

Tyrant 174

Chapter 174: Message to Caelum

Trafalgar closed the heavy door of his chamber behind him, the echo of its thud fading into the quiet. The air was colder here, thinner, though he hardly noticed anymore. His thoughts were too loud.

'Euclid under my name, Mordrek buried, and tomorrow I'm flying on a wyvern to hunt a dragon with Valtair. No academy, no normal routine—everything keeps piling up. And if Caelum leaves, Mayla's alone.'

He rubbed the bridge of his nose, exhaling sharply. The meeting had clarified a lot, but it left more weight on his shoulders. Euclid was more than just a territory; it was responsibility, image, and danger bundled into one. 'Good for protection, good for leverage,' he admitted inwardly, 'but also a rope around my neck if I misstep.'

His gaze dropped to his hand. With a thought and a spark of mana, the Shadowlink Echo materialized, dark and silent, pulsing faintly as if waiting.

Trafalgar stared at it for a long moment, jaw clenched. 'This is the only way. If Caelum knows, he can move Mayla now. Velkaris will be safer than anything here.'

He sat at the edge of the bed, shoulders hunched forward. For a second, his reflection caught faintly in the window glass—eyes shadowed, hair damp from the earlier bath. Sixteen years old, and about to throw himself into a dragon hunt like it was another exam.

A humorless chuckle slipped out. "Hell of a field trip."

His fingers tightened around the crystal, his pulse syncing with the faint glow. He drew in a breath, steady and deliberate.

'Alright. Time to send it.'

Trafalgar pressed his palm against the Shadowlink Echo, feeding mana into it. The crystal pulsed once, then went still, waiting. He spoke clearly, his words steady but low.

"Caelum, it's me. Listen carefully. Things have changed. Valttair is taking me with him tomorrow morning to hunt the dragon that killed Mordrek. That means my time away from the academy will be longer than expected."

He paused for a breath, then continued. "Because of that, I need you to handle a few things. First—take Mayla to Velkaris. Immediately. Don't leave her here unprotected. Bring her to the property I bought in the city. Once you're there, find Marella and Arden. Tell them they're responsible for her safety while I'm gone. Make sure they understand how serious this is."

The crystal glowed faintly, recording every syllable. Trafalgar shifted his grip, his tone firming.

"Second—I've decided who will manage Euclid in my absence. Find Arthur of the Tenth Squad. He's new, barely more than a year under Valttair, but that's exactly why I want him. He doesn't carry old baggage, and his men are the same. Inform Arthur and his entire squadron that from this moment forward, they answer to me. Euclid will be under their command. Make that clear."

A small smile tugged at his mouth despite himself. 'Arthur isn't new to battle—he's older, seasoned, the kind of man Valttair only recruits if there's real talent. His squad may be fresh, but with him at the front, they'll follow. Better to have experienced steel leading new blood than leave Euclid in the hands of politics.'

He let out a slow exhale, finishing the message. "That's it. Get it done quickly. I'm counting on you, Caelum. Don't fail me."

The crystal dimmed, sealing the words inside. Trafalgar withdrew his hand, the faint hum fading into silence.

The Shadowlink Echo pulsed faintly in Trafalgar's hand, signaling the message had reached its mark. He pressed his fingers against the cool surface and injected mana once more. The glow deepened, and a voice filled the room.

"Young master Trafalgar." Caelum's tone was steady, but beneath it was a trace of urgency. "I've received your message. You're going after the dragon with Valtair... I won't lie, I don't like it. But if it's your decision, then I'll respect it."

There was a pause, followed by a sharper edge. "I'll take Mayla to Velkaris immediately. The property you bought—yes, I know the one. Marella and Arden will be informed, and I'll make sure they understand the weight of protecting her. No harm will come to her under their watch."

The crystal vibrated faintly as Caelum continued, his voice firm. "As for Euclid—I'll seek out Arthur of the Tenth Squad. If Valtair recruited him personally, then his strength and loyalty are unquestionable. Putting him and his unit under your banner is bold... but it might just work. They'll hear the command from me, and they'll follow."

There was another pause before Caelum's voice returned, clipped and precise. "You are sixteen, and yet carrying what most men twice your age could not. That is not my concern. My concern is that you return alive. Do not fail."

The glow faded, and silence reclaimed the room.

Trafalgar sat still, hand resting on the now-dark crystal. The reply lingered in his ears—icy, disciplined, without a hint of warmth.

'That's Caelum. Cold as always, but dependable. If he says it'll be done, then it will be.'

The Shadowlink Echo dimmed, fading into nothing as Trafalgar released the flow of mana. He let it rest on the desk, the surface of the crystal dull and lifeless now that its duty was done.

Silence pressed in around him once again, but this time it wasn't heavy. The message was sent, the reply received, and the wheels already turning. Caelum would handle Mayla. Arthur and the Tenth Squadron would be drawn under his banner. Euclid was no longer a title in name only—it had a spine now, however fragile.

Trafalgar leaned back in his chair, arms folding loosely across his chest. 'One more step forward. Small, maybe, but solid. Euclid, Mayla, the academy, the hunt of that motherfucker who killed Mordrek.'

His gaze shifted to the window. Beyond the frosted glass, the night sky stretched endlessly, stars scattered like silver dust over the dark peaks. Somewhere out there, Mordrek's killer still lingered, wounded but hidden. And tomorrow, he and Valtair would go hunting.

A tired breath slipped past his lips. 'The funeral, Euclid, a dragon to kill... it never ends. Always something waiting for the next day. I just want to chill a bit, but I know that I can't.'

He stripped off all his clothes, the cold air biting briefly at his skin before he pulled the blankets over himself. His body sank into the mattress, but his mind kept running, gears turning restlessly.

Still, exhaustion had its way. His last thought as his eyes closed was steady, simple. 'Tomorrow's going to be hell. As always. So I better be ready.'