

Shota 591

Chapter 591 Interrogating the captives (1)

"Ha, ha, ha, the lord of hell is coming for all of our souls! There is no escape, there is only death!"

"This is all a dream, this is all a dream! When I wake up, it will all be over and I will be in my bed!"

That was what the general and vice general were saying.

The look on their faces made it clear that they weren't right of mind.

It seemed that the slaughter had affected them quite deeply that they had gone off the deep end.

I looked at General Killock and he shook his head to show that he was helpless as well before saying, "We've had our doctors look at them, but it seemed that the stress was just too much for them and they couldn't keep their minds together. Even if we want to help them, it isn't as if there's anything that we can actually do for them..."

I looked at the general and vice general with a complicated look.

I never thought that I would shock them enough that they would lose their minds like this.

Though I was prepared to kill them, I wasn't prepared for this.

I even felt a bit guilty because of it.

However, that feeling only lasted for a few seconds as I remembered who they were.

They were the general and vice general of the army that had come to invade our kingdom. They were the ones that wanted to invade our home and take what we had.

Remembering this, I no longer felt anything towards them and just wanted to get the information that I wanted.

I looked at General Killock and said, "Bring them to the interrogation room, I want to talk to them privately."

General Killock revealed an awkward look when he heard this, but he still gave a nod and gave a signal to the soldiers on the side to release the general and vice general.

It didn't take long for me to understand why General Killock had revealed that expression just now.

The moment that the soldiers went forward to grab them, the general and vice general immediately lost control. They flailed their arms, they kicked their legs, they did everything that they could to stop the soldiers from grabbing them.

The way that they did this while lying on the floor was just like a child that was throwing a tantrum.

It really was strange seeing grown men on the ground throwing a tantrum like this...

But eventually, they were able to grab the general and vice general, bringing them to their feet.

They had to get a bit rough, so there were a few bruises, but this was better than the alternative.

The general and vice general were brought to the interrogation room, but they were still doing the same thing as in their cells. It didn't seem like they cared at all about where they were or anything around them.

It was as if all they cared about was what they were muttering about.

Giving a deep sigh, I walked into the room and said, "Tell me what your kingdoms are planning and we can consider letting you go."

Neither the general or the vice general responded.

It didn't even seem like they reacted to the words that I had just said.

General Killock was here with me, so he slammed his fist down on the table and said, "The general is asking you a question!"

Still, neither of them reacted to this and just looked like they were in their own little world.

I just calmly looked at them, not letting myself lose control.

The way that they acted, it was clear that they had lost their minds, so I was trying to think about the psychology books that I had read in my past life.

After thinking about it for a bit, I slowly came to a conclusion.

Though this conclusion was a bit dangerous. f reewe b

I waved my hand at General Killock and he followed me to the corner of the room.

When he heard my suggestion, he said with a shocked look, "General, are you crazy? That's just too dangerous!"

I gave a nod of agreement since I also thought that it was dangerous, but I also said, "This is the only way. They won't react unless we do this."

General Killock had a hesitant look on his face when he heard this, but he still gave a nod in the end since he knew that I was right.

Nothing we had tried so far had worked, so it wasn't as if there was anything else that we could do.

The only thing that we could rely on was this plan of mine.

General Killock gave a sigh before leaving the interrogation room.

When he came back, there were several soldiers that came in with him.

Seeing them all come in like this, I nodded at the soldiers that had stayed in the room with me.

These soldiers moved over to the general and vice general, but they didn't lay a single finger on them. They just stood there as if they were prepared to grab them at any moment, as if they were preparing for when the two of them went crazy.

Once these soldiers took their position, I sat back down in front of the general and vice general.

Though I was sitting right there in front of them, the two of them didn't seem to pay any attention to me.

It was the same as before where they kept muttering to themselves without a single care in the world. It was as if what they were saying was the only thing that mattered in this world.

They just didn't care about anyone or anything else around them.

That was until I suddenly slapped the table and said, "I was the one that slaughtered your entire army and the one who trapped you with those Blood Worms."

As soon as I said this, the two of them slowly looked up at me with dazed looks that didn't seem to have any emotions in them.

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Then they suddenly broke out in laughter as they started mocking me.

"You? You're saying that you're the one?"

"What a joke! If you want to claim something like this, at least bring someone believable."

"Right? Do you really think that we would believe that a pretty boy like you could come up with anything like this?"

The two of them suddenly became sane for a moment before suddenly going back to what they had been doing.

Was it because they were pretending, or could it be that I had actually reached them?

Either way, it was a good sign.

As long as I keep provoking them, there will be a reaction that comes.

That was what I had learned from those psychology books that I had read.

Sometimes, it was necessary to dive deeper since the mental breaks that they suffered from were a projection of the thing that had caused that mental break. By diving deeper, one might be able to find what had caused that mental break in the first place, as well as helping that person come to terms with it.

So I didn't hesitate to push further.

"So these two great generals were defeated by a young pretty boy like me, how does that feel?"

The two generals once again snapped out of their crazy ramblings to look at me in a daze before suddenly reacting.

"What did you say?"

"You want to say that you're better than us? Come back in a thousand years!"

The two generals once again insulted me as much as they could, but I just ignored all of it as I calmly looked at them.

Even if they didn't want to accept it, they had no choice but to face this since they were being insulted right now.

But then General Killock said, "He is indeed the current general of this army, the one that was appointed by the fourth prince himself. He was the one that led us here and planned out that entire battle."

