

## I! Cleaner 201

Chapter 201 Is there really one?\_1

"Alright."

After hearing Leon's refusal, Jerry couldn't help but sigh, then scratched the back of his head awkwardly and said,

"Since you've got things at home, you should head back first. Once the director wakes up, I'll help you request some time off from her..."

"No! That's not necessary!"

Hastily putting away the photos on the table, Leon carefully scrutinized the woman who came to report, pondering over her relationship with Anna as he spoke,

"Things at my place... aren't really urgent. Why don't I first ask questions with you, senior, and then head back?"

"That works too..."

Seeing Leon's sudden change of heart, Jerry raised his eyebrows in surprise, but when he noticed Leon's unblinking gaze at the woman, he gave a knowing smile.

\*'Stop dreaming!'

He reached into his pocket, rubbed a certain anomalous object capable of soul communication, and stealthily nudged Leon with his elbow.

\*'She's already married. She filled out the registration form when she came to report this morning, and her marital status is listed as married!'

" ... "

\*That's not what I meant... And married? Then Anna must be...\*

Holding the worry that his sister might be a hidden "rouge," Leon, with a faintly aching head, invited the two into the office and sat on the guest sofa.

Placing a shopping bag containing the Black Goat at his feet and taking out a small notebook, Leon squeezed his homemade charcoal pencil and politely said,

"Miss, I need to know some basic information first. Could you tell me your name again?"

"Veronica."

Looking at Leon, whose demeanor was gentle yet faintly distant, the Princess couldn't help but sigh inwardly. Instead of immediately revealing her connection with Leon, she chose to cooperate and answered a few questions first.

"Alright."

Through the soul vision of the Black Goat, Leon confirmed that she hadn't lied and everything she said so far was the truth. He secretly gave an OK gesture to Jerry beside him and continued to ask,

"Could you please describe what kind of anomalous situations you've encountered? How did you learn about our Purification Bureau?"

"As for the anomalous situation... since noon yesterday, I've been forgotten by everyone. As for how I knew about your Purification Bureau... I've always known about your existence."

Looking at the man before her, who until yesterday was her prince, Princess Veronica spoke with a somewhat complex expression,

"It may be hard for you to believe, but until noon yesterday, I was the princess of this country."

Princess?

Jerry frowned at these words and then cast an inquisitive glance at Leon beside him.

\*No, that can't be right. I remember the King should only have a son, so where would a princess come from? Is she lying?\*

No, she's not lying. At the very least, she truly believes so.

Slightly shaking his head, Leon gave a negative answer to Senior Jerry and then, mind slightly confused, rubbed his temples and continued to ask,

"Since discovering the anomalous situation, it must have been a whole night. Did you contact any relatives or close friends yesterday who might remember you? Were they unable to recover their memories as well?"

"I managed to contact some of them."

Princess Veronica sighed,

"But everyone has forgotten me, including the maid of honor who has always been by my side. No matter how many past events I recount, she doesn't believe I'm the princess and even tried to call people to catch me. I only escaped after knocking her out.

As for my family, well, I can't access the Royal Palace now, so naturally, I can't reach them to see if I can awaken their memories."

"I see..."

The conditions still weren't sufficient to determine the real situation.

After listening to the princess, Jerry immediately gave Leon a look, indicating that he could ask sharper questions to see if this woman was delusional or truly affected by an anomalous object.

Returning a knowing look to him, Leon straightened his posture, stared into Princess Veronica's eyes, and said,

"I apologize in advance. My next question might be a bit offensive, but please try to answer: have you considered the possibility that you might not be the princess but are experiencing some kind of hallucination?"

"No way."

Having pondered this question all night and fully prepared, the princess shook her head, her expression resolute,

"I'm very sure that I am indeed the princess of this country, and I should be able to prove it."

As she spoke, she looked at Leon, whose breath reeked of alcohol, his expression visibly tired, and whose collar sported half a lipstick stain. She frowned slightly before continuing,

"Gentlemen, yesterday at the Ryan family's inauguration ceremony, are you familiar with it?"

Ryan family's inauguration ceremony?

Hearing Princess Veronica's words, Leon and Jerry exchanged surprised glances before they both nodded.

"I've heard some things."

"Not only do I understand it, but I was there yesterday."

After answering this woman who claimed to be a "princess," Leon's head suddenly spun, as if something was about to leap out of his memory.

But when he tried to grasp this part of memory, it was as if there was an invisible thick glass barrier—no matter how he reached out, he could only feel the cold, hard barrier.

"I was there yesterday too."

Watching Leon's eyes, which were somewhat confused, and his hand unconsciously pinching his brow, Princess Veronica felt a flicker of hope. She clenched her fists and spoke earnestly,

"It may be strange to you, but the King actually doesn't only have a son. He has a daughter as well, and that daughter is me.

Yesterday, I privately visited Ryan Manor, wanting to observe the Ryan family's inauguration ceremony. But as soon as I entered the hall, I heard someone offering the entire Ryan family as a dowry in a proposal to me."

"Wait a minute!"

Upon hearing this, Leon, whose mind was growing more chaotic, couldn't help but raise his hand and remind with a furrowed brow,

"Let's assume for a moment that you do exist as a princess, but are you really sure someone proposed to you using the entire Ryan family as a dowry?"

"I'm sure."

"But I don't recall such a thing happening."

Leon rubbed his temple,

"The only person qualified to use the entire Ryan family as a dowry should be just one person. You may not have met me, but I actually am..."

"You are actually the new Duke of Lionheart."

Preemptively stating Leon's identity, Princess Veronica looked into his surprised eyes and declared, word by word,

"The person who proposed to me yesterday was you!"

"???"

"And I accepted."

"!!!"

Under the surprised gaze of Senior Jerry, which seemed to say, "You scoundrel, you did such a thing," a stunned Leon waved his hands repeatedly,

"Impossible. If you really are a princess, and you accepted my proposal, then..."

\*Then I should have a corresponding badge, and it should start at Silver Level, possibly even Gold... Damn, I actually do!\*

Opening the system panel on a whim and seeing the [Migratory Thrush Prince] gleaming with dazzling golden light in the slot, Leon's mind felt like it had been hit with a heavy hammer, buzzing into utter disarray.

\*Did I actually propose to her yesterday? So, is she really the princess?\*

Chapter 202 Confirming Identity and Starting Investigation\_1

"I know it still sounds a bit unbelievable, but I do have a way to prove it."

Unaware that Leon had already verified the truth of her words through another method, Princess Veronica, who had spent the entire night pondering how to prove her identity to the Purification Bureau, raised her hand to remove an old shawl and placed it on the table, introducing with a serious expression,

"This wool shawl is made from the wool of the Merino white rock sheep native to Merino County. This wool is incredibly fine, resistant to dirt, and its pure coloring makes it ideal for dyeing, which is why it is highly sought after by the nobility. However, because the Merino white rock sheep grow slowly and live on sheer cliffs, making wool collection very difficult, the output is extremely low, resulting in an

exceptionally high price. Even among the nobility, there are few who can afford it, and most wool garments are mixed blends.

But this shawl was a gift from my father on my twelfth birthday, made entirely of Merino white rock sheep's wool. Its texture is completely different from mixed wool fabrics, the print on it is the royal family's red-breasted robin, and the fringe flower net was handwoven by my personal maid. There is no other shawl like it in the entire capital."

"But in the end, it's just a wool shawl, isn't it? Replicating it wouldn't be too difficult, and we don't know wool, so we can't judge whether what you're saying is true or false."

Having patiently listened to the origin of the wool shawl, Jerry frowned and asked,

"Do you have any idea how difficult it is to erase the existence of a princess from everyone's memory? Such an ability is nearly in the realm of the divine. Even if the scope were limited to just the kingdom, or even to the entire capital, finding such an abn... um... object, is not something ordinarily achievable. So, rather than believing a princess was forgotten, I'm more inclined to think this is the rambling of a madman, for it's far more realistic that someone forged a shawl than erased the existence of a princess."

