

Tyrant 67

Chapter 67: Before the Gate Opens

The long dining table of Mordrek's mansion was surrounded by warmth and golden candlelight. Outside, the snow never stopped falling—but inside, laughter and clinking silverware filled the room.

Trafalgar sat between Mordrek and Sylis, quietly eating while observing the family around him.

Anthera, dressed in her usual graceful deep-red dress, turned toward her husband with a smile. "You look good with your new haircut, darling."

Mordrek grunted, scratching the back of his neck. His once wild platinum hair was now trimmed short, making his features appear sharper.

"Tch. Figured it was time to look more like a proper lord."

The twins, Eron and Mael, were busy fighting over a bread roll. Their mother calmly split it in half for them.

"These two troublemakers never change," she sighed with amusement.

Sylis rested her cheek on one hand, clearly used to the chaos. Trafalgar smiled slightly—this kind of atmosphere was foreign to him, yet oddly comforting.

Just then, the doors opened and a few maids entered, placing new dishes on the table. One of them was the elven maid who had once tried to flirt with Trafalgar.

He noticed her eyes briefly meet his, but he quickly looked away, focusing back on his plate.

'She was the one who said I could ask for help... with that. No thanks. I don't want to lose my real first time to someone I barely know.'

His expression darkened for a moment.

'The first time Trafalgar experienced that... it was stolen by Rivena. Just thinking about her disgusts me.'

Anthera turned to Trafalgar, her tone warm as always.

"It's hard to believe almost three weeks have already passed. In just two more days, you'll be heading to the academy."

Trafalgar nodded, putting down his fork.

"Yeah... I didn't expect to stay here at all. Thought I'd go straight to the academy and spend the remaining time there." He paused, then added, "But I'm glad I passed through here."

Mordrek leaned back in his chair, arms crossed.

"Well, bastard, I didn't get bored training you these past two weeks. You're still steps away from the next Core Rank, but your growth is real. You've got unnatural talent... I think I know why."

He gave Trafalgar a sharp look.

"Just remember: don't go telling anyone out there. You're a Morgain, from one of the Eight Great Families—and with your bloodline, you're a walking target."

Trafalgar snorted. "You don't need to remind me, uncle. I survived fifteen years in that hellhole on my own. I think I've learned how to stay alive."

'Well... the real Trafalgar didn't survive. He killed himself. But no one knows that. So technically, yeah—he did survive.'

Sylis, sitting beside him, perked up. "Dad, am I going to the academy too?"

Mordrek glanced at her. "When you turn sixteen, yes. For now, you've still got a year to go. If you go, you'll be one year below Trafalgar."

Sylis sighed. "I really want to leave this place. I want to see the world outside."

Anthera raised an eyebrow. "Are we really that bad to be around?"

Sylis waved her hands. "No, no! That's not what I meant. I love you guys, but... we've never really left the Morgain territory. Just nearby cities and forests. That's it."

Mordrek shrugged. "You're still our little girl. It's normal we won't let you run off just yet. It's dangerous out there—even with your strength."

Trafalgar finished his plate, then pushed back his chair and stood up. "Thanks for the dinner. I'll head to my room now."

Anthera gave him a nod. "Good night, Trafalgar."

He exited the dining hall alone, his footsteps soft against the stone floor as he made his way through the quiet corridors of the mansion.

The hallways of the Morgain estate were silent, save for the soft crunch of the carpet beneath Trafalgar's boots. Through the tall windows, he could still see snowflakes falling gently across the white courtyard. The cold never seemed to stop in Morgain lands.

He reached his room and slowed as he spotted a familiar figure standing just beside the door.

The elven maid.

She wore a simple uniform, but her long silver-blond hair and delicate features gave her a noble air. Her ears twitched slightly when she noticed him approaching.

She gave a small bow. "Your bath is ready, Lord Trafalgar."

He nodded curtly. "Thanks."

The maid straightened but remained in place. Her eyes glanced toward him once more.

"If... you need anything at all, please don't hesitate to call for me. I'm ready for anything, my lord."

Trafalgar paused. There was a flicker of tension in the air.

'Right... Is she really offering again?'