Even in their crazed state, the general and vice general recognized General Killock since he was the famed general of the fourth prince's army.

The moment that he said this, both of them looked at me with very strange looks before suddenly saying in slow voices, "You're the one that planned everything?"

I just gave a very calm nod in response without saying anything.

There was a moment of silence before both the general and the vice general jumped onto the table. They reached their hands out as if they wanted to grab me and rip me apart.

But there was a reason why I had called all of these soldiers in.

They had been standing behind the general and the vice general the entire time, as if they had been waiting for something. The moment that the general and vice general tried to grab me, the soldiers grabbed them and restrained them.

They wouldn't allow them even come close to me as they held them back.

The general and vice general tried as hard as they could, but both of them were exhausted and injured. It wasn't as if they could overpower these soldiers that were well rested and in perfect condition.

So they could only let themselves be restrained in their seats.

Since they couldn't take action, they decided to use their words.

"You, you, you monster! You slaughtered all those people of our Midra Kingdom!"

"You're the devil! How could you watch all of our men be slaughtered like that?!"

They cursed me with all their might, but I wasn't offended at all since I knew that this was normal. I just calmly faced them and waited for them to finish, but it seemed like the soldiers and even General Killock couldn't help being disturbed by what they said.

General Killock suddenly slapped the table and said, "So you're the only ones that can kill people, we can't? This is war, people dying is normal."

Both the general and the vice general hesitated for a moment since they knew that General Killock was right.

They were the ones that had invaded, so they couldn't blame anyone but themselves for this.

But the general still said, "We surrendered. Why didn't you come and save us? Why did you let the slaughter continue excessively?"

At this, I said with a shrug, "Do you think that we can control those Blood Worms? You should be happy that they left when they did and we were able to save the few remaining survivors. Otherwise, you might have all been buried in the ground today."

The general revealed a very strange look that had a trace of fear when he heard this.

He just looked at me for a bit before suddenly saying, "How can you say something like that? Do you not have any care for your fellow men at all?"

I said with a cold look, "You're the ones that invaded us and you're asking for mercy? I think you should know what the answer to that question is."

The general and vice general really didn't know what to say after hearing this.

They couldn't refute it since this person was correct, but they had never met a person like this before.

A person who didn't even see his fellow men as humans and just let them be slaughtered in the name of war. This was a dangerous person to their Midra Kingdom...No, this was a dangerous person to the entire world!

They needed to think of a way to send word back to the Midra Kingdom or to the other allied kingdoms.

They needed to make sure that they knew about the danger of this person, so that they could...send assassins as soon as possible.

The only way that the world could be saved was if this demon king was killed...

"The second prince was right, we really underestimated the enemy and suffered the consequences."
The general muttered under his breath.

I immediately knitted my brows and repeated, "Second prince?"

Chapter 593 Interrogating The Captives (3)

As soon as I heard this, there was a person that I thought of.

At the same time, I could tell that General Killock was thinking the same thing as he suddenly knitted his brows.

As for the general and vice general, they realized the mistake that they made and covered their mouths, but it was already too late for that.

General Killock suddenly turned to me to say, "General, we should send out men to capture the Midra Kingdom's second prince."

The tone in his voice was as if he was strongly urging me to send someone after them.

But I shook my head as I said, "No, it's too late."

General Killock gritted his teeth when he heard this, but he still said in a voice that was strongly urging me on, "General, even if the chances are slim, we should send some people after them. It is the second prince of the Midra Kingdom."

The second prince of the Midra Kingdom, this was someone who was as infamous as the fourth prince was in our kingdom.

As for why he was infamous, it was the same reason as the fourth prince.

He was someone that had just as much power as the fourth prince did in our kingdom in his own kingdom.

He was someone that could even rival the king if he wanted to and was the clear choice for the next king, but it didn't seem like the second prince wanted to take this throne.

That was where I knew him from.

In the game, there was a quest line that was all about the successor to the throne in the Midra Kingdom.

The player would have to choose one of the princes to back and in the end, the prince that they chose would take the throne. With the power of the second prince, there was no doubt that he was an important character in this quest line.

However, one was able to find the real reason why he didn't take the throne.

Simply put, it was because of his lover...or rather his ex lover.

He had fallen in love with a commoner and had wanted to leave the royal family to be with her.

However, his father had found out about this and then had that commoner girl killed.

The second prince was enraged at his father for doing something like this, but as the benevolent person he was, he didn't retaliate. It wasn't that he didn't want to kill his father for this, it was because he knew that the moment that he did, the entire Midra Kingdom would fall into chaos.

His personality wouldn't allow this to happen, so he had endured until the succession race.

During the quest line, the second prince had suddenly shown up and killed the king. Then after killing the king, he allowed the prince that the player backed to kill him to establish themselves as the one that had killed the traitor.

The second prince got his revenge and was able to save the kingdom from collapse.

He could be considered the true hero of the Midra Kingdom, but...he had to bear the infamy of being a traitor that had killed the king.

It was a story that had been praised by many of the players of this game, one that had even moved me.

So there was a small part of me that wanted to meet the second prince and become friends with this person.

But for now, he was an enemy...

I still shook my head and said, "Do you really think that the second prince wouldn't have prepared an escape route already? Not to mention, there's the chance that he might have already expected this and set up a trap for us. It is too risky for us to do this, it's better for us to fortify this position just in case the second prince has any other plans."