"Your skepticism is entirely reasonable, but please, don't rush; I'm not finished speaking."

Determined to reclaim everything she lost, Princess Veronica was well-prepared and didn't panic in response to Jerry's doubts. She pushed the shawl across the table towards Leon and calmly said,

"Leon... Mr. Lyon, you have a magical broom capable of flying into the sky, am I right?"

Hungover from a night of binge-drinking, the news of his premature marriage, and the disparity between memory and reality nearly caused Leon's brain to crash. But trusting in the Badge System, he cooperated by giving a slight nod, then rubbed his temples and looked at the princess, hoping she truly had enough convincing evidence to offer.

"That's correct. Yesterday, you held me as we rode on that broom."

Under the gaze of both Leon and Jerry, Princess Veronica unfolded the shawl on the table, pointed to the intricately woven fringe net, and with a hint of relief in her eyes, said,

"At that time, my personal maid found my outfit somewhat risq... um, in short, she temporarily wove a net using the shawl's fringe, and when I boarded your broom, the shawl's fringe net snagged on it slightly and tore a bit. So unless you've used that broom between noon yesterday and now, it may still have a strand of white-and-red wool hanging from it, from the only entirely spun Merino wool shawl in the entire capital."

?!!!

Hearing Princess Veronica's words, Leon was momentarily stunned before quickly retrieving the Witch's Broom and checked the branches at the end of the broom. Leon and Jerry were surprised to find that although some seemed to have been blown away by the wind, there was indeed a small amount of wool hanging from the end of the broom, and its texture, color, and thickness were identical to that of the shawl on the table.

"Whew... I think this evidence should prove something, don't you?"

After Leon and Jerry compared the wool, Princess Veronica, who unknowingly loosened her tightly clenched hands, said with a calm demeanor,

"You can consult someone knowledgeable about textiles regarding the situation of Merino wool to see if I am lying. If I am honest, it would prove that I did indeed contact Mr. Lyon yesterday and rode his broom. Although it may sound self-aggrandizing, I believe that with a woman like me sitting behind him, Mr. Lyon would certainly not forget easily. So the only explanation is that everyone's memory, except mine, the victim, had an issue. Do you agree?"

"..."

Agreed... This should be irrefutable proof!

"Let's go find the director!"

Realizing that there was a ninety percent chance that the woman claiming to be the princess was telling the truth, Jerry couldn't help but take a deep breath, looked gravely at Leon, and communicated in a soul transmission,

'If it is confirmed that an anomalous object was used on a princess of one kingdom, then this becomes a serious issue. As per our agreement with The Twelve Kingdoms, such matters must be immediately reported to the main bureau, then handled and investigated by the branch director. From now on, this matter is no longer ours to deal with!'

...

"So... right before next week's year-end review, the princess was attacked by an Evil God-level anomalous object?"

Blurry-eyed, the red-haired director, forcibly awakened from dreams, let out a sigh of profound helplessness after listening to Leon's report.

Not that! Faced with such a deadly situation just before the year-end review, no matter how perfectly it was resolved afterward, a critique of ineffective oversight wouldn't be avoided, and the Virgin Branch's evaluation this year would likely be unprecedentedly low, possibly ranking last among the eighty-seven branches.

What? Ever since the Ryan Blood Night incident, our branch has been locked in last place, and even the four characters of "Olivia" have already been prematurely carved into this year's pillar of shame?

Ahaha, then it's nothing, no problem...

With a somewhat despairing gaze, the red-haired director leaned back in the chair, clearing the remaining alcohol from her system, filled with unresolved anger, and began pondering how to resolve this lethal issue swiftly.

First, undoubtedly, was to find that anomalous object or the person using it!

"This one... um... may I know how to address you?"

Upon hearing the red-haired director's question, Princess Veronica blinked while observing her lips, nodded slightly, and said,

"Veronica, you may call me Veronica."

"Very well, Your Highness Veronica."

The red-haired director, entering "work mode," wiped away the previous drunkenly desolate state and solemnly promised,

"I assure you, in the name of the Director of the Purification Bureau's Virgin Branch, from now until the end of this matter, you are absolutely safe; no one can harm you. Additionally, I hope you'll cooperate sincerely with our investigation. Our Virgin Branch will do everything in our power to restore everything to its original state as quickly as possible!"

Chapter 203 Royal Secret\_1

"Thank you, I will do my best to cooperate."

After stealing another glance at the Red-haired Director's lips and confirming that the lipstick color matched the half lipstick stain on Leon's collar, Princess Veronica's eyes flickered slightly before she spoke,

"Director, although I'm not an employee of your Purification Bureau, I thought about it last night and felt that there might be issues with three people. I wonder if you'd be open to hearing my thoughts?"

\*Your thoughts?\*

From the beautiful woman opposite him, the Red-haired Director sensed a slight hostility. Narrowing his eyes, he subtly controlled a strand of hair to press Leon's hand onto the Black Goat's forehead, signaling him to check the princess's soul state. With a smile, he nodded,

"Of course, or rather I should say it's very welcome. Having a target to investigate is far better than searching aimlessly."

"Then I appreciate the opportunity."

Controlling herself not to think about the lip stain and the lipstick, Princess Veronica took a deep breath and then, with a furrowed brow, recounted,

"First, there's a grandmother-granddaughter duo. Since I visited privately yesterday, I was very cautious and had close contact with almost no one except Mr. Lyon. The only exception was in the servant kitchen on the west side of the Ryan Family estate.

At that time, Mr. Lyon was pursuing rebels, and it seemed like he wanted to replenish something in the kitchen. I was outside the kitchen coaxing a little girl named Phoebe, and during that time, she patted my chest a few times. When Mr. Lyon came back out, he no longer recognized who I was.

Later, when Mr. Lyon forgot about me and left on his own, I wanted to ask him why, but Phoebe's grandmother called me over, and I couldn't stop Mr. Lyon in time. I suspect her grandmother did it on purpose.

Also, although there's a big age difference between them, the elderly lady named Lucy claimed to be Phoebe's sister, and the little girl Phoebe seemed to genuinely regard her as her sister. I find these two people very suspicious."

\*A strange grandmother-granddaughter duo calling each other sisters?\*

Exchanging a glance with Leon, who was touching the goat's head, he received confirmation from the princess's eyes that she was not lying. The Red-haired Director pondered for a moment, then nodded and continued to ask,

"Very valuable intelligence. Do you remember what that grandmother-granddaughter duo looked like?"

"I do."

Princess Veronica answered confidently,

"The elderly lady named Lucy had a very hoarse voice and a slightly hunched back, looking about sixty or seventy years old. The little girl named Phoebe had a round face and was small in stature, about six or seven years old, with very special eyes, having a kind of... hmm... how to describe it?"

After frowning in recollection, Princess Veronica uncertainly said,

"Like a... very pure feeling, but not the kind of innocence a child has. Children have emotions and thoughts in their gaze, but that child's eyes gave a feeling of... hmm..."

After recalling together with her, Leon hesitantly added,

"Clarity of stupidity?"

"Yes! That's exactly it!"

Glancing at Leon, Princess Veronica nodded and said,

"That child was like a clean piece of white paper, seeming less intelligent than kids of her age, but not genuinely stupid. It was a strange blankness from having experienced too little, knowing nothing."

"Understood, it's indeed very valuable intelligence."

Looking at Jerry, who was also in thought, the Red-haired Director gave him a look to immediately investigate, and after firmly memorizing the information, he gently continued questioning,

"And the third person?"

The third person...

Hearing this, Princess Veronica hesitated for a moment, seeming somewhat reluctant, but eventually spoke,

"The third suspicious person is my brother Joshua. Although he hasn't shown any abnormalities, I don't know why, \*but I always have a feeling that he seems involved in this...

Uh... let's forget it, just pretend I didn't say that! After all, if this matter is really related to Joshua, considering his and his mother's dislike for me, I fear I might have already been eliminated.\*"

"I see."

