Empress 136

Chapter 136: Who Keeps a Proper Diary?

Depriving the power to make mistakes is equivalent to depriving the opportunity to grow.

Some things are better taught through making mistakes once than teaching ten times.

Sif's growth speed surprised Roland.

After confronting Sofia, Sif seemed to have opened her mind overnight, her thoughts extraordinarily clear.

Although the reason for winning was quite ludicrous, a win is a win.

It's the first time in recent years Sofia didn't win in a confrontation.

This victory greatly boosted Sif's confidence.

She manipulated the Magic Mirror Puppet, easily handling the mayor and the port authority director.

The Empress rarely expressed her opinions, but her casual questions always made these two old bureaucrats shiver.

Her Majesty the Empress knows a lot and cannot be deceived.

This is the common thought of the mayor and the port authority director.

After listening to the report, the Empress chatted amiably with everyone until evening.

The headquarters was finally tidied up and ready for occupancy.

Dinner was held at the internal restaurant of the Fourth Fleet Headquarters.

The meal was very simple, hardly befitting the Empress's status, but suitable for the Navy General.

The dinner did not invite people from the city government and the port authority, it was entirely a Fourth Fleet internal banquet.

The officers and sailors who were able to accompany the Empress for dinner were carefully selected, their ancestors must be three generations old Sussex people with pure Imperial citizenship.

After this selection, over a hundred loyal and trustworthy officers and soldiers accompanied the Empress as extras for dinner.

Though a performance, it was a rare experience for these people.

They had only heard about the spectacle of Radiant Day from newspapers and colleagues, seeing the Empress and Count Sif in person for the first time.

This opportunity was truly rare.

The Empress and the main entourage's table was arranged among the navy officers and soldiers.

Despite Roland repeatedly reminding everyone to relax, the surrounding naval personnel were still somewhat tense.

Thus, the dinner ended amidst joy and restraint.

The entire Fourth Fleet was greatly encouraged, as Her Majesty the Empress brought good news.

The Fourth Fleet personnel lost at sea were accounted for as completing tasks, their wages paid, and sea allowances received.

This had been discussed with the Minister of Finance before leaving Imperial Capital.

Though the old miser painfully watched almost experiencing a heart attack on the spot, he accepted the suggestion.

After all, it was a suggestion from the Empress and fully compliant with the regulations.

Over twenty warships of the Fourth Fleet, totaling more than five thousand people went to sea, none survived nor any wreckage was found, so many doubts, it couldn't be simply judged as dead or missing.

Sif's solution was simple.

If it's neither death nor missing, then they're still on an escort mission at sea.

Since the task is not finished, wages and allowances cannot be reduced.

This ensures the families of these people can live without worries.

Upon hearing this good news, the entire Fourth Fleet was greatly invigorated, morale surged.

The main force of the Fourth Fleet was reduced, its strength rapidly shrank, and it became the weakest fleet of the Imperial Navy. Their commander was absent, and the Navy Headquarters despised them, making their situation very difficult.

The conditions given by the Empress for preferential care fully abide by legal framework, yet it was a shot of adrenaline for them.

Even brothers who couldn’t return were cared for this way, the sincerity of Her Majesty the Empress was clearly visible.

The Fourth Fleet instantly transformed from the fleet with the lowest morale and loyalty most shaken to the most loyal and reliable fleet.

Though restoring combat strength requires time, at least the hearts stabilized.

After dinner, back to Navy Headquarters, Sif told Magic Mirror to rest first, she and Roland came to the study before Planck’s incident.

The bookshelf and desk were still sealed, but the key was already placed on the table.

This was Bridges’s expressed attitude.

He didn’t handle these things privately, now completely handing them to the Empress.

Bridges dared not unseal, but Sif dared.

Sif and Roland carefully searched Planck’s desk, trying to find clues.

During the search, Sif said softly:

"I didn’t immediately pardon them nor express any opinion, just to make them scared, let’s talk about it tomorrow. As for these two guys, they are indeed capable but covet quite a bit, let them worry."

