

Northwest 30

Chapter 30

For several months now, the overjoyed emperor has gathered all the Sesbron nobles and royal families from nearby kingdoms to enjoy grand banquets daily. Especially the nobles rejoiced in unison as the emperor's heavy mood seemed to have washed away. Giving them the perfect opportunity to talk their way into higher positions. All thanks to Admiral Retiro, Sesbron's troublemaker, and his fleet that turned towards Amiaeng.

The imperial family amassed immense wealth due to the gold mines in the western continent. The emperor liked to show this wealth by holding luxurious banquets that no one could even dream of beating. All kinds of exotic food and alcohol enriched the nobles visiting the royal palace. Dancers brought in from newly discovered land embellished the splendour of the extravagant feast even more.

The emperor was accompanied by the Duke of Mireille wherever he went. Rumours that the emperor favoured him came no longer as a surprise. Since the emperor entrusted the duke, whispers of consideration wandered around the banquet hall. Debating whether or not to invest in the duke's Garni merchant business.

Powerful aristocrats acquired innate wealth through lineage and inheritance. They had no interest in directly accumulating knowledge or moving their bodies through lowly labour. Increasing their wealth through investments, sponsorship, expanding land through marriage, and contributing in conquests in return for major compensation were the ways they maintained their vested interests. The Imperial Academy, which was established to teach various subjects, was only attended by the middle class who wanted to advance their status. Nobles were uninterested, only occasionally did some enter the Imperial Academy. A typical example was Admiral Retiro, who attended the academy when he was much younger. There, he immersed himself in various disciplines.

So, when rumours spread that the duke had devised a plan to trick Edgar into moving, the nobles of Sesbron unconvincingly nodded their heads, thinking it was just some mutual agreement between two outsiders.

But how could he have known that the emperor would favour him so much because of it?

According to most nobles, the duke was a vulgar man. He lost his pride by being blinded by wealth and glory. They secretly shunned him, believing that a man as the duke, who personally handled commercial operations, would diminish the dignity of a noble. However, if the first-ever business that received backing from the emperor himself, would be the Garni Merchants association, nobles would be forced to cling to the duke. As a result, an unusual air settled over Sesbron.

And right there in the middle was the Duke of Mireille, highly enjoying this atmosphere.

As long as the Admiral performs well, I can't ask for more. Finding Liloa is the main task, but I wouldn't mind if he takes out a pirate or two when he's down there in the South. So please, be my guest and end up in the Admirals line of sight. If that bad-tempered fellow annihilates the southern pirates, I can take full control over the Ingres Seas commercial district.

The ridiculous story of how that maniac swept the Sea of Anatole from piracy, in search of looted art, has already spread all the way to Sesbron. For a long time, Edgar has had an

uncharacteristically noble hobby of collecting art and it is said that he was particularly interested in ancient artworks from the western continent. Which captivated many with their unique aesthetics. Among them, a prized statue of the early Arabal Kingdom from the West was stolen during transportation. Rumours has it, that he carried out a large-scale subjugation and eventually found the statue by robbing almost all pirates.

The duke smirked.

If the Pirates of the South were to touch his temper, whatever happened after that would be beneficial to me. In particular, Lil Schweiz, the fucking bastard, is the one causing the most damage to my business. And I cant forget about the mockery I receive from him every damn time. Its my biggest wish for Lil Schweiz to be caught off guard by the Admiral.

Duke. Duke? Ren?

Someone shook his shoulder. The Duke awakened from his thoughts and looked at the surprised emperor.

Ah, Im so sorry, Your Majesty.

Nothing to worry about, Ren.

The emperor chuckled, regarding it as something insignificant. Surrounding nobles were watching the duke, who did not notice the emperors call at all, in disbelief.

My negligence is tremendous.

No need for apologies. Theres someone here to see you.

What?

Mireille looked around. Standing not far from him was a man with black hair and black clothes. A young man with thin lines and an attractive appearance, emitting a somewhat gloomy air. The duke approached the man and bowed his head.

Hello, Venua.

Greetings to the Duke.

Mireille took the initiative and moved with a forced smile on his face. In the meantime, he tried hard to appear friendly.

Call me Ren.

However, with his firm look, Venua expressed that he had no intention to do so. Instantly, Mireille got irritated by the man who dared to openly show his dislike towards him.

Is your business doing well?

Its running smoothly.

I would like to know why you think so.

The dukes mouth twisted.

I know he has never been a pleaser, but he has not inherited his title yet. Making his status lower than mine, he should at least treat me as such. Too bad hes currently my biggest weakness or else

The duke skilfully concealed his true feelings and smiled.

Do you know the man I sent?

The Marquess of Roahn. The frivolous admiral, famous for his inability to take orders. Yet, you think everything is going smoothly?

The success or failure of this mission does not depend on Sir Edgars eccentric personality.

Even after the dukes reassurance, Venua kept an ugly expression on his face.

Hes a man who will stop at nothing to get what he wants, hell do anything it takes to find Liloa.

You look quite proud of yourself.

I am.

Arent you the one who made Liloa disappear in the first place?

I wonder what makes you so confident.

Ah, is it because His Majesty has decided to invest in your business? How pitiful. Remember the story about the fox? They say he stared at the tree in vain, waiting for the fruit to fall, only to die of a broken neck.

Venuas venom was overpowering. Mireille, unable to contain himself, glared at his opponent. Venuas eyes, which had become sharper and more vicious in recent days, were already fixed on Mireille, carefully watching his reaction. Mireille broke their eye contact first and ground his teeth.

Every time I look at those gloomy royal blue eyes, I feel an indescribable discomfort in my chest.

Perhaps, Im being too rude?

Perhaps. You should take caution in your tone.

Suddenly, the duke clenched his fists.

I would sell my soul to the devil, if I could just hit his face once.

I say this because the Duke seems to be only interested in the side profit, rather than his true purpose.

Thats impossible.

You look confident for having moved His Majestys fleet, but trying to guarantee silence based on the Marquess insane personality sounds dangerous.

Of course, I trust him entirely

The Marquess is not the only one with a mouth.

Mireille, displeased when his words were cut off, gradually grasped Venuas meaning. When he saw that unchanged calm face, his eyes widened in disbelief.

Are you threatening me?

The difference between the Admiral and me is that if things go amiss, my accusations will be disastrous.

Thats enough!

You're the head of your family, and yet you've abandoned your obligations and neglected your family. Moreover, when it became impossible to deal with it alone, you used His Majesty's Navy for your own private purposes. Enticing Admiral Retiro, the Empire's greatest asset. It's absurd to think that your snake-like tongue managed to twist some facts here and there and suddenly your actions are praised to heaven itself. I wonder how his majesty will dispose of you when he finds out about all this.

Venua straightened his body that had been leaning towards Mireille. He checked his surroundings, making sure nobody heard his threat.

It was then that he noticed a woman approaching them.

Ren?

The Duchess of Mireille came over and touched Mireille's arm. The duke returned her gaze, the lingering anger in his expression was still visible. He wasn't sure if it was on purpose or by chance, but the woman stroked his arm in order to calm him down. Venua stared at her expressionlessly and eventually took a step back.

No need to be nervous.

The duke tried to reassure the duchess and hide her behind his back, in the hope she wouldn't hear anything. He knew it was probably in vain, but it was better than doing nothing. He didn't want her to suspect anything from this conversation later.

Venua was about to walk away, but turned back once, still maintaining his impassive expression.

I mean, it would be nice if Liloa, who ran off to Malisuro to recover, will return as soon as possible.