General Killock didn't respond right away as he looked at me with narrowed eyes.

But in the end, he slowly gave a nod.

He had wanted to refute this, but there wasn't anything that he could refute this with since he knew that I was right.

That was just how infamous the second prince was.

I turned back to the general and vice general to say, "Is there anything else that you want to tell us?"

The general and vice general looked at each other before the general turned to General Killock to say, "Why would you choose to follow this devil? It's clear that he's a blight on humanity."

I shook my head with a sigh when I heard this before saying, "What do you mean by that?"

The general looked at me with narrowed eyes to say, "You don't care about human lives at all and you want to say that you're not a devil."

I gave a shrug before saying, "So you're saying that the people of the Midra Kingdom have never killed people of our kingdom before?"

The general said with a look of rage, "We surrendered and you watched as our people died."

I nodded in agreement to this to the surprise of the general. Then I said, "You're saying that your people wouldn't have done the same thing? We couldn't stop those Blood Worms even if we wanted to."

The general opened his mouth as if he was about to say something, but he found that he couldn't say anything in the end since he couldn't refute this. So he just said, "Our Midra Kingdom is the kingdom blessed by the gods, do you know how much each life is worth compared to your small kingdom?"

The soldiers all knitted their brows to reveal frowns when they heard this.

I shook my head with a sigh before saying, "As expected, when pressured enough, your true personality comes out."

I didn't bother saying anything else to the general and vice general since I knew that there was nothing else that I would get from them.

I just stood up and looked at General Killock to say, "Go and put them back in the dungeons." Then in a lower voice, I said, "But make sure to give them a proper welcome. As long as they don't die, you're free to do whatever you want with them."

General Killock revealed a surprised look at first, but then he revealed a smile with sparkling eyes as he nodded in agreement.

He knew what I meant by a 'proper welcome', so he turned to the soldiers and said a few words.

After he said these words, the soldiers all looked at the general and the vice general with smiles on their faces.

They had already been angered when they heard what the general and vice general had said about their kingdom earlier. Now that they were given a chance, they would naturally vent that anger on them.

The general and vice general could also see this, so they said, "Wait, what do you think you're doing? Stay away from us, we're valued prisoners of war!"

But the soldiers didn't care about this at all.

I also didn't look back once as I walked out of the interrogation room.

When the door closed, I could hear the screams of pain coming from behind it.

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We remained in this place for a while as we fortified the area just in case there was another attack.

But I knew that it was impossible for there to be another attack since they now knew about the Blood Worms.

Inversely, it meant that we weren't able to attack from this place either since it would mean having to cross the territory of the Blood Worms.

So neither kingdoms were really concerned about this place.

Though if I really wanted to, I could think of a way to cross the nest of the Blood Worms without a problem.

This was information from the game and I had plenty of that information, so I knew how to handle this if there really was a need.

But I chose not to attack the Midra Kingdom.

There were two reasons for that.

The first was that after wiping out an army of one hundred and twenty thousand, there was no doubt that the Midra Kingdom was already hurting. It would be unlikely that they would be able to continue aggression for a while since they would be trying to make up for this lack of forces.

They were surrounded by other countries as well after all.

For a country that only had around twenty million citizens to begin with, a hundred and twenty thousand soldiers should be close to a third of their entire forces.

They wouldn't do anything foolish while they were weakened like this.

So I would be able to use them as a buffer for anyone else that wanted to attack us.

Second, it was because of my personal feelings.

They were invading us, so I would show no mercy to the invaders.

But if we became the invaders, then I would start showing hesitation. After all, it would be on my mind how the people of the Midra Kingdom would be suffering like we were.

So I didn't want that on my conscience.

After a week of fortifying this place, I was trying to figure out where to go next.

During this time, the fourth prince had arranged for me to receive reports on the situations of the other battlefields. So I had a good idea of the direction that this war was currently heading because of all these reports.

At the same time, I also received reports from Shaka from Shadow Garden that gave me a good look of the situation behind the scenes. I had a good idea of what the people behind the armies were thinking as well.

There were some places that I was considering going since these were places that had special things just like this nest of Blood Worms.

As long as I took advantage of those places, it would be easy to wipe out the enemy just like with the army of the Midra Kingdom.

But while I was deciding on where to go next...

"General, there's a special guest here to see you."

To my surprise, I found that it was General Killock who had come to get me.

I had been locked up in the strategy room these days trying to figure out my next move. Because of the status that I now had with this army, they knew better than to distract me.

That included General Killock.

For him to come get me personally like this, it seemed like the guest that had come was an important one.

So I said with a nod, "Alright, let's go see them."

As I stood up, I saw that General Killock was looking at me with a strange look.

With one brow raised, I asked, "What's wrong?"

General Killock didn't say anything at first, but he slowly shook his head and said, "No, nothing's wrong. We should go, we shouldn't keep this guest waiting."

I had an even more confused look on my face after hearing this, but I still nodded in agreement and followed General Killock out.

Since this was a military camp, there weren't many places that were considered nice.

But the tent that I was brought to was the special tent that was used as a reward for soldiers that had achieved great merits. It was a special tent that had a fully furnished room and everything.

In short, it was the nicest place in this military camp.

When we came in, I was surprised to see the person sitting at the table sipping tea.

After taking a moment to recover, I said with a bow, "Your highness, what are you doing here?"

