

Tyrant 44

Chapter 44: A Shadow's Oath

The door creaked open, echoing softly through the quiet training room.

Trafalgar's eyes narrowed as he instinctively rose from the bench, gripping Maledicta's hilt. The blade shimmered faintly in his hand, casting dark reflections across the stone floor.

A man stepped through the threshold — tall, composed, dressed in a tailored black suit lined with subtle silver threading. Pale gray hair, precisely cut, and sharp yellow eyes that seemed to analyze everything at once.

"Who the hell are you?" Trafalgar asked, voice cold, stance tense.

The man halted just inside the doorway, offering a slight bow. "My name is Caelum and I serve the Morgain house."

Trafalgar didn't lower the sword. "That doesn't answer the question. Serving the Morgain family doesn't mean you can walk in here uninvited."

Caelum looked unbothered. "Understandable. Most in this estate wouldn't recognize me — that is by design."

'Great. Another cryptic bastard.'

Still not fully convinced, Trafalgar took a half-step forward, Maledicta humming in his hand. "One more step and we'll see if your organs match your calm face, I'm not in the mood right now."

Caelum raised one gloved hand in peace. "There's no need for that, young master."

Trafalgar flinched.

"...What did you just call me?"

Caelum smiled faintly. "You are Trafalgar du Morgain, aren't you? Ninth heir of Valttair. I've been observing your nightly training sessions two months ago, and your two month training."

Trafalgar's grip tightened, but then his eyes searched the man more closely. Something about his presence... the way he stood, the measured way he spoke — it wasn't the posture of a spy or a traitor.

'Like I get that, but why he is so respectful towards me? He's not lying though. But what the hell does he want?'

With a sigh, Trafalgar lowered Maledicta. The sword dissolved into black mist and vanished.

He folded his arms. "Alright, Caelum. If you've been watching me for that long, then I assume you didn't come here just to say hello."

Caelum's gaze remained level. "Correct. I came to speak with you, not to threaten or interrupt. Though, if you still prefer to hold a weapon between us, I won't take it personally."

Trafalgar shook his head slowly. "No need. You've got my attention now. Speak."

Caelum stepped further into the room, quiet as a shadow.

"Very well. Let's begin."

Trafalgar kept a cautious gaze on the man before him. Caelum stood with hands behind his back, posture relaxed but precise. It was the kind of stance that belonged to someone trained not just to obey... but to survive.

"You've been watching me for two months, and my father knows about this I imagine since no one knows about you or so it seems," Trafalgar said. "Alright. What's your angle?"

Caelum's yellow eyes met his. "I report directly to Lord Valttair, yes. But I'm also permitted discretion. And my discretion tells me you are... an anomaly."

Trafalgar narrowed his eyes. "That's not an answer I like."

"No," Caelum admitted calmly. "It's not. But here's one. I serve House Morgain — not just your father. My loyalty is generational. My family has done this for over eight hundred years. We don't choose people based on birthright or favoritism. We choose based on who can carry the weight of the bloodline."

"And you think that's me?"

Caelum gave a subtle nod. "I do."

Trafalgar couldn't help the small, bitter smile. "The bastard. The ninth. The one who awakened his core at fifteen."

"You forget the rest," Caelum said. "The one with an SSS Talent. The one who trains nightly. The one who adapted faster than any heir I've seen. The one who's learned to control bloodlust instead of be ruled by it."

'So he really has been watching me. Every move, even when I spared Rolands life, creepy honestly.'

"You sound convinced," Trafalgar said. "But why now?"

Caelum said plainly. "I'd rather be useful to the future heir than have to clean up the fallout later."

Trafalgar's arms crossed. 'He thinks that I will be the heir?'

He gave Caelum a long, sharp look.

"And what would this 'usefulness' of yours include?"

"Information," Caelum replied without missing a beat. "Cover. Access. There are things you want to know — and people you want to watch. You'll need someone better than a bruised soldier trembling at your feet."

