

KEEPER 151

Chapter 151: THE CHAMBER UNEXPECTED TWIST

"Even for murder?" The General's jaw tightened.

"Especially for murder," the head of the ten-school council answered again, lifting his eyes so he was looking at the general from under his eyebrows.

The chamber fell silent, and this time the silence held something in it. Just one wrong word and the whole thing could go up in flames.

"You're saying he walks free?" The Guild elder leaned forward and broke the silence yet again

"No." The Grand Marshal's voice hardened. "He continues his training." A ripple of disbelief spread across the room. The General stepped from his seat and rounded the podium he had been sitting behind, abandoning his seat at the centre.

"This is outrageous," he said, his hand resting on the hilt of the sword strapped to his side.

"Bring me evidence." The head of the ten schools council turned toward him. His gaze was even colder now. "Not anger. No suspicion." He gestured toward Sagiri. "Evidence."

Silence prevailed again, but the air beside the general had thickened. He wished to draw blood. The Guild elder watched carefully. He and his team might have wanted Sagiri, but the old foxes found more pleasure in watching whatever flames they had fanned expand. The more the flames, the better for them, so that they could take advantage.

"Until Sagiri graduates, he remains under academy jurisdiction," the head of the ten schools council repeated his earlier words. He was making his stand, and he was not going to bend. That much was clear. "No outside council may arrest him. No guild may claim him. No soldier may touch him unless you want to go against the charter protecting the ten schools signed by the supreme mandra himself." The chamber went deathly still after his last statement. No one among the three councils sitting in the chamber could dare go against the supreme mandra. That could be labeled treason and execution.

The General's fists trembled. But he knew the law.

"Well played, Sissara." The Guild elder slowly leaned back in his chair and addressed the head of the ten schools council by name. His eyes flicked toward Sagiri before he added another statement. "But investigations have a way of uncovering unpleasant truths."

"I welcome the attempt." Sissara's gaze never left him. He then turned his head slightly to look at sagiri.

"Cadet Sagiri will return to training. And if anyone attempts to remove him from this academy again..."

His voice dropped into something colder on the last part. The man might have been even colder than Senraki. After all, he did not get to be the head of such a council without a spine made of steel and a head full of pride to sit on his neck. His eyes swept across the Guild and the War Council. "...they will answer to me and the supreme mandra."

No one spoke after those words, and it was clear that the meeting was over. Until sagiri graduated from ten academy, the Ten Schools Council had the upper hand, and so he was protected. The meeting was over, but he could feel it. Every faction in the room now wanted him for a different reason. And none of them were finished.

Even though not everyone was satisfied, it was time to end the chamber. The chamber warriors moved forward, ready to cut sagiri loose, and the doors opened. The meeting was indeed over. Council members began rising from their seats, robes dragging behind them against the stone floor. The Warriors Guild delegation gathered their cloaks, murmuring among themselves. They must have known the outcome of the situation. They did not look fazed, as if their only role was to add fuel to the flames as they waited for their turn to make a move in the future. Not only are they smart and cunning. They are patient.

The General stood rigid for a moment longer, staring at Sagiri with burning resentment before turning away. He must have been the only one who thought he was going to get his way, unlike the warriors' guild council. Sagiri felt the weight of a hundred hostile thoughts pressing against him as the guards shuffled behind him, waiting for the council members to finally exit so they could unlock his chains. The Grand Marshal, on the other hand, remained standing near the council table, watching everything with unreadable eyes, as well as Salka, who had his enormous hands folded on his chest. Fuwuka had not said anything the entire time, but he also looked relaxed. For a brief moment, the storm had passed. Then...

Suddenly sound cut through the air. A sound that every warrior was familiar with. A sharp whistle cuts through the air. A sound made only by blades cutting through the air. Sagiri's instincts screamed danger immediately. Blades. Three of them were coming at him from different directions on the higher level of

the chamber, which had not been occupied in this session. The blades were aimed at him, and they were fast and precise, spinning through the air like silver lightning.

The entire chamber seemed to slow. Sagiri saw everything in fragments. His awareness had also improved, and he could see most attacks clearly. Right then, he could see not only the angle but the speed and the targets of the blades. They were aimed at his throat, his heart, and his eye. Whoever threw them was not only trying to kill him. To attack him in front of three councils who were skeptical of him was definitely a test. He could evade the attack easily by calling Nokai, who could in turn deter the team easily but he was clearly being pushed to show some type of skill.

Nokai stirred as the seconds froze and slowed, and the blades grew closer and closer to his vital organs that had been aimed for. If he defended himself the way his instincts demanded, they would see what he really was. What to do?

Sagiri's fingers twitched. Nokai stirred inside the archive, and the archive stirred violently. It moved inside his veins, readying him to fend off the attack. He was tied, so he could not evade all three; that was for sure. If he got injured and healed quickly, he did not trust the healers in the fortress to keep their mouths shut like the old man under Senraki. It's not like he could deny treatment for a wound everyone saw happen.

The power inside him surged forward, trying to work on its own accord, and his closed fists turned white from how hard he was in conflict with himself. And then, like a blur, a figure moved fast he almost missed him again.