would they be exiled?

Stripped of their title?

Sansa's answer was... something else entirely.

She smiled.

And I realized just how naive I'd been.

"Naturally...

The loser dies."

Dies?

"Seriously?

Isn't that... a little much?"

I mean—

They're siblings from the same family.

Sansa shook her head and began to explain...

"The winner can't allow the other to live...

It's an unspoken law when it comes to this kind of battle.

That's why Father forbade us from killing each other as long as we're inside the Temple."

"That's... too much."

Would they really go that far?

To kill your own family over a title... even if it's for the Emperor's seat?

It seemed like Sansa was reading my thoughts, because she continued:

"Even if we don't want to kill each other...

Our allies will push for it.

They can't risk letting a wildcard survive and undo everything they've built.

That's what it means to be children of the royal family.

We can blame fate for making us this way...

Or we can blame our father, for deciding to have us both at the same time."

She hugged her knees and stared quietly into the distance.

"Whether it's me or Aegon...

At best, one of us will die after our time in the Temple ends.

That's our fate."

And what a fate it was...

"That doesn't suit you, Sansa."

"What do you mean?"

I looked at the girl sitting next to me.

I didn't know much about her—only what I'd seen and heard so far.

"You just don't seem made for all that.

If you ask me, you look more like an ordinary girl...

Not some tyrant empress ruling from a throne."

That kind of life suited her more—far more, honestly.

Sansa chuckled quietly at my last comment.

She could've taken offense... but she didn't.

"I agree with you, Frey.

I think I'd much rather spend my days lounging around the Temple gardens, playing with flowers... than any of this."

She toyed with her fingers as if imagining that kind of life.

"But Frey...

Things don't always go the way we want.

Sometimes, we just have to accept reality."

She was right.

I knew that.

But I couldn't accept it.

Because if I did, then everything I'd done until now would be a contradiction.

If I accepted reality and sat still,

That would mean I'd resign myself to being Frey Starlight forever.

But I was working to shatter that reality—by force.

That was my path.

As for Sansa?

I wasn't in any position to tell her what to do.

Maybe a real friend would have.

"Sorry...

I made you talk about a lot of unpleasant things."

I apologized, trying to shift the conversation away.

But Sansa didn't seem bothered at all.

"It's fine, Frey.

Talking with you is... welcome here."

It was better than being trapped in her own thoughts.

Better than that suffocating silence.

Somehow...

She seemed like she was suffering more than me.

Maybe I had a light at the end of my tunnel.

Something I was chasing.

But the tunnel she walked ...

It looked black all the way through.