

Tyrant 145

Chapter 145: Wings Toward the Peaks

The ship's engines roared to life with a low, steady hum as it rose from the snowy courtyard. Wings spread wide, six in total, catching the wind as streams of vapor hissed from glowing vents beneath the hull. The vessel tilted north, carrying its passengers toward the Morgain Peaks—an endless stretch of jagged mountains cloaked in white.

Trafalgar leaned against the railing, his breath fogging in the freezing air. The city shrank beneath them, until only the snowfields and forests remained.

'Mordrek...' His thoughts stirred, unbidden. 'Even if it was an order from Valtair, he saved me. That day—I'll never forget it. The wyvern ride, the ambush that nearly ended me, and the second one that almost did. If not for Mordrek, I wouldn't be here.'

He tightened his grip on the railing. The memory of Seraphine's private soldier flashed across his mind—Mordrek cutting him down. Afterward, the flight back to Euclid. The weeks living under Mordrek's roof. For the first time, he had felt something almost like family.

'Three weeks... a short time, but enough. He didn't belong in the same house as the rest. That's why it feels heavier now.'

The wind whipped against his coat, cold but grounding.

His gaze shifted to the horizon. 'Was it really Caelvyrn? I can't make sense of it. He showed interest in me, but never tried to strike. When we were alone, he could have ended me easily—but he didn't. And now the family claims they don't even know why Mordrek was killed. None of it fits.'

His jaw tightened. 'Murdering a Morgain isn't something you do without reason. Whoever's behind this, they've started a war... whether they realize it or not.'

"Lost in thought, are we?"

The voice came from just behind him, and Trafalgar jolted so hard he nearly tripped over the railing. "Motherfucker—"

Alfred's chuckle was gravelly, amused. "Language, boy, language. Hasn't anyone told you insults aren't fit for polite company?"

Trafalgar shot him a sideways glare. "Yeah. They have."

Alfred smirked, stepping closer, his long coat swaying in the cold air. "I'd wager you were thinking of your uncle. Mordrek was a good kid. Never liked staying near that damned castle." He jerked his chin toward the looming mountains ahead. "All he wanted was to build a family and keep them safe. A shame how it ended."

Trafalgar's expression softened slightly. "You're right. He wasn't like the others. With him, you could breathe. Relax. That's rare for a Morgain."

Alfred's purple eyes studied him, the grin fading into something quieter.

After a pause, Trafalgar asked, "Do you know how Anthera is? And the kids—Sylis, Eron, Mael?"

Alfred shrugged. "I don't. I just ferry Morgains where I'm told. I'm no part of your family politics."

Trafalgar raised a brow. "Really? I thought you were tied to us somehow. Last time, with Lysandra... you spoke as though you'd known her since she was a child."

Alfred's grin returned, sharper this time. "Oh, I know your family plenty. Too well, perhaps. Enough to say Mordrek's loss cuts deeper than most will admit. But I'm no lapdog in the castle halls. I prefer the sky to the dungeon of politics."

Trafalgar exhaled slowly, eyes drifting back to the mountains.

'Mordrek, even strangers respect you more than your own blood did.'

Trafalgar folded his arms, studying Alfred from the corner of his eye. "You speak as if you've known us all your life. Lysandra hinted at it before, but... what's your connection?"

Alfred leaned against the railing with practiced ease, the wind tugging at his long coat. His grin softened into something closer to nostalgia. "Connection? I was best friends with your grandfather, boy. The old bastard and I used to raise hell together. Valtair's father—now there was a man."

Trafalgar blinked. "My grandfather? I've never met him. Only heard rumors... mostly from Lysandra. She said he had terrifying talent."

Alfred chuckled, a low, gravelly sound. "Terrifying is right. The man picked up the Morgain Blade in a single day. A feat even the most gifted swordsmen wouldn't dare claim."

Trafalgar's eyes widened slightly. 'The Morgain Blade... the same passive skill I learned quicker than most. Lysandra mentioned that. To think he mastered it instantly... it explains a lot.'

"What talent does he hold?" Trafalgar asked quietly.

Alfred's purple eyes glinted, sharp and amused. "Same as your father—SS. But don't think that makes them equal, how do I put it? Valtair sits at SS low. Your grandfather, though? SS high, yes something like that. Close enough to taste SSS, but not quite there. And trust me, boy, that gap is wider than you can imagine."

Trafalgar absorbed the words in silence, the hum of the engines filling the pause.

'So Valtair is powerful, but my grandfather... he's on another level entirely. A man like that, and yet I've never seen his face. What kind of shadow must he cast over this family?'

Alfred smirked, pushing off the railing. "He'll be at the funeral, no doubt. If you meet him, tell the old bastard Alfred still owes him a drink."

Trafalgar glanced around the deck, frowning. "By the way, Alfred... if you're out here chatting, then who's steering this thing?"

Alfred froze mid-step, then spun with exaggerated drama, his coat flaring. "Ah! Now that is an excellent question! Who indeed is steering the ship carrying us through the freezing skies of Morgain?" His voice boomed as if addressing an audience.

Trafalgar instantly grabbed the railing, knuckles white, memories flashing of the last time Alfred sent the vessel into a sudden dive. "You've got to be kidding me—"

Alfred threw his head back and cackled, the sound rolling across the deck. "Relax, boy! It's on autopilot. The ship can fly itself better than most men could dream of. Hah!"

Trafalgar exhaled sharply, half in relief, half in frustration. His mutter slipped out before he could stop it. "Careful, or yours might be the next funeral."

Alfred's laughter stopped cold. He turned, eyes narrowing. "What was that, boy?"

Trafalgar looked away, feigning innocence. "Said you're getting old, Alfred. Thought your hearing might be going."

The old captain's grin returned, sharp as a blade. "Hah. You've got some teeth after all. Don't lose them too quickly."

For once, Trafalgar allowed himself a quiet laugh, shaking his head.

Alfred gave him one last smirk before strolling toward the steering cabin. "Try not to fall overboard while I'm gone, cellar phantom."

The insult slid off Trafalgar this time. He straightened, walking toward Caelum, who sat silently at the far side of the deck, his golden eyes fixed on the looming Morgain Peaks.