Looking at the princess who raised but then dismissed the third suspect, the Red-haired Director, still composed, nodded and then smiled and gestured towards the door.

"Princess Veronica, if you have no other information to provide, then it's time for the Purification Bureau to work. Please wait for a while in Leon's office.

Please don't misunderstand, we aren't trying to hide anything from you. It's just that you are now forgotten, so the royal family's handbook on soul silence might not work on you anymore. Attending our meeting might bring additional danger, and I hope you can understand."

"Alright."

Upon hearing this, Princess Veronica nodded, stood up, and left the room. When her footsteps faded down the corridor, the Red-haired Director immediately began assigning tasks,

"Jerry, have your friends go to the Ryan family's kitchen, record all the auras that appeared there at noon yesterday, and compare them one by one to quickly locate that grandmother-granddaughter duo calling themselves sisters.

Then notify Emma to temporarily set aside other tasks for the next two days and remain on alert at the bureau. If there are any traces of rebels, act immediately and bring them back!

Finally, Leon, after you deliver the hair, immediately take my note to the Royal Palace and investigate Prince Joshua properly. See if he's tied to this matter!"

"Understood."

After listening to the tasks assigned by the Red-haired Director, Jerry immediately left the room, while Leon hesitated for a moment and suggested,

"Director, if possible, could I swap tasks with someone?"

"I'm afraid not."

Hearing this, the Red-haired Director shook his head and said,

"You're the only one in the bureau now who can tell lies, and you're the best person to investigate Prince Joshua."

"..."

\*It's not that I think the task arrangement is inappropriate, it's mainly because yesterday I punched that guy hard and even spat on his face. I'm afraid he might not cooperate with me...\*

"Leon, trust me, that woman is extraordinary. Her intuition is something to be taken seriously."

Looking at Leon, who still showed some reluctance, the Red-haired Director said earnestly,

"If she really is the princess, then she's a direct bloodline of the Twelve Royal Families. And the Twelve Royal Families... hmm... let me put it this way, if you trace back far enough, the royal families of the existing Twelve Kingdoms could be considered part of the Purification Bureau."

"Huh?"

"It's true."

Glancing at Leon's astonished face, the Red-haired Director hesitated for a moment but eventually explained,

"Including the now-destroyed East Carleighwen Kingdom, the ancestors of the royal families of all kingdoms were once the overseers of the Watcher's Palace, possibly even including its creators. It was due to the achievements of their ancestors that the Purification Bureau agreed to the pact with the Twelve Kingdoms, even making concessions in some areas.

Most royal families of each kingdom inherited some abnormalities from their ancestors' bloodline, and there were frequent intermarriages among them, leading to some outstanding direct blood descendants having more or less some special abilities even without anomalous objects.

Leon, listen to me. If I'm not mistaken, Princess Veronica might have special abilities manifested in intuition, so if the princess thinks Prince Joshua is problematic, he most likely is, and it's worth your effort to investigate him properly!"

Chapter 204 You check on me I check on you, it's normal\_1

The ancestors of the royal family of The Twelve Kingdoms... were once occupants of the Watcher's Palace?

Originally, it was just a bit of trouble, and Leon felt embarrassed to proactively talk to the director. However, he heard such a secret, prompting him to remain silent for a while before he couldn't help but ask,

"Then does Taurus His Excellency also..."

"Taurus His Excellency has no children."

The Red-haired Director responded,

"But if she had descendants and wanted to, the Purification Bureau would be willing to offer certain conveniences, including supporting her descendants in establishing a nation. If all went smoothly, The Twelve Kingdoms might become the Thirteen Kingdoms again in a hundred years."

Leon, this world is much larger than you imagine. It's not just the location of The Twelve Kingdoms that is suitable for human survival, and the Watcher's Palace is the last barrier protecting the world. Given the merits of the palace occupants in safeguarding the world, the bureau believes that conditions of this sort aren't unacceptable."

"..."

\*Although, saving the ancestors and then ruling the world? What kind of Dragonborn setup is this...\*

After listening to the Red-haired Director, Leon opened his mouth speechlessly. He wanted to retort, but after thinking it over, he decided to keep his mouth shut.

Compared to the Dragonborn, the royal family of The Twelve Kingdoms seemed much more normal. Although there were some doing as they pleased, because most nations weren't solely ruled by the royal family, power was held in check to a certain extent, remaining within the bounds of "humanity."

As for the Purification Bureau, with its secretive style and decentralized structure, it imposed heavy penalties for abnormal interferences in daily activities. Each branch had a great degree of autonomy and wasn't a tightly knit power organization.

Except for granting some special privileges to royal families due to their status as descendants of palace occupants, the bureau didn't seem to have intentions of staunchly supporting The Twelve Kingdoms—thus, The Twelve Kingdoms and the Purification Bureau gave the impression of having a mutually beneficial relationship.

The former didn't compete for power and relied on the latter to resist abnormal invasions; the latter needed the former to maintain stability in the surface world, providing assistance and support when necessary, maintaining a relatively stable balance.

"Additionally, you need to be extra careful during this time."

While Leon pondered what was really going on with The Twelve Kingdoms, the Red-haired Director, after thinking it over, uncertainly said,

"I think this matter might also be related to the Aquarius Director."

The Aquarius Director, yet again?

Leon furrowed his brows and tentatively asked,

"Is it because the rebels' ability comes from the Aquarius Director? Are you suspecting that the Aquarius Director is actually behind this attack?"

"That is part of the reason, but more so because of the intensity of the ability."

The Red-haired Director said with furrowed brows,

"Simply making an ordinary person completely forgotten is within the realm of possibility for many abilities. However, to make a nation's princess vanish from everyone's memory, the strength of the ability, the hierarchy of the anomalous object, and the cost would be incredibly high. There are very few branch directors capable of such feats.

Furthermore, even with such a significant person missing, no one noticed anything wrong. Everything was forcibly 'rationalized,' as if that nation had never had a princess... Doesn't this ability feel somewhat familiar to you?"

Everything was forcibly rationalized...

After frowning and pondering for a while, Leon suddenly realized something, his eyes filled with astonishment,

"Are you implying... the Brain of the Evil God, which is responsible for erasing traces of abnormal events?"

"To be precise, it should be the Brain of the Evil God along with the Illusion Can that houses it."

The Red-haired Director squinted and said,

"The strength of this forgetting ability is somewhat excessive, so I'm inclined to believe that someone incredibly knowledgeable about the operational rules of the Illusion Can took advantage of its power.

This forgetting ability might just have set things in motion, with the Illusion Can's trace-erasing power exploited afterward, misleading the Illusion Can into concluding that the event had ended and that the princess had disappeared, prompting a large-scale erasure of the event's traces, leading to the current situation.

Otherwise, if it were merely a simple memory erasure, just a few people examining old newspapers or receiving documents signed by the princess before she was forgotten would immediately notice something amiss. Thus, only the Illusion Can within the bureau could forcibly rationalize those problems, and the person capable of doing so..."

The person capable of doing so could only be the Aquarius Director!

As one of the Twelve Directors, he was undoubtedly familiar with the rules of the Illusion Can. Coupled with some link between him and the rebels, the suspicion of him being behind the scenes couldn't be said to be large—it was practically tantamount to listing his identification number!

Once Leon quickly grasped the logical structure in the Red-haired Director's words, he couldn't help but feel uncomfortable, as if some world-class trickster had set their sights on him.

"Director..."

Glancing at his mere 4.1 Contamination Value, confirming that his little physique couldn't handle much turmoil, Leon, feeling that a major issue was at hand, couldn't help but complain,

"Within a week of the Ryan Blood Night, the headquarters' review of me came down; yet here we are, having reported potential issues with the Aquarius Director—how many days have passed since then, and the headquarters hasn't made any moves?"

"What kind of moves did you expect? Should they just arrest the Aquarius Director and let you take that sheep of yours to interrogate him?"

