Empress 124

Chapter 124: Want to Make a Deal, Alina? (Part 2)

Jes also strictly carried out the Minister of the Army's orders, even disregarding Sif's guards' objections, by deploying a dozen cavalrymen to stand guard around her lodging.

He executed it very strictly, not missing a single detail.

But not exceeding any either.

The Minister of the Army ordered him to watch the Count and his entourage, so he arranged for people to monitor the Earl's Mansion's people.

Except for one person.

Roland.

According to his understanding, Roland was the Captain of the Imperial Knight Order, although without an official title, his rank was above Sif.

He was not part of Sif's entourage.

Strictly speaking, Sif was considered his entourage as the Knight Order Leader.

What did the Minister of the Army's instruction to tail the Count's entourage have to do with the Empress's Knight Order Captain?

Soldiers carry out orders in such a meticulous manner by nature.

Jes is a soldier, an excellent one.

During the banquet, Roland openly left the Port Authority and blended into Dovor Port under the cover of night.

In just one evening, finding one person in a port city with 50,000 permanent residents and 100,000 transitory population was like a fool’s errand.

Even if the Port Authority and the city government fully cooperated, it would be impossible.

Moreover, they would never cooperate.

But Roland had a method.

He took out an old ticket—he intended to board a ship.

Standing at a concealed street corner, he joined the two halves of the ticket and mumbled to himself:

"Huh, what’s wrong with this ticket, can’t fit it together?"

"Idiot, you’ve got the bottom half upside down, how do you expect to fit it?" a soft voice sounded from behind him.

Roland turned around with a smile and saw the long-missed Alina.

To be able to approach him silently implied that the person was likely a Transcendent of the same level or a top-level intelligence agent.

There weren’t many such people; in Dovor Port, only Alina fit the description.

Although she was in disguise, Roland could recognize her at a glance.

"Alina, how are you?" Though he knew Alina was surely not well, such pleasantries were excellent for breaking awkwardness.

Alina removed her black glasses and veil, softly saying, "I am fine."

Her eyes were swollen, clearly from recent crying.

Her pupils were bloodshot, showing a severe lack of sleep.

Her spirit was sapped and listless, clearly deeply unsettled.

Is this really fine?

Roland calmly said, "We are friends."

"You are now the Empress's Favored Minister, and I am a fugitive."

Alina calmly said, "Thank you for remembering your friends. If you could persuade your government not to extradite me, it would be a favor beyond words."

"Is it that serious?" Roland frowned.

He guessed Alina was in trouble, but didn't expect it to be this big.

Alina's expression was full of bitterness, "My father was murdered by his political enemies, and a gang of thugs broke into my house that night, killing my entire family. Including my mother, brother, and sister."

"My father's student risked his life to get the message to me, urging me to flee, but I couldn't escape at all."

Looking at the ticket gripped in Roland’s hand, Alina ironically laughed, "It’s ridiculous; I said I’d take you to Jin Yuan, and now I’m a fugitive of the Jin Yuan Kingdom."

Roland frowned slightly, puzzledly asking: "Is your country’s political struggle so bloody? Not even sparing women and children?"

Such family exterminating political struggles only occurred in the early days of the Magic Empire, and were rare among the main civilized countries on the Rodinia Continent.

"At least on the surface, they didn’t do so; they just fabricated charges to execute my father. The ones who killed my family were a group of ’thugs.’"

Alina’s gaze turned hollow, she smiled bitterly and said:

"My family is an old nobility of Jin Yuan, and also a main creator of the republic system. To avoid suspicion, my father gave up core power voluntarily."

"He intended to trade generous concessions for unity across different classes, but it turned out like this."

Roland remained silent.

He initially thought Alina’s father was politically naive, but he didn’t expect him to be a martyr of his ideals.

He respected him with due solemnity.

But it was just respect, never to be emulated.

Alina’s father wrote a lesson with his family’s blood that could not be turned back.

The military, personnel, and financial powers should be held firmly in hand.

Giving up power for unity seems noble but is actually foolish.

It’s like a Hunter putting down their gun to embrace a lion or tiger.

Of course, Alina had already been heartbroken and in deep despair, so these words were better left unsaid.

Alina looked up at Roland, biting her lip as she said, "Do you think my father was foolish?"

Roland didn’t speak.

This is something you said yourself; I didn’t imply it.

Alina softly said, "My father had three close comrades; during the war opposing the Emperor, they fought side by side with my father, becoming comrades-in-arms for life and death."

"He wasn’t an idiot; while relinquishing the presidency, he had these three serve as Speaker, Minister of Defense, and Prime Minister respectively."

"Many subordinates and students were also placed in important government positions."

"He distanced himself from the core of power, compiling theoretical writings for the operation of the republic system. He wanted to become the founding father of the republic, famous through history."

"His actions were related to his Extraordinary Profession as well. If everything went well, he had a very good chance to break through Tier Seven."

"Yet, he was betrayed."

Thinking of those traitors, Alina gritted her teeth in hatred, adding a bit of redness to her lips.

Not from recovered spirits, but from breaking her lips.

Roland patiently listened to Alina's account, then softly asked, "What are you planning to do?"

That question brought Alina out of her flames of hatred; she remained silent for a long time before slowly speaking:

"What I want to do is not important, what matters is that I can do nothing. I originally planned to sneak back home and assassinate those few traitors, yet I can't even find a ship."

"Alina, have you tried contacting your former subordinates?" Roland asked in a deep voice.

"No, I haven't. I dare not trust anyone now." Alina seemed a bit dejected.

"But you still came out to meet me."

"That's different, we have no conflicts of interest." Alina sighed.

Roland jokingly teased, "Really? If I sold you out, how much reward do you think your government would give me?"

Alina froze; she ironically laughed, "I hadn't thought about it like that. Indeed, my head is very valuable—alive, I'm worth twice the bounty."

"Roland, kill me; use my bounty to avenge me and my family."

"Why say something like that?" Roland asked Alina, surprised.

Alina self-mockingly laughed, "You never do anything unprofitable, but you also value friendship. This is the optimal solution—go ahead, take revenge for my family."

"Captain Alina, I need a ship." Roland said calmly, holding the old ticket.

Alina got a little angry; she cursed in Jin Yuan Language and said furiously, "Roland, don’t go too far. You can kill me, but you can’t insult me! Where can I get you a ship from right now? I don’t even have one myself!"

"Then you owe me a ticket now; that’s two tickets."

Roland calmly said, "You’re right. I’m an opportunist, but I don’t think selling you for money is the best option."

"The best course of action is to help you regain power."

Alina looked up incredulously, a flicker of hope appearing in her eyes, only to be extinguished shortly after.

"Roland, stop joking. I believe you can help that girl with a brain as simple as an amoeba to regain imperial authority because she is an Empress, whose legitimacy is immensely powerful."

"But I’m different. My family is classified as traitors, a regressive force masked within progressive circles, a target to be completely overthrown. Even if you controlled all of Sussex’s power, do you think you could fully defeat the Jin Yuan Republic?"

"Even if you could completely defeat them, it would only cement my traitor status. The Jin Yuan People can’t accept a traitor."

Roland raised the ticket in his hand, calmly saying, "Since you have nowhere else to go, why not bet on me?"

Alina fell silent.

Indeed, she didn’t originally qualify to be at the table; Roland was sharing chips with her, so on what grounds could she refuse?

"What’s the price?"

"You owe me two tickets and one ticket to the City of Romance, so naturally it’s a high cost. You must fully support me in the future."