

Tyrant 185

Chapter 185: A Lord's Expectations

The hall had grown quiet once the maid left, the faint crackle of the fireplace the only sound. Trafalgar leaned back in his chair, eyes fixed on the man across from him.

"Serve yourself if you want," he said, gesturing at the teapot between them. "This won't be a short talk. We've got a lot to cover."

Arthur bowed his head slightly, poured himself a cup, and sat straighter. "Thank you, Lord Trafalgar."

"No need for the 'lord' every time." Trafalgar waved a hand dismissively, then leaned forward, elbows on the table. "Let's get straight to it. How are the repairs going in Euclid?"

Arthur sipped once before setting the cup down. His expression remained steady, but his voice carried the weight of someone used to delivering reports. "Well, Trafalgar. Very well. Your father, Lord Valtair, has spent heavily to reinforce the city. Euclid is becoming more than just a trade hub—it will also serve as a strong military base. Perhaps not strong enough to withstand a dragon indefinitely, but strong enough to hold until reinforcements arrive."

He paused, folding his hands neatly on the table. "Thanks to Lord Mordrek, the destruction was minimal. He drew most of the battle away from the city. Those who lost homes have already seen them rebuilt. The families of the fallen were compensated, and morale has begun to recover. Construction crews remain at work, and the final stages of the reforms should be complete within a few months."

Trafalgar listened silently, then nodded once. "Good. That's the right way to handle it. Keep supporting those families, especially if children are involved. That's not negotiable."

Arthur's lips tightened, and he dipped his chin in acknowledgment. "Understood, Lord Trafalgar."

Trafalgar tapped his fingers against the table, letting Arthur's words settle before speaking again. "Alright. Next matter. Tomorrow I'll return to the academy."

Arthur's brows lifted slightly, but he didn't interrupt.

"I know the Gate here connects directly to Velkaris," Trafalgar continued, "so technically I can come and go whenever I want. But let's be honest—most of the time, I'll be buried in academy work. If anything important happens here, you don't wait, you don't send a letter—you come find me. Understood?"

Arthur inclined his head. "Yes, Lord Trafalgar."

"And one more thing," Trafalgar leaned forward, his tone firm but calm. "We'll establish a routine. First day of every month, you'll cross the Gate to Velkaris. I've bought a place there—a private location, not connected to the academy. A maid will give you the address later. You'll bring me a full report in person."

Arthur straightened at the order. "An in-person update every month?"

"That's right," Trafalgar said, meeting his gaze. "I don't care how small the news seems. If it concerns Euclid, I want to hear it directly from you. Rumors, unrest, trade problems—everything. If I'm supposed to carry this title, I need to know the reality of it, not just the polished version people feed my father."

For a moment, Arthur was silent, then he placed a hand over his chest in a gesture of respect. "Understood. I will make it a priority."

Trafalgar gave a small nod, satisfied. 'Good. If I'm stuck balancing academy life with running a damn city, I need someone dependable. At least Arthur doesn't look like the type to slack.'

Arthur took another measured sip of tea, then set the cup down with care. His eyes lifted toward Trafalgar, sharp yet respectful.

"May I ask something, Lord Trafalgar?"

Trafalgar gestured with his hand. "Go ahead."

"Why me? Out of all the captains, why place your trust in the Tenth Squad?"

Trafalgar leaned back, arms crossed, studying him for a moment. Then he answered without hesitation. "You're new. The Tenth Squad's fresh, and I met you during that breakfast at the castle. Most of your men saw me training—they know what I can do firsthand. That means they respect me more than the other squads do." His voice hardened slightly. "And respect matters more than anything else."

Arthur's jaw tightened, but he said nothing.

"And," Trafalgar added, eyes narrowing, "you caught my father's attention, didn't you? That wasn't easy. Unless you lied about that."

Arthur shook his head immediately. "No, my lord. I wouldn't lie about something like that. Lord Valtair himself remarked on my potential."

"Then that's the reason," Trafalgar said bluntly. "I'm not giving you this responsibility out of kindness. Don't get it twisted." He leaned forward, his gaze sharp. "I expect perfection. Do you understand? I won't tolerate mistakes. You know what happened with Roland. I had to kill him because of what he did."

A shadow crossed Arthur's face, a mix of regret and resolve. "Yes... I know. And I regret that failure deeply. But nothing like that will happen under my watch. My men know we serve you now, Lord Trafalgar. They've seen your strength. They want to follow you."

Trafalgar held his stare for a long moment, then gave a single nod. "Good. Don't make me regret it."

Trafalgar exhaled, letting some of the tension slip away. "One more thing before we wrap this up. The city's merchants. For the first three months, no taxes or tariffs. They don't pay a single coin."

Arthur blinked, clearly caught off guard. "Are you certain, Lord Trafalgar? Without that income, we'll struggle to purchase materials for the repairs. The treasury will run thinner, and you won't profit."

Trafalgar's expression didn't waver. "I'm sure. They've been through enough already. Let them breathe first. If the businesses rise again, the city rises with them. We'll gain more in the long run."

Arthur studied him, then gave a slow nod. "I see... You're very good, Lord Trafalgar."

The boy tilted his head slightly, a faint frown crossing his face. 'Good? This isn't charity, it's just common sense. Guess in this world, thinking like that makes you special.'

He waved a hand, signaling the end of the meeting. "That's it. Take care of the mansion while I'm away. I'll be at the academy dorms, as required, but Euclid is my responsibility now. Remember: inform me the moment anything important happens. Later, a maid will give you the address of my place in Velkaris. Use it for the monthly reports."

Arthur rose smoothly, bowing once more. "Understood. I won't fail you." With that, he turned and left, his heavy steps echoing against the marble floor until silence reclaimed the hall.

Trafalgar stood as well, stretching slightly. His body still ached from the battle days ago, but the exhaustion was almost comforting.

The doors creaked open again. The elf maid stood there, her voice soft but formal. "The bath is ready, Lord Trafalgar."

Trafalgar smirked faintly. "Behind you."

He followed her down the corridor, already craving the heat of the water.