Glancing at Leon, the Red-haired Director replied testily,

"After all, he's a director! You're a newbie who's only joined the Purification Bureau for a month, proposing an investigation against him is like a shepherd from Laine County accusing the king of sneaking into his sheep pen yesterday. Nobody will pay much attention.

Even if I vouch for you and the information becomes noteworthy, executing an investigation on him would still be troublesome—at the very least, it would require agreement from three directors. And considering that most directors keep their identities secret, or aren't even in this world, just continue waiting then!

Anyway, it's almost time for the end-of-year review. Every year, three directors are responsible for overseeing it. With Taurus His Excellency en route back, I should be able to notify four directors by next week. At that point, the review concerning Aquarius should just about be ready."

A week, huh...

Leon pondered, relaxing slightly. Just as he was about to continue speaking, he heard a strange squeaking sound coming from the drawer behind the Red-haired Director.

"It should be a message from headquarters."

Noticing the sound, the Red-haired Director returned to his desk, opened the drawer, fiddled for a moment, and then pulled out a sheet of ink-smeared paper, quickly scanning it.

"I thought it was something else; it turns out the results of your investigation are in, and you... huh?"

Upon seeing something unbelievable, the Red-haired Director's eyelid twitched violently before his brows furrowed instinctively.

"Leon..."

After skimming through the paper, his gaze lingered on terms like "suspicious," "dangerous," and "madness!" After a deep breath, he grimly informed,

"The results of your investigation... aren't too optimistic..."

Chapter 205 Evaluation and Visit\_1

Although Leon had already felt an ill foreboding when the Red-haired Director paused suddenly, hearing the outcome of his failed investigation made his heart sink, turning half cold.

"What does 'not very optimistic' mean?"

"It means exactly that, those two investigators rated you extremely poorly."

Looking at the evaluation form in his hand, which, although passed judgment, was filled with almost nothing but "bad comments," and demanded that, as the branch director, he closely monitor Leon, the Red-haired Director frowned and summarized,

"Perhaps it's due to our bureau's past bad reputation dragging you down, although there's no evidence linking you to the Ryan Blood Night incident, they still insist you are highly suspicious, at the very least having condoned Bobby Laien's mass slaughter. They also believe that your stable mental state is a pretense, that you usually repress your true thoughts for a long time, and despite your low desire for wealth and power, you have a very high affinity with the demon-type Anomalous Object representing greed, proving that you probably have even more dangerous desires and pursuits.

"Moreover, Camus, that senior investigator, even suggested in the evaluation form that your understanding of the world might be skewed, and that deep down you disregard the rules, harboring significant dissatisfaction with the current regulations.

"If given the chance to rise to a high position, or to possess a sufficiently powerful Anomalous Object, you would surely not adhere to the Purification Bureau's statutes but would instead try to evade the headquarters' jurisdiction, acting recklessly based on your own understanding and ideals..."

"..."

Wasn't that... a bit too much of an insight from that old guy?

Listening to the evaluation, which was less precise and appropriate and more like his mind had been dissected and printed directly onto the form, Leon began to sweat coldly, realizing for the first time how formidable the investigators were. Even though we barely interacted, just sat in the office chatting for a while, he managed to see so much? Did I... show myself that blatantly?

"However, you don't need to worry too much, while they rated you poorly, they haven't caught any solid evidence."

Seeing Leon, whose eyebrows were tightly knotted and face somewhat darkened, the Red-haired Director, feeling he had dragged Leon down, sighed and comforted him,

"Although the bureau values the investigators' opinions, it equally values concrete evidence, these can only be classified as personal opinions of those two investigators.

"Until they find tangible evidence proving your nefarious intentions, this investigation report doesn't have a major impact on you. With my guarantee, your application for Anomalous Objects won't be affected, it's just that promotion will become extremely troublesome.

"If you can't find a way to change this impression, forget about becoming a branch director, you might be stuck at a Level Three incident handler for years without any further advancement."

So... this evaluation result only affects my "future," doesn't it?

After hearing the Red-haired Director's words, Leon couldn't help but breathe a small sigh of relief, as long as they weren't suspecting that I orchestrated the Ryan Blood Night, losing a mere future is fine!

Though internally he didn't care much, he still needed to show some attitude. After considering a bit, Leon put on a face of "indignation" and said,

"Can a few baseless conjectures ruin a person's future? Is the bureau just going to watch them talk nonsense like this? Can't anything be done to deal with these investigators?"

"There actually is a way..."

Seemingly recalling something amusing, the Red-haired Director's mouth couldn't help but curl up, then he said,

"Next time you get into trouble and they come to investigate, go all out to pick fights with them, preferably make them your enemies."

"Huh?"

"That's pretty much what people at our bureau do."

The Red-haired Director shrugged and said,

"Anyway, those investigators have a prejudice against our bureau, and they won't say anything nice during regular investigations, so we might as well make enemies with every investigator who comes. As long as they don't catch any real fault, the credibility of the investigation results actually diminishes, directly minimizing the impact."

Wow, is that even possible?

Hearing this unconventional solution, Leon couldn't help but say in speechless amusement,

"No wonder... I was wondering why all the investigators seem to have a grudge against our bureau..."

"Emma and the others have no choice, making enemies with the investigators proactively is better than being on the bureau's watch list every few days, where you're scrutinized for everything you do."

The Red-haired Director sighed and said,

"I originally thought you wouldn't need to resort to such things, but it seems you can't escape in the end... never mind, stop thinking about it for now, hurry home and deliver the hair to your siblings, then pay a visit to Prince Joshua at the Royal Palace to see if he's related to all this."

"..."

"Why are you silent again? Why do I feel like you're quite resistant to seeing that Prince?"

"Well... I'm not exactly resistant to meeting him, I'm mostly worried he's resistant to seeing me..."

Leon forced a chuckle, briefly recounting what he did at Ryan Manor, then suggested to the speechless Red-haired Director,

"Director, considering Prince Joshua's character, if I go to ask him, he might not cooperate. How about I wear a mask to disguise myself, use the Black Goat to secretly observe, and you send someone else to accompany me?"

"Alright..."

Seeing the once diligent and dependable Little Leon starting to quickly align with the troublemakers of the bureau, the Red-haired Director opened his mouth as if to warn Leon about something, but ultimately gave up, rubbing his temples and pointing outside,

"Go find Emma, she's free now, let her accompany you."

"Got it!"

...

"Crash!"

A crisp cracking sound resonated as an exceptionally exquisite ceramic vase was violently hurled against the wall, shattering like a certain prince's fragile ego.

"Aahhh!!!"

Seeing his own heavily swollen left cheek in the mirror and the slap mark on his face that seemed to mock him, Prince Joshua's freckles involuntarily twitched.

"Boom!"

He lifted a foot and kicked the table beside him, toppling the elaborately carved red pine table onto the carpet. Recalling being slapped in the face in front of hundreds of guests and having someone spit on his face yesterday, Prince Freckles couldn't help but let out another hysterical howl.

"Ah! I'll kill him! I'll kill him!"

"Damned Duke of Lionheart! Damned Leon Layne!"

"Kill you, kill you, kill you! I'll definitely tear you to pieces!"

Seemingly not satisfied with just voicing his anger, Prince Freckles hefted a chair beside him and hurled it with all his might at the door, crashing it open with a loud bang, revealing a trembling maid in the hallway and a man and woman exchanging glances behind her.

What on earth did you do yesterday? Why does he hate you so much?

From the look Senior Emma cast, Leon, wearing a mask and cloak, read her curiosity and responded with an awkward smile.

Yesterday... I proposed to his sister, that's why he seems to hate me so much. He's probably a siscon, I guess?

Chapter 206 Strange Dreams (Part 1)\_1

"Prince Joshua,"

Led by the trembling maid into Prince Freckles' room, Emma, standing in for Leon as the primary interrogator, disregarded the chaos that looked like a storm had passed through and politely initiated the conversation,

"Long time no see, you seem to have grown a lot since the past."

