## Empress 152

Chapter 152: How Do You Expect Me to Stay Calm?

The laws of noble inheritance are complex and difficult for non-professionals to understand.

Simply put, the Late Emperor is only missing, not deceased, so Sif cannot inherit the domains of the Imperial Family. Her private domains consist only of the two Earls' Domains of Tyrone and Mangster.

These two Earls' Domains aren't large, with only a few Baronial Domains under them.

When Roland suggested offering some lands as rewards, she hesitated.

"Roland, those places are kept for you."

Sif wasn't unwilling to part with titles and lands; she simply didn't want to give away her homeland to others.

Seeing her reluctant expression, Roland immediately understood.

Sif was emotionally attached to her private lands and didn't want to divide them among outsiders.

Seeing her pained expression as she prepared to reluctantly agree, an idea suddenly sparked in Roland's mind.

"There is a way. We can submit the list of commendations to the council for approval."

"You as well?" Sif's eyes lit with anticipation.

"Yes, together."

The anticipation in Sif's eyes flared briefly and then died down.

"Your contributions are outstanding, and a mere earldom is far from sufficient. There is already a non-Imperial Duke, so ennobling you as a Duke wouldn't break any rules. But I'm worried the council won't agree."

Sif sighed softly and said with a touch of melancholy, "You've said before that to trade benefits, there must be enough leverage. Right now, we don't have the leverage to persuade the council to agree, especially with your name involved."

"Sorry, I'm not saying your contributions aren't enough; it's just that they are prejudiced against you."

Roland almost couldn't help but laugh.

Just say it, that they see me as just a pretty face.

He lowered his voice and teasingly whispered, "Who said we need it approved? The goal is for them to reject it."

He leaned close to Sif's ear and laid out the plan for awards.

First, spread the rumor of selecting a batch of excellent officials to be ennobled alongside Roland.

In the eyes of these officials, it would appear that Her Majesty the Empress was taking them along to secure a title for Roland.

They would be of course delighted.

Then, openly submit the list of commendations to the council, using parts of the Three Overseas Provinces for feudal allocation.

Even if there was originally a 1% chance that the council might pass the decision, seeing Roland's name would make them decisively oppose it.

Submitting the list of commendations would elevate the expectations of the officials from the Three Provinces to the fullest.

Thereafter, the council's rejection would be like a bucket of cold water dousing their fervor for advancement.

Who could bear such disparity?

At that time, raising an arm to rally the troops from the Three Provinces to follow the Empress back to the Imperial Capital to eliminate traitors, who wouldn't comply?

Sif was stunned, taking quite a while to regain her composure.

She didn't ask what would happen if the council approved the decision.

Passing it would be even better.

With the officials from the Three Provinces ennobled, to defend their direct lord they would naturally fight desperately.

If the Empress fell, they would suffer as well, so the Empress must not fall.

The plan was excellent, yet it left Sif somewhat wistful.

"The homeland's lands are nearly all allocated, and my native land I truly don't want to give away. But being reluctant to part with lands does nothing to sway these officials."

Even fishing requires bait, let alone fishing for the power of the entire Empire.

While she was internally struggling, Roland solved her dilemma for her.

"Let me tell you the story of the ’Count of Glamorgan’..."

Temporarily allocating the lands was no big deal, as being Emperor meant having every reason to exchange lands with vassals.

If someone is sensible and considers the big picture, they can rise from Baron to Viscount or even Earl.

If not, they are disloyal, and punishment is only natural.

After listening to Roland’s story, Sif widened her eyes in shock.

She never imagined that laws could be used this way.

Yet this method was perfectly legal.

No need for Roland to explain, as Teacher Wald’s lessons on law already covered it.

Sif felt somewhat puzzled; hadn’t anyone done this before?

"Of course, they have, and such actions would be artistically refined, not so bloodily direct."

Sif suddenly realized, nodding with a smile, though still somewhat wistful, "This method is indeed good; it just has the suspicion of exploiting legal loopholes, like using the law as a tool."

"The law is indeed a tool, must it be above the Emperor?"

Roland snorted lightly, saying with a hint of disdain, "This is the Empire, and the law is the Royal Family’s law. If the law cannot protect our interests, then it is a bad law."

"Moreover, how is this exploiting legal loopholes? It is wielding the weapon of law to defend rightful power."

Seeing Roland's justifiable stance, Sif pondered, her eyes shining, as if a gateway to a new world had been opened for her.

Noticing her contemplative expression, Roland smiled with satisfaction.

It's not the fear of a poor student background, but the fear of a student unwilling to learn.

Sif is an exceptionally good listener and learner.

From the moment rumors spread to the actual ennoblement, it would take some time, but the rumors from the Governor's Mansion had already stirred the officials of the Three Provinces.

Some say His Majesty plans to ennoble a Baron, others two Viscounts, and some bold enough speculate that maybe even an Earl.

The location of the ennoblement, some guess would be the native Tyrone Region, while others say it is Her Majesty's homeland and won't be easily given away, surely it's in the Three Overseas Provinces.

Upon hearing the rumors, Governor of Hansa, Ados, discreetly inquired during his report to Roland, who neither confirmed nor denied it, just slightly raised the corner of his mouth.

Having navigated the bureaucracy for years, Ados instantly understood the implication behind Roland's smile.

Roland wasn't unaware; it's just difficult to speak on.

Soon, new rumors became popular in the Three Overseas Provinces' bureaucracy.

The reason for Her Majesty the Empress's ennoblement is not just because everyone did so well, but because she wants to make a future for Roland.

She wants to grant her ... partner monumental wealth.

Simply put, Roland gets a big feast, and officials in the Three Provinces get to sip the broth.

This news greatly exhilarated the officials.

Sipping the broth, so what? Do other local officials even qualify? Those unwilling to sip can leave.

Lord Roland has worked tirelessly, with utmost loyalty, and is a confidant of the Empress, so what's wrong with ennobling him Earl or even Duke?

In the eyes of these officials, Roland's image changed from a pretty face to a lucky star in an instant.

As Roland's name surfaced, overseas officials were convinced this time the Empress was serious.

The Empress is beautiful and wise, but after all, she is a young girl, made happy by the little ... lucky star Roland and naturally wants to grant grand titles.

To silence others, she also needs to make things pristine and seamless, leaving no room for remarks.

That means finding accomplishments for the overseas officials and collectively awarding titles.

The achievements of the Three Overseas Provinces, with Roland as the Governor, deserving the highest rewards, was reasonable and justifiable.

This reasoning was flawless, and with each level of officials embellishing and boasting, the rumors became increasingly exaggerated until in the end, some even firmly believed the Empress would make Roland a Prince.

In just three days, the various rumors about the Crown Prince Roland became the hottest topic for the bureaucrats of the Three Overseas Provinces to discuss over meals and tea.

A few elderly, prudent officials anxiously admonished their colleagues to remain calm, but it was of no use.

Remain calm?

Faced with the temptation of ennoblement, how could they remain calm!

The voice of steadiness and calm was soon drowned in the frenzy.