

Tyrant 94

Chapter 94: Rift Within the Labyrinth

Trafalgar followed the sound until the narrow corridor opened into a wider chamber. What he saw made him pause.

A human with short red hair was moving fast, his hands flashing as he deflected arrows one after another. But his hands weren't normal—each time they met an arrow, his skin darkened and gleamed, reshaping into iron. Sparks burst with every clash as if metal struck metal.

Facing him stood an elf, tall and sharp-eyed, bowstring taut as he loosed arrow after arrow with frightening speed.

'So that's the sound I heard...' Trafalgar thought, eyes narrowing.

But almost instantly, he realized it wasn't. The sound was sharper, deeper—something else entirely.

Behind the two fighters, the air warped. A distortion spiraled, threads of darkness bending the stone around it.

A rift.

Trafalgar's stomach dropped. '...Shit. Void creatures? Again? I thought I was protected. Why are they appearing now?'

The memories of the last incident flashed in his mind—the chaos, the danger, the creatures that should never have existed here. If they were surfacing again, it meant one thing.

Something inside this labyrinth wasn't supposed to be here. Opposites colliding, like magnets repelling—the very anomaly the Veiled Woman had warned him about.

He clenched his jaw. Every instinct screamed at him to run, to get as far away as possible. But his thoughts pulled him in the opposite direction.

'If I leave now, I'll never know what triggered it.'

The red-haired fighter and the elf hadn't noticed, they were too focused on their duel. But the rift widened, humming with pressure. Darkness bled into the chamber like smoke from a fire.

And Trafalgar kept his eyes locked on it, knowing exactly what would come next.

The duel raged for only moments longer before both fighters noticed the distortion. The elf's eyes widened, his bow lowering slightly as the twisting void tore wider behind him.

From the rift, shapes began to crawl out—creatures that didn't belong in this world.

Tall, faceless humanoids, their skin stretched and smooth like polished obsidian, moving with eerie precision. Beside them, malformed hounds dragged themselves forward on twisted limbs, their jaws splitting unnaturally wide, dripping with violet light. They radiated the aura of alien invaders, cold and merciless.

Void Creatures.

The elf froze, caught between keeping his aim on the red-haired human and staring at the abominations spreading into the chamber.

The hesitation cost him.

With a sharp step, the red-haired fighter closed the distance. His fist—skin shifting once more into hard iron—slammed into the elf's side. The blow landed clean against the ribs, driving into his liver.

The elf gasped, collapsing to the ground, clutching his abdomen. He coughed, breath knocked out completely, his bow clattering away.

But something was wrong.

No protective barrier flared around him. No shimmer of magic intercepted the hit. The academy's safeguard that should have prevented such an injury... never triggered.

The elf's eyes darted wildly as the void creatures advanced. One of the faceless humanoids turned its featureless head toward him, while two malformed hounds padded closer, jaws snapping.

He tried to crawl, scrambling away from the rift, fear twisting across his features.

Trafalgar's grip on Maledicta tightened. 'Why isn't the barrier activating? Why aren't they pulling us out?!

His heart pounded as the air grew heavier, corrupted mana flooding the chamber. The rift pulsed like a beating heart, more creatures spilling through with each second.

This wasn't supposed to happen.

- Council of Overseers POV -

Far above the labyrinth, inside the observation hall, four figures watched the trials unfold across dozens of projected screens.

Kaelen, the mage, leaned forward, his violet eyes narrowing. On one screen, Trafalgar had just cleaved down a Lycan. On another, the duel between the elf and the red-haired student flickered into view.

But then the image warped. The rift appeared, tearing reality apart inside the maze.

Kaelen's expression darkened instantly. His hand shot to his crystal staff, murmuring an incantation.

"Shit!"

Selara, the disheveled elven alchemist, adjusted her strange goggles and frowned. "What happened?"

"The labyrinth has been compromised," Kaelen said sharply. "A rift has opened inside. I can't teleport the students back—and the defensive barriers aren't triggering."

"What?" Eryndor, the scarred warrior, rose from his chair, his massive frame tense. "How the hell does that slip through your magic?"

Althea, the vampiric strategist, crossed her arms, crimson eyes narrowing like blades. "Then what are you waiting for, Kaelen? Don't waste time. If dimensional magic fails at a distance, go there yourself."

Kaelen's jaw tightened. He didn't argue. In a flash, his figure shimmered and vanished from the hall, leaving only the echo of displaced air behind.

Selara's lips curled into a grin, eyes glinting with dangerous curiosity. "Well... this just got interesting."

Back in the maze, Kaelen's tall frame materialized in front of Trafalgar, staff glowing with radiant power. His voice was firm, commanding.

"Keep them occupied while I close the rift."

Trafalgar's glare flicked toward him, sharp and distrustful. But refusing wasn't an option. His hand tightened around Maledicta, the blade humming faintly in the heavy air.

Trafalgar scowled. 'Of course... dump the dirty work on me.'

The first hound lunged. Maledicta flashed.

[Arc Slash.]

A sweeping wave of dark-blue energy cut across the beast, splitting it apart midair. Its body shattered into shards of violet light.

Another faceless humanoid closed in, swinging an elongated arm like a blade. Trafalgar stepped lightly, his body blurring.

[Severance Step.]

He reappeared behind it, blade already mid-swing. [Severing Fang] ripped a diagonal arc through its torso, the creature collapsing into nothingness.

But more poured out. Two, three, five at once. The chamber grew thick with their presence, the rift a constant wound bleeding enemies into reality.

Trafalgar clicked his tongue. 'Tch. I'll burn through all my mana at this rate.'

They surged together. He grounded his stance, shadows curling at his feet. [Morgain's Requiem.]

A whirlwind of slashes erupted around him, Maledicta dancing in a deadly rhythm. Each cut projected curved shadows that carved through the void creatures in waves. Hounds and humanoids alike fell apart under the barrage, their bodies scattering into dim light. The final swing tore a wide arc, clearing the space around him.

Trafalgar dropped to one knee, panting. His mana reserves were thinning dangerously fast.

Behind him, Kaelen's voice roared over the chaos, filled with strain. "Almost... there!"

The rift shuddered. Runes spiraled outward from Kaelen's staff, tightening around the distortion until, with a thunderous crack, the wound in reality sealed shut. The oppressive energy lifted, silence returning to the chamber.

Kaelen exhaled heavily, lowering his staff. "It's done. I'll teleport the three of you out immediately."

But Trafalgar stood, wiping sweat from his brow, Maledicta still at his side. "Not me."

Kaelen's eyes flicked toward him. "What?"

"I'm staying. The mana here is too rich to waste. I can't get this kind of environment anywhere else."

For a moment, Kaelen studied him, violet eyes unreadable. 'This is Morgain, right? It's going to be interesting. He doesn't look like the one in the rumors. Well, it doesn't seem like there'll be any problem with him staying. I'll keep an eye on him.'

Then he nodded slowly. "Very well. The anomaly has been sealed. It should be safe enough now. Stay if you wish—but don't get reckless."

The mage turned back to the fallen elf and the red-haired fighter, preparing the teleportation spell.

'Time to find out what's going on here.'