

## Tyrant 171

Chapter 171: Summoned by Valttair

Trafalgar set down his fork and leaned slightly forward. "Good morning, Sylis. How are you feeling?"

For a long second, she just stared at the table. Then, with a voice flat and cracked from too many tears, she muttered, "Like shit."

The words hit the quiet hall like a hammer. A few heads turned their way, brows raised at the bluntness. But no one said anything. They all returned to their food, letting the weight settle again.

Trafalgar kept his expression neutral. Inside, he winced. 'Well... at least she's honest.'

A servant arrived, placing a tray gently in front of Sylis. Warm bread still steaming from the oven, a bowl of rich broth, cuts of tender meat, and dried fruit arranged neatly. The kind of meal meant to restore strength, not please the tongue.

Sylis didn't thank the servant. She just picked up a piece of bread and tore it apart slowly, chewing as if every bite weighed her down. Her eyes were red-rimmed, her face pale, the grief clinging to her like a second shadow.

Trafalgar watched her in silence for a moment, then picked up his own cup. He wasn't the type to spill comforting words—he didn't even know how. Still, there was something about the raw honesty of her answer that made him want to keep her talking, anything to pull her away from the pit for just a while.

He cleared his throat. "Well," he said dryly, "at least the food looks decent. Better than the cafeteria at the academy."

Sylis glanced up at him briefly, her bread halfway to her mouth. The corner of her lip twitched, not quite a smile, not quite annoyance either. She tore another piece off and chewed in silence.

Trafalgar leaned back in his chair, raising his cup. "I mean it. At the academy, you're lucky if the stew doesn't fight back when you try to eat it. This," he gestured at the platters spread before them, "this is practically gourmet."

Her eyes narrowed, suspicious. "You're trying to change the subject."

"Maybe," Trafalgar admitted, tearing into a slice of roasted meat. "But think about it—if I let you sulk the entire time, we'll both lose our appetite. And that would be a damn shame, because this bread's actually warm."

For the first time that morning, a faint sound slipped from her—half a scoff, half a sigh. She shook her head and muttered, "Thanks..."

They ate in relative quiet after that, though it wasn't the same silence as before. It was lighter, less suffocating. Trafalgar kept tossing small remarks into the air—complaints about the cold halls, sarcastic grumbles about everyone staring at him since yesterday. Nothing that required much of a reply, but enough to break the stillness.

Sylis eventually set down her spoon and looked at him, her eyes softer now despite the redness around them. She didn't say anything right away, but she didn't need to. He could tell the weight on her shoulders had eased, even if only for a moment.

Trafalgar chewed slowly, pretending not to notice. 'Not much I can do... but if this helps her breathe a little easier, then fine.'

The scrape of boots on stone interrupted their quiet meal. A servant approached, bowing his head low before speaking.

"Young master Trafalgar, your father requests your presence. He awaits you in his study."

The weight of those words hung in the air. Trafalgar set his fork down, wiping his mouth with a cloth before rising. Around them, a few Morgains glanced his way, curious, but quickly returned to their own conversations.

Sylis lowered her spoon, her gaze lifting to meet his. For a heartbeat, neither of them spoke. She looked small in her chair, dwarfed by the hall and the hundred relatives filling it, yet her eyes stayed steady.

Trafalgar adjusted the clasp of his cloak, the fur lining heavy on his shoulders. He gave her a short nod. "Guess that's my cue."

Sylis nodded back, her lips pressed together in a faint line.

He hesitated, then added, voice even, "Until next time, Sylis. Take care of yourself."

Her eyes softened, and she gave him the faintest of smiles—small, but real. "You too."

Trafalgar turned and followed the servant out, his boots echoing against the stone. The hall swallowed his figure, but his words lingered behind like an anchor, something simple yet grounding.

For Sylis, it was enough.

The servant led Trafalgar through a long corridor lined with heavy doors, their iron handles gleaming faintly in the morning light. At the end, two guards stood stiffly before a tall set of double doors. They saluted in silence as one pushed them open.

Inside, the study felt like another world compared to the fortress's bare halls. Rich tapestries of battles long past hung from the walls, heavy maps covered the tables, and shelves groaned under the weight of ledgers and scrolls. The air carried the scent of ink, parchment, and burning mana-lamps.

Behind the desk sat Valtair du Morgain. His platinum hair, loose and gleaming, caught the rays of sunlight pouring through the tall windows. His gray eyes were sharp, cutting like blades as they rose to meet Trafalgar's. Even seated, the weight of his presence pressed against the room.

To his right stood Armand du Morgain, silver-haired.

Trafalgar stepped inside, the doors shutting behind him with a heavy thud. For a brief moment, he felt the shift in air—the kind of atmosphere that said nothing here would be simple.

Valttair leaned back in his chair, fingers steepled before his face. "You came quickly."

Trafalgar held his gaze, his voice steady. "Your servant made it sound urgent."

Armand's eyes flicked between them, silent, as if measuring both.

The room was quiet but heavy, the kind of silence that promised the discussion ahead would carry weight.

Trafalgar exhaled once, the conversation was about to begin.

Valttair's eyes narrowed, his tone carrying the weight of command. "I summoned you to speak of Euclid—why I gave it to you, and why you must govern it properly, without failure."