

Tyrant 205

Chapter 205: Confrontation

The question hung in the air like smoke.

Trafalgar didn't answer right away. He simply stood there, his coat torn, his face streaked with blood and soot. The heat of battle had vanished, but the weight of what he'd done still lingered in the silence between them.

Around them, the guards held position—some gripping their swords, others clutching mana-powered muskets that glowed faintly blue in the dark. None dared move until their commander spoke again.

Armand's sharp eyes swept across the wreckage, over the broken floor and the lifeless bodies. His silver hair caught the dim torchlight, and though his face was calm, there was something unreadable behind his gaze.

"Trafalgar," he said again, lower this time, almost disappointed. "You've made quite the mess."

Trafalgar exhaled slowly. "They started it." His voice was quiet, flat—without defense, without remorse.

Armand raised a hand. "Lower your weapons."

Every soldier obeyed instantly. The metallic click of blades and muskets echoed through the hall before settling back into stillness.

"Good," Armand murmured, his tone clipped. "Clean this up before dawn. Every body, every trace. I don't want this incident spreading beyond these walls."

A few guards nodded and began moving at once, dragging corpses aside and extinguishing the last of the burning debris.

Finally, Armand's attention returned to Trafalgar. His expression softened slightly, though his voice remained firm. "You. Follow me. We're going to talk—and those two girls as well."

He turned toward a half-intact doorway at the back of the warehouse. His cloak brushed through the ash as he walked.

Trafalgar followed without hesitation. Behind him, Mayla exchanged a quick, anxious glance with Garrika before both moved after them. The muffled steps of the guards cleaning behind them faded slowly, replaced by the hollow echoes of boots striking stone as the four figures disappeared into the corridor beyond.

The corridor beyond the main hall was dim and narrow, lit only by the faint orange glow that bled from the cracks in the walls. The scent of smoke still clung to everything, thick and metallic.

Armand led the way, his steps measured and silent. The faint swish of his cloak was the only sound until Trafalgar followed a few paces behind. Garrika and Mayla trailed further back, their silhouettes wavering in the haze.

Trafalgar's boots crunched over broken stone and glass. His eyes wandered briefly to the flickering shadows on the walls, then to the faint bloodstains still smeared across his gloves.

'Lucky,' he thought. 'If it had been anyone else but him walking through that door, I'd already be in chains.'

He glanced ahead at the older man's back—the straight posture, the controlled stride. There was no doubt in Trafalgar's mind that Armand du Morgain could have cut him down on the spot if he had wanted to. The fact that he hadn't meant one thing: family still held weight, at least for tonight.

Garrika broke the silence first, her voice low but curious. "That's his grandfather, right? The old man up front?"

Mayla nodded softly. "Yes. Armand du Morgain—one of the Elders of Velkaris. I saw him once when I still worked at the Morgain castle, back when Trafalgar was just a baby. Everyone there spoke his name with respect. He's one of the most powerful men alive."

Garrika's eyes narrowed slightly as she studied the man's steady stride. "Figures. First time I see him, and he doesn't look half as terrifying as Valttair. Still, something about him... it's heavier. Like he doesn't need to raise his voice to crush someone."

Mayla gave a faint, knowing smile. "He's different, yes. But still someone you never want to cross."

Their voices faded as the group reached an intact chamber at the end of the corridor—a room untouched by fire, quiet except for the distant crackle of embers.

Armand stopped before the door and opened it without a word. He stepped inside first, and Trafalgar followed closely behind, already bracing himself for what was coming.

The side chamber was dim but intact—one of the few rooms untouched by the flames. The air inside was cooler, though the faint scent of ash and iron still lingered. A single mana lamp flickered weakly from the wall, throwing long, shifting shadows across the cracked floor.

Armand entered first and turned sharply, his cloak settling behind him as he faced Trafalgar. The young man stopped a few steps away, posture straight, expression unreadable. Behind him, Mayla and Garrika waited quietly, their eyes moving between them.

For a moment, no one spoke. Only the faint sounds of soldiers working in the distance broke the silence.

Then Armand began, his tone calm but firm. "Even if you carry the Morgain name, that doesn't give you the right to kill as you please." His gaze hardened. "I didn't expect this from you—especially after what Valttair told me. So, I hope you have a good explanation. Because even a Morgain isn't beyond consequence."

Trafalgar's voice was low, measured. "He kidnapped something that's mine."

Armand's brow furrowed. "Kidnapped?"

Trafalgar's eyes flicked toward Mayla. "Her. Mayla. She used to be my maid, but not anymore. They took her to use her in a brothel. The same man tried it once before—with Garrika."

Mayla lowered her gaze, fingers tightening against her skirt. Garrika's tail bristled slightly, a faint growl escaping under her breath.

Armand's expression didn't change, but his silence carried weight. "You killed them all for that?"

Trafalgar didn't flinch. "He was warned. Once."

A long pause followed. The faint hum of mana from the lamp filled the void between them.

Armand exhaled through his nose, folding his arms. "It's not that simple, Trafalgar. You can't cut down everyone who crosses you. Velkaris is a city of balance—political and economic. We can't control every dirty trade in its veins, not even the Council. But..."

His tone softened slightly. "Endangering a Morgain heir twice is not something I'll ignore. You said it happened before?"

Trafalgar nodded once. "The same man. Same method. I let him live the first time. I didn't make that mistake again."

Armand studied him for a long moment. His gaze was sharp, searching, but there was no anger.

Armand's eyes narrowed slightly. "This man—do you know his name?"

Trafalgar nodded. "Lucien. A businessman. He owned several establishments across the lower districts—brothels, gambling houses, and a few trade fronts to cover his tracks. He used them to smuggle people, mostly women. Some of the guards here must've known what he was doing."

The old man's expression darkened. He took a step closer, his presence pressing like a heavy weight in the air. "Lucien..." he repeated quietly, as if testing the name. "I've heard whispers, but nothing concrete. That explains why every investigation into the southern quarter led nowhere."

Trafalgar's tone hardened. "Now you have your answer. He was protected, or at least tolerated. And he nearly dragged my name into his filth twice."

Armand's eyes flicked briefly toward Mayla, then Garrika, before returning to his grandson. His voice dropped, slow and deliberate. "Then you did what our laws should have done long ago. But we'll make sure this ends properly."

He turned his head slightly toward the doorway, speaking to one of the guards posted outside. "Send word to the Council's enforcement division. I want every property registered under Lucien's name seized by dawn. Every manager, every contact, every ledger—taken or burned. Nothing survives this."

The guard saluted immediately and rushed off.

Armand looked back at Trafalgar. "You'll leave the rest to me. The Council will erase his network and silence anyone tied to it. You have done well to protect our name, Trafalgar."

Trafalgar's eyes softened just enough to show a flicker of relief. "Thank you, grandfather."

Armand gave a single nod. "Don't thank me. Just remember—next time, come to me first. You know how important you are because of your talent, we can't let anything happen to you. Well, you can go. The others will clean up the mess."