It was the fourth prince who had suddenly appeared here.

But the fourth prince didn't say anything related to this. Instead, he said, "You're calling me your highness again?"

I revealed an awkward look before looking around at the soldiers around me.

General Killock and the officers who had been allowed to come as guards all had very strange looks on their faces after hearing this.

With a sigh, I said, "Brother, what are you doing here?"

As soon as I said this, all of them looked at me in shock. But they didn't look at me for long as they quickly turned to look at the fourth prince, waiting for his reaction.

When they saw him reveal a smile, there was a chill that ran down their backs as they were afraid that this was it for them.

But to their surprise, the fourth prince actually wasn't angry as he said, "There we go." Then he waved his hand at me and said, "Come, let's sit and talk. I made sure to bring some special tea and treats that my sister prepared for you."

The awkward look on my face became even more awkward when I heard this...

However, that wasn't the worst part.

The worst part was the way that General Killock and the officers were looking at me.

It was clear what they were thinking based on the looks on their faces.

After I sat down, the fourth prince said, "Alright, I came here today for two things."

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I slightly knitted my brows the moment that I heard this, but I didn't say anything as I waited for the fourth prince to speak.

The fourth prince didn't seem to be in a hurry as he suddenly poured himself a cup of tea instead of continuing what he was about to say.

After pouring this tea, he just casually sipped it without a care in the world.

During all of this, all of us just sat and stood there with awkward looks on our faces.

The saying really was true, the subordinates really worried while the superiors relaxed.

After he finished sipping his tea, the fourth prince put the cup down and casually said, "The first was to deliver the goods that my dear sister sent to you, her fiance."

Once again, there were shocked and strange looks that were aimed in our direction. Or rather, it was to say that they were all pointed at me.

It was clear that not a single one of the others in this room knew this fact.

But of course, it would be strange if they knew this.

This was something that was a secret even among nobles. Only the top of the top knew about this matter and it wasn't something that was easily spread.

Though in the case of the nobles, it was more that they wanted to keep this information to themselves so they could get the jump on the others. They wanted to build relationships with the soon to be husband of the princess before anyone else could.

But the war got in the way of that.

On the other hand, I looked at the fourth prince with a strange look on my face, as if I was saying, "Should you have said that?"

The fourth prince just looked at me with a smile that made me want to punch him in the face. It was the smile of someone who didn't seem to care that they had made a mistake.

It was the smile of someone who would just say, "Don't mind."

It was the annoying kind of smile that really made one want to get angry.

Still, I could guess that the fourth prince had a reason for saying this out loud.

If I had to guess...it was most likely to make sure that the general and the officers knew so they would treat me properly.

But this kind of help was unnecessary since I had already solved that problem.

As I expected, a minute later, the fourth prince said, "Of course, that's supposed to be a secret right now." He turned to look at General Killock and the officers to say, "I'm sure you don't need me to tell you that loose lips sink ships, right?"

General Killock and the officers all trembled when they heard this before quickly nodding in agreement.

They might not be as scared if it was someone else, but the fourth prince...

Well, there was a reason why he was so infamous in this kingdom in the first place.

Those that knew the power that he had wouldn't dare cross him.

After the fourth prince finished talking to General Killock and the officers, he turned back to me to say, "Then there's the other matter that I came here for."

The way that he spoke, it was as if he was keeping people in suspense on purpose.

However, there was a reason for this.

I quickly found out what that reason was.

The fourth prince had been casually leaning in the chair that he was sitting in until he sat up all of a sudden. After sitting up, he looked at me with a serious look and said, "When I read the report, I didn't believe it at first. However, after seeing it with my own eyes, I really had no choice but to believe it."

I didn't need him to say what it was he was referring to, I could already guess what he was talking about.

The slaughter on the Rising Land Plains, that was the only thing that he could be referring to.

But I still couldn't see through him at all.

I didn't know whether he was impressed or if he was angry, so I waited to see what the fourth prince's reaction was.

The fourth prince continued by saying, "You have really performed a great merit for our kingdom by slaughtering the army of the Midra Kingdom and you even managed to capture their general and vice general. This kind of merit is completely unheard of in our kingdom since there has never been anyone who has done the same thing. Though, the one mistake that you made was letting the second prince of the Midra Kingdom escape."

A faint smile appeared on my lips when I heard this as I slowly figured out what the fourth prince was here for.

But still, I didn't say anything as I waited for the fourth prince to make his slow reveal.

In times like this, it was better to let them finish their soliloquy and then slowly give them the answer they wanted. Only then would one be able to avoid any misunderstandings that might arise.

The fourth prince saw the look on my face and his eyes looked like he knew that I had already had an idea in my mind, but since we were in front of everyone like this, he had to continue his soliloquy.

"So the one question that this raises is...how did you know about the existence of the Blood Worms? This was something that even we at the kingdom didn't know about and yet you were able to use them so easily. It really makes one wonder what other kinds of secrets you're hiding." The fourth prince looked at me with a serious look as he said this.

Though he didn't say it out loud, it was also implied, "Will you use these secrets for the kingdom or use them against the kingdom?"

Plain and simple, this was just a test to see what my intentions were.

I wasn't worried at all, rather I just revealed a smile since I already had an answer in my heart.

Chapter 596 Reporting (3)

Looking at the fourth prince, I calmly said, "It really isn't a secret that these Blood Worms were here. As long as one looked at the surrounding area carefully, they would have known that they were here."

