

KEEPER 149

Chapter 149: THE CHAMBER HEARING I

Sagiri could not tell day from night, but he guessed another day had gone by while he was kept in a cell. If Lotaga was right, then it meant that the three councils had to gather, and that could take a few days. His food was brought three times a day by the prison wardens, but they remained silent whenever he asked them anything.

He had slept through the first day. More like passed out. He had not realized how depleted he was until then. He was now completely rested, and he wanted to get out of the cell as soon as possible. He did not know what his fate was, but he knew some part of it was already sealed. Now that he had had time to himself to think, he was starting to realize that his benefactor must have been behind Yugo's killing. Someone must have been watching him, and Yugo might have died whether he had left or not. If not Yugo, then another warrior could have died.

Now the only question unanswered was who could have done it? He had been thinking about it, and the only answer he could get was that the person who did it must have been in Riogi's team or a team guarding the other sides of the wall. If not, then it was no doubt someone within the walls of the war headquarters. Someone could not have gotten in easily to cause such. Even with them being on watch duty. There were still eight ACTH towers watching beyond the gates. Perhaps it was not one person but many. He did not know anymore.

He kept adding and subtracting possibilities while alone with his thoughts, but he could not come up with a clear answer. It must have been the fourth day when warriors dressed in chamber uniforms came to get him. They were black but with stripes of white at the hems of the collar, waist, and ankles. He did not need to be told to know that he was being escorted to the hearing chamber. Finally. Waiting was more torturous than knowing what could happen to him. He was escorted up several winding stairs and down several corridors until they entered the sixth wing, where the hearing chamber was.

Members of squad 25 were standing by the door when he passed by, and apart from giving him relieved and pitiful looks, they did not say anything. Or perhaps they were not allowed to say anything to him. Ulekai smiles at him as if to encourage him. N'varu looked worried, Kaka looked irritated, Maita looked impatient, kiuga a bit guilty, banga just unbothered, Zazarie and bukata worried, and Zolinka looked drained as if the whole thing had deprived him of a good sleep. He entered, and his team followed, only allowed to stand by the door.

The chamber doors closed with a heavy iron thud. Silence settled like dust over a battlefield.

Sagiri was escorted to a platform at the centre of the room and forced to stand with his hands bound behind his back and tied to a pole at the centre. His ankles were also cuffed to the pole with slightly longer chains. Only then did the chamber-uniformly dressed warriors step back. They remained standing behind him. To his left sagiri could see Salka, senraki and Fuwuka sitting, and he assumed the the mean looking men sitting beside them were some of the ten schools' council. It entailed twelve members, but it seemed they sent only three who looked like they had more pressing matters to attend to. Since Felunka was sited to the front of his with the six other men and one other man, it was obvious that they were some from the war council. So that meant to the right was the warrior guild.

Across the chamber, the War Council table was already in disarray. The general seemed to be more on edge, and sagiri could already tell why. The warriors guild, which only had older men on it, was reeking of pride as if they looked down on everyone, and they also had some hate for the ten school council. The war council despised the warriors' guild and, at the moment, hated the council of the ten schools with passion. Tension was already thick. One simple push and the whole council could burst into flames. It was going to be one hell of a chamber hearing.

The council opened up, and before anyone could speak, General Felunka was the first to snap. He slammed his fist against the stone surface and shot to his feet.

"Two men," he growled. His voice echoed through the chamber like thunder. "Two of my soldiers are dead in under a week in a time of peace, yet their corpses go cold under the earth, and I have no explanation for their death."

His eyes burned toward Sagiri.

"And every time this boy is involved, bodies pile up." He continued.

A Guild elder leaned back in his chair, completely unfazed by the outburst, fingers resting lazily on a cane carved from black bone. The Warriors Guild delegation had arrived with their usual unsettling calm and pride, thinking that they were better than anyone. The elder spoke softly when he finally parted his lips lazily.

"And three of our warriors were killed when the kidnappers came for him." His eyes moved slowly toward Sagiri. "A cadet slaughtering trained warriors. Curious, isn't it?"

The accusation hung in the air. The war council must not have known that piece of information, and Felunka sat down as if the new piece of information was the last piece he needed.

Sagiri said nothing. Or rather, he was not allowed to speak until he was asked, which he doubted was going to happen. He could feel the weight of every stare in the chamber.

The General pointed at him.

"The instructor and his teammates said he was weak and was not able to kill a person. Why did the guild keep such an important piece of information?"

"Because it is none of your business to know. The guild doesn't answer to you," the same white-haired man answered as if he had not dropped a bomb that suddenly added fuel to the flames. Some of sagiri's teammates did not know he had killed three men. Only kaka, kiuga, and N'varu knew. He should have known the guild had been trying to get their hands on him, and they were a couple of cunning foxes.

"He disappears from patrol for four hours. His partner ends up carved to pieces. And we're supposed to pretend this is a coincidence?" Felunka shot his question at the Ten Schools Council this time, perhaps realizing the warrior guild was a real pain in his neck