

Tyrant 12

Chapter 12: Ashes in the Dark

Trafalgar stood frozen, his breath stuck in his throat as he watched the impossible unfold. The beast—thirty meters of flesh, fangs, and nightmare—had been split clean in half.

By a man.

By his father.

"Insane," Trafalgar muttered under his breath.

Before he could even begin to process it, Valtair's voice thundered through the night.

"Positions! We're under attack! This isn't over!"

Trafalgar blinked. 'What?'

He turned his head frantically. The battlefield had shifted. The fallen monster still steamed on the ground, but something else had arrived.

Shapes moved in the darkness—dozens, no, hundreds. At first, they looked like people.

But they weren't.

They had horns, protruding from their skulls like jagged crowns. Their eyes burned red, their silhouettes wrapped in cloaks or armor. Some held swords. Others raised glowing staves.

"Demons...?" Trafalgar whispered.

Then the first projectile came—crimson and fast. A bolt of condensed flame, aimed straight at his head.

He dove sideways, the heat searing his cheek as the spell slammed into the dirt behind him.

He landed hard—right beside the corpse of the Morgain soldier he had stabbed to survive.

The same sword was still embedded in the man's chest.

Trafalgar stared at it, hesitating.

'I don't want to touch it again.'

But he had no choice.

His hand wrapped around the hilt. He yanked it free. A sickening spray of blood followed as the steel slid from the soldier's pierced heart.

No time for guilt.

A shadow fell over him.

Trafalgar spun just in time to see a demonoid—black robes, two curved horns, glowing red eyes—lunging at him with a jagged blade.

Instinct took over.

Trafalgar stepped in, twisted his hips, and with one clean motion, severed the creature's head from its shoulders.

The body collapsed, twitching.

Then the headache hit him—sharp and sudden.

"Ah—!" He staggered, clutching his temple.

[Sword Insight (Lv.Max) activated]

His vision blurred as dozens of movements, postures, and clashes began to etch themselves into his memory. Every fight around him—every swing, every feint, every kill—was being recorded.

Burned into him.

'I need to get to Valtair. That's the safest place right now.'

Trafalgar gritted his teeth and started running.

Screams echoed through the night. Steel clashed against steel. Spells lit the sky with bursts of fire and lightning.

Trafalgar pushed forward, dodging debris and weaving between fallen bodies. The demonoids were relentless—casting spells, swinging blades, moving like trained assassins.

Ahead, one blocked his path.

It looked similar to the one he had just killed—black cloak, two horns—but its eyes were pitch black instead of red. It grinned, revealing sharpened teeth.

Without a word, the creature dashed forward.

Trafalgar raised his blade just in time to parry the first slash.

'Fast'

The demonoid stepped back and tightened its grip on the blade. Then, it muttered:

"Arc Slash."

A faint glow pulsed along the weapon's edge before it unleashed a crescent-shaped wave of energy, slicing through the air straight at Trafalgar.

He dove to the side.

The slash tore through the stone behind him with a sharp hiss, leaving a long gouge in the wall.

[Sword Insight (Lv.Max) activated]

[Skill Observed: Arc Slash – Common Rank]

[Skill Learned: Arc Slash – Common Rank]

The system messages blinked inside his mind.

'So Sword Insight lets me copy what I see... Arc Slash, huh? Not bad.'

The demonoid charged again, blade raised.

Trafalgar blocked once, then again. Sparks flew.

He gritted his teeth and stepped back, feeling the weight of the sword in his hand.

"Arc Slash," he whispered.

His blade surged with light—and with a clean motion, he sent his own energy wave crashing forward.

It hit the demonoid's knees. Both legs burst open, torn apart by the impact. The creature collapsed, howling in pain. Crawling.

It reached for Trafalgar's leg.

"P-Please... save me," the demonoid begged, its voice trembling.

Trafalgar stared into its eyes.

'Just seconds ago you were trying to kill me...'

He hesitated for just a breath, then lifted the sword.

Without a word, he plunged it straight between the demon's eyes.

'I can't afford to hesitate.'

Trafalgar exhaled shakily and pressed forward once again.

The moment the blade exited the demonoid's skull, Trafalgar staggered slightly, feeling the weight of what he'd just done.

But there was no time to reflect.

A soft chime echoed in his head.

[Weapon durability low: Common Sword – 19% remaining]

"Shit," he muttered under his breath, glancing at the cracked blade. It was stained with blood, the edge chipped and trembling in his grip.

'Now's not the time for this. I need to reach my father.'

The stone roads were littered with debris, corpses, and glowing embers. The chaos of battle had spread through the district. In the distance, he could hear a thunderous roar—not from a beast, but from raw magic detonating in the air.

Trafalgar darted into a narrow alley, boots splashing through pools of blood and ash—only to stop dead in his tracks.

The path was blocked by collapsed rubble.

"Perfect..." he growled.

Before he could decide whether to climb or backtrack, a female voice called out from the other end of the alley.

Trafalgar turned swiftly toward the voice.

At the far end of the alley, stepping out from the shadows, was a girl around his age. She wearing a tattered cloak over fitted black leather armor. Her skin was pale. Two black horns curved from her forehead, and long purple hair flowed behind her in waves.

Her eyes were greyish— not glowing, but faintly shimmering.

She tilted her head with a playful smile.

"Oh? The bastard himself?" she said.

Trafalgar narrowed his eyes. "Do I know you?"

The girl stepped closer, hands behind her back like a child caught sneaking around. "Tsk, tsk. You don't remember? That's a shame. I thought we were childhood friends."

He furrowed his brow. 'Childhood friends...? Trafalgar was friends with her?'

She let out a small laugh. "Still nothing? Hm... well, no matter. You'll remember soon enough."

Trafalgar tightened his grip on the worn sword. 'Who the hell is this girl? And why is she showing up now, in the middle of a battle?'

The girl stepped even closer, her smile fading slightly. Her expression turned unreadable.

"You're not as broken as I remember," she said.

Trafalgar raised his weapon slightly. "If you're here to fight, come at me."

The girl simply grinned. "Fight? No, no. I just wanted to say hello, I think after this things will calm down between our two families."

She turned her back on him and began to walk away toward the flames in the distance.

"We'll talk again soon... Trafalgar du Morgain."

And with that, she vanished into the shadows.

Trafalgar stood there frozen for a few seconds.

'...What the fuck was that?'