

Unfinished 1451

Chapter 1451 Am I Great or What?

"Mr. Nolan, perhaps you didn't understand what I meant about the business. It's not just about a few companies or making some money. It's about the entire Eurosia. If you're willing, the entire Eurosia can be yours. Do you understand?" Beatrix's voice came through.

Immediately, Beatrix realized it was a recording of her words to Eugene at the Governor General's residence that day.

He... He recorded the conversation?!

Infuriated, she barked, "Eugene Nolan, you despicable prick! How could you record it?!"

Eugene lazily glanced at her. "You mean this? I have a habit of recording, but is it really fair to call me despicable just because of this habit? I didn't threaten you or approach you on my own, did I? You walked right into it yourself. Or are you denying it, Your Highness?"

His tone was casual and mocking, almost driving Beatrix mad. She charged toward Eugene, shouting as she went, "Eugene Nolan, you better turn it off this instance!"

However, Eugene didn't budge. Instead, Albert stepped forward and blocked her, warning, "Why should he turn it off? Is there something you don't want others to hear?"

Meanwhile, Alice ordered, "Guard the Crown Princess and ensure she doesn't disturb Eugene while he provides evidence."

"Alice, she's your sister!" Lucian snapped furiously, making Alice look at him provocatively before ordering the guards, "If anyone obstructs, treat them as accomplices."

The guards acted promptly, not arresting Lucian or Beatrix but forming an impenetrable barrier around them.

After that, Eugene gladly replayed the recording.

"I don't." Eugene's voice came through. "I'm not the queen, so how will Eurosia be mine?"

Beatrix explained, "Yes, you can't be the queen, but I can. Once we're together, what's mine will be yours too."

"But you're not the queen, too," Eugene argued, and Beatrix corrected him. "Sooner or later, I will be."

"Are you plotting to usurp the throne?" Eugene asked.

"Oh, come on, don't make it sound so ugly," Beatrix argued. "In this day and age, power belongs to those who can seize it. You saw it today in the palace; Alice couldn't even control her own guards. With this kind of strength, do you think her reign can remain stable?"

The conversation continued until Eugene made the final mocking remark. "You want to beat my wife with that intelligence of yours? Huh, on what grounds?"

With that, the recording ended.

Everyone was left speechless. At the time, Beatrix actually thought Eugene was weighing the pros and cons, and in her haste, she revealed her true intentions.

She admitted that Lucian hired someone to steal the Eurosia necklace, confessed to their ambitious desires for the queen's position, and acknowledged that they didn't want Olivia to cure Doreen's illness but rather framed her.

With such intelligence...

Eugene hadn't been insulting her at all. Who did she think she was to break him and Olivia apart?!

Ashamed, Beatrix glared daggers at Eugene. "You're really ruthless, Nolan."

Eugene didn't say a word, remaining modest and unassuming. He sat down after the recording ended and leaned toward Olivia, seeking praise, "What do you think, sweetheart? Am I great or what?"

Olivia held his hand and smiled, her eyes twinkling. "You've always been great!"

If it weren't for his strategic planning, she might have already been thrown into prison by Lucian.

Eugene held her hand in return. "My wife is great too."

You two are something else. This was what everyone thought after being rendered speechless by the couple.

Chapter 1452 This Is Eugene's Deliberate Retaliation

Alice spoke up, "Is there anything else you want to argue about now? Why don't you explain the content of this recording, Beatrix?"

Beatrix stumbled, looking defeated. It was over.

Those words were all hers. How could she explain?!

D*mn Eugene, how did he manage to record it secretly? No wonder he always had his hands in his pockets and showed more patience toward me. He was waiting for this moment, wasn't he? And to think that I had foolishly thought my offers swayed him.

She had naively believed that this man, no matter how unruly, could not escape her grasp. This was damnation! She had willingly said those words one by one.

What was she to do now?

She looked at Lucian in bewilderment.

He, too, was in distress. He had anticipated that Beatrix would say some shocking things, but he never expected Eugene to trap his foolish daughter so ruthlessly.

She confessed to everything.

He struggled to control his urge to erupt as his mind raced. He couldn't just admit defeat like this and couldn't let Alice suppress him.

So, he sighed, gave Beatrix an exasperated glare, and said, "My foolish daughter, I've said it before: love is something that can't be forced. Have you finally seen his true colors this time?"