His expression didn't change, but his voice was calm, almost apologetic. "Sorry, but I'm really not looking for that kind of help."

The maid blinked, her smile faltering just slightly. "I see... I understand."

He nodded again and stepped past her, pushing open the door to his room.

"Good night."

She didn't reply immediately. Only after he was inside did he hear her soft voice from the other side. "Good night... Lord Trafalgar."

The door clicked shut. Alone again.

Trafalgar exhaled slowly and rubbed the back of his neck.

'She looked disappointed... but I can't do it, I have some morals left, even if it's normal in this world.'

His gaze drifted toward the far side of the room, where steam curled from the half-open bathroom door.

'I want my first time to be with someone special to me... even if it sounds naive.'

He began to undress, piece by piece, tossing his clothes into a nearby basket. When he was bare, he stepped into the warmth of the bathroom.

The scent of herbs and heated water greeted him. The large bathtub was already full, the surface shimmering with soft ripples.

Trafalgar stood for a moment, bare and silent, then glanced down at his body—his torso, his arms, the faint lines of muscle beginning to show.

'Hard to believe this body used to look sickly just a few months ago...'

He stepped into the water, sinking slowly, letting the warmth cover him from the neck down. Then, without a word, he ducked his head fully underwater, submerging himself in silence.

Underwater, all sounds vanished.

Trafalgar kept his eyes closed as the heat seeped into his muscles, loosening the tension of training, of caution, of everything he'd carried for the last weeks. No battles, no blood, no whispers of bloodlines or expectations.

But of course, his mind refused to rest.

'Two days left.'

He surfaced slowly, exhaling a deep breath as air returned to his lungs. Water dripped down his face and shoulders as he leaned back against the smooth edge of the tub.

The steamy ceiling blurred above him.

'In two days, I'll leave for the capital. Velkaris... The Gate should take me to the main hall and someone would technically be waiting for me. They said I'll have about a week to settle into the academy's dorms before the classes officially start.'

He stretched his arms along the rim of the bath, muscles flexing, posture calm, but his mind kept spinning.

'Velkaris is the biggest city in this world. I've read that it's ruled not by a king, but by a council of elders, the ones who control the actual Council. Even the great families only have limited influence there. Neutral ground, supposedly.'

He smirked faintly.

'Perfect place to chill a bit I hope.'

His thoughts drifted again, this time to the map he had seen in Mordrek's study. Endless mountains, vast deserts, ocean kingdoms, frozen tundras—this world was massive. Maybe two or three times the size of Earth. It made sense why so many ancient bloodlines could still go undetected.

'If even a dragon can go unnoticed in a forest for weeks, then how the hell am I supposed to find anyone connected to the Primordials... let alone the Veiled Woman?'

His fingers curled slightly on the bath's edge.

'I'll figure it out. One step at a time.'

He sighed and slid further down into the tub, his body sinking until just his eyes and nose remained above the water.

Steam rose. Silence returned. And in that silence, Trafalgar let himself rest—just for a moment.

After spending a while longer soaking in the warm bath, Trafalgar stepped out slowly, water cascading down his body. He didn't bother reaching for a towel—his Primordial Body radiated heat, and the ambient mana clung to him like a second skin, evaporating the droplets in seconds.

He walked naked across the room, the floor cold beneath his feet but not enough to bother him.

The clothes he had discarded earlier remained untouched. He didn't need them. Not in his own room.

The mansion was quiet. Outside, snow continued to fall in soft sheets beyond the frosted windows. Even in this part of the Morgain territory, far from the main castle, winter never truly left.

Trafalgar pulled the sheets back and slipped into bed, bare as always. He preferred it this way—unrestricted, clean, distant from all the layers people wore during the day. There was something freeing in the silence of being alone, wrapped in nothing but his own skin and the faint hum of mana that naturally wrapped around him.

He laid there for a moment, arms behind his head, staring at the dark wooden ceiling.

'Two days until I leave.'

The academy. The capital. The search. The dangers. The unknown.

But for now... sleep.

He closed his eyes.

The mana around his body pulsed gently, like a lullaby known only to those born of ancient blood.

Sleep came quickly after that.