

KEEPER 167

Chapter 167: THE TRIO

"Do you mind moving back to your seats?" sagiri asked. He had a lot to think about, and if they were just going to stare, then they could leave. He had a lot to think about.

"What if we don't?" the Anku lady said. Sagiri did not have time to deal with another set of high school rivalries. The one with the tamelku twins had gone on long enough and cost a life. They could take their child's qualms somewhere else.

"Suit yourself," sagiri said and closed his eyes. There were still ten more minutes till the start of the exam, and he was not going to waste them on unimportant issues. Sagiri closed his eyes and rested his back on his chair.

"Who do you think you are? What is your clan and tribe?" the Teshini tribe snapped, and sagiri could feel the aggression of the three rise. Perhaps they were not used to being ignored. Sagiri ignored her. He was not feeling like having a chat about his clan or tribe either. That was the thing he was thinking about at the moment, and they were getting in his way. Her voice was raised when she asked, and the whole arena, which was already watching, was now even more interested.

"What is going on?"

"Aren't those the Kafika triple threat? I hear nobody has managed to beat them, not even themselves. They are equally matched in strength," another said

"Do they want to fight the suffocation chamber protege?"

"Who do you think will win?" another asked.

"I have never seen either fight, but my money is on the trio," another said.

"I don't think it's that simple. The boy has his eyes closed. He is not scared at all. I won't be quick to decide. He is a rival to the bami prince," another said.

Sagiri was still thinking about how to draw out his enemy when a hand choked him around the throat by the collar of his combat suit. He had felt her move, but he did not care much. Some part of him wanted to see how far they were willing to go before he cared enough to react. Sagiri snapped his eyes open.

It was the Teshini one. She looked pissed, and she was indeed strong by the strength she had put into the pull. Well, that did not faze sagiri at all. He had sparred with one of the strongest warriors of Tagayia a couple of times, and this did not begin to come close.

"Answer me when I'm talking to you," she snarled, almost pulling Sagiri out of his seat. Sagiri could see movement in his periphery, N'varu or perhaps Kiuga or Kaka. Or perhaps they were moving at the same time. Sagiri lifted his hand and raised a finger to signal that he got it. If his Kaka got involved, then a full brawl was going to break out. It would start with squad on squad, then school on school, and by the end of the nine minutes, there would be no seats standing.

"Let go of my combat," Sagiri said, his voice low. He had not offended the trio, and he did not appreciate that they were hellbent on starting something with him. Why could everyone just stay out of his air?

"Answer the question. The Tsank girl moved closer to him, and her snakes went feral with her agitation.

"Like I said. Let go of my combat," Sagiri said more slowly this time, making sure they understood that he was not in the mood.

"Or what? Do you plan to fight the three of us?" the Anku girl asked in a singsong mocking tone.

"Do you want me to fight you?" Sagiri asked, and there was some hooting and cheering from the cadets watching. "I did not take the number ones of Kafika to be such a disappointment," Sagiri said. He had expected a lot from the trio, but turns out they were just spoiled and prideful brats. Even Kaka was better than them. He at least had honour, and he could not go doing such. He was aggressive but still had honour. These three lacked the latter.

"How dare you?!" the Tsank girl, the one from the tribe that worshipped the women. The women of Tsank are worse than the men of Bami when it comes to believing they are superior. At least the Bami loved their women. The Tsanka did not view their men as more than tools to continue their clans. She must have never been chastised before, and she fumed.

"Lola?" She called, and before Sagiri could think, the snake wrapped around her shoulder, neck, and rested on her head, unraveled quickly, and jumped in the air, going for his neck. The Tsanka tamed the snakes, but they did not rid them of the poison. In fact, they went as far as making themselves resistant to their snake's poison, or, for the more crazed, once more than a couple of dozen snakes.

Sagiri had not wanted to get into it with anyone, at least until it was necessary, but he could not just let himself be bitten. He had been bitten once by the muddy water scorpion, and recovering from the poison was pleasant. He had fought and sparred with Salka many times, and he had developed a fast reaction. He pulled himself out of the Teshini girl's grasp by driving his right elbow into her arm and snapped his left hand to catch the smaller snake.

Smaller because he had dealt with the grayscale, and then he had met Myama. The snake was not even the size of Myama's egg. Sagiri did not intend to harm the snake, but he did not have any other choice.

Its master lacked self-control, and for such a small sentence, she had instructed it to attack. Such a snake and its master needed to be separated, even if it meant eternally.

He held the snake by its neck. It was much more violent than he expected, but it was still not a match with Salka or Kaka, who had almost killed him thrice in the name of sparring.

"Sleep," Sagiri whispered behind his mask to the snake, and it fell limp in his hands.

The trio froze for a moment before the Tsanka girl went crazy.

"What did you do to him? What did you do to Lola?" She wailed suddenly as if she were mourning a child. She stretched her trembling hands forward to her now limp snake, but Sagiri pulled it back. There was now pin-drop silence in the exam arena.

"She is sleeping, but not for long. A master like you doesn't deserve a beast. Using your tamed war beast to attack a person for no reason is reckless," sagiri said in a cold voice. The girl trembled, but it was now too late. Sagiri had given them several chances to leave, and they had refused. His statement had barely time to hang in the air before his right hand moved, and with both his hands, he separated the head of the beast from its body.

There were gasps before, and the trio froze.

There was a moment of silence before a scream tore through the arena loud enough to wake the dead. By then, N'varu had reached his side with Kiuga and Kaka, and even Ulekai were just a few feet behind him.

"Now leave before I release your other beast from its duties. You are no fit to be a master to a beast." Sagiri spat, and he could see fear in the Anku girl's eyes. Perhaps she was imagining her pet meeting the same fate. The Tsank girl went crazy picking the remains of her snake as she wept. The Teshini girl gave Sagiri a hateful glare before she pulled her friend away.

"That was dishonorable," Kaka's voice said, ignoring all the screams.

"You mean Sagiri or the trio?" Kiuga asked.

"The Kafika top students have no honour. Starting a fight and crying at the consequences." Kaka tsked.

The instructors burst into the room moments later, but all they could see was a screaming and kicking girl with a dead snake and a staring match between Galka and Kafika students.

"Sit down! The exams are about to begin," an instructor announced, and just the ink keepers with their carriers started pouring into the arena. The ink keepers had not come with Kiana this time, and Sagiri wanted to see her for some reason, but it seemed they had left the girl behind, or she was lurking somewhere.

The room settled down immediately, but something had suddenly changed in the way everyone looked at him. It had turned from curiosity to fear. Perhaps he could get used to that.