Then, he looked at Alice and continued, "Your sister fell in love with Eugene. She was worried that Olivia would drag him down, so she went to see him that day. She did it to save Eugene, to get him away from Olivia. She intentionally said those things, even though stealing someone else's love might have been inappropriate. But love itself is innocent, and what she said wasn't meant to be taken seriously!"

Alice couldn't help but laugh. "Even facing death, you are unrepentant. Regardless of her motives, I can charge you and your daughter with plotting to usurp the throne based on those words alone. Not to mention your involvement in framing and sabotaging Doctor Maxwell's efforts to treat General Bleu's illness. Isn't all of this preparation for the throne? I never expected that you two had been eyeing my throne for so long. Lucian, what are you still trying to argue?"

With that, she ordered those around her. "Guards, arrest Lucian and Beatrix!"

The guards exchanged glances and slowly approached the two.

Beatrix screamed in panic and took a few steps back, hiding behind Lucian.

Lucian, holding her, stepped back and urgently explained, "Alice, those words were entirely guided by Eugene. Your sister just likes Eugene, and he manipulated her. This is all part of Eugene and Olivia's scheme. We're your family, Alice. How can you trust a stranger over us?"

At that, he turned to incite the Cabinet Consuls. "Haven't you all noticed? This is Eugene's deliberate retaliation. When I found out that Olivia was the thief who stole the necklace, I did use the Tears of the Ocean to implicate her, but it was all for the good of you and General Bleu. I was worried you'd be deceived. I admit my methods were somewhat inappropriate, but the charge of plotting to usurp the throne is far too unjust for us. Are you just going to stand by and let Eugene and that thief lead the queen?"

Alice sneered; She wanted to see how many Cabinet Consuls were on Lucian's side. So, she said, "Lucian, I'm not the young girl I used to be, and you don't need to spread rumors. Let's hear everyone's opinions if you want to hear them. Don't think that I'm ruling with an iron fist."

She looked at everyone and said, "Feel free to speak your mind about this matter."

The crowd remained silent.

Chapter 1453 Rectifying the Council

Seeing that no one spoke up, Alice spoke again, "Does no one have anything to say? Are you all in agreement with Lucian's words, or do you agree with mine?"

With that, she looked around and suddenly called, "Silas Cadwell."

Silas jumped in surprise, wondering why he was being called again.

A sly smile crept up to the corners of Alice's lips. You're one of Lucian's men, are you not? Let's see how you'll respond.

"You speak."

Silas looked somewhat resentful at Alice. How could he navigate this?! He wanted to say that he had no opinion on the Queen's punishment, but he also didn't want to offend Lucian.

Although he seemed to be in a weaker position now, Lucian was cunning, and who knew when he might strike back?! So, it was best not to offend either side.

He wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand and hesitated, adopting a diplomatic tone. "Well... this... I'm not sure I should comment on this. It's, you know, a matter within your family, Your Highness."

Her pupils contracted. While he hadn't shown bias toward Lucian, he also hadn't taken a strong stance in her favor.

Did she lack a mindless puppet?!

Instantly, she turned grim. "A family matter? You've been pressing me for an explanation for three days, worrying about General Bleu one moment and Eurosia the next. Now, when I ask for your opinion and explanation, you say it's a family matter? What's this? You come to work without a brain, just a mouth? Mr. Bailey, find someone to replace his job. I won't keep idlers!"

Azriel immediately responded, "Yes."

Alice then instructed the guards, "Throw Silas out for me."

Silas, seeing the guards approaching to apprehend him, panicked and shouted, "Your Highness, I haven't done anything wrong! You can't treat me like this..."

The guards might have had some reservations about Lucian, but they were not very polite to a consul like Silas. In no time, he was swiftly ejected from the hall amidst Silas' passionate protestations.

Lucian frowned. She was openly attacking him!

"Alice, Silas has always been diligent in his work. You can't just throw him out because he didn't say what you wanted to hear. This way, who will dare to speak the truth in the future?"

Alice sneered, "The truth? Did he say a single truthful word? It was all nonsense!"