Hmm?

Hearing the words of this tall and beautiful woman, the fierce-looking Prince Freckles couldn't help but raise his eyebrows, scrutinizing her for a moment before hesitantly saying,

"You are... hmm... the woman who joined the Purification Bureau six years ago?"

"Yes."

Emma smiled gently, then gracefully threw out a bandage and righted the overturned furniture in the room, introducing her purpose with a calm demeanor,

"Prince Joshua, our Virgin Branch received a request for help this morning regarding rebels plotting against the royal family. We need you to answer some questions. You know, our branch also bears the responsibility of guarding the royal family. However, due to chronic understaffing, there are occasional lapses. To better protect you and your family's safety, we hope you can cooperate with our investigation."

"Tsk... More people from the Purification Bureau..."

Hearing Emma's words, Prince Freckles couldn't help but touch his face, traces of lingering anger in his eyes. But considering the presence of the eerily snake-like bandage, he ultimately refrained from speaking harshly, instead questioning with dissatisfaction,

"Are you even aware of your role in guarding the royal family? Then why do other kingdoms have Purification Bureau staff permanently stationed beside their royal families and even some powerful nobles, while we have nothing?"

"We ask for your understanding in this matter."

Facing Prince Freckles' accusation, Emma maintained her gentle demeanor, responding unhurriedly,

"Our branch's situation is somewhat unique. Our personnel is only a fraction of other branches and, with the Kingdom experiencing frequent anomalous incidents in recent years, our manpower is extremely tight, making it difficult to allocate a permanent team for royal protection. However, our director remains stationed in the Capital City almost year-round and never ventures too far, constantly monitoring the Royal Palace and surrounding areas via anomalous objects. So unless it's an extremely unique situation, the safety of you and your family can be assured."

"Hmph!"

Prince Freckles seemed still unsatisfied with Emma's answer, continuing to nitpick with a displeased expression,

"If it were standard situations, would we even need you? Isn't the Purification Bureau's existence meant for handling special situations? If you ask me, your director doesn't know how to prioritize. When short on manpower, the royal family's safety should be the first priority, not bizarre anomalous incidents! If the royal family encounters danger, the entire Kingdom will descend into chaos. Those anomalies occurring in other counties, even if blown up, only result in the deaths of some ordinary people, hardly causing any significant turmoil. Why can't those be dealt with later?"

"..."

Having endured Prince Freckles' lengthy diatribe, Leon couldn't help but take a deep breath, his wrists trembling involuntarily.

\*Damn it, what if I really want to smack him right now? Who on earth taught this prick? How can someone be so infuriating? Speaking of which, your sister's talent is intuition; is your talent attracting animosity?\*

"Alright, I will relay your suggestions truthfully to the director."

Not provoked by Prince Freckles' accusations, Emma merely smiled warmly, then gently gestured toward the sofa,

"Prince Joshua, would you mind being questioned by us now?"

"Go ahead, ask away!"

Pleased with Emma's deferential manner, Prince Joshua first sat down in the single seat on the sofa, and Leon and his companion followed suit, sitting across from him.

"Wait a minute, who are you?"

Observing the man across who was covered in a robe and mask, as if fearing recognition, Prince Freckles inexplicably felt a surge of strange aversion, glaring at Leon's mask and scolding,

"She's a grand noble and has the privilege of sitting before me. What about you? Coming in without greeting, sitting directly across from me without a word? Hasn't anyone taught you what etiquette means?"

"..."

\*The etiquette you're referring to, does it involve using your face to warmly embrace my palm?\*

Irreconcilably at odds with this pompous prince, Leon bit the inside of his cheek beneath his mask, amused by the absurdity of it all, and reached out to remove his mask, intending to turn the questioning into a downright interrogation. Yet, just then, a soft, warm hand clamped down, seizing Leon's right hand and pulling him back, gently pressing his knee to signal him to hold back.

"Prince Joshua, if you persist, you'll put me in a difficult position."

Seemingly incapable of ever getting angry, facing Prince Freckles—who seemed to be a walking, talking prickly nuisance fresh from the proverbial sewer—Senior Emma still smiled sweetly,

"He's my colleague, a junior under my wing. He's usually shy and reserved, unfamiliar with proper etiquette when meeting the royal family. I ask for your patience. Besides, he's well-versed in soul, will, and spirit, areas that complement my abilities. Should you ever encounter minor troubles in these areas, he might be of assistance then."

"..."

Faced with Emma's soft persuasion, seemingly imbued with a 'calm aura,' Prince Freckles hesitated, finally retracting his thorny demeanor, sighing as he leaned back against the sofa with slight impatience,

"I have business later; hurry up and ask whatever you need."

"Alright, for the first question,"

Gently patting Leon's hand to calm him, Emma spoke with a soft voice akin to a cloud,

"Please, have you ever had private contact with members of the rebels?"

"What kind of ridiculous question is that?"

Prince Freckles frowned, his demeanor unfriendly,

"Why would I have a connection with those people? They want to assassinate me! If I had private dealings with them, wouldn't that be courting death?"

\*He's speaking the truth.\*

Seeing Prince Freckles' soul flame steady as ever, Leon silently reached out, marking a check on Emma Senior's soft lap through her satin skirt.

"I'm sorry, that was a routine question. Let's move on to the second question,"

Her thigh involuntarily trembled slightly at the feedback. Emma smiled, then continued,

"Prince Joshua, if you had a sister stronger than you in every way and the first in line for the throne, how would you perceive her?"

Chapter 207 Strange Dreams (Part 2)\_1

"What's this weird question of yours?"

Prince Freckles, who felt completely confused, said with a bit of impatience,

"I am Father's only son. Where would I have a sister? If you're wasting my time just to ask this kind of... um..."

At this point, as if recalling something, Prince Freckles hesitated slightly and then glanced warily in Leon's direction.

"Did you... somehow spy on me while I was asleep to see what dreams I had?"

Dreams?!

Upon hearing Prince Freckles' words, Leon and Emma both raised their eyebrows in unison, then instinctively exchanged a glance.

"Prince Joshua, while the Purification Bureau does have Cleaners capable of dream invasion, our Virgin Branch doesn't have anyone with such abilities... but we can't guarantee that the Rebels don't have someone like that."

After exchanging opinions with Leon through their gaze and feeling that this could be probed further, Emma immediately sat up straight with a somewhat serious expression and said,

"Prince Joshua, we now suspect that someone might have invaded your dreams and is trying to harm or control you through them. To ensure your safety, you must tell us the contents of your dream!"

"Uh... It was just a jumbled dream, a nonsensical type with no logic. Do I need to talk about it, too?"

"Yes, it might be critical intelligence!"

"This... okay..."

Startled by Emma's serious demeanor, Prince Freckles hesitated for a moment but ultimately hesitantly confessed,

"Just like your question, I happened to have a similar dream last night. In the dream, I wasn't an only child but had a sister about fourteen or fifteen years older than me. I think her name was... Vera... Vero... something..."

"Veronica?"

"Yes! It's Veronica!"

Feeling a bit surprised, Prince Freckles clapped his hands gently before pausing slightly, then looked up at Leon, who picked up where he left off, with a face full of suspicion,

"How do you know the name of the person in my dream? And, why does your voice sound kind of familiar...?"

"Of course, we know that name!"

Emma, senior to Leon, gave him a discreet pinch on the leg to stop him from speaking out of turn and replied with a slight frown,

"Because there's a woman named Veronica among those Rebels, Prince Joshua. We suspect that woman possesses an Anomalous Object that allows her to invade your dreams!"

"So that's what's going on..."

Upon hearing this, Prince Freckles seemed to realize suddenly, then surprisingly said with some relief,

"That explains why the dream was so strange; it turns out everything was controlled."

Strange?

Upon hearing this, Emma blinked her eyes and promptly asked,

"Prince Joshua, aside from having an additional sister, was there any other strange content in the dream?"

"If we're talking about strange... the whole dream was strange from start to finish!"