Roland just smiled subtly, without speaking.

Her approach was correct, enforcing both benevolence and authority is the way to rule.

Seeing Roland smile without speaking, Sif explained softly:

"With only benevolence and no authority, it appears weak, unworthy of respect. With only authority, but no benevolence, it makes people distant. You've said this before, I'm not wrong, am I?"

Roland nodded with satisfaction, "Of course not, completely right."

Benevolence is pardoning their crimes, authority is tonight's cold treatment.

Sif indicated to them, wanting to deal with them is just a matter of minutes.

Scaring them a bit first then forgiving, it's more shocking for them and can make them stop in time.

After handling these troublesome trivial matters, Roland and Sif continued searching the room.

Though the room must have been handled, it's hard to find any valuable stuff, but idle as they were, however it is handled, there are traces left behind.

As Roland analyzed Planck's personality based on the books placed on the shelf, Sif happily appeared before him with several small notebooks.

"Look, look, what have I found?"

Seeing her expression akin to presenting a treasure, Roland was also a bit curious about what treasure it was.

Opening a notebook, one glance, he almost couldn't help but laugh out loud.

Simply put, this thing is a general's diary.

Roland casually flipped through, shaking his head with a smile, "This isn’t a diary."

"Ah? How could it be, I just had a look, this is a diary!" Sif was unconvinced.

Roland didn’t directly refute, instead, he pointed to a segment of text, softly saying: "You see, does this seem like something written for your future self?"

"This..."

As long as it doesn’t involve political fields, Sif’s mind is ten out of ten bright, only in politics she’s prone to confusion.

She could see the problem where Roland pointed.

This doesn’t look like a diary, instead it seems like words dressing up and packaging oneself, too deliberate.

As a top actor like her, how could she not tell it’s a performance?

With a slight frown, Sif’s voice was a bit cold, "Who’s so bold, dare to forge Planck’s diary? This is forging evidence!"

"Uh, how shall I put it, this stuff is indeed written by Planck himself, but the content has a beautification filter. Such actions are also called ’fake persona.’"

"Fake persona?" The fresh terminology from Roland made Sif curious.

"It’s an excessive performance for creating a stereotyped impression. For example, if there was a priest selling indulgence tickets, eager to sell indulgence tickets wherever he is, regardless of the appropriateness of the occasion, no matter how absurd these words sound, he would say it, year after year, time after time, that’s rigorously maintaining a fake persona."

Sif slightly nodded, learning something new.

With Roland’s explanation, she quickly understood.

Planck probably realized one day these diaries would be used as evidence, so he was deliberately performing.

But would anyone truly perform in a diary?

Seeing her puzzled expression, Roland jokingly teased:

"Who writes diaries seriously, at least not like this. Though diaries are not without their use, sometimes performers overlook showing their true nature, like here."

Roland pointed to a day Planck noted about praying at a Holy Hall, mentioning a nun’s thigh was long and white.

"Could he have harbored illicit thoughts towards the nun?" Sif frowned.

"Not quite. A nun is just slightly more special in status, not more beautiful than an ordinary girl, he likes those white long legs. Planck being unmarried doesn’t mean he has no women, this is a clue."

Roland carefully reviewed Planck’s diary, extracting many useful pieces of information, discovering he recorded five stays in a small city in Hansa Province.

"Likely here, his mistress and illegitimate child are probably here, otherwise being an Imperial Navy Admiral, he has no reason to visit such a small place so many times."

Sif acknowledged Roland’s judgment, murmuring: "As long as we locate his family, there’s a possibility to uncover more clues. Didn’t expect you also understand crime investigation?"

"I truly don’t understand this, but I understand the mindset of diary writers."

Roland’s expression turned somewhat sentimental.

After all, he once had a literary dream, writing diaries like Tolstoy.

And... also maintained a fake persona.

Not knowing if people from another world seeing his relic diary would be moved to tears.

Truly, serious people don’t write diaries.