Empress 109

Chapter 109: The Sussex People Dislike

The gentle sea breeze swept across the square, bringing a refreshing coolness to the crowded masses.

Although the latitude is not low, the warm ocean currents bring moist winds straight to the face, making the winter in the Imperial Capital not too cold, and snow is seldom seen most of the time.

The long-lost sunshine also filled the crowded people with warmth.

Their gaze followed the Empress as she ascended the high platform, watched her raise the scepter to greet everyone, and then walk into the temporary box just set up, sitting on the throne with dignity.

Even though the beautiful Her Majesty the Empress was temporarily out of sight, they knew she was right there, and even more so, that the Empress was surely watching them.

What they could never guess was that their perfect Empress in their hearts was at that moment lounging, waiting quietly for the end of the workday.

For the Magic Mirror, this performance was meaningless; it only needed to carry out Sif's instructions.

Those stirring words were either pre-scripted or improvised by Sif.

The real Empress was in a carriage rehearsing lines with her rumored lover, preparing to take the stage.

The itinerary of the Radiant Day celebration had long been fixed, an ancestral tradition seldom altered over centuries.

First, the Chief Minister of the Cabinet gives a speech on behalf of the government, briefly summarizing the year's work and outlining the development plan for the coming year.

This is followed by blessings from a representative of the Divine Court of Fengrao.

Next came the grand artistic performance.

Artists from around the world gather to perform their signature shows.

This was the moment everyone looked forward to the most.

When Chief Minister William stepped onto the stage, the audience had some distaste for him.

This year Sussex offered little to commend, no new territories were annexed, and the sole change was the change of Emperor.

But one cannot exactly include changing Emperors as an achievement in the report.

One can't exactly say that through the joint efforts of the Cabinet Ministers, the late Emperor passed away at sea.

William didn't want to mention the new Emperor Sylph's name too often, making the report particularly awkward.

This on-site report was easily the driest report of recent years.

Apart from the slight difference in data from last year, the content was almost copied.

The people of the Imperial Capital aren't ordinary; they have a high level of political acumen and love discussing politics.

While not everyone is adept in their professional field, many believe they are better at governing the nation than the Chief Minister.

And much more so.

Seeing William drone on incessantly, the people of the Imperial Capital had had enough.

Jeers erupted continuously.

"We don’t want to hear clichés!"

"Wrap it up already!"

"We want the artistic performance!"

"We want to hear Her Majesty the Empress’s sacred voice!"

...

William’s face looked grim as he slightly lowered his head, desperately trying not to expose his pale face.

His hands were trembling.

Not from the cold, but from anger.

This work report was meticulously prepared, subtly covering up the governance flaws of the late Emperor’s final years while cleverly attributing achievements to various Cabinet Ministers.

It was a splendid piece of work he and his secretary had painstakingly crafted over several days, taking all aspects into account. What’s with this bunch of scoundrels?

Overwhelmed by anger, William seemed to forget that his report covered all bases except for certain individuals and a specific group.

It downplayed the Empress, ignored the masses.

Denying respect to the masses made them see him as muddled. Denying respect to the Empress made him a traitor, and it's absurd to think the people of the Imperial Capital would buy into that.

With tens of thousands of people booing in unison, the level of sound overwhelming and penetrating, the Chief Minister never expected to encounter such booing at an occasion like this; he was somewhat dazed.

Their high political acumen allowed him to persist until the report ended, but his trembling voice couldn't be clearly transmitted through the enhanced amplifying Magic Array.

When William stepped off the stage, he was utterly dazed and confused.

This was a scenario he had never encountered in decades of his political career.

And it would undoubtedly be a stain on his political career.

He didn't even know how to face it.

Perhaps asking Her Majesty to say a few words could salvage the situation, but he couldn't bring himself to speak it out.

Requesting the Empress to step in would make the situation even more awkward.

As William walked despondently into the Cabinet Ministers' box, Alben, who had never been on good terms with him, came over unexpectedly and softly consoled:

"William, don't fret over it. This mob just enjoys venting their spleen; do they understand politics? When has the country's affairs ever been for them to judge?"

"You bear the responsibility of thirty-four provinces of the Empire, nearly a hundred million people's Chief Minister. How can you be weak?"

William looked at Alben with a complicated expression.

Perhaps he really misjudged him.

Thinking Alben disliked him and would step on him when he was down, he hadn't expected this political foe to be the first to comfort him.

William said nothing but nodded heavily.

Alben was right; these fools had no idea of his devoted efforts!

No matter how many scoundrels stirred things up, they couldn't change his resolve!

Following William was Archbishop Herman, representing the Divine Court of Fengrao, who took to the stage.

The entire venue fell silent.

The relentless booing, curses, and sarcasm quickly vanished.

Living incurably sick and hurt, the Divine Court of Fengrao might not save everyone, but could at least offer hope to its followers.

No matter how dull Herman's words were, no one dared oppose.

Routine speech with routine applause, as always.

The Archbishop considerately didn’t speak for too long before stepping down, leaving the stage to today’s stars.

Artists from all over the globe.

The artistic performance began.

With the exaggerated introduction by the host in a drawn-out tone, the first act magnificently took the stage.

The first to perform was the opening act.

The opening act didn’t signify poor quality; it had to be superior.