After frowning and recalling for a moment, Prince Freckles recounted with some distaste,

"In that Rebel's manipulation, in the dream, I looked like a Clown.

"From childhood, Father constantly compared me with her and made me emulate her in everything. Mother also took every chance to emphasize that she was my greatest threat to inheriting the throne, urging me not to trust the kindness she showed me, warning me that she might harm me for the throne.

"Then... hmm... and then the me in the dream was rather foolish.

"Even though my relationship with her wasn't bad when I was younger, and she often took me to play in the Royal Palace, I started wanting to oppose her a bit once I got older. She was frugal, so I was extravagant. She was gentle, so I was forceful. I kept causing trouble for her later. Eventually..."

As he recalled more details through active recollection, a hint of pain unexpectedly appeared in Prince Freckles' eyes. Then, as if narrating his own story, he spoke with an uncomfortable expression,

"Later... the Kingdom was attacked. They first blocked all major deep-water ports with warships. The main roads were bombed to the point where a quarter of them were unusable, and more than half of them were occupied. Half the Kingdom's transportation was almost completely cut off, with airships dropping bombs overhead every day.

"As for the army under the control of those useless military officials, they were utterly incompetent in front of the enemy, almost collapsing with just one strike. Only my sister and the Minister of Defense managed to organize a few new forces with some resistance capability.

"But no matter how many numbers or weapons they had, they were far inferior to the other side. Although they relied on Old Hill's command to fend off several attacks and stabilize the situation, my... my mother and some in the Finance Ministry kept dragging them down..."

Recollecting his foolish actions in the dream, Prince Freckles could hardly continue talking. Suddenly, he slammed the table hard with rage and said,

"Anyway, I didn't do anything right!

"Then the new forces couldn't pay salaries, nor could they supply any more ammunition and weapons. Although they were barely holding together with my sister's prestige, they couldn't hold on later and were mostly trapped in Merino County.

"Later, the Capital City was captured, and there were refugees everywhere. As I was mixed in with the Finance Ministry people with my mother, we got separated and couldn't escape. Then... and then my sister came back."

At this point, Prince Freckles paused slightly, then said with a highly complicated expression,

"At that time, neither Father, Mother, nor Uncle came looking for me, but she was the only one who fought her way out of Merino County's siege with her people, re-entered the Capital City, and found me in a converted air-raid shelter in the Old Town.

"I... I asked her why she came. She said she didn't want to either, but I had to stay alive. Father had only two children; I couldn't just die like that, I had to live in case something happened."

"I didn't understand what she meant at the time, but later, after Father died while on the run, she was caught and executed after failing to resist, and after her death, the disbanded troops and those who didn't want the Kingdom to be completely annexed began turning towards me, saying I was the last Robin of the royal family.

"However, I... the me in the dream was utterly useless, with no ability to resist like her. All I could do was retreat again and again with the people, relying on complete submission to other kingdoms and signing a lot of harsh, unreasonable treaties to barely keep a piece of land less than three counties.

"And to avoid being entirely wiped out, we had to pay a large sum of precious minerals and almost 40% of our fiscal revenue annually, almost comparable to a major county of the other Kingdoms. Even though I worked as if my life depended on it every day, the situation kept deteriorating..."

\*As if experiencing it himself,\* Prince Freckles recounted another self's "experience" with an expression of gloom, then said with some bewilderment,

"Just as everything seemed to be heading towards the worst result, with the entire Kingdom impoverished and unbearable, and almost to the point of disappearing forever, an old man with naturally smiling eyes, both squinting and smiling, asked me if I wanted to change it all.

"Then he opened a door for me, telling me that stepping inside would allow me to undo the regrets, but the cost would be losing everything. As for the me in the dream, I was either utterly desperate or felt there wasn't anything more to lose, so I just went in directly..."

"..."

"And then?"

After waiting a while without hearing more, Emma, who was a bit engrossed, couldn't help but ask,

"What happened to the you in the dream after entering the door?"

"After that?"

Prince Freckles blinked, seeming a bit dazed,

"After that, nothing. At dawn, I woke up."

Chapter 208 Saving people is crucial\_1

"..."

\*You're unbelievable... You won't be happy until you get hit today, huh?\*

Hearing the crucial part cut off was frustrating not just for Leon, who clenched his fists, but even for the usually good-natured Senior Emma, who took a deep breath and then tried to speak as calmly as possible,

"Prince Joshua, thank you for your cooperation. We will have a thorough discussion about your dream when we return."

"Why discuss it later?"

No longer recalling the nightmare from last night, and shaking off the strange feeling of weariness, Joe "Hedgehog" Shua suddenly became more humanlike, blocking them with an unfriendly expression,

"This is my dream, and I personally told you about it. If you're going to discuss and analyze it, you have to do it in front of me! You can't leave until you explain the situation clearly!"

"Your Highness, it's not that we don't want to explain it to you, but we currently don't have enough information, and we're not particularly skilled in dream-related abilities. We can't clarify it for you yet."

"Then bring someone who is skilled!"

For some unknown reason, Prince Joshua seemed unusually persistent about the strange dream from the night before. He squinted his eyes threateningly,

"I remember there's an agreement between your Purification Bureau and the royal families of various countries to protect us from anomalies as much as possible, right? But it seems you haven't achieved that!"

After hearing the implication in Prince Freckles' words, Emma paused slightly, then softly said with her usual gentleness,

"Prince Joshua, please don't make things difficult for us. I can pledge on the Alman Family's honor to inform you as soon as we have results. Is that acceptable?"

"Alman... ha!"

Looking like he was being tormented by last night's strange dream, with bloodshot eyes, Prince Freckles bluntly rejected,

"Don't mention the Alman Family's honor to me; ever since you plotted a coup to overthrow the royal family, the Alman Family's honor has been worthless!"

"Em... Are you Emma? Considering you're the last member of the Bauhinia Family, I've been quite courteous already. But don't be ungrateful! You're definitely hiding something from me. I need to know why I'm having this dream right now!"

"And that Veronica from the rebels, she dared to pretend to be my sister in the dream! You must catch her immediately and hand her over to me! Otherwise, I'll expose the Virgin Branch's negligence!"

Alman... Bauhinia? That Duke family, known as one of the twin pillars of the Kingdom alongside the Ryan Family?

From Prince Freckles' words, Leon captured some incredible information, suddenly remembering the redwood tree across from Ryan Manor, which was used as the execution platform for the Bauhinia Family.

Senior Emma... is she from the Bauhinia Family?

That means her friends, family, parents, husband, and almost everyone she knew were executed because of the coup? But... doesn't she have a daughter? Why would Joshua say she's the last person from the Bauhinia Family?

...

"Prince Joshua, please try to control your emotions."

While being watched in amazement by Leon, Senior Emma maintained her composure and calmness despite hearing Prince Freckles' threats. She didn't smile anymore but explained in as gentle a tone as possible,

"I can see that you're being tormented by yesterday's strange dream and are a bit too agitated, but threatening us won't really solve the problem. It would instead invite inquiries from the central bureau and slow down our normal investigation process, so..."

"I'm not tormented by any dream!"

Prince Freckles shouted angrily,

"It's just a dream, you get it? Fake!"

"I'm my father's only son, the kingdom's only heir! I've received the best education since I was young, destined to rule this kingdom from birth!"

"How could I be like that useless clown in the dream, doing so many foolish things? How could I be like him, crying at Veronica's feet, begging for forgiveness like a dog? It's an insult to me!"

With his anger causing veins to surface, after spilling the details he hadn't shared earlier, Prince Freckles seemed to realize he might have misspoken. Embarrassed and enraged, he scolded them,

"Get out! I'll make sure my father and your central bureau hear about the Virgin Branch's negligence, and replace all of you!"

"Especially you, a family of traitors who staged a coup. You all should've been hanged! You're lucky to still be alive because of the royal family's mercy, and yet you dare show your face before me? Counseling me to calm down? If I wasn't calm enough, you'd have gone to join your dead relatives long ago!"