As she spoke, she looked at everyone again. "I know all of you in these positions have a slick way of handling things, avoiding offending anyone, not taking sides, and aiming for no achievements but no

mistakes. But from today onwards, open your eyes and see the situation clearly. If you want to stay, use your brains. Don't just blindly agree with everything. The era of 'it's none of my business' is over. If you still want to continue living here, you can pack your things and leave!"

At this moment, Azriel stood up and said, "Your Highness, the investigation into Doctor Maxwell's case was conducted by me and Mr. Bleu together. Based on our investigation, I can conclude that Lucian and Beatrix indeed had treasonous intentions, and it seems to have been premeditated for a long time. Just the fact that he placed a recording device in his study is suspicious. Furthermore, we have Mr. Nolan's recording as evidence, along with his attempt to frame Dr. Maxwell using the Tears of the Ocean. It's clear that his aim was to hinder Dr. Maxwell from treating General Bleu and thus weaken the Queen's power. Such a person must not be tolerated."

At that, Lucian angrily shouted, "Azriel Bailey, you're talking nonsense!"

But Azriel simply ignored him and nodded slightly at the Queen before sitting down.

With Alice's stern warning and Azriel's lead, how could anyone still fail to see the situation?!

Soon, others began to speak one after another.

"Yes, Lucian and the Crown Princess have dismissed countless doctors in the past few months. They pretended to be concerned, but in reality, they just didn't want General Bleu to be treated."

"The Crown Princess has always been arrogant and brainless. The words in the recording must be sincere. She and Lucian have long been planning treason."

"During this time, Lucian has been carrying around a list of assassins, asking us to persuade the

Queen. We thought he was doing it for the good of Eurosia, but we were kept in the dark. Please, Your Highness, bring them to justice."

Chapter 1454 On the Brink of Death

Lucian looked at the people who had turned against him, feeling furious to the point that every part of his body ached.

He had underestimated this young girl. No! He had underestimated that man—Eugene Nolan.

He narrowed his eyes fiercely. "Even if I framed Olivia Maxwell for the Tears of the Ocean necklace, the video is real, right? It's true that she stole the necklace five years ago, right? And the sapphire necklace fell out of her bag, too, didn't it? How do you explain all of that?"

Alice sneered icily, "Trying to drag someone down with you when you're on the brink of death? Very well, I will clarify it for you, Lucian!"

At that, she turned to the crowd and asked, "Do you all remember that our country's sapphire necklace is hereditary, and do you remember who issued the hereditary system for the sapphire necklace?"

The people in the room, now resembling obedient schoolchildren, eagerly answered, "Queen Blanchett."

Alice continued, "Yes, my mother. But do you all know why my mother said that inheriting the throne required the sapphire necklace?"

The crowd whispered among themselves, but no one responded.

Alice didn't expect them to answer either and continued, " General Bleu only told me about this after

falling ill. My mother was seeing my father—my real father, Zachary Quaver, not Lucian—before she ascended the throne. My great-grandmother, the former queen, separated them because she thought my father's humble background wasn't suitable for my mother. She even arranged a marriage for my father to dissuade my mother from pursuing him. On my father's wedding day, my mother found out she was pregnant. She didn't want to ruin my father's wedding, was afraid of my great-grandmother finding out about her pregnancy, and didn't want to see sisters fighting against each other. So, she willingly gave up the throne and left for Criccia.

"However, Titiana wasn't convinced that my mother had willingly given up the throne. She sent people to search for my mother. On one occasion, when Titiana was pursuing her, she happened to be in a hospital getting her child treated. She had no choice but to leave the child in a doctor's office and was captured by Titiana. This incident is no secret in Eurosia, and I'm sure you've all heard of it. So, I won't repeat it.

"What I want to say today is that the reason my mother instituted the rule of inheriting the throne with the sapphire necklace is that she gave the sapphire necklace to the child she left in the doctor's office, which is my sister, The Crown Princess of Eurosia!"

With Alice's revelation, the crowd erupted into a tumult.

"What does this mean? Are you saying that the former queen had another child?"

"Yeah, I only heard about the former queen being captured by Titiana and outsmarting her, but when did she have another child?"

"Don't you all care about the purpose behind the queen's words today? Obviously, the child has been found."

"Who is it? Could it be Olivia? She's in possession of the necklace, isn't she?"

Beatrix tensed up with a mix of anxiety as she glanced around, fearing that the revelation might be true.