The fourth prince slightly knitted his brows before saying, "Explain."

I gave a nod before waving at General Killock to come over.

When he did, I said, "Bring me a map of the surrounding area."

General Killock slowly looked at the fourth prince and only when he saw the fourth prince give a nod did he head off to grab that map.

It took him no time at all to come back with the map that he quickly spread on the table in front of us.

When this map was placed, the fourth prince looked at me as if he was waiting for me to explain.

I just casually brought my hand forward and tapped it a few times on the map in front of us.

The places that I tapped were all of the villages that were marked on the map, as well as places that villages had been before. The villages that were gone now had been destroyed for various reasons, but not a single one had been attacked by these Blood Worms.

The fourth prince just raised a brow as he looked at me.

Taking a small breath, I explained, "There's a reason why all of these villages are built like this. Even the villages that were destroyed before all have an area that they are avoiding."

The fourth prince looked down at the map and he realized that this was indeed the case.

It didn't seem like it at first, but when he followed the line that the villages and past villages created, it seemed like it was circling a certain area. This was the area where the Blood Worm nest was.

But this was something that no one from the kingdom had noticed before.

Was it because they didn't do their jobs properly or was it because of something else?

No matter how the fourth prince looked at it, this kind of oversight shouldn't have been possible...

After all, it only took him a single glance to figure this out.

"How did they not notice this before? What are we paying those people for?" The fourth prince said in a cold voice.

General Killock and the other officers immediately looked away, out of fear of the fourth prince.

They were an army that was under the fourth prince, so they naturally knew things about the fourth prince that others wouldn't. That included what happened when the fourth prince lost his temper.

So they wanted to stay out of the way as much as possible.

But the fourth prince didn't lose his temper in the end as he looked up at me and asked, "How did you know about this?"

I just gave a shrug and said, "Like you said, it just takes a single glance to figure out. Not to mention, I have access to reports from all over the kingdom because of my connection with Shadow Garden."

As soon as they heard this, General Killock and the officers immediately looked at me in shock.

Since they were high level military officials, naturally they knew about Shadow Garden as well.

They just never thought that I would be connected to Shadow Garden.

The fourth prince gave a nod in response to this and when I saw that, I continued by saying, "The reports stated that there was a legend that was spread in the villages around here."

"A legend?" The fourth prince repeated in a confused voice.

I said with a nod, "The legend says that the God of the Earth's holy land is in this area and any who dares trespass will face the wrath of the God of the Earth."

"God of the Earth..." The fourth prince repeated with a look of thought on his face.

Then all of a sudden, the fourth prince slapped the table and said, "So that's it! The shaking of the ground caused by the Blood Worms attacking was misconstrued as the wrath of the God of the Earth."

However, he then looked at me with narrowed eyes and said, "How did you know about the Blood Worms though?"

I gave him a faint mysterious smile without saying anything.

The fourth prince narrowed his eyes even more as he looked at me before finally saying, "Alright, I understand that you have your secrets."

I let out a secret sigh of relief when I heard this.

After all, my secret was that I had knowledge from the game. Without that knowledge, I wouldn't have known about these Blood Worms either.

But it was also because of the game that the location of this Blood Worm nest wasn't known until now.

This was a special event in the game, but it was also a hidden danger for this kingdom and the Midra Kingdom. It was not something that the governments would have ignored if they knew about this.

Since it was a game before, it was easy to set it so that neither kingdom knew about this matter.

However, once this game became a real world, the only explanation for neither kingdom knowing about this was incompetence. That was the only way to explain why no one had known about this before it was exposed.

So that was why the fourth prince was so angry.

But this wasn't something that I could explain...

At the same time though, it didn't seem like the fourth prince was finished.

The fourth prince once again revealed a serious look as he looked at me and said, "You can have your secrets, but I want to know...what do you intend to do with them? Do you mean any harm to this kingdom?"

This time, he didn't use the indirect method.

This time, he directly asked me whether I was loyal to the kingdom or not.

But in response to this, I already had an answer.

Chapter 597 Reporting (4)

I said in a calm voice, "This kingdom is where my territory and my family is. As long as they are here, then I have no reason to betray the kingdom."

General Killock and the officers immediately knitted their brows when they heard this.

The looks in their eyes weren't as calm and collected as before.

There even seemed to be some kind of hostility in their eyes as they looked at me.

But I just ignored them all as I looked at the fourth prince, waiting for his reaction.

The fourth prince had only narrowed his eyes slightly to look at me when he heard this.

The way that he looked at me, it didn't seem like he was judging me.

The way that he looked at me, it almost seemed like he understood what I was talking about and accepted it. But there was also something strange about the way that he looked at me that I didn't understand.

After a long silence, during which the soldiers all moved a step forward towards me as if they were preparing to do something just in case the situation broke down, the fourth prince finally spoke.

"Alright, that's fine. As long as you don't have any intentions of betraying our kingdom for now, it doesn't matter what your thoughts are. After all, I know that there's no way to force someone to be loyal to a kingdom, all we can do is align their interests with our kingdom with benefits such as territory and such." The fourth prince said in a very casual tone, as if he wasn't bothered by this at all.

But General Killock and the officers clearly seemed bothered by this.

They looked like they wanted to say something, but since the fourth prince had already spoken, it wasn't as if they could say anything.

If they were to say something now, it would seem like they didn't trust the fourth prince's judgement and that would offend the fourth prince.