"..."

Hearing him mention her family, Emma, who had always maintained her emotional composure, couldn't help but slightly clench her right hand, causing her knuckles to turn faintly red.

But looking at the frenzied Prince Freckles, she knew he was completely dazed by the contrast between the dream and reality, so there was no point in arguing with such an irrational person. Emma loosened her fist and silently turned to leave, but then...

"Close the door on your way out."

With a voice whispering in his ear, Leon, who was about to leave with her, turned back immediately. In Prince Freckles' dumbfounded expression, he delivered a swift kick to his gut.

"Ah!!!"

After taking that kick, which had been held back for over half an hour, Joshua screamed as he flew backward, crashing into the table Emma had just helped up, knocking the heavy wooden table over onto the carpet.

After holding back for quite a while, Leon naturally wouldn't be satisfied with just that. He dashed over with a move from the ancient Yagami style martial arts, slammed him hard onto the ground, then grabbed his collar to lift him up, executing a perfectly delivered slap.

"You... you..."

After being familiarly lifted and receiving another all-too-familiar slap, Prince Freckles spat out a tooth, looking utterly bewildered,

"You're that... that..."

"I'm your... never mind..."

Originally about to say "I'm your dad," Leon decided it was an ill omen, so he swallowed the last word, then once again raised his right hand, ready to forgo unnecessary communication in favor of action.

But just as Leon's next slap was about to land, a piece of bandage wrapped itself around his wrist.

"That's enough, it's unnecessary."

After casting a slightly grateful glance at Leon, Senior Emma softly advised,

"After all, he's a prince, and your investigation just ended. There's no need to bring further trouble upon yourself..."

"What trouble? I'm saving him!"

After shaking off the bandage wrapped around his wrist and delivering several more satisfying slaps, Leon turned back with a serious expression,

"Didn't we just say it? The rebels used an anomalous object to invade dreams, trying to manipulate and control Prince Joshua. Fortunately, the anomaly was discovered by you and me."

"In order to prevent the esteemed prince from falling under their control, we had to use mild pain to keep him awake, making sure he didn't forget who he was and eventually become a puppet of the rebels."

"As for the minor disagreement between us, as the director put it, they're separate issues. We might have had a dispute with him, but it doesn't stop us from saving him fiercely!"

"By the way, I didn't sleep well last night, so I'm a bit off today. Senior, would you be willing to help me beat...cough, save him for a while?"

"You're really..."

Glancing at Leon's serious nonsense and then at Prince Freckles with a face swollen like a pig's head, Emma couldn't help but shake her head in amusement, smiling despite herself,

"Leon, in terms of being... mmm... cunning and adaptable, you're exactly like the director... You take a break, and I'll help save him a little, too!"

## Chapter 209 Family Conflicts and the King of Nightmares\_1

"Don't... don't hit me anymore..."

After a hellish mixed-gender 'rescue,' Prince Freckles, who had been beaten black and blue, passed out and woke up again, could no longer hold on. He wrapped his arms around his head, curled into a ball, and protested on the ground,

"I... I'm a Prince after all, you guys from the Purification Bureau and the royal family have an agreement to... to ensure our safety..."

"Prince Joshua, you're being unfair."

Shaking his somewhat sore wrist, Leon, who was truly delighted after the rescue and amazed at how deeply entrenched Prince Freckles' views were, couldn't believe that even after such a thorough beating, he still clung to his identity as a prince. Leon earnestly and nonsensically said,

"We're ensuring your safety right now. After being rescued by us for so long, don't you feel much better? No more of those weird feelings of being controlled or influenced?"

"..."

\*That feeling never existed in the first place! I just wanted to know what the dream was all about!\*

Even though he wished he could tear these two damned cleaners to pieces, Prince Freckles, having taken the first beating of his life, was genuinely a bit scared for the moment. With his butt sticking up, he nodded repeatedly and said,

"No more, no more, really not a bit of that feeling anymore. I've never felt better!"

Joshua was only taught crooked views, not actually lacking intelligence, so he naturally understood the underlying message in Leon's words.

Feeling much better probably meant no more beatings, whereas not feeling that way at all meant still being controlled and requiring further "rescue" until he really felt better!

Well then, just as I'm relieved too.

Seeing this prickly creature finally concede, Leon, who had been rescuing him for quite a while, was truly exhausted and immediately turned his head to the tall, beautiful woman next to him, politely asking,

"Senior Emma, do you want to rescue him a bit more?"

"No, I've already vented my anger."

Returning a rather bright smile to Leon, Senior Emma reminded him,

"Leon, remember to heal his wounds before we leave, otherwise when the investigators from the bureau come down, it will be hard for you to explain."

"Got it."

Nodding in response, Leon took out the [Plague-Infected Blood Band], and amidst Prince Freckles' struggles and screams, he forcibly pried his arms away from his head and wrapped the dirty bandage around his head twice.

As the health extracted from a fat chicken in the kitchen rapidly infused, Prince Freckles' face, swollen like a pig's head, took only about a dozen seconds to deflate, revealing his original appearance.

\*Finally... finally, is it over?\*

Noticing that his face suddenly didn't hurt anymore, Prince Freckles hurriedly reached out to touch his face and almost cried out when he found the swelling had subsided.

Although the national ruin and family destruction of last night was tragic, it happened in a dream after all. With a layer of separation, the impact was not so deep. The extreme remorse that felt like heart-wrenching and meat-cutting gradually faded after waking up from the dream.

But the beating he just endured now was real pain, truly palpable!

In all these years, aside from a few childhood scrapes and scratches, he had never been beaten so badly; even his father, the King, had only slapped him once... Ah!

"Tsk, why did you move?"

Seeing Prince Freckles, who was slapped to the ground again, holding his face in utter confusion, Leon couldn't help but furrow his brow and said with displeasure,

"I accidentally healed yesterday's slap along with your injuries, and since yesterday and today were for two different reasons, one slap can't substitute for another. So, I have to reprint that slap..."

Get up! Hands down! Stand properly and don't move! If I miss again, I'll have to redo it from scratch!"

"Alright, alright, let's leave it at that."

Seeing Prince Freckles trembling as he put his hands down, eyes shut tightly with a mournful face, waiting for Leon to reprint the slap mark, Emma couldn't help but shake her head. She walked over, hooked Leon's arm, and pulled him out of the room, stopping him from giving another slap.

"Senior Emma, why are you pulling me?"

"To keep you from getting into more trouble, of course!"

Seeing Leon still seeming somewhat dissatisfied, Emma couldn't help but sigh,

"No wonder the director specifically told me before coming here to keep a tight rein on you.

Even though we found a pretty good excuse, this will still definitely attract investigators from headquarters. Since he has already admitted he wasn't harmed, you should have stopped. If you keep hitting him, it will cause trouble."

"Don't worry; I already thought of a reason before I took action."

Leon chuckled after hearing her concerns and explained,

"Though I have no memory of such a thing, didn't his sister say she had agreed to my proposal? In that case, by name, I am his brother-in-law.

If a brother-in-law and little brother-in-law have a spat, and I lightly slap him a couple of times without using any Anomalous Object to hurt him, wouldn't that be considered a family conflict? The investigators from headquarters wouldn't bother with something like this, right?"

\*You can do that?\*

Emma was slightly taken aback, then she said with amused resignation,

"You really are something... fine, you got me there!"

"I'm not all that, senior; you're the truly amazing one."

Thinking of Emma's remarkably stable emotions and her calm and rational handling of unexpected situations, Leon couldn't help but genuinely admire her,

"I'm just a bit more flexible in thinking, but when it comes to capability in handling matters, there's still a lot for me to learn from you... By the way, senior, your soul jumped violently before; did you discover something?"

"Don't call me 'senior'; it makes me sound old. I'm actually not much older than you. Just call me Emma from now on."

