

Tyrant 216

Chapter 216: Eryndor

The bell rang softly, signaling the end of Rhaldrin's lesson. Students began packing their things, chatter rising across the room as quills snapped shut and chairs scraped against the floor.

Trafalgar didn't move. His eyes were unfocused, lost somewhere far from the classroom. He hadn't heard a single word of what Rhaldrin said. His thoughts were tangled around something else entirely.

He lifted his sleeve slightly, revealing the faint mark that coiled along his forearm: a black serpent tattoo, incomplete, fading before reaching his elbow. The lines pulsed faintly, almost invisible unless the light hit just right.

His jaw tightened as the memory hit him—the smell of burnt stone, the heat, the liquid pain crawling under his skin.

'That damn shard...' he thought, exhaling slowly. 'It hurt like hell, like someone poured fire straight into my veins.'

He winced slightly at the thought. 'Right. Maybe "hurt like hell" isn't the best expression here... people might take it literally.'

A faint, amused breath escaped him. The sound caught Zafira's attention.

She turned in her seat, one eyebrow raised. "Do I have something on my face? Or are you finally admiring my beauty?"

Trafalgar blinked, pulled back to reality. "Oh, you're definitely beautiful," he said with a faint smirk, "but that's not what I was thinking about."

Zafira tilted her head, pretending to pout. "Shame. I was starting to believe you'd finally developed taste."

He chuckled quietly, shaking his head. But as his fingers brushed the edge of the mark again, the faint warmth under his skin reminded him of something more pressing.

'If those ruins really belonged to the Primordials... maybe I'll find something like it there. Another shard, another clue.'

His eyes narrowed slightly. 'Pain or not, I'll take the risk.'

As the classroom emptied, the low hum of conversation echoed against the marble walls. Zafira was still gathering her notes when a calm, confident voice called out from a few seats away.

"Trafalgar?"

He turned. Lyren di Myrrhvale stood there, his sea-green eyes reflecting the soft light filtering through the mana lamps. "Ah—Trafalgar du Morgain, right? It's a pleasure to meet you. I apologize for not realizing sooner. You looked familiar, but I couldn't quite place you."

Trafalgar forced a polite smile. "Don't worry about it."

'Familiar? Really? Is it that strange to see a pale guy with long hair in a ponytail and navy eyes?' He glanced briefly at Xavier still chatting with other students. 'He's got two different-colored eyes and wears a scarf even during training—if anyone looks odd, it's him.'

He extended a hand. "Nice to meet you, Lyren. Third heir of Myrrhvale, right?"

Lyren's smile widened. "Exactly. I didn't expect to see so many heirs from the Eight Great Families in one class. I already spotted Alfons earlier—I'll have to greet him later too."

Trafalgar nodded once. "I see. Well, it's been good talking, but I've got another class now. Guess we'll meet again before the trip."

"Of course," Lyren said with an easy tone, then turned toward Zafira. "Would you like to join me for a drink before your next class?"

Zafira smirked. "I've got a bit of time. The cafeteria works."

Trafalgar watched as they walked out together, his hands in his pockets. 'Sociable guy. Maybe a little too smooth. Still, first impression—seems decent enough. But you can't trust anyone too quickly in this place.'

He sighed quietly. 'Guess I'll tell Mayla I'll be gone for a few days. Although it hasn't been long, I want to see her.'

He slung his bag over his shoulder and headed for the door. 'After that, I'll find Barth and Cynthia to visit the orphanage. They've been waiting for me to see it.'

The afternoon breeze carried the faint scent of iron and dust as Trafalgar crossed the stone courtyard toward the training fields. A few students chatted near the gates, still buzzing about the Myrrhvale ruins, but he walked past them silently, his mind already shifting to what came next.

'Practical training today,' he thought, glancing at his schedule. 'Swordsmanship. Been a while since I had this class.'

He lifted his hand slightly, summoning a faint surge of mana through his core. Black mist coiled around his palm, swirling until it condensed into a blade — Maledicta.

The weapon formed with a low metallic hum, its edge reflecting a dim blue shimmer before settling into silence.

'Better,' he thought, watching the black steel catch the sunlight. 'I've had enough of wooden swords. If I'm going to learn, I'll do it with my own weapon.'

He rested Maledicta against his shoulder as he continued walking. 'Last time I had a substitute because Eryndor wasn't around. Sword Insight barely reacted... but now that I'm in Pulse Core, probably the substitute would do nothing.'

His boots crunched lightly against the gravel as he reached the wide open field. The area stretched beyond the academy walls, protected by a faint mana barrier that shimmered in the air. Rows of wooden dummies stood along the far end, weapons racks and white banners fluttering in the wind.

At the center of the arena stood a single man — broad, scarred, and radiating power. He swung his enormous greatsword effortlessly, each motion carving gusts of wind through the field. The ground itself seemed to tremble with each strike.

Eryndor — the Warlord.

Trafalgar's eyes narrowed, the black blade resting against his side. 'So he's finally back. I heard he returned while I was gone... Guess today's the real deal.'

He stopped a few paces away, studying the man's technique with sharp focus. 'Let's see what kind of monster teaches this class.'

Eryndor's greatsword cleaved the air in a single, fluid motion. The sound it made wasn't just steel cutting wind—it was weight, force, and experience blended into something terrifyingly clean.

Trafalgar's eyes followed the swing instinctively.

And that was all it took.

A sharp pulse shot through his skull, like invisible blades stabbing behind his eyes. The world slowed—the blade's arc burned into his vision, every movement breaking down into dozens of precise fragments.

Sword Insight had activated.

"Ghh—" His breath hitched as the familiar agony surged back, far worse than before. His knees trembled, blood trickling slowly from his nose. It wasn't pain—it was invasion. The technique forced its way into his mind, engraving each motion whether he wanted it or not.

He gritted his teeth, forcing himself not to cry out. 'Come on... I've handled worse... This is nothing compared to Father's battle against the Gluttony Dragon.'

Eryndor stopped mid-swing, planting his sword into the ground with a solid thunk. He turned toward the sound, his golden eyes narrowing when he saw the student standing a few meters away, trembling with a bleeding nose.

"Oh?" His deep voice carried amusement more than concern. "You're early. Didn't see you there."

Trafalgar straightened quickly, wiping the blood away with his sleeve. "Sorry. Didn't mean to interrupt."

Eryndor's gaze sharpened, then a grin spread across his face. "Wait a second—you're Morgain's boy, aren't you? Trafalgar du Morgain." He chuckled, his tone booming across the empty field. "Heard you were gone for a while."

"Just got back," Trafalgar said, steadying his breathing.

"Good," Eryndor replied, clapping his hands together once. "Then today's your welcome-back gift. We'll wait for the others, then class begins."

He rested his massive greatsword against his shoulder as if it weighed nothing. The sunlight caught the scars on his arms, making them glow like molten lines.

Trafalgar exhaled slowly, the last of the dizziness fading. 'Sword Insight always hits like a hammer... I should've known better than to stare at him directly.' He tightened his grip on Maledicta, a faint smirk tugging at the corner of his lips.