If Olivia is also a princess, won't it mean that we're on equal footing?! No, this can't happen!

Lucian also realized the implications and sneered, "Are you suggesting that Olivia is the child Blanchett lost all those years ago? Ha! You, as a queen, truly have a flair for the dramatic. You're even willing to give up the princess' status to clear Olivia's name. How absurd! A common thief like Olivia doesn't deserve it!"

Alice glanced at Lucian indifferently and said, "Deserving it or not isn't up to you to decide, and whether or not to let her have it isn't up to me. My mother's firstborn is the Crown Princess of Eurosia, and that's undeniable. Furthermore, my mother had once stated that she wanted to pass the throne to her firstborn!"

Chapter 1455 Do You Think You Can Fool Me Like a Child?

As Alice continued her revelation, the crowd was in shock.

What's going on? Does this mean that Olivia is the rightful queen of Eurosia instead?!

Alice ignored their astonishment and continued, "The Crown Princess' name is Avril Bleu, which means 'beginning' and symbolizes a new start for my mother. Later, when Avril was lost, my mother searched for her, but when it proved fruitless, she shifted her focus to finding the necklace. Since the necklace was placed on Avril, my mother believed that finding the necklace would lead to her daughter, and that's why Eurosia's succession required the sapphire necklace. My mother was wise; she knew that everyone would strive to find the necklace for the throne, but it was never found. Five years ago, on the night depicted in Lucian's video..."

She paused and took a deep breath. "At this point, I don't want to hide anything. The video Lucian released a few days ago is indeed genuine, and the person in it is indeed Olivia. She was the assassin from the Double Dragon Court hired by Lucian, intending to steal the sapphire necklace."

The crowd was left bewildered by this revelation.

What's going on? Wasn't the video said to be fabricated just a few days ago? Now, it's genuine again?! Also, the Queen had just claimed that Olivia is both the Crown Princess and the rightful queen, and yet, now, she revealed that Olivia is indeed the assassin from the video. What's the real story here?!

Lucian grinned wickedly, schadenfreude. How about that? She doesn't spare any mercy now that Olivia is threatening her throne as well. She wants to strike us down, then get rid of Olivia, doesn't she?!"

At that, he exclaimed urgently, "So, you're admitting that the video is real now? Last time, you vehemently claimed it was fabricated. Whom were you trying to protect? Or is it that the person you're protecting also poses a threat to you? You're accusing me of hiring assassins from the Double Dragon Court. What evidence do you have? You're labeling Olivia as an assassin and branding both me and your sister as employers of assassins. By doing this, you're eliminating all those who threaten you. It's a clever way of getting rid of your rivals! I suspect you're not here to solve problems but to eliminate dissidents!"

Alice's lips curved into a half-smile, seemingly amused. "I was just introducing Doctor Maxwell's identity to everyone. Why are you so worked up, Lucian? If I wanted to eliminate dissidents, I wouldn't have revealed Doctor Maxwell's identity."

While Lucian furrowed his brows, looking somewhat puzzled, she continued, "I recognized Doctor Maxwell immediately when I saw her this time. Back when she and the others were in this study, I was just outside, and I had their every move under my control. Of course, I had no idea that Lucian had placed a recording in my study."

She then turned to look at Lucian. "You asked me who I was protecting to deliberately claim that the video was fabricated. Well, let me tell you, it was you, my father. I was giving you a chance! I didn't want to be ruthless with you. Don't you realize that by admitting the video's authenticity, you essentially acknowledge that you hired assassins to steal the necklace?! Otherwise, how do you explain placing a recording in my study that conveniently captured them committing the crime? The only explanation is that you knew in advance.

"Even if the Double Dragon Court's assassins were formidable, without someone on the inside, they couldn't have moved about Eurosia freely without raising suspicion. I've given you chances time and

time again, but you truly didn't take me seriously. Your daughter made grandiose claims, framing doctors and preventing them from treating General Bleu. You secretly rallied various factions to your side. Just a few months ago, you even sent assassins from Dragon's Breath to steal the necklace, didn't

you? The list of assassins in your possession is something only the employer would have. Father, did you really think you could fool me like a child?"

Chapter 1456 She Came To Save Me

While Lucian was unfazed, Beatrix was visibly shaken. She looked anxiously at Lucian. How did Alice suddenly become so formidable? She even knew about our attempt to hire assassins from Dragon's Breath a few months ago!

