

Tyrant 26

Chapter 26: The Girl Behind the Blindfold

Trafalgar sat quietly on the edge of the bed. His legs still felt heavy, but his mind was clear now. Beside him stood the strange girl from earlier—the one with the black blindfold and the pale-feathered bird perched silently on her shoulder. The little creature tilted its head, its glowing red eyes locked onto Trafalgar like it could see through him.

"Did you help me?" he asked.

The girl nodded calmly. "I did. A gentleman found you unconscious on the balcony. The elf and I took care of you."

"I see," Trafalgar replied, nodding once. "Thank you for that."

"No need to thank me," she said. "It's the least I could do for someone injured. Do you remember feeling dizzy or anything before you fainted?"

Trafalgar paused, eyes narrowing slightly.

'I remember the woman in the black veil... the pill she forced me to swallow. Good thing I'm still alive. I'll have to figure out what the hell that was later.'

"Unfortunately, no," he said aloud. "I just remember stepping out for some air... and then nothing."

"Well," she said, folding her hands over her lap, "you woke up soon after, so it doesn't seem too serious. I'll stay here until your father, Lord Valtair, arrives. I imagine the Council is still ongoing."

Trafalgar tilted his head slightly. "You know who I am?"

"I think the better question is—who doesn't?" she replied with a faint smile. "You're Lord Trafalgar du Morgain. Ninth heir of the Morgain family. The swordsman family, also that duel you won made some noise."

He gave a dry laugh. "Doesn't something like 'the bastard of the Morgains' fit me better?"

She turned her head toward him slightly. "I think you're just Trafalgar. Does it really matter where you come from?"

Trafalgar blinked. That caught him off guard.

"It's rare to meet someone who thinks differently about me than most do," he muttered. Then added, "By the way, what's your name?"

She hesitated only a second before replying.

"My name is Aubrelle. Aubrelle au Rosenthal."

Trafalgar froze.

The name struck him like a cold wind. He hadn't known much about the game's lore—but some characters had stuck out, because that was the only information he had. He'd focused entirely on the tragic mess that was the bastard heir... but there were others. The other nine more legendary characters.

'Aubrelle au Rosenthal... a girl from a family of Summoners. Not one of the Eight Great Families, but powerful in their own right. She's blind... but the game hinted she had an Innate Talent. It never said what it was. All it said was that she was... unique. One of the Ten Legendary Characters. Damn, so they are real.'

His gaze lingered on her face, the faint curve of her lips as she sat composed and still.

"...Nice to meet you, Aubrelle," he said finally. "I'm Trafalgar du Morgain. Ninth heir of House Morgain."

"You didn't have to introduce yourself," she replied softly.

"Consider it courtesy," he said. "Something I should've done earlier, since you helped me."

"Very well."

Trafalgar leaned back slightly, trying to ease the stiffness in his legs. He glanced at the bird still perched loyally on Aubrelle's shoulder.

"By the way," he said, gesturing toward it, "what's your little friend's name?"

"The bird?" she asked, tilting her head as if mildly surprised. "His name is Pipin."

Trafalgar couldn't hold back the chuckle that escaped him. "Pipin? That's... kinda adorable."

Aubrelle turned her head toward him. "Hey, it's a good name for a bird," she said with a faint pout. "It suits him."

Trafalgar smiled. "Yeah, I guess it does. Something about it just... fits."

He pushed his hands against the bed to stand up.

"I think I'm feeling better now. Might as well stretch my legs—"

"No! Wait—"

The moment he rose, his knees buckled.

"Ah—damn—" he muttered as the strength in his legs gave out.

Aubrelle quickly stood to help, but she wasn't particularly strong herself. Trafalgar lost balance, and before either of them could react, he collapsed forward — right into her.

With a soft thud, they both fell to the floor.

The force of the fall caused Aubrelle's blindfold to slip off, fluttering to the ground like a leaf.

Trafalgar blinked as he pushed himself up. For the first time, he saw her face unobstructed.

Two long, diagonal scars ran across her closed eyes — clean, precise, almost surgical. From the corner of one ear to the other. Her eyes themselves... unfocused, crimson, and unsettlingly luminous.

He froze for a second too long.

"I—Sorry," he said, reaching out instinctively. "Are you okay?"

She didn't answer right away, merely sitting there quietly.

"I didn't mean to fall on you. Here, let me help you up." He reached for her hand.

She didn't move.

Then he remembered.

"...Right," he murmured, and gently took her hand himself. "With your permission."

Carefully, he helped her to her feet.

Above them, Pipin fluttered once and landed on Trafalgar's head, giving him a few annoyed pecks. Then the little bird swooped down, picked up the fallen blindfold in its beak, and flapped up to Aubrelle's shoulder to return it.

"Sorry you had to see something so horrible," Aubrelle said quietly, reaching for the blindfold.

