

Tyrant 163

Chapter 163: The Gathering

Trafalgar lingered at the threshold, the golden light spilling across his boots. His dark hair, tied back in its low ponytail, caught a faint shimmer from the chandeliers above. For a brief moment, his deep navy-blue eyes swept over the hall—rows upon rows of Morgains, each voice weaving into a tapestry of low thunder that made the air feel heavy.

Then he stepped inside.

No one looked at him. Conversations carried on, laughter and solemn words blending together as though his presence didn't matter. He moved between the long tables, passing cousins, uncles, distant kin—none spared him a glance. To them, he was invisible, a shadow among bloodlines more important than his own.

'So this is what a hundred Morgains look like under one roof,' he thought grimly. 'Pretty amazing honestly, this family is big as hell.'

The arrangement was clear. The central table, raised slightly on a dais, was reserved for Valtair and his branch. Around it, in a wide circle, each of the other lines of the family had their own tables. Old faces with weathered lines of power, younger heirs with polished manners, wives adorned in silks that shimmered even beneath the dim light.

Trafalgar slipped quietly into an empty seat among his father's children. The chair felt colder than stone, though the air was warm with the scent of roasted meat, spiced wine, and baked bread. His fingers brushed the rim of the goblet before him.

He let out a faint breath through his nose, leaning back.

The sound in the hall shifted when the great doors opened once more.

Conversations dimmed, chairs scraped softly as dozens of Morgains turned their heads toward the entrance. Anthera stepped inside, her red hair braided and veiled beneath a dark hood, her green eyes

shadowed by grief. A gown of somber black fell to the floor, heavy with mourning, yet her posture remained steady—dignity carrying her even as sorrow weighed at her shoulders.

Beside her walked Syllis, dressed in matching dark fabric, her youthful features pale but composed. At her sides, the twins Eron and Mael clung to her hands, their small frames swallowed by plain black tunics. Together, the four of them moved slowly down the aisle between tables, the entire hall following their progress.

As they passed, voices rose one after another.

"My condolences, Lady Anthera."

"Our hearts share your grief."

"Your loss is ours as well."

Each phrase carried the ritual weight of mourning, but the sincerity behind them varied. Some bowed deeply, their words thick with feeling; others spoke with polished courtesy, their eyes already shifting toward the main table where Valtair sat.

Anthera inclined her head at each greeting, her lips tight, never slowing her pace. Syllis kept her eyes forward, her hand squeezing the twins' fingers as if shielding them from the solemn flood of words.

Their destination was the table nearest to Valtair's own, placed close out of respect for Mordrek's position as lord of Euclid. The four took their seats quietly, servants rushing to adjust chairs and bring fresh dishes.

'I feel bad for them, they have all the attention, and I know very well how this family works...' He shifted in his chair, fingers tapping idly against the goblet in front of him.

The servants moved quickly, filling the tables with more roasted meat still steaming from the ovens, baskets of bread that cracked with each tear, and pitchers of heavy red wine. Conversation began to

flow again, though it was quieter now—measured, as though every voice still carried the weight of mourning.

Trafalgar sat in silence, tearing off a piece of bread and chewing slowly. Around him, his cousins and half-siblings exchanged polite greetings with relatives from other branches, pretending at warmth while their eyes flicked constantly toward the central table.

His gaze drifted around the great hall.

'Crazy. Even though we're on the highest peak of the Morgain mountains, this place feels richer than the main castle. Resources, food, wine—it's overflowing. And the design...' He glanced up at the arching ceiling, the thick walls, the guard towers visible through the high windows. 'It's too well protected. Almost like they built this place expecting a siege. Yeah, this is more fortress than dining hall.'

He sipped from his goblet, the wine biting his tongue. 'Guess it makes sense. Up here, no one can touch them. A family like this doesn't survive by being careless.'

Then the scrape of a chair broke the rhythm.

Valttair rose from the central table, his towering frame drawing every eye. The grey of his eyes caught the candlelight, sharp and commanding. The hall quieted at once, forks and knives lowering as silence spread.

"My brother, Mordrek," Valttair began, his voice carrying easily across the vaulted hall, "was many things. Lord of Euclid. Husband to Anthera. Father to Sylis, Eron, and Mael. To me, he was my youngest brother—the one I swore to protect, the one who carried our name with pride."

A murmur of agreement rippled through the crowd, but Valttair raised a hand and it stilled immediately. His voice hardened.

"Tomorrow, we bury him. And after that, we avenge him. We know who is responsible for his death. What we lack is not the culprit—but their exact place to strike."

The silence after Valttair's words lingered, heavy as stone. Then, from the far side of the hall, the scrape of a chair echoed. An elder rose—one of the five ancients of the Morgain bloodline.

"It was a dragon," the old man said, his tone certain. "There is no doubt. But dragons are not so easily tracked. If it can take a human form, it can vanish among the people. If it grows horns, it could pass as one of the demon-kin. Either way... finding it will not be simple."

The hall stirred uneasily. Several Morgains exchanged sharp looks, whispers breaking like cracks across the silence.

Trafalgar's navy-blue eyes fixed on the elder. 'So that's him... my grandfather. Technically, at least. First time I've ever seen him.' His gaze lingered a second too long, studying every detail like he was analyzing an opponent across a chessboard.

The elder's eyes shifted. For a heartbeat, they locked with Trafalgar's. The weight of that stare ran down his spine like ice water, forcing him to look away almost instantly. He exhaled slowly, hiding the tension with a sip of wine. 'Damn. One glance and it feels like he read straight through me.'

The old man continued. "With the family gathered, there is another matter to settle. Euclid has no lord now. Lady Anthera and her children have refused the seat—and they will not be forced to bear it."

The hall rippled with surprise, then hushed again. The elder's gaze swept the room. "So it falls to us, the Morgains, to choose who will govern in Mordrek's place."

The words dropped like a stone into water, and the waves of consequence spread across every table.

Trafalgar's hand tightened slightly on his goblet. 'I really don't like where this is going...'