Lucian also had yet to anticipate that Alice would bring up this matter, which had ultimately failed. The assassins hadn't even managed to enter the first level of Eurosia; they were discovered immediately. He thought this incident was insignificant, so how did she find out?

Before he could fully process it, Alice turned everyone once again. "I'm sure you're all rather confused about Olivia's identity now. Olivia, indeed, was an assassin back then, but that was only because she had no other choice and ended up with the Double Dragon Court. She is also my mother's firstborn, Avril, the Crown Princess of Eurosia, and my sister by birth. Here's the proof of our blood relation; you can take a look."

She handed the identification report to those around her, who passed it to the Consuls one by one.

After reviewing the report, the Consuls expressed their astonishment.

"Olivia is really the Queen's sister?!"

"Tell me about it! This dramatic twist happened so suddenly!"

"Yes, this plot twist is too fast, isn't it?"

"The Crown Princess of Eurosia turned into an assassin to steal Eurosia's necklace? This is beyond bizarre!"

Beatrix also wanted to take a look, but the guards surrounded her and prevented her from leaving. She anxiously shouted, "Let me see."

Alas, no one paid her any attention, and it wasn't until everyone had finished reading that they handed the report to Beatrix.

Beatrix snatched it away, looking incredulous as she read the report from top to bottom. When she saw the identification result, she finally let her arm fall limply to her side and murmured in disbelief, "It can't be. How is this possible? Olivia is actually a princess."

Lucian picked up the report and glanced through it once before angrily throwing it away. He scoffed, "Creating a fake identification report and spinning a story. Do you think you can cover up this matter? Even if you grant her the title of a princess, it won't erase the fact that she stole the necklace. You should know that if the Crown Princess of Eurosia is found guilty of stealing Eurosia's necklace, her crime will be even more severe."

Alice stared at him. "If theft is a crime, then hiring them makes you even more culpable. Let's not forget that Olivia, even before we found out that she was Princess Avril, had already balanced her actions through her contributions to Eurosia. She not only saved General Bleu but also saved me. That night, five years ago, when Olivia and her team came out of the study and noticed me, my mother's death deeply saddened me, and Eurosia was in turmoil with Beatrix scheming. I had never harbored any ambitions and only wanted to end my life. I sent away all my servants and was about to jump from the balcony when they stopped me.

"I demanded they return the necklace to me, or else they shouldn't care about whether I lived or died. Olivia said they had to follow orders, and failing their mission meant death for them. I asked them to kill me first, but it seemed that they were reluctant. Either way, in the end, she asked me to find a replacement to fulfill the mission. We stayed in the room for over an hour, and she tried to comfort me. She said she understood my feelings as she had also recently lost her mother and believed my mother would want her child to live a good life. Under her reassurance, I abandoned the idea of suicide, so she didn't come to steal the necklace; she came to save me, and I willingly gave her the fake necklace."

The narrative was Alice's own invention. Although she hadn't been on the brink of suicide when she met Olivia, she had genuinely considered it. That was why she dismissed her servants and expressed her desperation, saying they should kill her if they didn't return the necklace.

At that time, she thought a skilled assassin would end her life swiftly and painlessly.

That way... That way, she could quickly reunite with her mother. Perhaps they could sense her despair, so they really talked to her in the room for over an hour.

In hindsight, it seemed that everything was fated to happen.

Chapter 1457 What Right Do You Have To Scream and Shout?

Lucian frowned deeply. No wonder the necklace he saw taken out of the study's safe ended up being a fake; Alice had secretly switched it with Olivia.

"Nice story," he remarked icily.

Alice casually glanced at Lucian and asked, "Didn't expect me to switch the necklace, did you? How did you feel when you held the fake necklace in your hands?"

Lucian was rendered infuriatingly speechless. "You—"

At that, Alice withdrew her gaze indifferently and said with emotion, "Actually, I was bewildered back then. Despite knowing she was an assassin, I wasn't afraid of her at all. I thought it was because I was already seeking death that I didn't fear her. But looking at it now, I realize it's because we share the same blood. We're sisters by birth! The innate connection between us made me unafraid and convinced she wouldn't harm me, just like how she would rather face punishment than watch me die. Now, I'm overjoyed that she has returned safely.