Regardless of what their feelings were for this situation, they would never do something as dumb as that.

The fourth prince poured some more tea, but this time he also poured a cup for me.

It seemed that he had finally accepted the answer that I gave him, so he started treating me like he did before.

So I let out a secret sigh of relief before taking the cup to have a sip of the tea.

The two of us just sat in silence sipping our tea for a bit before the fourth prince suddenly asked, "So what are you planning to do now? I'm sure that you've already come up with some plans for this army, right?"

I was surprised to hear the fourth prince suddenly ask this, but there was no need for me to hide anything from him.

I just gave a simple nod and said, "I have some ideas."

When General Killock and the officers heard that, they couldn't stop the faint glimmer that appeared in their eyes. After all, they had already seen how much destruction one of my ideas had, so they were looking forward to seeing what other ideas I had.

Though that didn't stop them from looking at me with looks of suspicion.

It seemed like they still couldn't let go of what I had said earlier.

As for the fourth prince, he just gave a simple nod before turning to say to General Killock, "Can you go and get a map of the western border for me?"

General Killock was surprised to hear this, but he quickly nodded and ran off.

As he ran off, I couldn't help looking at the fourth prince with a strange look.

I was trying to figure out what he was planning, but the fourth prince just looked back at me with a mysterious smile.

It almost seemed like payback for how I had acted earlier.

When General Killock came back with the map, he took the map that was already there and spread the new map across the table.

Once the map was spread, the fourth prince suddenly came forward and pointed at a spot on the map before saying, "How about here? Do you think that you have anything that will work here?"

I looked at where the fourth prince was pointing and revealed a bit of a surprised look.

After all, that place that he was pointing at was actually one of the places that I had thought about.

There was indeed an event there that I could use to torment the enemies with, but...there had to be a reason why the fourth prince had pointed that place out.

So instead of answering the question, I looked at him with one raised brow as if I was questioning him.

The fourth prince put on a calm look as he saw this, but in the end, he said with a sigh, "The situation over there is bad. I'm sure that you've received the reports, but they are much worse than the reports make it seem. The ones in charge over Directly support the authors on WebNovel!

there just don't want to admit how bad it is, so they're downplaying the situation."

After a pause, the fourth prince added with another sigh, "It's those kinds of people that make things worse. The worst part is that they are old generals that we can't do anything about since they have prestige and experience under their belts. They control quite a few soldiers and have mentored quite a few officers, so it's hard for us to force them in any way."

I slowly gave a nod of agreement.

I also had my fair share of this, but that was more in my past life than in this life.

Still, I was able to understand the pain that the fourth prince was suffering from.

So I said, "Alright, I have something that will work in that area. As long as I can move freely, then I should be able to do something."

The fourth prince gave a nod before saying, "I'll make sure that you get the clearance that you need, so you don't need to worry about that." Then he revealed a smile and asked, "However, what kind of plan are you going to use this time? Can you give me a sneak peek?"

Then General Killock and the officers heard this, they couldn't help piquing their ears and leaning in as if they wanted to hear this as well.

But I didn't say anything in response.

All I did was reveal a mysterious smile like I did before.

The fourth prince pouted his lips seeing this before throwing a tantrum that really wasn't like him, "Fine, keep your secrets then." After this little tantrum, he said with a smile, "I'm looking forward to your good news."

I could tell that he was dismissing me, but I didn't mind since I had things to prepare with General Killock.

The two of us quickly left this tent, leaving the fourth prince alone with his bodyguards.

But the fourth prince just waved his hand and sent them away.

When the fourth prince was alone in that tent, he stroked his chin and said to himself, "So he'll remain as long as he is attached to it. It seems like we need to move up that plan as soon as possible."

Chapter 598 Situation In The West

Two weeks later, we arrived at the western border of the kingdom.

Before we even arrived, we could see that the situation in this place wasn't going well.

There had been many refugees making their way out of the western part of the kingdom, showing that the fighting wasn't going our way here.

When I had General Killock bring some of the refugees to see me, I learned even more things about the situation here in the west.

Though it was a bit hard for me to get them to calm down at first.

They thought that we were the enemies that had invaded that captured them, so they had been filled with terror. It took a long time before we were able to convince them that we were an army of the kingdom that was here as reinforcements.

It seemed that the enemies had been pushing hard and the nobles here had been hiding inside of their own territories. The only safe places were the cities and towns that the nobles protected with their armies.

For these refugees who came from the surrounding villages, they had no choice but to flee.

The enemy armies ravaged the land while they waited for the nobles to come out of their turtle shells.

That meant that it was very common for the enemies to raid the villages that were in the surrounding area.

The refugees that we had taken in for information were from those villages.

The enemy army didn't hold back at all. They burnt crops, stole their valuables, and even kidnapped their women.

It was no different from what bandits would do...

When General Killock heard this, he seemed like he wanted to bash some heads in, but I raised my head for him to calm down.

When he realized what he did, he quickly apologized, but I told him, "Don't worry, I feel the same."

General Killock looked at me with a look that seemed different from the ones that he had given me before.

It seemed that this time, he had finally accepted me.

After finding out the situation of this western region, I had General Killock prepare some supplies for these people and send them off. I had wanted to send some soldiers with them to guard them on their way out, but I knew that this was too much.

Sometimes, people would be suspicious of excessive kindness.

When they left, I couldn't help thinking about the situation in the west.

