

Tyrant 43

Chapter 43: On a Leash

The training room was dimly lit, shadows clinging to the corners like silent witnesses. The torches lining the walls flickered with a low, enchanted flame—just enough to see, not enough to feel warm.

Trafalgar sat alone on a bench near the center, polishing the edge of Maledicta with a cloth soaked in oil. The sword gleamed under the faint light, its blade pulsing faintly as if hungry for blood once again.

The door creaked open.

He didn't look up.

'Finally.'

Heavy boots echoed across the stone floor. Roland stepped into the room, still bandaged and moving with a limp, his face pale from blood loss and stress.

"I'm here, Young Master," he said, stopping a few meters away.

Trafalgar tapped the floor beside him with the flat of Maledicta, not even sparing him a glance. A sharp, hollow sound rang out—tap tap.

Roland walked over and stood in front of the indicated spot.

"Kneel."

Without hesitation, Roland dropped to his knees.

"Good," Trafalgar said, voice low. "From this moment on, you belong to me. Not the Morgain house. Me, Trafalgar. Understood?"

Roland blinked. "I—I don't know if that's possible, Lord—"

"I'm not asking if it's possible," Trafalgar snapped. "I'm telling you how it is. Do you understand me now?"

His tone dropped several degrees into ice. "Or do I need to take your other hand and have them stitch it back together? Maybe then you'll finally get it."

Roland's voice trembled. "N-No need, I understand perfectly. I do."

"Good. Now tell me what happened to Mayla. Everything. From the start to the end. Not a single detail left out."

Roland swallowed hard, then nodded. "If you'll allow it, I'll begin."

"You'd better. I don't plan on sitting here all night."

Roland took a breath. "It started in Lord Valttair's office. I was stationed outside when the First Wife arrived—Lady Seraphine. There was news about the mine... something had gone wrong. Lord Valttair rushed out after hearing that Lysandra had reported an incident involving you. Seraphine remained behind."

'The First Wife... Seraphine. I barely remember her ever speaking to Trafalgar.'

"She called me inside," Roland continued. "She told me to go find Maeron—her son, the First Heir."

Trafalgar's eyes narrowed. "What do Maeron and Seraphine have to do with this? The letter was from Rivena."

"I'm getting to that, Young Master," Roland said. "When Maeron arrived, I waited outside. The door wasn't fully shut, and I... overheard a bit. Lady Seraphine gave him a direct order. Said something like—'Teach that bastard his place. He dared to disrespect one of his sisters.'"

Trafalgar's face hardened. "That must've been Rivena."

Roland nodded. "Likely. Then comes the... unpleasant part."

Trafalgar's tone was cold. "Tell me. Everything."

Roland hesitated. "I'll spare you some of the worst details—"

"All of it, Roland."

The silence in the room grew suffocating.

Roland looked down, his voice a low murmur barely above the hum of the torchlight.

"After Seraphine gave the order, Maeron didn't even blink. He told me to come with him—to help him 'send a message.' I didn't know what he meant at first... not until we reached your room."

Trafalgar's grip on Maledicta tightened. Shadows seemed to stir around the blade.

"Mayla was inside," Roland continued. "She was folding clothes. Preparing everything for your return. She smiled when she saw us. Asked if something was wrong."

He paused.

"...Maeron didn't respond. He just clenched his fist. Mana began to gather around it—dense, crackling, like he'd been planning this the whole time."

Trafalgar's voice was sharp. "And?"

"...He struck her. Full force. In the head. She dropped immediately—like a puppet whose strings were cut. Blood hit the floor before she did."

Roland's voice broke slightly. "She didn't even scream."

Trafalgar said nothing.

'...She was preparing my room. Probably humming while doing it... and he...'

Roland forced himself to go on. "He looked at her body. No guilt. He just said: Leave the letter. Get a healer. Tell Mother it's done. And then he left."

The room went silent. The only sound was the crackle of torchfire and Trafalgar's slow, steady breathing.

But his aura had changed—grown heavier, more volatile. The kind of silence before a volcano erupts.

'Fucking bastard... I should've been there. I should've protected her...'

Roland looked up nervously. "Young Master...?"

Trafalgar's voice came low and dangerous. "Shut up. Let me think."

Roland obeyed instantly.

'Why now? Why target her, of all people? No one's ever touched Mayla before. They always came for Trafalgar. Mocked Trafalgar. Beat Trafalgar. But Mayla...?'

His eyes darkened.

'The letter... Rivena's name was a distraction. A deliberate mislead. Seraphine wanted me to think it was her, to ignite the right emotions. Which means... she's behind more than just this. Maybe all of it. Maybe... everything that ever happened to the old Trafalgar.'

The realization burned like acid.

'I need to speak to Valtair... soon. But first... Roland. What do I do with him? He didn't stop it. But he's useful. Especially now that he's terrified of me. That fear will keep him loyal—for a while.'

Finally, Trafalgar stood up and walked slowly toward Roland, sword still in hand.

"Roland," he said after several minutes of silence, "Who are you loyal to?"

Roland didn't hesitate. "To Lord Trafalgar du Morgain."

"Good. Then listen carefully. From this day forward, you'll remain close to Lady Seraphine. Watch her. Report everything she does. And when I depart to the academy, I expect a letter every month. Details on Seraphine. Rivena. Maeron. And updates on Mayla."

Roland nodded. "Understood."

"If anything happens... anything... I want to know immediately."

"Yes, Young Master."

"Then go."

Roland bowed deeply and left, the door closing behind him with a soft click.

Trafalgar remained still, staring at the floor.

'This... is bigger than I thought. Seraphine... what game are you playing?'

He looked up at the ceiling, jaw clenched.

'I'll need help. Lysandra? Valttair?'

Suddenly, the door creaked again.

Trafalgar didn't turn. "I already told you what to do."

He squinted.

"...Who are you?"