"If there is guilt, it is mine. I forced my sister into a situation where she almost died trying to complete her mission. I took a position that should have been hers. In reality, our mother had already left an edict stating that if Princess Avril were found, she would be the Queen of Eurosia."

Then, she turned to Doreen. "Godmother, please bring out the royal edict!"

Doreen nodded and said, "Alright. Hugh, fetch it, will you?"

Hugh acknowledged and retrieved a royal edict wrapped in a silk cloth from a storage compartment in Doreen's wheelchair.

"Please show it to everyone, Mr. Plumpton!" Alice requested.

"Certainly," said Hugh.

Everyone stared at Hugh in confusion. They hadn't expected Queen Blanchett to leave an edict for Doreen before her death.

The will's contents were roughly as follows: Doreen was instructed to find Princess Avril after her death and reveal everything to her. It clarified that it wasn't because her mother didn't love her but because the situation had suddenly arisen, and she hadn't wanted to lose her. If Princess Avril intended to inherit the throne, she would become the queen. Otherwise, the kingdom would continue under Princess Lydia's stewardship, with Doreen as her assistant.

A special provision had granted Doreen the authority to exercise all of these rights on her behalf, including the power to dismiss certain high-ranking ministers, princesses, and even queens.

Alice added, "To prevent anyone from claiming I'm fabricating this, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Warwick, and Mr. Naylor, you've all served under my mother. You can verify the authenticity of this edict."

Several of the Consuls brought magnifying glasses and carefully examined Queen Blanchett's handwriting, comparing it with the royal edict. In the end, they concluded that the royal edict was indeed genuine.

"Good, let's execute the edict, then," said Alice with a nod before standing up and dipping her head at Olivia. "Olivia, now that you've returned, this throne rightfully belongs to you."

The sudden turn of events took Olivia aback. This was never part of their planning. Alice couldn't force her into a position like this!

Does Alice not know that I know nothing about ruling a country?!

She quickly responded, "No. No, I can't. I have no idea how to govern a country. Didn't we agree that I would willingly renounce my claim to the throne?"

Beatrix was already fuming before Alice could say anything else.

What are these two babbling about?! Do they think the throne is some trinket that can be passed around as they please? Do they think anyone, even a petty thief, can inherit the throne?!

She couldn't take it anymore and shouted at them, "What, are you two doing a comedy routine? Is the throne something you can just pass back and forth? An inexperienced Lydia Bleu inheriting it is bad enough, and now some thief from out of nowhere can inherit the throne too?! A royal edict? A bloodline verification? What a joke! I'm also the queen's daughter. Why didn't she mention that I could inherit it? Don't think you can shout whatever you want just because you're the queen."

Alice's face turned cold. "The edict and verification report are here for everyone to examine. Consuls, you can check them at your leisure. As for you, a woman who changed her name after the queen's death and constantly plots to seize the throne, what right do you have to scream and shout here?"

Chapter 1458 Coup d'Etat

"Lock Lucian and Beatrix in the dungeon," Alice ordered.

"Yes!"

This time, the guards responded in unison, displaying unprecedented unity.

A faint smile appeared on Alice's lips; decimation had worked.

Just as the guards were about to apprehend Lucian, he desperately broke free from their restraints and swiftly used a pen-shaped object to cut the throat of one of the guards.

That guard didn't even have a chance to make a sound before collapsing to the ground.

The room erupted in chaos. People screamed and scattered in all directions. The guards surrounding Alice immediately shielded her from harm.

Eugene instinctively protected Olivia, while Albert, after a quick glance at Alice to confirm her safety, stepped forward to shield Olivia as well.

At the same time, the palace gates were violently kicked open, and a horde of guards rushed in from outside, each armed with firearms and covered in blood. It appeared they had overcome the guards stationed at the palace entrance.

Olivia's eyes narrowed in realization. It seemed her husband had indeed anticipated this. In his

desperation, Lucian had prepared a contingency plan, notifying his people to come and stage a coup d'etat.

At that, she whispered something to Albert, who obediently nodded and departed.

On the other side, Lucian's guards pointed their guns at the terrified and screaming Consuls, shouting, "Sit down! All of you, sit down and don't move!"

As they spoke, they began firing at the palace guards.

Before long, the palace hall was a scene of death and injury.

