

## VILLAIN 43

Chapter 43 43: I love you

-Frey starlight Pov-

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"Sansa..."

I saw the princess approaching, a rare smile on her face—so unlike her usual cold demeanor.

"What's wrong? Didn't expect me to follow you?"

"No..."

She sat down without waiting for my response, swinging her legs leisurely as if she were enjoying herself.

"Do you need something from me?"

I wanted to get away from her as soon as possible. Sansa was an enigma—unpredictable and unfamiliar. I never knew how to deal with her.

And yet, despite myself, my gaze flickered toward her legs.

She wore long black stockings that reached just beneath her short skirt. The way she moved her legs, the smooth rhythm of it... It was a test of restraint for any man.

I needed to cut this short. She was a princess, after all.

At my question, she stopped swinging her legs and turned toward me.

"Actually... yes, I do need you."

"Hmm? And how exactly do you need me?"

A creeping unease settled in my chest. There was a certain possibility I didn't want to consider.

Sansa played with her hair before pointing at me.

"Your duel with Feyrith proved something important... You've changed, Frey."

"Changed?"

She nodded.

"Yes. You've become much stronger than before."

I tilted my head, giving her a wry smile.

"And that caught our dear princess's attention?"

"Indeed. You stole the spotlight there. Who would have thought that the despicable noble, Frey Starlight, would reveal such power?"

I chuckled at her choice of words.

"Your opinion of me seems to be at an all-time low."

Sansa gave me a look that said, Wasn't it obvious?

"Of course. Do you remember the time you lured me into that basement and left me trapped there all day? We were only six years old... What kind of child does that?"

She was clearly enjoying herself as she brought up memories of the past—memories that weren't mine.

"And then there was that time you wanted Seris's attention... You used to beg me for help. How many times did you manipulate me into doing your dirty work? Honestly, you're the worst. You only remember that we're 'friends' when you need something."

"Friends?"

I cut her off this time.

"Did you really consider someone like that a friend?"

She froze for a moment, then quickly recovered.

"I don't know..."

"Hmm."

Now, I was beginning to understand how Frey got her killed in the original draft of this story.

Despite everything... Despite knowing what kind of person he was, she continued to overlook his actions and consider him a friend.

If she was that naïve, she wouldn't stand a chance against that snake, Aegon.

"Let's put that aside... I assume you're here to secure my support in the race for the throne, aren't you?"

Seeing me cut straight to the point, her expression turned serious.

"That's right. If I want to win, I need every bit of power I can gather. And somehow... you've become a necessary force."

I shook my head.

"Sorry, but I have no intention of getting involved in this succession war."

At my response, she lowered her gaze, playing with her fingers.

"So you're siding with my brother, then?"

I frowned. How did she come to that conclusion?

"As I said, I'm not on your side or his. I don't want any part in this mess."

"There's no need to pretend. I already know about your meeting with him."

I raised an eyebrow.

She knew about my meeting with Aegon? The princess was more perceptive than I thought.

"I don't know what to say... You're all worse than each other, always keeping an eye on everything. It's true that I met Aegon, and he did offer me a chance to follow him, but I refused."

Sansa didn't look convinced.

"You expect me to believe my brother simply let you walk away after rejecting him?"

Damn it ... why was she so persistent?

I sighed, deciding to lay it all out.

"No... He said he wanted to be my friend."

Sansa's golden eyes widened.

Was it really that hard to believe?

I wasn't sure what was going through her mind as she gently bit her lip.

A few seconds of silence passed before she finally spoke.

"Tell me, Frey... Will you betray me?"

I frowned at her question.

"Betray you? When was I ever loyal to you in the first place?"

I muttered under my breath but stopped when I saw her frozen in place, sadness flickering in her expression.

Seeing her like that, I found myself asking without thinking,

"What's wrong? Did I say something I shouldn't have?"

She quickly snapped out of it and shook her head.

"No... I just didn't expect this. I suppose I'm the only one who remembers..."

I tilted my head.

"Remembers what?"

"Nothing."

She sighed, brushing the topic aside.

"Regardless of what you say, you will be forced to take part. My brother has secured the support of the Sunlight family, while I have gained the backing of the Moonlight family."

"Right now, we're both building our alliances. But the deciding factor will be the Starlight family... which means, sooner or later, you'll have no choice but to pick a side."

My face must have darkened at her words. I was probably wearing the most annoyed expression possible.

"Spare me this nonsense. I'm not even the lord of the Starlight family. What could any of you possibly want from me?"

For the first time since sitting beside me, Sansa laughed.

"It's not just your strength that has changed... Normally, you would have used this situation to your advantage. You really have changed, Frey... I'm starting to wonder if you're even the same person."

I sighed, tilting my head back to gaze at the sky.

"The Frey you knew died a long time ago."

She took my words as a metaphor.

But I meant them quite literally.

Our conversation had reached its end. The silence between us made that clear.

I was about to let it go, but then something crossed my mind.

The girl in front of me had forgiven the previous Frey time and time again... No matter what he did, to the point that it led to her death in the original story.

In that case...

Sansa was just about to stand and leave, but I moved first.

I stepped in front of her, meeting her golden eyes.

She looked at me in confusion.

"What are you doing?"

And at that moment, I said the words I had decided on.

"Sansa... I love you. Please go out with me."

I spoke politely, bowing my head.

For a moment, there was only silence.

Then, as expected, I saw the shock on her delicate face—quickly followed by a cold, disdainful look.

She stood up and pushed me aside. Her slender hands looked fragile, but she still managed to shove me off balance.

With an icy expression, she met my gaze one last time before turning away.

"Maybe you have changed, Frey... But you're still a despicable person. I'd rather die than be with someone like you."

Without giving me a chance to respond, she left.

I scratched my head, watching her walk away.

"I got rejected."

Expected.

What mattered was that I completed a system quest.

Besides, given her past with the original owner of this body, I doubted she'd do anything to me.

"Now that I think about it... Frey used to exploit her to get what he wanted. And now, I used her for achievement points."

Maybe I really was a despicable person.

I sighed and glanced at the clock. The practical class was about to start.

Clearing my thoughts, I headed back inside.

None of this mattered.

I got my achievement points, and that was enough.