After correcting Leon's form of address, Emma, in a very good mood, smiled and said,

"As for discoveries, I did find a few... Have you heard the name 'King of Nightmares'?"

"King of Nightmares?"

"The King of Nightmares is also known as the Lord of Nightmares, mastering the Nightmare Authority within the realm of dream Authorities. It is one of the True Gods worshipped by the Bai Ye Sect.

Because its true form only exists in the dreams of intelligent beings and never interferes with reality, even headquarters has little it can do about it. It's quite a troublesome entity."

After briefly explaining the situation of the King of Nightmares, Emma pondered while explaining,

"The ancestors of the royal family of our Kingdom once fought with the King of Nightmares and repeatedly forced it away, thus suffering some curses from it.

As they grow older, each direct Blood Descendant of the royal family begins to encounter repetitive nightmares, constantly reliving their most regretful past in dreams, and the older they get, the more regrets they accumulate. These dreams become more real and more painful. The current Old King is tormented by such nightmares and has fallen ill.

So, if I'm not wrong, last night Prince Joshua likely experienced an incredibly painful nightmare, which is why he suddenly lost his mind and acted so madly, wanting to know what the dream was about no matter what.

This is also why, at first, I didn't plan on paying him much attention; he suffered through such a horrifying dream last night, so being emotionally unstable is quite normal, and he does have his own reasons."

Chapter 210 Emma's Request\_1

"..."

\*Did he have his own difficulties?\*

Remembering that arrogant, overbearing, and irritating Prince Freckles, whose face practically screamed "I need a beating," Leon couldn't help but click his tongue inwardly.

Alright.

Since he had his difficulties, I couldn't be too unsympathetic. The next time he ended up in my hands, I could slap him with a sympathetic look!

...

"Hmm, hold on a second!"

After pondering over how to deal with his nominal brother-in-law in the future, Leon carefully considered Senior Emma's words and found something didn't seem right, prompting him to voice his doubts,

"Shouldn't what the King of Nightmares makes people dream of be past regrets? But why did Joshua dream about future scenarios? Could it be that he simply had a nightmare?"

"I've considered that possibility too, but it's really low."

Emma shook her head and said,

"Simple dreams are very fragmented; they wouldn't be so smooth, continuous, and logically clear, nor could they cause such a huge impact on a person's mental state.

Moreover, he already lost his memories about the princess. He doesn't even know who Veronica is, so how could he dream about her?"

"That's true..."

Nodding in agreement with Senior Emma's judgment, Leon couldn't help but frown along with her.

"So what's going on? Could it be that even the Authority controlled by an existence as powerful as the King of Nightmares could make mistakes?"

"Yeah, I can't figure it out either."

Emma shook her head and said,

"I really have limited knowledge about dreams, souls, minds, and such, so I plan to go back and ask the Director to see if she has any insights... By the way, Leon, are you planning to come back to the Bureau with me, or go home first?"

"I'll go home first."

After glancing at the sky, Leon touched the photo in his pocket, then smiled and said,

"Today is Wednesday, and Bridge Public School lets out earlier. If I calculate the time right, Anna should have already picked up the two little ones from school, and I'll get home just in time.

As for Prince Joshua's dream, I just heard about the King of Nightmares today. Even if I go back, I won't be of any help. I'll just wait for Senior Emma... um... for you and the Director to figure things out, and let me know what I can do then."

"Alright, I won't see you off then."

Emma waved at the two steam carriages waiting by the roadside and paid the fare before Leon, then hesitated slightly after boarding the carriage and poked her head out to ask,

"Leon, do you remember that I once asked you for a favor?"

"I remember! Of course I remember!"

Hearing this, Leon, who was about to get on the carriage, hesitated slightly and then promised with a serious face,

"Senior Emma, you not only taught me a lot of the knowledge needed for work at the Purification Bureau, but you also saved my sister's life during that incident at the hospital! As long as it's within my power, just ask whatever you want!"

"Why are you calling me 'Senior' again..."

Blinking somewhat helplessly, Emma smiled and said,

"Since you say so, I won't stand on ceremony.

Next month is my daughter's birthday, and I... although I'm her mother, have seldom been by her side, so I don't know much about what children like.

Leon, you have three younger siblings, so you should know a bit more about this than I do. Could you spare a day to help my daughter have a birthday with no regrets?"

You spoke so seriously, but it turns out just to spend a birthday with your daughter? Was this what you wanted me to help with before?

Hearing Senior Emma's request, Leon couldn't help but pause slightly, but since he couldn't find a reason to refuse and didn't want to reject it, he thought a moment before nodding in agreement.

"Sure, what day exactly? I'll definitely be there!"

"The 6th! Next month, the 6th!"

Hearing Leon agree to her request, Emma couldn't help but smile happily and waved farewell to him, saying,

"On the 6th, at 8 a.m., I'll be waiting with Ellie under the big tree at the entrance of Treasure Flower Manor on Redwood Avenue. You must come then!"

"Alright! I'll definitely be there!"

Having made arrangements with Senior Emma and watched her leave, Leon boarded his carriage and took out his pocket notebook, noting down the event on the latest page.

[To-do list:

1. Observe Senior Tom's soul state a few more times to see if it was influenced by the Aquarius Director (currently everything is normal)

2. Talk with the Director about my luck issues (Director has no solution, shelved)

3. Infiltrate the Scales Gold Sect meeting and upgrade the Holy Spirit Badge to Gold (uncertain time, about three weeks later)

4. Go home to give my hair, then ask Anna about the photo, and confirm her sexual orientation. If there's danger, seek help from the Director (it probably isn't about sexual orientation)

5. Investigate the princess incident (no clue for now, but it surely involves the Aquarius Director—damn Aquarius Director! Always has to meddle everywhere!)

6. Senior Emma's daughter's birthday (Next month, 6th, 8 a.m., under the redwood tree at the entrance of Treasure Flower Manor, named Ellie)]

Hmm... these were probably the most important.

After looking over these six items, Leon nodded in satisfaction, just about to put away his notebook, but remembered something and marked a big question mark on the last item with his charcoal pencil.

Prince Freckles just said that Senior Emma was the last person in the Bao Hua Family, but she still had a daughter. Was she secretly kept safe by the Director? Or did Prince Freckles make a mistake?

Moreover, the entire Bao Hua Family... Senior Emma's whole family was executed... And with a daughter to care for, no wonder she was so cautious and unwilling to take any risk, even with an Undying Body.

Oh, and! Even though I don't know what Senior Emma originally wanted my help with, it definitely wasn't just for her daughter's birthday. I better pay attention to this too!

...

"Bridge Street, number thirty-five."

While Leon was musing over Senior Emma's matters and absentmindedly doodling circles in his notebook with the charcoal pencil, the coachman in front reminded him.

"Sir, it's time to get off."

"Oh, oh!"

Snapping back to reality, Leon put away his notebook, opened the carriage door, and got off, looking towards Happiness Apartment.

"Snip snip!" "Snip snip!"

"..."

Seeing the big old man carrying large scissors, who suddenly popped out from the garden bushes and began gesturing at him, Leon couldn't help but twitch slightly at the corners of his mouth before giving the man a sincere thumbs-up.

Old man, you're truly reliable. I just got off the carriage, and you're already here waiting with scissors, truly dedicated to a full twenty-four-hour surveillance of me, huh?

However, just as Leon planned to bypass the big old man and find the curly-haired old lady to deal with him so he could go home to see his siblings, he unexpectedly saw two familiar little heads popping out of the bushes right behind him.

"Big brother?"

Seeing Leon standing outside, the two little ones couldn't help but gleefully tap their feet on the fence and enthusiastically wave.

And Melanie, who had changed into a pretty little dress, exclaimed excitedly,

"Big brother! Sister-in-law has already moved in! When will you bring her home to marry?"

Sister-in-law... the princess?

Hearing Melanie's words, Leon couldn't help but blink in confusion.

\*Strange, how did they know about this? And also, when did the princess move in? Last I left, she was still at the Purification Bureau.\*