Covered in blood and with fierce appearances, the invading guards looked even more menacing and terrifying.

The Consuls, too frightened to run, obediently sat down.

Strangely, Alice maintained a calm demeanor, appearing composed and in control of the situation. Her elevated position allowed her to oversee the entire hall.

Soon enough, a smile played at the corners of her lips as she witnessed another group of guards dressed in blue uniforms entering, representing Doreen's faction. She also spotted River leading over twenty black-clad bodyguards, representing Eugene's faction. These groups arrived in quick succession, with only a few seconds between them.

The echoing command of "Don't move" reverberated through the hall.

Just as the triumphant shouts of Lucian's guards had not yet subsided, they were rendered motionless by the subsequent arrivals.

Lucian's guards had just engaged in a skirmish with the palace guards at the entrance, resulting in casualties, which put them at a numerical disadvantage. Moreover, Doreen's troops were well-trained, each capable of taking on several opponents. Eugene's bodyguards were also formidable.

In no time, the two groups besieged Lucian's guards.

Initially bold and full of confidence, Lucian's guards were now sandwiched and trapped. Despite their firearms, they dared not make any rash moves.

To move meant certain death, and they were essentially standing targets. Their mission was to kill the queen and rescue Lucian. They glanced at the heavily guarded queen and then at Lucian, locked in combat with the palace guards. They realized there was no way to proceed.

One by one, they sensibly lowered their weapons.

Just as Lucian had incapacitated one of the palace guards, he was left dumbfounded by the unfolding scene.

He had believed himself to be the mastermind, but it turned out that the young girl had devised multiple backup plans.

No, it couldn't be her! How could she possess such wisdom? It had to be Doreen.

D*mn it! She has just started to recover, and now she's ruining everything for me! I have to kill her no matter what, or she'll predict my every plan!

He didn't want to experience this kind of defeat again.

Almost instinctively, he charged toward Doreen.

"Protect the general!" Alice shouted in panic as she watched the enraged Lucian closing in on Doreen. But Lucian was too fast. Before anyone could react, the pen-like dagger was thrust toward Doreen.

Chapter 1459 Threat

Stab! The sound of the blade piercing flesh was heard. However, it wasn't Doreen who was injured, but Hugh.

He didn't have time to react to the critical moment at all. He saw a flash of light and instinctively shielded Doreen, taking the sharp dagger into his back. He let out a muffled groan in pain.

Doreen's pupils constricted in fear, and she tried to look at him, but he held her tightly. "Hugh!" she called out desperately.

Hugh quickly reassured her, "Don't worry, General. I'm okay."

That said, he was motionless.

Lucian hadn't expected his initial thrust to miss Doreen, so he made another attempt only to hear a menacing voice from behind. "Lucian, stop right there!"

At that, he turned around to find Albert holding Beatrix hostage.

Instantly, he turned pale with a slight frown. He had instructed Beatrix to leave through the back door earlier, so how had she ended up in Albert's hands?

"Let her go!"

Lucian, being shrewd, quickly released the immobilized Hugh and pressed the pen-like dagger against Doreen's neck.

A collective gasp filled the room, but no one dared to make any sudden moves, fearing that Lucian might harm Doreen.

Albert's countenance shifted instantly. "Lucian, look at the situation now. Do you really think you can make it out of this alive?"

Lucian surveyed the surroundings. His men had already been subdued by Doreen and Eugene's people. At this moment, it was just the two of them, one posing a threat to others and the other being threatened.

The situation was indeed unfavorable, but...

"We won't know unless we try, right? Release Beatrix. She has nothing to do with this."

Beatrix's panicked face was streaked with tears as she pleaded with Alice. "No, it's not true. Everything my father did was for my sake. Alice is also your daughter. Spare him, please, Alice."

Despite her deep-seated dislike for Alice, she was willing to compromise for Lucian's sake at this moment.

Alice slowly descended from the platform and looked at Lucian. "Alright, everything's negotiable if you let go of General Bleu."

Lucian chuckled lightly. "You think I'm as naive and gullible as you, Alice? Without Doreen's masterful planning on your side, you'd have died dozens of times already. Now, arrange a helicopter for me and

Beatrix to leave. Once we're on the plane, I'll release Doreen. Otherwise, you'll be dealing with her lifeless body today!"

