

In the Name of Empress

#Chapter 1: Fake News! - Read In the Name of Empress

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The withered sycamore leaves drifted down with the wind, gently pressing against the window, painting the autumn in golden hues.

The sun's afterglow spilled into the room, warming Roland, dispelling the autumn chill, and lulling one to sleep.

Stretching lazily, he glanced at the blank manuscript paper on the desk and chuckled self-deprecatingly as a young clerk.

It's well-known that novels have only three difficult parts to write.

The beginning, the middle, and the end.

At this moment, he was troubled by the beginning.

He was a clerk at the Imperial Post Office, and his primary job was writing letters for people who were illiterate.

The job was not hectic, and his hobby was slacking off at work—well, writing novels.

He longed to become the Electrician Liu of this magical world, slacking off to write novels at work, using his talent to enter literary salons hosted by the nobility, meeting beautiful noble ladies, all the while paying the price of losing worries for a comfortable life.

However, as ideals were as full as a noblewoman, reality was as shriveled as a wallet; he had his manuscripts rejected by publishers repeatedly.

The first time, he wrote feverishly, penning a passionate story of a fallen young genius turning the tables after forming a three-year pact with the pirate leader Red Beard.

The editor sneered at this—pirates had no moral boundaries and would throw anyone who displeased them into the sea to feed the sharks. Who would make a three-year pact with you?

The second time, he wrote a kingly story of a hero defeating the Evil Dragon, turning the tables, and marrying the Princess.

Editor: "¿"

He didn't care about the subsequent plot but was worried about Roland's mental state.

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Roland was a transmigrator, living in the Sussex Empire for eighteen and a half years. Since he could remember, he hadn't seen his mother, and his father, a grassroots military officer of the Empire, died in a war three years ago.

Perhaps the blow of his father's death was too great. Although Roland inherited his father's combat talent, he resolutely refused to join the army or become an independent adventurer, choosing instead to pursue a clerical role.

At his coming-of-age ceremony, he unlocked memories from before his transmigration, as well as a mysterious Soul Bound Card.

[Profession: Writer]

[Tier: Tier Nine]

[Level: Normal]

[Ability: Early Stage Memory]

With the help of the Early Stage Memory ability, he could recall books he had encountered before transmigrating. As his ability improved, the amount of content he could recall would gradually increase.

If he were an ambitious transmigrator, he would likely first take out magical books like "The Dual-Use Talent's Friend," but Roland had no ambition—only the heart to slack off.

He chose novels. Wouldn't it be amazing to localize these excellent works to the otherworld and become a literary giant in no time? Now, that was a suitable choice for a writer profession.

However, in the class-divided Sussex Empire, stories of hot-blooded youths turning the tables and poor boys marrying rich beauties were doomed to have no market. His literary dreams were mercilessly humiliated.

One could delay their literary dream, but one still had to eat.

Fortunately, the Empire still showed some care for military orphans. He inherited and lived in the public housing allocated to his father and found a nine-to-five standard job at the post office through an acquaintance, sparing himself from crying under a bridge with a small blanket.

Just as Roland was worrying about how to start his writing, a lighthearted laugh, carrying a fragrance, came from behind him.

"Oh future literary giant, what genius idea do you have now?"

The scent became a pretty older sister wearing a post office uniform, sitting across from him.

No one dislikes a generous and wealthy older sister, and Roland was no exception.

The girl's smile was as bright as the sun, gently stirring the collar of her uniform, dispelling the worries in the young man's heart.

Putting down his ink-less quill pen, Roland smiled in response, "Miss Lisa, you seem to be in a good mood today."

"Let me correct you one more time; it's Sister Lisa! Sister!"

Lisa propped her chin with her left hand, her lake-blue eyes filled with clear laughter.

No matter the standards of time and space, she could be considered beautiful.

Youthful charm washed over him, accompanied by the whisper of a demon.

"Roland, your parents passed away early. You should learn to mature like an adult."

Mature? Like getting married?

Spare me!

Transmigrating to another world yet still facing marriage pressure?

He's not even nineteen yet, hey!

Directly refusing would only garner more nagging. So Roland, filled with generous enthusiasm, pounded his chest and uttered nonsense, "I don't want to consider these things before writing a masterpiece for posterity."

"Can I understand this as a declaration of being single?"

Her slender fingers drew an elegant smooth arc, landing precisely in the middle of the blank paper.

"The short story competition's deadline is today. How many words has our literary giant written? Oh heavens, it's actually zero."

Lisa looked at Roland with a hint of pity.

Young people with no status or money often liked to imagine themselves as writers.

If someone else had said that, she would think it was youthful impatience, but Roland was different.

Clerk work was cumbersome, and writing letters for others wasn't easy. Often, they would encounter customers who found it very difficult to express their thoughts.

