Empress 150

Chapter 150: Pretty Boy? Lucky Star!

Sussex Imperial Capital, emergency cabinet meeting.

William’s expression was grave, his hand gripping the intelligence report trembling slightly.

He thought Her Majesty the Empress’s departure from the capital would bring some peace, but he underestimated Sif’s penchant for stirring things up.

Or rather, he underestimated the Empress’s ability to stir things up under Roland’s instigation.

The fleet’s encounter with an attack at sea made him break out in a cold sweat, a chill creeping up his back.

Although the Empress often didn’t play by the rules, she still respected tradition by entrusting state affairs to the cabinet before officially ascending the throne.

If something happened to Sif and a new Emperor took over, who knows what the situation would be.

What if the new monarch was the "troublemaker king" version two?

Fortunately, Empress Tianyou, the attackers were not strong, and didn’t cause much damage.

He thought Sif went to the Three Overseas Provinces to confirm the Late Emperor’s death and relax a bit, but as soon as she reached Hansa, she made a big move.

Upon her arrival in Hansa, the Empress immediately issued a bounty to the Three Overseas Provinces.

"A generous reward for anyone providing clues about His Majesty Edward’s whereabouts.

——Sylph York Sussex, Crown Prince and Acting Emperor of the Sussex Empire."

A seemingly simple bounty, apparently without issue, had indeed significant implications.

According to Empire law, a person without confirmed death evidence is considered missing and only declared dead after three years.

Thus, theoretically, the Late Emperor Edward wasn’t dead, merely missing.

Since Edward wasn’t dead, Sylph was acting as the Emperor in the capacity of a Crown Prince.

As such, her official coronation would be three years later, not one year later.

At first glance, delaying the coronation might seem foolish, but it actually deferred the moment of power sharing.

The political system of Sussex wasn’t constitutional monarchy nor complete absolute monarchy.

The Emperor shared supreme power with the cabinet.

The division of imperial authority and ministerial authority depended on the balance of power.

If a strong Great Emperor was in place, then imperial authority was solid, and cabinet ministers were merely high-level functionaries.

If an incompetent monarch sat on the throne, ministerial authority would shine, and the Emperor would be a figurative seal.

Most of the time, a monarch couldn’t reach the level of a Great Emperor nor was ineffective to the point of complete uselessness; hence, a tacit balance between imperial and ministerial authority formed.

Coronation was the moment of unveiling shared power.

Sylph respected tradition, intending to share part of her power at the coronation, but wished to share as little as possible, thus finding excuses to delay the coronation.

As long as she hadn't been crowned, theoretically, the power remained hers, temporarily loaned to the cabinet.

This change caught William somewhat off guard.

If it were just this, his mood wouldn't be so bad. After all, not getting crowned only delayed, not solved the problem. Whether lending or giving, for this time, the main power resided with the cabinet.

However, Sylph soon gave him a new surprise.

The Empress announced that since there was currently no nobility in the Three Overseas Provinces, they would be temporarily governed by the Imperial Family. To facilitate this governance, she appointed a new Governor.

Roland.

This time, William was truly stunned.

Within the Empire, bestowing a title typically implied dedication to the homeland. External appointments were equivalent to demotion, something the major nobles were not willing to accept, leaving the recruitment open only to some minor nobles and high-level knights accepting overseas colonies as fiefdoms.

The Three Overseas Provinces held a special status, neither being a homeland nor a colony.

Due to existing disputes, there had always been no external appointments.

The Three Overseas Provinces, after all, were in the rich parts of the Rodinia Continent, and many nobles coveted this land.

Yet, no current division doesn't equate to this being directly governed by the Imperial Family!

William cast a somewhat exasperated look towards Alben, feeling slightly reassured.

Alben had always been at odds with the Empress, would surely interpret things unfavorably for her.

The final interpretation of the law was with him.

William tapped his fingertips on the table, signaling everyone to quiet down, and then asked Alben.

After listening to William's account, Alben asked in a deep voice:

"Did Her Majesty declare the Three Overseas Provinces permanently belong to the Imperial Family or are they temporarily managed by it?"

William was slightly taken aback, his face even more unsightly.

Alben hadn't explained yet, but he already knew the answer.

If the Empress directly announced the undistributed territories as belonging to the Imperial Family, it would be a serious violation, akin to treason.

Though it might sound strange for an Emperor to commit treason, that's how the law was stipulated.

Alben, quoting from well-documented laws, explained to the cabinet ministers.

William said in a dejected manner, "Her Majesty... she said it was temporary governance."

"That is completely legal."

Alben somewhat reluctantly said, "Any judge can find the relevant legal provisions, which are very clear and cannot be misinterpreted unless someone distorts the facts nonsensically. And such behavior..."

He left his words unfinished, but everyone understood.

To distort legal provisions and discredit the Supreme Leader would indeed be considered treason, wouldn't it?

Inside the meeting room, the atmosphere was awkward, and the ministers were speechless.

Several people looked towards Minister of Internal Affairs Wald's seat.

Vacant.

Since the Empress went overseas, the old guy used the excuse of being unwell every day and never attended cabinet meetings.

Initially, the ministers thought it was a good thing, freedom to speak without the old guard.

Now they were somewhat regretful, wishing he were present, at the very least to question him.

William pondered long and hard, then slowly asked, "Alben, Grishus, is Her Majesty's appointment of Roland as Governor legal and compliant?"

Alben's face looked grim, he merely nodded, unwilling to say more.

Clearly, he didn’t wish to discuss this matter.

Grishus, after a moment of contemplation, said slowly, "The establishment of a governor falls into two categories: one is important colonies, like Governor of Balat, Governor of the Jidong, Governor of the Horn of the World, etc. The other is a governor to manage directly governed lands on behalf of the Emperor."

"The former are high-ranking government officials, appointment submitted by the cabinet, and approved by parliament. The latter is a private role set up by the Emperor, appointed at his discretion."