Alice glanced at the dagger in Lucian's trembling hand, which had already nicked Doreen's neck, but she remained silent.

Due to Doreen's physical condition, she couldn't suffer even the slightest injury, as it would be difficult for the wound to heal.

Despite her inner anxiety, she maintained her composure. "I know neither you nor Beatrix have any affection for me, and you blame Mother for passing the throne to me. I understand that you merely wish your daughter to inherit the throne, but this position isn't as glamorous as you imagine, and I don't cherish power as much as you think. If you and your sister had approached me for a discussion instead of resorting to this method to snatch it from me, I might have agreed. General Bleu's health is fragile, and I am offering to exchange myself for her. Using me as leverage is a more significant bargaining chip than her."

"No!" Olivia exclaimed.

"No!" Albert echoed.

Even Doreen, who was slightly slower in responding, firmly said, "You don't need to."

Alice felt a pang of emotion. She often believed she couldn't do anything right, yet many still cared about her.

"It's alright." She smiled at them before turning to Lucian. "Do you see that, Lucian? I am a greater bargaining chip than General Bleu, and they will be more susceptible to your threat."

By doing this, Alice hoped that during the hostage exchange, a sniper could take the opportunity to eliminate Lucian. While it posed a risk to herself, only she could potentially force Lucian to compromise.

Chapter 1460 Lucian's Demise

She had promised to protect her, but Lucian wasn't one to easily compromise.

He squinted fiercely through the lens of his glasses. What is she implying?

He didn't believe Alice had such good intentions, for he didn't believe anyone would sacrifice their own life for someone else's.

Even though Doreen has helped her a lot, she can't possibly sacrifice herself for me, so she must have some ulterior motive. And even though Alice may not be very skilled, she's still much harder to control than Doreen, who can't move at all. Judging by her nervous demeanor now, she still cares a lot about Doreen.

What mattered was that she still cared.

She would still be susceptible to his threats as long as she cared.

Coldly, he said, "No need. If you don't want Doreen to die in front of you, don't bother negotiating with me. Instead, prepare a helicopter for Beatrix."

At that, Albert sneered. "Have you forgotten your daughter is still in my hands?"

"You better let her go," Lucian demanded. "I don't need to kill Doreen. All I need is to slit her, and she'll be on her way to her maker."

Olivia's heart raced, and his words made her fly into a rage. Well, he knows General Bleu's condition like the back of his hand, that's for sure.

"Your daughter's life is still a life. Do you think if you make a move, we won't retaliate? If you both let go simultaneously, I promise Alice won't trouble you."

Lucian snorted. "You? What are you? A thief and an assassin, dreaming of taking the queen's position in Eurosia. I won't recognize you as Avril; you can stop dreaming!"

Olivia chuckled. "That position is only precious to you two. Neither Alice nor I care about it. I'm thinking about you. Look at your current situation. Look at how many snipers are aiming at you. And don't forget, your daughter is in our hands. Even if you hold on, you won't outlast us. Unless you can maintain constant vigilance over General Bleu, one moment of distraction, and you'll be dead."

At that, she exchanged a covert glance with Albert, who replied with a subtle nod.

Lucian had to admit that Olivia had a point. If they continued this standoff, he couldn't leave. Alice wouldn't provide a helicopter. Unless he was willing to completely ignore Beatrix's life and use Doreen as leverage, he might have a slim chance, but Beatrix was his beloved daughter...

He took a deep breath. He knew he couldn't afford to be soft-hearted at this moment. If they continued like this, both of them would surely die.

Moreover, they were soft-hearted, and they wouldn't necessarily harm Beatrix.

If this standoff continued, he truly had no way out.

As he was considering making the first cut on Doreen's arm to show his determination, he suddenly heard Beatrix scream.

Lucian, overwhelmed by guilt, instinctively turned to the source of the sound and found Albert had already acted first, cutting Beatrix's arm. The sight was shocking.

Albert was more decisive than him.

Just as he raised his knife to make a cut on Doreen's arm, a sudden gunshot rang out.

Lucian only swayed slightly, but a bullet-sized hole appeared on his forehead, and tiny drops of blood oozed out. Eugene, with his cold, emotionless face, reflected in his widening eyes.

The entire hall fell into a shocked silence, one that was as deep as death.