

Tyrant 170

Chapter 170: Under the Morning Sun

The first rays of sunlight slipped through the narrow window, spilling faint gold across the stone walls. Trafalgar hadn't slept a second. He sat cross-legged in the center of the room, completely naked, his eyes shut, body drenched in sweat.

Here, at the highest peak of the Morgain mountains, the air itself was thick with mana. It pressed against his skin, seeped into his lungs, sank into his core. Anyone else would have drowned in it—but thanks to the Primordial Body, Trafalgar could drag every drop of that rich mana into himself.

Hours had passed like this. His forehead gleamed, beads of sweat dripping down his back, pooling into a dark stain on the floor. The cold meant nothing. He didn't even feel it anymore.

'Almost... almost at the third core. It's overflowing with mana. Just a little more and it'll burst. If I could stay here, I'd advance much faster.'

The thought pulsed in rhythm with his heart. Then another, heavier one followed.

'But we'll have to leave soon. I can't skip the academy for long. There's probably a mountain of things waiting for me... Damn. And here I thought this life would finally let me stay on top of everything.'

A bitter chuckle escaped his throat before he smothered it with focus again.

'In the end, it's the same lesson I learned the hard way back in university. They give you two, three months for a project for a reason. If you let it pile up until the last minute, it crushes you. Doesn't matter the world—you always pay for procrastination.'

He exhaled slowly, eyes snapping open, gray light flashing in them.

Almost there.

Trafalgar finally released the breath he had been holding and let his shoulders sag. His body felt heavy, every muscle trembling from the strain of hours spent channeling mana. He opened his eyes and glanced down. A wide patch of sweat stained the floor beneath him, proof of his effort.

He wiped his forehead with the back of his hand, lips twisting. 'What a mess. Guess I'll have to clean this up later...'

Rising to his feet, he stretched, bones popping faintly, then walked toward the small adjoining bath. The cold stone under his bare feet bit at him, but after hours of meditation, it barely registered.

The shower water struck his skin, washing away the sheen of sweat. For a moment, he let his head rest against the wall, eyes closed, letting the steam blur the edges of his thoughts.

'Almost at the third core... just a little more. If I could stay here, on this mountain, I'd break through in days. But that's not happening. We'll have to leave soon.'

He scrubbed his arms, the sound of dripping water filling the silence.

'And I still need to talk with Valttair. He must think I'll manage Euclid right away, but he was the one who sent me to the academy. I'm not about to abandon it now. The academy is safer anyway—safer to train, safer to get stronger. Safer than sitting in Euclid waiting for another dragon to show up.'

His jaw clenched as he thought of Caelvyrn, and then the unknown dragon that had killed Mordrek.

'Yeah. The academy is where I belong for now. Not Euclid.'

He shut off the water, wrapped a towel around his waist, and exhaled sharply. A new day had started. Breakfast awaited.

The corridors of the fortress stretched long and bare, their stone walls cold and unadorned. Only the most important chambers carried signs of wealth—the occasional golden trim on a doorframe, a tapestry heavy with age, the gleam of enchanted sconces. Everywhere else, it was austerity.

Trafalgar's boots echoed softly as he made his way toward the main hall. Servants moved quietly around him, their eyes lowered, their hands busy carrying trays or sweeping the chill from the air with mana lamps. The atmosphere remained subdued; grief still lingered heavily after the burial.

When he entered the hall, the sheer number of Morgains gathered inside struck him again. More than a hundred sat at long tables, their conversations hushed. The moment he stepped across the threshold, dozens of eyes lifted toward him.

He ignored the stares and moved to an open seat. Almost immediately, servants brought food: steaming platters of roasted meats, rich in fat; bowls of fresh vegetables seasoned with herbs; dark bread crusted with seeds; and hearty soups that sent up a fragrant steam. It was a balanced feast, heavy on nutrients, crafted to fuel warriors rather than nobles who lounged in comfort.

Trafalgar ate steadily, unbothered by the attention. The weight of the previous day lingered, but so did something else—the unspoken shift in his status. He wasn't just another face at the table anymore. He was the new Lord of Euclid.

'They're staring because of that. Yesterday already made enough noise, and not even my fault this time. But now? Every single one of them knows who I am. Euclid's lord. Great.'

He tore into a piece of bread, chewing slowly.

'Still need to talk with Valtair. He knows I can't abandon the academy. It's safer to grow stronger there than to sit in Euclid waiting for the next dragon to come knocking.'

He lifted his cup, drinking deeply. Across the hall the heavy doors creaked open, drawing the hall's attention for a moment. Trafalgar set down his cup and glanced up.

Sylis entered quietly, her steps measured, her black dress brushing against the floor. Her eyes were red-rimmed, swollen from the tears of the night before. She didn't bother hiding it; grief clung to her like a second skin.

The hall fell into another hush as she crossed the threshold. Some of the Morgains turned to look at her, others respectfully lowered their gazes, but none approached.

Trafalgar's gaze lingered. Memories flickered—the weeks he had spent with her, Anthera, and the twins. Out of the entire hall, she was the one he felt closest to. Not because of blood, but because of shared time, shared silence, the simple fact that they had lived under the same roof.

Sylis's eyes drifted across the tables until they found him. For a moment, her steps faltered. Then she squared her shoulders and made her way toward his seat.

When she finally reached him, she pulled out the chair across the table and sat down. Her voice was small but steady.

"Good morning, Trafalgar."

He set down his fork and met her eyes. "Good morning, Sylis. How are you feeling?"

For a moment she said nothing, her lips pressing together as if weighing whether to answer. The silence between them wasn't uncomfortable, though—it was familiar, like the quiet they had once shared at home.