Trafalgar blinked. "What are you talking about?"

She hesitated.

"My face," she said. "My eyes."

He looked straight at her. "I thought your eyes were... beautiful."

Aubrelle stiffened.

Her lips parted slightly, but no sound came out. Her hands trembled as she fumbled to re-tie the blindfold.

A single tear escaped her left eye.

Trafalgar noticed the tear slide down her cheek.

Alarmed, he reached out slightly but stopped himself halfway. "Hey—are you okay? I didn't mean to upset you. Did I hurt you? Do you need anything?"

Aubrelle shook her head gently as she finished tying the blindfold back over her eyes. Her voice was quiet but steady.

"No... I'm fine. Thank you for your concern."

Trafalgar lowered his hand and sat back down on the edge of the bed. He exhaled slowly. "Alright... sorry again. I'll do what you said and wait for my father to show up. Not gonna try standing again."

A faint smile returned to her lips. "That would be wise."

She took a small breath and added, "Now that you're stable, I'll take my leave. It seems you no longer need me here."

Trafalgar nodded. "Still... thank you, Aubrelle. Really. You didn't have to stay."

She turned slightly in his direction, then summoned a slender walking staff with a soft shimmer of mana. Pipin fluttered up to her shoulder again, resuming his place like a vigilant sentinel.

With quiet steps, she made her way toward the door. Her hand reached out without hesitation, fingertips brushing the edge of the frame before finding the handle.

She paused and turned her head slightly. "See you around, Trafalgar."

He gave her a small wave. "Take care, Aubrelle. And thanks again... for everything."

She opened the door.

Click.

It shut softly behind her.

In the hallway, the quiet click of the door echoed faintly.

Aubrelle stood still for a moment, her hand still resting on the handle. Pipin shifted on her shoulder, his tiny claws adjusting against the fabric of her dress.

Then he turned his head—once to the left, once to the right—scanning the corridor with sharp, glowing eyes.

Aubrelle crouched down gently, placing a hand on the ground for balance. Her golden hair, now slightly loose from the earlier fall, brushed over her shoulder.

"...You heard that, Pipin?" she whispered.

The bird gave a soft chirp, tilting its head.

A faint smile touched her lips—fragile and real. "He didn't flinch. He looked straight at me... and he said my eyes were beautiful."

Her fingers lightly touched the blindfold covering her scarred face.

"...The first person who didn't look away in fear or disgust, his tone was sincere and honest..."

She remained crouched for a few seconds longer, taking a slow breath.

Then she stood, staff in hand, and walked silently down the hall—her crimson dress trailing softly behind her, with Pipin perched proud and watchful.

Trafalgar remained seated inside the room, his mind focused on one clear thought.

'What was that pill they made me swallow... and who was that woman in the black veil?'

'If Aubrelle is here, then the other eight legendary characters could be too. Maybe even some of the epic and rare ones... but let's be honest, who ever gave a damn about those in a gacha game? No one maxed out a B-rank unless they had a fetish or were masochists.'

He rubbed his temples, already feeling the beginnings of a headache.

'Still... maybe there's one among the other legendaries who can help me find out more about the veiled woman. I only know scraps of their background stories, but I know them better than anyone else in this world. Trafalgar's memories filled in the blanks for him, sure... but the others? I'm on my own there.'

The pressure started to mount. His chest felt heavy, his brain crowded.

'Tch. So many questions. So few answers. Maybe things will come to light piece by piece. For now... I should probably worry about Valttair.'

His eyes narrowed.

'I don't know how he'll react once he figures out I've been hiding my real Talent. After the duel with Alfons, he probably noticed I've already learned the Morgain Blade. And it's only been—what?—a day?'

He clenched his fists lightly, just as the door creaked open behind him.

'Speak of the devil...'

The door creaked open, and Valttair stepped inside alone. His gaze swept across the room until it landed on Trafalgar, seated on the bed, his dark hair slightly messy, his navy-blue jacket wrinkled from the earlier fall.

"You're awake, Trafalgar," Valttair said calmly, closing the door behind him.

"So it seems, can I ask you a question father?," Trafalgar replied, keeping his tone neutral.

Valttair tilted his head slightly, studying him with interest.

"Later, first this is interesting."

Trafalgar frowned. "What is it, father?"

"Don't you feel anything strange in your body?" Valttair asked, stepping closer with his hands clasped behind his back.

"What do you mean?" Trafalgar leaned forward a bit, wary.

"Take a good look," Valttair said, nodding toward him. "Open your system."

Trafalgar sighed under his breath and muttered, "Status."

A blue translucent screen shimmered into view before him:

[Host: Trafalgar du Morgain]

[Title: Cursed Heir]

[Age: 15]

[Race: Half-Human / ???]

[Bloodline: ???]

