

Tyrant 84

Chapter 84: The Price of a Rescue

Arden rushed out with the medical kit in hand, his steps heavy but precise. Marella was already by Ronan's side, pushing a chair toward him so he could sit down before collapsing.

Trafalgar sat nearby, his gaze scanning the scene. Around them, a few other customers watched, but none seemed shocked. It was as if this sort of thing happened often here.

'Yeah... in the first game it was even worse. Back then it wasn't just two old people running this place—they had a lot more staff dealing with stuff like this.'

"Hold on, Ronan, don't fall asleep, stay with me," Arden urged.

Marella pulled out a small bottle of strong liquor from the kit and passed it to Ronan. He began drinking in quick gulps, the burn of the alcohol mixing with the sharp pain radiating from the stump where his arm used to be. It wouldn't numb the pain immediately, but it would make him a bit tipsy and help him endure.

A few moments later, Ronan's eyelids drooped, his body leaning back in the chair. Marella and Arden had already used some kind of magical item from the kit to stabilize his wound, along with basic first aid. His breathing slowed, but it was steady enough.

Once Ronan was settled, Marella, Arden, and Sylven moved to a nearby table. The elf's expression was tense, his hands clasped together as if holding something in. Trafalgar stayed where he was, close enough to hear every word.

Sylven looked at them both. "Marella, Arden... what I'm about to tell you won't be easy to hear. The situation is worse than you think."

"Spit it out, boy," Arden said, his voice sharp.

"I'll tell you everything from the start," Sylven began. "We were on the mission you gave us—the one to escort a messenger to a village outside Velkaris, past where the train tracks end."

"I remember," Marella nodded.

"Everything was going fine at first. We were just me, Garrika, and Ronan as usual. The monsters we ran into were Spark or Pulse rank—nothing we couldn't handle. But then... we were ambushed."

"By who?" Arden demanded.

"The messenger himself. He led us into a trap, and suddenly we were surrounded. Dozens of them."

Trafalgar leaned back slightly, watching the old man's reaction. 'Sometimes I forget what this world is really like because of how calm my last week's been. But here we are again—more trouble. Not mine this time... but maybe it can work in my favor. This could be exactly what I was waiting for. Let's see where this goes.'

Sylven continued, "We fought—three of us against twenty. They weren't stronger than us individually, but the numbers wore us down. Ronan held the front as our shield. When the strikes came too fast, he couldn't block them all. He lost his arm, and in that moment of chaos, they took Garrika."

Sylven's voice trailed off into silence. He opened his mouth to speak again, but Arden slammed his fist on the table. "You let my granddaughter be taken by bandits?!"

Sylven flinched, but Marella was the one to intervene. "Arden, it was an ambush from the start. They targeted us specifically. There's no point in blaming him now—the important thing is getting Garrika back. Losing your temper won't help."

Arden's shoulders dropped slightly. "...I know. Garrika is like our own daughter... I just—"

"I'll find her," Sylven said quietly. "I'll prepare something to get her back."

Arden's jaw was tight, his hands clenched on the table. "Do you even know who took her? Where they took her? If you go in blind, you'll get yourself killed. Give me a few days to gather people—someone's bound to know something."

Trafalgar's lips twitched into the faintest smirk. 'Bingo. I know exactly who has Garrika.'

He stood up and stepped closer to their table, his footsteps drawing all three pairs of eyes toward him. "I can help," he said plainly.

"Get lost, kid," Arden snapped. "This doesn't concern you. I don't care if you're a Morgain—don't get in the way."

A vein pulsed on Trafalgar's forehead. "Fine. Then I'll just go back to my seat and enjoy my food once it is served. Good luck finding your 'daughter' without me—though I happen to know exactly where she is."

Before he could turn away, Marella's hand shot out, gripping his arm. "Wait. My husband is stressed—please, sit down."

Trafalgar sat, his gaze shifting to Sylven.

"Who took Garrika?" Sylven asked.

"The information's not free," Trafalgar replied.

Sylven leaned forward, his voice sharp. "There's a life at stake. Tell us now."

Trafalgar didn't flinch. "The information's not free."

Arden exhaled through his nose like a bull. "What do you want?"

"Simple. Same as last time—sell me this place."

"No!" Arden's answer was immediate, almost a bark.

Trafalgar pushed back from the table as if to stand. "Then I wish you luck. You're going to need it."

"Son of a bi—" Arden began, but Marella cut him off before the insult could leave his mouth. "I accept."

Trafalgar turned back to her. "You sure? Doesn't seem like your husband's too happy about it."

"I just want to know where Garrika is," Marella said firmly.

He leaned back in his chair, the hint of a smile curling his lips. "Lucien has her. Not hard to figure out if you connect the dots—he was here last time, and I warned you he'd make a move soon."

Arden's hands slammed the table. "That bastard!"

"Calm yourself," Trafalgar said evenly. "If you want her back, you'll need more than anger."

Arden's breathing was heavy, his knuckles white against the wooden table. Trafalgar didn't rush him; he simply sat there, letting the old man's anger burn itself out.

"In fact," Trafalgar added, "I can help even more. But first, I want something to make sure you'll actually negotiate with me."

Without a word, Marella stood and hurried to the counter. She rummaged through a drawer, grabbed a sheet of paper, and returned with ink and quill. In quick, practiced strokes, she wrote out a short agreement—nothing too detailed, just enough to state that if Trafalgar brought Garrika back safely, they'd negotiate the sale of the place to him.

She slid the paper toward him. "This should be enough, yes?"

Trafalgar glanced over it, then folded it neatly and tucked it into his coat. "Good."

Sylven shifted in his seat. "You don't have to do this. I can—"

"You can what?" Trafalgar cut in. "You're alone, your partner's out of commission, and if you take too long, they might do something to Garrika you can't undo."

Sylven clenched his jaw. He didn't argue further.

Arden leaned forward, his voice lower now. "What do you propose, then?"

"What do you think?" Trafalgar replied, his tone carrying a faint edge of pride. "I'm a Morgain. I'm going to bring her back."

"I'm going with you," Sylven said suddenly.

Trafalgar shook his head. "No. They know you. They know me too—but they have a... different opinion of me. Especially Lucien. I can use that."

For a moment, the three of them just stared at him. There was skepticism in Arden's eyes, but also the faintest flicker of hope. Marella's gaze, however, was steady—calm, but sharp, as if weighing him.

Trafalgar stood, adjusting his coat. "Stay here. Wait for my word."

Without waiting for a reply, he turned and walked toward the door. The folded contract was secure in his pocket, and a thin smile played on his lips.

'Time to work. Time to put myself in danger again. At least this time I will be with my good friend Barth.'