

Tyrant 139

Chapter 139: Messenger in the Night

The quiet corridor seemed to shrink the moment Trafalgar's eyes met that familiar golden gaze. For a heartbeat, he froze.

'Caelum? What the hell is he doing here? Is this one of his clones he uses to keep watch, or is it actually him in the flesh? If he came in person... then something serious must've happened.'

He forced his feet to move, step by step toward his room. Caelum stood tall at the far end, his pale gray hair combed neatly back, his presence calm yet commanding.

The older man raised a gloved hand in a polite gesture. "Good evening, young master Trafalgar."

Trafalgar hesitated only a second before answering, his voice measured. "Good evening, Caelum... but I can't say your visit inspires confidence. I take it that something has happened at the main house?"

Caelum inclined his head with calm precision. "Indeed, young master. A number of things, in fact. But..." He paused, his voice carrying the weight of caution. "...this is not a conversation meant for open corridors. Too many ears, hearing from behind closed doors."

Trafalgar understood immediately. They were standing in the dormitory reserved for heirs of power, where privacy was a rare luxury. Conversations here were dangerous if overheard.

Without another word, Trafalgar reached for his door and pushed it open. "Come in. We'll talk inside."

Caelum gave a courteous nod and followed.

As the door shut behind them, Trafalgar felt his chest tighten. Whatever news Caelum carried from the Morgain estate, it was not going to be simple.

Inside the room, the silence settled heavier than before. The walls here offered safety from wandering ears, yet the tension between them lingered.

Trafalgar motioned toward a chair. "Make yourself comfortable, Caelum. Though I'm afraid I don't have anything to offer."

Caelum shook his head politely. "No need, young master. You should rest yourself. I imagine your night has already been... eventful."

Trafalgar froze for an instant, then forced his expression to remain neutral.

'Eventful? He must've seen it. The kiss. Damn it... that wasn't just something childhood friends do. If he tells Valtair, this could spiral into a real problem. He may be on my side, but Caelum ultimately serves my father too.'

He leaned back slightly, eyes narrowing. "You're talking about what happened with Zafira, aren't you?"

Caelum met his gaze calmly. "Indeed. As you know, she belongs to the Zar'khael family—one of the Eight Great Families. You of all people should understand the weight of that name. After what happened in the mines, the relationship between Morgain and Zar'khael is... fragile at best. You may be young, full of energy, but you would do well to maintain your distance. Especially from her."

Trafalgar's lips pressed into a thin line before he answered. "I understand perfectly. But I'd prefer you keep this from my father. We only went shopping. That's all. She knows more about Velkaris than I do, so I asked for her help."

Caelum remained silent for a moment, studying him with sharp eyes. Then he gave a slow nod. "Very well. For this time, I will keep it from Lord Valtair. Consider it a gesture of trust. Perhaps in return, you might come to see me as more than the pawn of your predecessor."

Trafalgar held his gaze, arms folded behind his back, posture straight. The man's tone was cold, but there was no mistaking the respect it carried.

Trafalgar broke the silence first, his voice even. "Any news about Seraphine, Rivena, or Maeron? Has Rivena returned from the missions Father assigned her? Or is she still away from the estate?"

Caelum answered with calm precision. "Your sister Rivena has returned. In fact, all of your brothers and sisters have returned to the house. They are all present now."

Trafalgar's eyes narrowed slightly. 'All of them? That never happens unless something important has occurred...'

Caelum continued. "As for Lady Seraphine, the first wife, she did not endure the hunger strike for long. After a few days, she chose to eat again. And Lord Maeron... he has been released from his punishment, though it seems the ordeal has left its mark on him."

The words hung heavy in the room. Trafalgar looked away, a flicker of disgust twisting in his chest. 'They make me sick. Every single one of them. And yet... I'm still too weak to do anything about it. Compared to them, my strength is nothing. For now, all I can do is wait, endure, and keep growing. But one day... one day I'll deal with every last one of them.'

He clenched his hand briefly, then forced it to relax, masking the reaction with a calm exterior. His voice returned steady, almost casual. "So they're all gathered back at the castle. That alone makes it obvious something important has happened. You wouldn't be here otherwise, Caelum."

The older man inclined his head slightly, acknowledging the point. His golden eyes caught the dim light of the mana-crystals above, gleaming with a sharpness that only made the tension in the room heavier.

Trafalgar's gaze sharpened. "Then tell me, Caelum. What happened at the castle that brought everyone back? And why are you here, tonight, in person?"

Caelum straightened, though his posture had never truly wavered. His voice was steady, but there was weight in every syllable. "You are correct, young master. I would not have left the estate without cause. What occurred demanded it. And so, I bring you two pieces of news."

He paused deliberately, his golden eyes fixed on Trafalgar.

"One good... and one bad. Which would you prefer to hear first?"

The question lingered like a blade in the air, sharp and unavoidable.

Trafalgar leaned back slightly, his arms folding across his chest. The faint glow of the mana-crystals overhead painted shadows across his face. For a moment, he said nothing.

'Good news, bad news... it's always the same pattern. The good one to soften the blow, the bad one to crush you after. I already know whichever I pick, none of it will be simple. Still, the fact Caelum came here personally means the bad news is far worse than I can imagine.'

He let out a quiet breath, more a sigh than anything. 'Damn it... just what the hell happened back home?'

His eyes lifted again, meeting Caelum's without hesitation. There was no fear in them, only the cold weight of resolve.

"Start with the bad," Trafalgar said flatly.

"Lord Mordrek is dead."