

KEEPER 165

Chapter 165: PERMISSION TO KILL

"I don't plan to keep your blades because I believe you will be needing them now more than ever," Senraki added soon after.

"Why?" Sagiri asked.

"There has been movement from the south. Someone said they saw a figure cross the desert, but it has not been proven," Senraki said.

"You know I'm from the south," sagiri said. Of course, Seyika had told them too.

"Seyika is smart, and your parents agreed after Salka convinced them," Senraki said, and Salks sprang to his feet.

"What did you do to them?" he snarled, looking between senraki and salka.

"I went south to meet with them before the exercise, and they only agreed to talk to us after your assassination attempt. Indeed, you are from the south," Salka said. "I did not do anything to them. They will be with the guest and parents," Salka said.

"You should know that if someone wants to harm your parents and those you hold dear are a place to start. If Salka can find them, so is the person who tried to assassinate you," Senraki said, and sagiri slowly lowered himself to their seat.

"Your parents are fine for now. I only went to talk to them. They were not wheeling to talk to me back then, but Fuwuka went east after you attempted to tell them what had happened, and they have been living with personal trustees of mine." Salka added, and sagiri breathed a breath he did not know he had been holding.

"If he dares hurt them..." Sagiri seethed.

"You'd better be sure he will try," Senraki said in a matter of factly tone. "I figured the attempt to assassinate you was a charade to get the attention of the supreme mandra on you. This exam period, I am sure they will try to do something, although I do not know what it is."

"Many people will be inside Galka, parents, instructors, and important people of Tagayia. It will be difficult to filter out who is involved," Salka said.

"The supreme mandra is very wary of the south. If he finds out you are from the south, you will be hunted down and killed." Senraki said. Sagiri's ears perked up at the new information. He had felt an odd feeling when he could not find anything about the south in all libraries, and whatever Senraki had said was the most he now knew about the south.

"Why?" sagiri asked, even though he felt as if he already knew the answer.

"After what your blade did, do you have to ask? If it were anyone at the end of those blades in your last move, they could have died. Salka had to use all his speed to evade that attack. It's the fastest I've seen him move in so long that I can remember. The South is known for its odd abilities and odd bloodlines. Only a few people still dare speak of this, and I'm telling you this because even though you are an anomaly, you are still a student of Galka, and I don't want you to die young," Senraki said, and sagiri shifted in his seat now.

"I have never harmed anyone," sagiri said, feeling uneasy at the feeling that he was being haunted because he came from a people with odd abilities, and he was being seen as a threat.

"You saw someone try to kill me when we were coming north. My duty is to protect Galka, yet they hate me because I'm stronger. Let alone a southerner," Salka said. The word southerner hit him hard, but he knew that Salka did not mean it maliciously. It was true. Salka had been attacked and looked at with hostility because he is strong, he is from Tagayia, yet they hate him. What of someone who was not from Tagayia?

"Salka is right. I hate to say it's true, but those with power mostly don't like to know that someone stronger than them is out there. Most assassination attempts on Salka are not pushed by the weak, but by the powerful, willing to use the weak. Do you understand?" Senraki asked.

Sagiri nodded and thought long and hard. He did feel odd about knowing he did not belong in a place he had always known since he was a child, but that also came with a longing to get to know his roots. If he

were from the South, why was he in the North? That question had been at the tip of his tongue ever since they talked with Seyika.

"What else do you know about the south?" sagiri asked.

"That I can not tell you. I was still in college when the South shut its borders. They had always been secretive, even with their borders open, and no one knew much about them. What I know is that something must have happened and someone must know what because they seem to know who you were long before you did," Senraki said, and sagiri shuffled in his chair again.

"What did Rusha and Bakuru say?" sagiri asked.

"They said that they will tell you in person when they come to watch your final exams," Salka said. "They refused to tell them even when Fuwuka explained the weight of the matter," Salka said. That must have been true.

"It is good that they don't trust anyone, especially because you are from the south. What I do know is that you must be from a bloodline with odd abilities. You know this by now, and I have turned a blind eye because you are just a boy, even with your odd abilities," Senraki said as if he was already standing between a rock and a hard place. It was understandable because hosting a person, the supreme mandra, was against it, or people in power made the whole thing complicated.

"What Senraki is trying to say is that you will soon be out of this academy. Have you thought about what will happen after?" Salka asked.

"You should leave Tagayia while you still can," Senraki said on a serious note. "You don't have to sit for the exam or put yourself in danger. I can get you out now." Senraki said with urgency, and Sagiri almost agreed with him, but if he ran south, wouldn't his benefactor chase him south? What was he even expecting in the South? Running was a good option, but was it the best? Besides, what if his benefactor wanted him to run so he could fall directly into his plan

"I hate to agree with Senraki, but...." Salka started to speak, but sagiri cut him off.

"I won't run. He will only come after me. I should kill him before he kills me," Sagiri said in a cold voice.

"You might be strong, but you can't fight the whole Tagayia and win," Salka answered quickly.

"I don't intend to fight the whole tagayia," sagiri said. He did not have any interest in fighting anyone besides his benefactor.

"Do you think the person after you will allow you to choose? He has already made you a subject of the supreme mandra's curiosity," Senraki asked, and that question had him frozen. It was true, whoever was after him had a very big agenda, and he would be a fool to underestimate him.

"What do you think I should do?" sagiri asked. He had never fought battles before; perhaps the two men in the room could help him come up with a plan.

"You should not use nokai. the weapon will prove that you are indeed from the south," Salka said, not missing even one beat.

"What if someone tries to kill me?" sagiri asked. If someone dared to assassinate him, he was not going to hold back.

"Then you kill them with another spear or sword," Senraki said. "Use the normal weapons or make sure no one sees you or that it can't be traced back to you," Senraki continued, and sagiri could only imagine what Senraki meant. He was not stopping him from killing, just telling him to be smart. He was permitting him to kill because it was necessary, but not to implicate himself.

"I understand."

"What happened in that pit cannot happen again," Senraki emphasized the word again.

"I understand." Sagiri nodded again.

"Don't ruin my reputation," Senraki said in a light note, but sagiri could see that the man's aura had gotten darker. Something big was about to happen.

"Shut up, Senraki, you don't have a reputation." Salka snickered.