[Core: Spark]

[Class: Swordsman]

[Talent: SSS]

[Abilities:

Passive Skill: Sword Insight (Lv.Max)

Passive Skill: Morgain Blade (Lv.1) – Unique Rank

Active Skill: Arc Slash – Common Rank]

His eyes scanned the details quickly. Nothing seemed out of place... until he noticed the change.

'Wait... my core isn't Origin anymore...'

"Spark?" he muttered, eyes narrowing.

"Correct," Valttair said with a small smile. "It seems you've achieved a breakthrough. You're now at the second rank of mana core, Trafalgar. Quite the feat, considering it's been barely two months since your awakening."

"Wow..." Trafalgar stared at the screen. "So I'm not Origin anymore? I guess I'm still behind the others, but... this is a huge step."

"It is," Valttair nodded. "And that kind of progress, in such little time, only happens with a powerful Talent. Which I'd very much like to know the truth about." He narrowed his eyes slightly. "Don't try to lie again, not while I'm still in a good mood."

Trafalgar straightened his back slowly, his expression stiffening.

'Well... I managed to live peacefully for two months. I guess my time's up.'

He took a slow breath.

"My real Talent... is SSS, father."

The room fell into complete silence.

Valttair stared at him for a long moment.

Then... he laughed.

It started low, like a breath caught in his throat, but quickly grew into a full, genuine laugh that echoed through the room. He wiped the corner of his eyes with one hand as if brushing away tears.

"Oh, the gods do have a sense of humor," he muttered between chuckles. "To think... it was worth keeping you around after all."

Trafalgar blinked, visibly thrown off.

'He's... laughing? I expected him to get angry. To punish me. Not this.'

He searched his inherited memories for something—anything—that matched this version of Valttair. But there was nothing. In all the few memories Trafalgar could access, the man had been distant, cold, unreadable. Not once had he seen him smile—let alone laugh.

'What the hell is going on...?'

Valttair finally composed himself, exhaling deeply as he stepped closer.

"You thought I'd be angry?" he asked with a raised brow, clearly amused.

"A little, yeah," Trafalgar admitted, eyes narrowing. "Wasn't exactly expecting tears of joy."

"Angry?" Valtair repeated, letting out another short laugh. "No, no. For the first time in generations... someone in our family has an SSS-ranked Talent. Do you have any idea what that means?"

"I imagine it puts a target on my back," Trafalgar muttered.

"It means you're valuable." Valtair's tone turned serious now. "The other Great Families have children with such talents too, SS or SSS—though they're not all the same, there are some SSS that can be considered above others SSS. But now... the Morgains are back in the game."

'So I'm not the only one,' Trafalgar thought. 'It's kind of disappointing... but at the same time, it means Valtair won't treat me like trash anymore. And Rivena... she'll have to stay far away.'

Valtair turned away slightly, reaching into his coat.

"You'll still be punished for lying to me, of course. But for now..." He raised his hand, revealing a silver ring glowing faintly with magical energy. "Take this."

Trafalgar's eyes locked onto the glowing silver ring resting in Valtair's palm. Thin, elegant, but radiating a subtle magical pressure—it was unmistakable.

"Are you sure about this, father?" he asked, standing up slowly. "Giving me a legendary item?"

Valtair nodded, still holding it out.

"You earned it. That duel with Roderic's son was public. You put him in his place, and by extension, elevated our name. Besides..." He glanced briefly at Trafalgar. "I still don't understand why you insisted

on keeping that blade when I gave you the chance to replace it. At least this way, I know you'll be carrying something worthy of your bloodline."

Trafalgar stepped forward, extending his hand.

"I see... thank you, father."

The ring fell onto his palm with a soft weight. The moment it made contact, a soft chime rang in his mind.

[You have received: Oathbinder, Type: Accessory – Rank: Legendary.]

(If you want more information about the item, say so.)

'A legendary accessory... I'll check the details later, once I'm back in my room.'

He stared at the ring for a moment longer, then closed his fingers around it. Inside, his gamer instincts were going wild.

'Let's fucking go. First legendary drop, baby.'

"Well, what is that question you wanted to ask me?"

"I actually fainted because of a woman who was dressed in black with a veil, it seems she forced me to eat something which caused me to faint, who is that woman?"

"Hmm, I have no idea. With the number of guests who come to the council whenever it's held, it's hard to spot someone just by their attire. And what did she force you to eat?"

"It was shaped like a pill."

"A pill, huh. I'll have someone look into it. At first glance it doesn't seem like she's done anything to you"

Valttair turned toward the door and began walking.

"Be in my office tomorrow morning. That's when I'll decide what punishment fits your little lie."

Trafalgar followed him with a nod.

"Understood."

As they exited the room, Trafalgar glanced once more at the fading light from the ring.

'This Council answered a lot more than I expected... gave me more questions too. But at least I have some allies now... and my first legendary item.'

And with that, the Council of the Eight Great Families came to a quiet end.