

Northwest 21

Chapter 21

Captain.

It was Alain. Reluctantly, she stopped walking.

Although this old man loves to drink till he cant even talk straight, the man was generous and wise. As a result, the crew followed him easily. He served as boatswain, making him in charge of the deck. So, I cant ignore his words hastily. If the Captain ignores the dignity of the deck, the crew will not respect it either.

What, Im busy. Tell me quickly.

Why do you hate it so much?

Is there something I dont know about?

Lil frowned and spat out her words.

I dont like that hes from the Navy.

Whats the big deal to have one or two soldiers who ran from the Navy? Captain Jarles also accepted three men from the Navy recently. I heard that most of the deserters flee because they hate authority and are very satisfied with the rules and contracts of the Southern League of pirates. Especially the reasonable compensation and the retirement arrangement.

That doesnt mean we can just allow them on the Bell Rock. We should be more careful, in addition to the Leagues work, we also carry out missions against the Imperial Order. What if hes followed? Then itll be irrelevant if its only one or a thousand deserters.

The chaser fleets* were active decades ago when there werent as many lower-levelled sailors in the Navy, but these days theyre not as persistent anymore. Red Giroduans first mate is also a former navy helmsman, right? Its been almost 20 years, but I heard hes still alive and well.

Even if we vote, there needs to be unanimity. Unless youre going to break the rules, you set up yourself, Captain. I think its better not to be stubborn.

The Admiral is coming here to wipe us out. What if hes a spy of the fleet?

Dont worry about that. Ill keep an eye on him.

Why dont you put the bottle down first before you say stuff like that?

Hehe

Alain scratched the back of his head and took a swig from his rum. Lil left him be and went back to the front.

Im trying my best, though I feel like Im being pushed back.

Well, I I was the doctor of a ship from the Mondovi Fleet!

She stopped walking. All kinds of eyes poured on Ed like a tidal wave. Lil was one of them.

Surprised, she turned around while her mouth fell open. Several arms grabbed the soulless captain and dragged her in front of Ed.

What?

Please dont say no because Im from the Navy. There will be nothing more unfair to me than that!

What do you mean?

I was a non-commissioned junior officer and was completing my four-year service at the navy. Its a requirement to enrol in the medical graduating program at the Imperial Clairaut and become a registered doctor.

But Im done now.

If it werent for that fucking admiral, Id have volunteered at the Navy after my service was over and fulfilled my lifelong dream. But that Admiral made me Damn it! Im so sick and tired of the Navy!

Chatter began to rise when the admiral was mentioned.

Fucking Admiral? Does he mean the Admiral of the Peninsula?

I think so. He mentioned the Mondovi fleet

Admiral Retiro? That bastard from the Anatole Sea?

Isnt he the one who said hed come to Amiaeng soon?

Lil tried not to be distracted by the sporadic noise.

So, this guy is not from the Lebrun academy, but from the Imperial Academy. And he got a tattoo because he was going to pledge his loyalty to the Navy?

She observed Eds every move.

Clenching his fists as if it was unbearable and the angry expression on his face seemed to say that he had some sort of negative affair with the Admiral. When it comes to acting, I cant deny hes talented.

As Alain said, the story of sailors escaping the Navy and becoming pirates was pretty common. Officers live in luxurious cabins and eat high-quality food, while the non-commissioned officers or sailors under them have a difficult time. Its obvious that he had some bad experience with the Admiral, which could be a huge advantage. Besides, hes even showing animosity towards the Admiral, its hard to find a better motive for supporting the pirates than this.

What about chaser fleets?

I dont know. They arent around these days.

How can I believe that you graduated from the Imperial Clairaut?

I cant exactly prove it, but I have a recommendation letter from Doctor Pons.

When the name of Doctor Pons was mentioned, the surroundings became even noisier.

My poor Amiaeng crew really believes Pons is some kind of god.

Lil scanned the letter of recommendation that Ed gave her and handed it over to Alain. Alain, still hiccupping from the alcohol, read it and nodded his head with a stern expression.

Let me see!

Me, too!

What do you want to see? You cant even read!

Several hands aimed for the letter, so the boatswain raised the piece of paper above his head. Unfortunately, Alain wasnt fast enough and someone snatched it away. Soon there was a scuffle and the sound of tearing paper could be heard.

Lil kept quiet and stared at Ed.

I assume that he covered his face with that fake beard and eyepatch because he was running from the navy.