'He's talking about Roland... Damn. He even know that he works for me now, was he spying me just now? How does he know? The sound shouldn't have made it through this training ground because the walls are reinforced.'

Trafalgar tilted his head. "Alright, Caelum. If you're really offering your loyalty... then I'll test it."

He stepped closer.

"Actually, there's something I need you to do for me."

Caelum's eyes did not flinch.

"Tell me what you require."

"Lady Seraphine," he said slowly. "She had something to do with what happened to Mayla."

Caelum nodded once, like he had already anticipated the name.

"I want you to find out why. And more than that—" Trafalgar's tone dropped, lower, colder—"I want you to keep Mayla safe. At all times. Once I leave for the academy, I won't be able to watch over her myself."

Caelum responded with a calm assurance. "Consider it done. I'll assign something personally. No one will lay a finger on her again."

Trafalgar studied him in silence for a few seconds, then spoke again.

"So I want eyes on Seraphine. Everything she does and everyone she talks to. I want regular updates on her, Rivena, Maeron, and anything involving Mayla's recovery."

"I can provide that," Caelum said. "But if I'm to do it thoroughly, I'll need to bypass the usual channels. Discretion is key."

Trafalgar gave a faint smirk. "That's what you're good at, isn't it? Ghost in the manor, always watching."

Caelum didn't smile, but there was a faint flicker of acknowledgment in his golden eyes.

"One more thing," Trafalgar added. "What's your Class, Talent, and current Core Rank?"

Caelum blinked once, unbothered by the directness. "You're the first to ask me that in decades."

"Well?" Trafalgar pressed.

"I'm a [Rogue]," Caelum answered. "My Talent is ranked A. I'm currently at Prime, nearing Ascend."

'That's the fifth stage... Damn, he's stronger than most captains.'

Trafalgar gave a nod of approval. "Rogue... makes sense. Crossbows, daggers, stealth."

"And assassination," Caelum said without pause. "Espionage. Infiltration."

'So that's why barely anyone knows who he is in this house...'

"Only Valttair's brothers, the wives, the generals, and now me," Trafalgar said aloud.

Caelum inclined his head. "Correct. You're officially in that circle now."

Caelum reached into the inner pocket of his coat and retrieved a small, sleek object.

He tossed it gently toward Trafalgar, who caught it mid-air.

[Item Acquired – Shadowlink Echo, Rank - Rare]

Description: A compact mana-infused node capable of recording and transmitting encrypted voice messages over long distances. Requires a small infusion of mana to activate.

Trafalgar raised an eyebrow.

"With that," Caelum said smoothly, "you'll receive my reports the moment I have something relevant. No need to wait for a monthly letter like with Roland. Just focus your mana into it when you have time—it'll replay my voice."

Trafalgar nodded, rotating the device in his fingers.

'He really had heard all the conversation.'

"That's efficient."

Caelum adjusted his gloves. "Valttair is speaking with Maeron as we speak. I doubt the conversation will end gently. Not after discovering your Talent is SSS... that fact will be kept private, of course. But for now, you're the Morgain's most valuable asset, not now because you are strong, but because of your potential."

Trafalgar didn't react visibly, but a subtle tension left his shoulders.

"You remember what your father told you about SSS Talents?" Caelum asked.

"That no two are the same," Trafalgar replied.

"Exactly. We won't know your full potential until your true Class awakens. But your growth... it already exceeds expectations."

Caelum began walking toward the door but paused before exiting.

"Don't worry about Mayla," he said over his shoulder. "She'll be protected. And as for Seraphine... I'll keep a close eye."

The door clicked shut behind him, leaving Trafalgar in silence.

He exhaled slowly, sinking onto a bench by the wall.

'So now I've got Roland... and Caelum. One out of fear, one out of loyalty. But how long can I juggle this alone?'

His gaze drifted upward to the ceiling.

He closed his hand around the Shadowlink Echo and made it disappear.

'Let's see how far I can take this.'