Some customers spoke with a heavy rural accent, struggling to convey a few sentences. Even a seasoned clerk like her would find it headache-inducing.

Roland, however, could always understand the customer's intentions with a smile and various communication methods, writing succinct and clear letters that were highly praised.

He had talent.

He was full of passion.

And very handsome.

Handsome young men could easily stray from the right path. Being the neighboring sister who lived in the same building, she felt it was her duty to guide Roland, who lacked parental supervision, back to the right path.

Young people should be down-to-earth.

For example, marrying Miss Elizabeth of the Baker Street Alchemy Workshop, with her thick thighs and big butt, and having three, four, five, six, seven, or eight kids to start a family.

Stop being unproductive, Roland!

Faced with Sister Lisa's doubts, Roland blushed slightly, spouting all kinds of complex terms like "Once the idea is complete, the writing will fly off the pen" and "The writer doesn't want to write, just has writer's block."

The atmosphere in the post office became lively in an instant.

Lisa laughed so hard she was shaking, utterly unreserved in her mirth.

"Maybe you're right, but there's only an hour left until the deadline. There's not enough time."

"Who says there's not enough time? I've got the feeling now. I'll write right away!"

Roland's competitive spirit kicked in, and he grabbed a feather pen, hovering it over the white paper.

This writing competition requires themes around gods, royalty, mystery, suspense, and gender, and the shorter, the better.

"First, it must involve gods!"

Roland wrote "Oh my God" on the paper.

Got the gods in.

Seeing his focused expression, the dismissive smile on Lisa's lips disappeared without notice.

Obviously, Roland was serious.

Roland followed the essay's main theme and continued to write "Oh my God, Empress, pregnant," stringing them together.

"Oh my God, the Empress is pregnant, who did it?"

"Wow, that title is interesting. My curiosity is piqued, tell me, tell me, what happens next?"

Lisa's beautiful big eyes sparkled with curiosity, urging him for more on the spot.

"There's nothing more."

"There's nothing more?"

"Yes, that's the entire novel." Roland's expression was serious.

Lisa, somewhat annoyed, reached out to pinch Roland's ear, but was surprised to find that Roland, sitting up straight, was half a head taller than her. She couldn't treat him like a child anymore, and her fingers paused in mid-air.

Roland, not noticing Lisa's unusual actions, put away the manuscript paper and smiled with relief.

"Done, I'll submit it now."

"Wait, what if it fails?" Lisa never forgot to bring Roland back on track.

"Then there's always next time."

"That won't do! If it fails this time, you'll have to listen to me and at least meet Miss Elizabeth first. She's kind-hearted, understands alchemy, quite pretty, and has a nice pair of birthing hips..."

Seeing Roland running off without looking back, Lisa also chased after him out the door, "Hey, are you even listening?"

Roland's figure flew dozens of meters away.

Perhaps he heard, but he definitely didn't take it in.

As if he heard.

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Just in time!

Roland, having completed his submission before the publisher closed, walked down the street, pondering the editor's question.

"Why not the princess? I think readers would prefer a princess."

"Sir Byron, our country really does have a princess! Slandering the Imperial Family is a capital offense."

That damn bald editor, was he trying to set him up?

This writing contest is sponsored by the Imperial Family, writing about the Empress being pregnant might be okay, but definitely not the princess.

"Sir, buy a newspaper! Today's news is absolutely sensational!"

A raggedy newsboy darted out like a rabbit, blocking his way, waving The Sussex Sun, loudly pitching it to Roland.

Usually, Roland would politely and firmly refuse.

After all, his money didn't fall from the sky.

The Sussex Sun is a standard tabloid, mainly focused on high society celebrities' scandals.

News reported by this paper is rarely accurate, and decidedly wild.

But today, in a good mood, he casually pulled out two pence, handed them to the newsboy, and accepted a newspaper.

"Shocking disaster, the revered His Majesty Edward encountered an ambush by unknown enemies in Sosko Bay while with the fleet. His Majesty, the Crown Prince, and the entire Planck Fleet have perished!"

Truly a toilet paper.

This news is wilder than folklore.

Roland was amused on the spot.

The Sussex Empire is the world's top naval power, with over ten million square kilometers of directly governed territory.

The world's second to ninth-ranked fleets combined wouldn't be enough to challenge the Royal Fleet of Sussex, this is universally acknowledged.

Which fool would dare to attack the Royal Fleet?

Even if there were such idiots, Admiral Planck is a renowned general of the time, definitely ready to teach them a lesson at a moment's notice.

"Fake News!"

The political news from this toilet paper, believing a single word would be an insult to one's intelligence.

He casually crumpled the newspaper and tossed it into the trash.

What a beautiful day, except for the wasted two pence.