

Tyrant 166

Chapter 166: Bath

The heavy door closed with a dull thud as Trafalgar stepped inside the bathroom. For a moment he just stood there, taking it in. Marble floors, polished brass fixtures, steam stones embedded neatly into the walls to keep the place warm—this wasn't the kind of room he expected at the top of a fortress.

He let out a low whistle. "Huh. Fancy. Guess the Morgains really don't do things halfway."

His eyes trailed over the carved shelves stacked with towels, jars of fragrant oils, even a mirror of enchanted glass set into the far wall. A place this high up in the mountains should have been bare and utilitarian, but instead it looked like something out of a noble's palace.

'Makes sense, I guess. This is the most protected stronghold the Morgains have. Still... the resources they poured into this place must be insane.'

He crossed to the bathtub, a wide basin of smooth stone fitted with mana-pipes that hummed faintly as he twisted the valve. Clear water poured in, filling the chamber with its gentle rush.

While it filled, Trafalgar moved toward the narrow window carved into the wall. He leaned on the frame and peered out.

The world beyond stole his breath.

He was standing on the highest peak of Morgain territory—higher than anything he had ever known on Earth. K2, Everest... those "giants" suddenly seemed like mere hills compared to this. Yet here, breathing was easy. The air was crisp but plentiful, thick with mana, and his Primordial Body adapted to it effortlessly.

Below, there was nothing but darkness. An endless void yawned beneath the fortress, a black chasm that the night swallowed whole. But above... the sky blazed. Thousands of stars spilled across it, shining so bright they seemed almost close enough to touch.

Trafalgar exhaled slowly, his lips quirking despite himself. 'Yeah... definitely a fantasy world.'

Steam curled upward as the tub filled. Trafalgar stripped off his clothes, folding them absentmindedly on a stool before lowering himself into the water. The heat wrapped around him instantly, seeping into muscles he hadn't realized were tense. He sank until the water reached his chin, exhaling a slow breath that fogged the surface.

For the first time that day, silence pressed in—not the suffocating silence of the Morgain hall, but a gentler one. Here, it almost felt safe.

'It really is a fantasy world,' he thought, letting his head rest back against the edge of the tub. 'Mountains higher than Everest, a fortress with baths like this, mana in the air... hell, even the stars look better.'

He chuckled under his breath, the sound half-bitter. 'Every gamer dreams about being thrown into a world like this, right? Magic, swords, dragons. The ultimate escapism. Yeah, except it depends on the world. And in my case? Lucky me, I got reincarnated as Trafalgar du Morgain, the bastard no one wanted.'

He dipped lower, letting the water cover his face for a moment before rising again. Droplets slid down his skin as he muttered, "Great deal, huh?"

Closing his eyes, he let his thoughts spiral. Tomorrow would be Mordrek's funeral. It felt like everything had accelerated since the moment he'd woken up here. No breaks, no time to breathe. Just politics, death, and survival.

'I feel bad for Sylis and the twins... losing their father like that. After tomorrow, who knows if I'll even see them again. Chances are they'll distance themselves from the family—and honestly, I can't blame them.'

His fingers trailed across the water's surface, breaking the reflection of the starlit sky above.

For a fleeting second, Trafalgar allowed himself to relax. Just a boy in a bath, suspended between two worlds—the one he'd lost, and the one that refused to let him go.

Trafalgar let himself sink until the water covered his head, the world muted to a dull hum. He stayed there a few seconds before pushing back up, gasping softly as the cool air hit his face. For a moment he just floated, staring at the ceiling.

Then his jaw clenched. 'Tomorrow is Mordrek's funeral. And they still don't know where the hell his killer is.'

His hands curled into fists under the water. 'Are we serious? A dragon kills one of the strongest Morgains alive and no one can track it down? What, are we all idiots? I get it—dragons can take human form in this world, horns and all, basically demons. But still... it pisses me off.'

He leaned forward, arms resting on the rim of the tub, droplets sliding down his shoulders. A thought surfaced, sharp and unwelcome.

'Wait. I have a way.'

He closed his eyes and focused. In his mind, the words etched themselves like a game tooltip:

[Soulbound Compass]

Type: Utensil

Rank: Legendary

Description: Crafted by the hyper-mega-marvelous Alchemist Selara. This artifact links to the soul of someone you've touched at least once, pointing unerringly to their location.

Limitation: One use only.

The water rippled as he slowly raised his right hand. With a faint shimmer, the compass materialized in his palm, its needle glowing faintly as if waiting for command.

He stared at it in silence.

'If I use this on the dragon, I'd gain favor with Valtair. Maybe even the family would stop treating me like garbage. But... I've been saving this for her. The Veiled Woman. The one person who might actually have the answers I need.'

His grip tightened around the compass. "Sorry, Mordrek," he murmured, voice low. "But finding her increases my chances of surviving. And right now, that's all I can afford to care about."

The compass glowed faintly in Trafalgar's palm, its needle spinning slowly as if tasting the air, waiting for him to decide. Steam drifted across the room, wrapping the scene in a hazy veil.

He stared at the artifact, lips pressed into a thin line. 'Selfish? Yeah, maybe. But I barely knew Mordrek. He treated me decently, sure, but... he wasn't my father. He wasn't even close. Why would I waste the one thing that could lead me to her?'

He drew in a breath, steadying himself. "It's settled," he whispered. "I'll use it for the Veiled Woman. For the answers I need. For survival."

The needle twitched. A faint hum filled the room. Then, before he could channel his intent, something strange happened.

A voice.

Soft, but clear. Familiar in a way that made his heart stop. He had only heard it a handful of times, but it was unmistakable.

The Veiled Woman.

Her words slipped into his mind like a whisper carried on the wind.

"Find Mordrek's killer. You must focus on becoming stronger, Trafalgar. I already told you—your destiny is written."

The sound of her voice sent a shiver down his spine. He nearly dropped the compass, the artifact trembling in his wet hand.

His pulse raced as he muttered, eyes darting to the empty corners of the room, "What the fuck? Are you here?"

But no response came. Only silence, broken by the faint dripping of water.