The location that we were supposed to be heading to was Vayne City, the city that was under the control of a duke.

This duke was Duke Yuletide, the duke that basically ruled over the western region and controlled most of the nobles here.

According to the refugees that we had talked to, it seemed that he had also been the one to convince the nobles of this western region to turtle themselves like this. It was clear that he was someone who cared only about his own benefits.

But it wasn't just that, I also knew this because he had played a role in the game.

Duke Yuletide had his own quest line in the game and it was one where he turned out to be the villain.

Plain and simple, the duke and the Yuletide Family only had a single target all these years of being in the kingdom.

Starting from the first generation, they had wanted to become the new royal family.

When they supported the royal family to the throne, they had unwillingly allowed them to take the throne. In truth, they had thought that they would be the new royal family of this kingdom when they took over this region.

But in the end, the current royal family took the throne and they were given titles as dukes.

That was something that had been going on for many generations now.

The current Duke Yuletide also wanted to usurp the throne from the current royal family.

However, the Yuletide Family had been a cautious one.

Though they were treasonous, they had never shown their tails even once.

They had been slowly building up power in this western region and had never made a single mistake that anyone could use to catch them.

The one thing that they never expected was this war, but of course, they also wouldn't show their power. Which was why they were currently turtling in their territory, without sending any troops to the surrounding villages.

I was fully aware of what the Yuletide Family wanted, it was just too bad that I didn't have any proof of this.

The proof that I did have was based on a time that was further in the future, so I wasn't able to use this proof yet.

The only thing that I could do was watch over the Yuletide Family since I knew what they were planning.

But the problem was, I had no choice but to go to Vayne City.

As a reward for the slaughter that I had created in the Rising Land Plains, I was given ten thousand more troops to use. However, the fourth prince didn't have any more troops to give me since he had a limited number of troops in the first place.

Since this was a reward that came from the top, that meant that I was able to recruit these troops from the local garrisons.

And since I was heading to the western region, that meant that the local garrison was the one in Vayne City.

That was the only garrison that could even spare ten thousand troops.

So I had no choice but to go to Vayne City to get these troops.

The problem was...would Duke Yuletide give up these troops in the first place?

No, it was very unlikely that he would.

Plus with the news that he and the surrounding nobles were abandoning the villages, it might even be possible that he was planning some kind of coup d'etat.

I couldn't help complaining to the fourth prince in my heart since he was the one that wanted me to come here in the first place...

Chapter 599 Vayne City

When we arrived in Vayne City, I couldn't help knitting my brows.

It wasn't because the situation around Vayne City was bad...but rather because the situation around Vayne City looked very good.

There were few signs of fighting in the area around Vayne City, almost as if there were nothing more than skirmishes.

At the same time, it didn't seem like there were any traces of the enemy around Vayne City.

But when I looked at the city from a distance, I could see the gates firmly closed and the walls filled with guards.

It seemed that they really had no intention of coming out to fight the enemies...

I could see that General Killock beside me had an ugly look on his face and he was clenching his fists, as if he wanted to charge into the city after seeing this. But of course, I couldn't let him do anything like that.

So I just raised my hand to stop him before saying, "We're here on the orders of the king and the fourth prince, do not do anything to bring shame to the two of them."

General Killock gritted his teeth when he heard this, but he still gave a nod of understanding in the end.

After all, he knew what I was implying.

We had the upper hand in terms of position since we had our orders, so we shouldn't resort to the same tactics as these petty nobles.

But I could also see that there were many soldiers that were angered by the scene in front of us.

It seemed that those that followed the fourth prince were all similar minded.

I had seen how much the fourth prince cared about this kingdom with how he kept asking me where my loyalties were. It seemed that the soldiers of the army under the fourth prince were the same, they all cared about this kingdom.

So when they saw someone that was supposed to be in a high ranking position in the kingdom acting this way, they were naturally angered by this.

With a sigh, I gave the order for Cecilia to lead some officers to calm them down.

Cecilia had been following me the entire time, but she had been playing a more passive role since she was an outsider in this army. It was only after I had established my fame among the soldiers with the slaughter of the Rising Land Plains that they started to accept her.

She was given a commander position among the army and could be considered well respected.

Of course it helped that she was a beautiful woman, but the army already knew that she was mine, so they didn't dare do anything.

As we approached the city, I had the soldiers set up camp while I gathered a few people with me.

These were the ones that would be heading into the city with me.

Since we had an army of fifty thousand, it wasn't as if we could bring everyone in.

The only thing that I could do was bring the high ranking officers with me, as well as some strong fighters. After all, there was no knowing what would happen in the city...

Among those that came were General Killock, Cecilia, and Shaka. The rest were officers that General Killock had chosen for me.

As well, there seemed to be someone that was hiding in the shadows.

Before we approached the city, I stopped everyone and said, "When we go in later, let's divide our roles properly."

I slowly laid out my plan for everyone, but there were a few that opposed this.

Still, I was able to calm them down and make them accept the plan in the end.

Though it was clear that they weren't happy about this.

When we came up to the gate, I shouted at the soldiers that were above, "I am Count Zwein, the general of the fourth prince's army. I have come with orders from the capital for Duke Yuletide and request entry to the city."

"Skreech."

The gate in front of me suddenly started to move upwards, as if it was about to open.

When we saw this, we couldn't help being surprised.

After all, I had already figured that it would be impossible for us to enter Vayne City right away.