She was convinced that if shed met Ed for the first time today, shed let him join without any hesitation.

The criteria for selecting new crewmembers werent that strict. Besides, hes a doctor. Normally, a doctor would be welcomed with open arms. Hed be a great asset, especially one with formal training. Now that the battle with the Navy is coming closer by the day, theres no choice but to alleviate the anxiety of the crew. Only, its somewhat

Lil frowned.

I know that Captain Lil Schweiz and the prostitute Lil look completely different. But somehow, I cant get rid of this uneasy feeling. I want to ask more. However, on pirate ships, its the unwritten rule to ignore a sailors past.

After taking in the atmosphere, Lil knew for sure.

If I say no to this, there will be a revolt. Alain was right, if we vote, Ill be badly outnumbered.

Finally, she spat out.

Take care of it.

Immediately the crowd went wild. Numerous shouts welcomed the new crewmember and sailors huddled together to shake hands. Lil irritably pushed the incoming men out of her way.

The old ones finally useful now that hes dead! That damn quack cut off my toe while applying ointment

Whaha. Welcome, welcome! Whats your name?

Ed

Yeah. Take it easy, Ed

Ill be in your care

Lil watched their friendly chatter with displeasure and saw Cesar approaching from a distance. She ground her teeth and started to cut through the line of sailors right away. Of course, she kept her ears open to the conversations of the crew behind her.

I know I shouldn't ask this, but I'm curious. What happened?

Did he try to scalp you?

Oh, yeah. I want to know that too! Does he really do that? Does he really sear people with a hot iron?

And does he collect human skulls?

Ed paused for a moment but soon nodded grimly. In fact, Lil was a little curious about that herself and glanced in their direction.

It's all true. He's a complete lunatic that flays scalps and feeds eyeballs to his fish

Then the cannibalistic pets are also true? And are they fed with the prisoners' fingers and toes?

That's right. It happens simultaneously with the Admirals' mealtime. He sits in a chair near them, so they can eat together. And their name I forgot it, but it was the most frightening name I ever heard

Ma, madman

He sounds like a real madman!

If I get caught, I won't be able to get a clean death.

Chills ran down her spine before Lil moved forward again.

With such a personality, it's likely that he's also cruel to his subordinates. I can't really blame the deserters.

The loud chatter went away. Lil walked over to Cesar, who was watching the uproar on the dock.

Cesar, what did you do? Why is that pervert here?

What?

Don't pretend you don't know what I'm talking about. He said he got permission from the navigator and that he is a doctor.

I don't know.

What?!

Cesar squinted his eyes and stared at the brown crown in the middle of the chaos.

Is it the guy from the Counts' house? It was too dark that day, so I didn't see his face in detail.

It looks like he was beaten by that lunatic Admiral. I don't know why he stayed at the Counts' house, but he left the Navy and is now on the run.

It turns out he's a doctor.

When Cesar stayed quiet, Lil looked up.

Cesar knows that Ed and I fought in the Counts' study. Of course, I said I fell on my own, but I'm sure he knows that was a lie.

You're not the one who gave permission? Everyone thought it was you.

It wasn't me.

Then who was it? Jericho?

Jericho does sometimes call himself the navigator.

Lil stomped her foot.

Yeah, damn it! I think youre right. He was in charge of recruiting.

She glared daggers at Ed, who was making his way to the ship.

Its surprising that they didnt hang flowers around his neck already.

In the midst of the celebration, the owner of the brown hair crossed over to the deck.

We need a doctor and we dont know when we have the opportunity to find another one. Even if I step in now, the crew will never accept it.

Thats true, damn it! That makes it even more annoying, why does he have to be a doctor?

You must remember that youre not the woman from that night. You need to hide those feelings or else hell get suspicious.

Fuck.

Dont worry. If I see a chance, Ill give him a good beating.

Seeing the normally timid Cesar react so aggressively, Lil felt the need to alleviate his growing temper.

No, thats alright. Hes my responsibility now. Until he signs the contract, I can beat him up myself.

Lil rubbed her mouth and walked towards the Bell Rock. Cesar followed quietly. She spoke without looking back at him.

Keep an eye on that guy, something is still bothering me. Everything he said makes sense, but I just dont believe him.

She walked over the crossing and made her way up the deck. Even though the captain was on board, there were only a few people who greeted her. She turned her head away and raised her nose at the welcome ceremony on the upper deck. Lil ignored the calls for the captain and went into the captains room, leaving only the order to bring Jericho.