I had expected them to stall for a bit by saying that they needed to report to the duke and then keep stalling to buy time to discuss what to do with us. But that didn't seem to be the case as they immediately opened the gates for us.

What was happening?

After the gates were opened, there was a group of soldiers that came forward.

The one that wore the different set of armour that looked to be their leader came forward to me to give a bow before saying, "Count Zwein, we have already received the letter from the capital and have been waiting for you. Please come with me, the duke is already waiting for you."

All of us couldn't help looking at this guard with a surprised look.

To be honest, not a single one of us had expected Duke Yuletide to act in this manner.

There was even a part of us that felt like this was some kind of trap...

But it didn't seem to be the case since all of the soldiers were looking at us with respectful looks.

It was possible to send one group of people to try and fool us, but for everyone to act this way...it was clear that all of them knew about this.

It was impossible to set all of this up in the short period of time that they had.

So it seemed like they were telling the truth.

But if they were telling the truth, what was the duke planning?

Seeing that we didn't move, the leader of the soldiers asked, "Count Zwein, is something the matter?"

I snapped out of my daze when I heard this and quickly shook my head to say, "No, it's nothing. Lead the way."

The leader of the soldiers just simply said with a nod, "Alright, please follow me."

Chapter 600 Here Are The Troops

Our group went through the gates and made our way through Vayne City.

Though we were being led by these guards that seemed respectful, it didn't seem like they wanted to talk to us.

So I took the initiative to ask, "It's our first time in Vayne City, can you tell us about a few of the specialties here?"

But the leader of these soldiers just shook his head and said, "Count Zwein, I'm sure that you don't want to waste any time with the current situation of the war. The duke is already waiting for you, so let's hurry over as soon as possible."

My entire group was taken aback when we heard this.

We looked at the leader with strange looks as if we were trying to figure out if he was being serious or not, but it seemed that he was indeed being serious.

So the only thing that I could do was nod in agreement and silently follow behind these soldiers.

At the same time, it seemed that they picked up the pace.

They really wanted to get us there as soon as possible.

Why?

It didn't seem to make any sense at all.

After all, we had been fully expecting the duke to play tricks to stall us since he wouldn't want to give us these troops. At the same time, we had been expecting the duke to even try and harm us to make the situation look worse.

Though of course, if he were to harm us, he would do it in a manner that wouldn't implicate himself.

So the only real worry was that we would be assassinated.

As we walked through the city, there were some things that caught our eyes.

It was the disparity in wealth as we made our way through the city.

The ones that were near the gate were the poorest and the ones that were closer to the center of the city seemed to be richer.

It seemed that the nobles of the city only cared about their own wellbeing.

There were even some people that were fighting over gutter water in some of the poorer parts of the city. It was clear just how much they had suffered after closing themselves off to defend against the enemies.

Or it should be said that they had completely cut off their own supply lines, making it hard for them to receive supplies from the outside.

This kind of plan was clearly self destructive, but the nobles that sat above the rest didn't seem to care.

The only thing that they cared about was their own wellbeing.

I could sense the tension that came from my group, but I calmed them down with a look and a shake of my head.

For now, we should play along to see what the duke was up to.

When we arrived at the duke's manor, I was surprised to see the duke waiting there for us.

I recognized him as soon as I saw him because he looked the same as in the game.

He was a kind looking old man with a full white beard. If he were to put on red, one might think that he was a jolly old man who handed out gifts...

Though in reality, he was anything but that...

When the duke saw us, he took the initiative to come forward to me with a friendly smile on his face.

Regardless of how I felt about him and what I knew about him, the appearance that he had really was that of a friendly old man...

After coming over, the duke said, "Count Zwein, it is truly an honour to host you in our Vayne City." Then he gave a sigh before saying, "Unfortunately, we had to meet under such circumstances."

I gave a nod before saying. "Duke Yuletide, you'll have to excuse my curtness, but I'm sure that you've received the orders from the capital?"

Duke Yuletide revealed a serious look before saying, "Yes, I've received the orders just recently, but for the sake of our kingdom, I have been preparing everything. The troops that will follow you have already been prepared and are just waiting to set off."

Though I had a calm look on my face, I couldn't help being surprised.

I could feel the surprise that came from behind me, but I secretly gave a signal behind my back for them to calm down.

We couldn't let ourselves fall into the duke's pace after all.

So in the end, I gave a nod as I said, "Then shall we go?"

Duke Yuletide didn't hesitate at all as he gave a nod of agreement before leading the way.

All of us were even more confused when we saw this, but we still followed behind him.

During this, I did all that I could to figure out just what Duke Yuletide was planning.

It was only when I saw the troops that he had prepared for us that I finally realized what was happening.

He didn't plan on cooperating at all.

That we already knew, but we never expected him to use this kind of trick.

The troops that were standing in front of us, it would be kind to even call them troops since they were clearly not trained soldiers.

These were scrawny looking people that had equipment that seemed like they should be thrown out.

They looked like they were refugees that had been quickly picked up and then had some equipment slapped onto them to make them seem like they were soldiers. There was no way that these troops would be actual trained soldiers with how lax their formation was.

It was clear that they had never received any form of proper training.

General Killock had his brows knit even more than me since he was a proper soldier and knew more than me.

After we arrived at this place, Duke Yuletide turned back to me and said in a voice that sounded like he found this all natural, "These are the troops that we have prepared for you."