Empress 164

Chapter 164: We’re All in the Same Boat Now (Part 2)

When confessing his own sins, Bordeaux was timid and his voice was as weak as a mosquito.

When denouncing the illegal acts of his colleagues, he was generous and impassioned, and his voice was as loud as the roar of a Giant Dragon.

The more he read, the more excited he became, but the expressions of the other officials were somewhat uneasy.

Until the last page, his complexion changed too.

This really shouldn’t be read.

The Empress raised an eyebrow, looked at him, and asked with a smile that was not quite a smile: "Read it, why aren’t you reading?"

"This, this is slander against Lord Governor!"

Roland was somewhat surprised, how could he be involved too?

Impossible, this was sorted out by Alina, he had reviewed the complaint letter, what’s going on?

He suspiciously looked towards Sif, but the Empress remained stern-faced and did not respond.

Just when the room fell silent, the Empress calmly said:

"Even the Emperor is subject to legal sanctions when breaking the law, what about the Governor? Read!"

Since she said so, Bordeaux could only wipe his sweat and first issue a disclaimer.

"Your Majesty, since you insist, I shall comply."

He showed an uneasy expression, stammering as he read:

"Reporting Northern Rodinia Governor Roland..."

"Read!" The Empress said coldly.

"Roland seduced Her Majesty the Empress, appointed cronies, and eliminated dissidents..."

Bordeaux was almost in tears.

Is this something that can be said?

Silence enveloped the room.

All the officials were stunned, even Roland was somewhat dumbfounded.

Wait, who taught this?

He hadn’t taught it this way.

Deathly silence inevitably needed to be broken by someone.

Bordeaux acted as the pioneer.

He slapped the table forcefully, yelling loudly, "Is this a complaint letter, this is clearly slander against Her Majesty, the Governor, and everyone else!"

"Yes, yes, it is definitely slander!"

"We must find out where this complaint letter came from?"

"That’s right, we must investigate the mastermind behind this, this matter cannot be let go!"

"Exactly, our reputation can be damaged but Her Majesty’s reputation must not be!"

...

The officials were filled with righteous indignation, their emotions running high, eager to drag out the person who spread the rumors and execute them on the spot.

This time it wasn’t an act, it was genuine anger.

Retrieving the complaint letter, the Empress examined it carefully, somewhat surprised, she asked:

"Wasn’t it written by one of you?"

"Of course not!" the officials chorused.

"All rumors?"

"Absolutely rumors!" the officials echoed unanimously.

The Empress nodded, smiling as she said, "I understand, there are bad people sowing discord."

"Your Majesty is wise!" the officials expressed agreement in unison.

Sif put away the complaint letter, personally struck a match, and burned the complaint letter.

"Since it’s all rumors, let it stop with wisdom; I believe you are all wise."

Everyone breathed a sigh of relief simultaneously.

But the Empress’s words made them tense again.

"I believe in your innocence, just like you believe in me. But rumors have a reason to spread. For instance, the friendship between me and Governor Roland caused quite a stir."

"Your actions in routine might easily give rise to misunderstandings, leading to rumors."

"I cannot prevent anyone from reporting to the Imperial Capital. Let today be the deadline; if any of you truly do things mentioned in the rumors, I can only act according to the law."

Having said this much, the officials present were no fools; how could they not understand?

Whether or not Her Majesty and Roland had issues they dared not ponder, but they indeed had issues.

Her Majesty took the opportunity of burning the complaint letter to forgive their past sins and issued them a serious warning.

Not to be repeated.

Most of the officials present were relieved yet felt a heightened sense of urgency.

The Empress's bloodshot eyes were like sharp blades, piercing deep into their hearts, making them feel anxious and uneasy.

Her Majesty is not someone easily deceived.

She knows the things they have done.

She forgave their old sins, gave them a path for promotion, and also warned them not to err.

If after this high-level Governor's Zone meeting they still know not to repent, then they are fools.

Leveraging the power of the complaint letter, Sif sequentially announced several rules.

Included were specific instructions like work reports should not include pointless chatter, and not to report unless necessary.

Bordeaux's expression was awkward, yet he dared not utter a sound.

Although there was no direct mention, it was almost equivalent to naming him.

After the Empress announced the rules, other officials' reports indeed sped up significantly.

The Governor of Brook Province, Aramis, even directly stated there were no major issues, thus skipping the report.

All the subsequent official reports combined did not take as long as Bordeaux alone.

This made him even more embarrassed.

Finally, when the meeting ended, after enduring a lot of torment, as Bordeaux was about to exhale deeply, the Empress suddenly looked up at the crowd, making him again extremely nervous.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the Governor's Zone is an area where trade flourishes; perhaps merchants frequently bribe you, some bribes are hard to refuse face-to-face."

"No problem, I'll alleviate your concerns. If there are bribes that cannot be refused, you can hand them over to the national treasury and explain the situation; such money will not be incriminated."

The officials were stunned for a moment, then quickly understood.

Is this letting them buy peace at the expense of money?

Sure enough, it won't be easy to pass through cleanly.

As Roland announced the end of the meeting, officials from the Three Provinces left with heavy hearts.

Today's meeting had good news and bad news, but overall it leaned towards favorable.

Though it requires some expenditure, they at least boarded the Empress's big ship.

Following Her Majesty not only can lead to promotion but also leave an enduring title for descendants, isn't that much better than just seeking wealth?

Watching the backs of the officials, Roland's expression was slightly complicated.

Today Sif's performance was extremely perfect.

He, the chief director, was somewhat surprised.

Because many words surpassed the script and were completely Sif’s improvisation.

He didn’t know how to evaluate it for a moment.

While he was lost in thought, Sif’s gentle voice came from behind.

"I slightly modified the planned content without discussing it with you in advance, you won’t be mad, right?"

"Of course not, I would only be pleased. As long as it fits the overall strategy, feel free to shine."

"That’s good, I thought I was going to be scolded again." Sif softly murmured.

Roland slowly turned around, looking at Sif.

At this moment, only he and she were left in the meeting room, somewhat empty.

Sif stepped down from the main seat and came in front of Roland.

Her eyes were full of blood streaks, slightly swollen, appearing to have slept poorly last night.

Her small complaint made Roland feel a bit heartache.

Roland gently gave Sif a way down, "I’m sorry, I was in a hurry, next time I’ll surely pay attention to my tone."

"Well, that’s not what I want."

Sif slowly raised her head, placing her right hand on Roland’s shoulder, unintentionally closing the distance between them.

"Roland, I don’t want to hear those polite words; you are my only friend; I hope more for you to speak frankly like yesterday."

"I understand, but friends must also consider each other’s feelings."

Roland said gently.

"Yes, I know."

Sif shaped her right hand into half a heart.

This was a gesture she learned from reading romantic novels.

It is said to bring two hearts closer.

Roland quickly extended the same-side hand, made the same shape, and their hands joined together.

It didn’t form a complete heart, but a palm holding the back of a hand, a big hand holding a small hand.

Just like when attending a cosplay convention across time, it failed the same way with the cute coser girl.

Time had changed many things, yet nothing at all.

Sif paused briefly, then "poof" laughed out loud.

"Roland, thank you."

Even such an embarrassing thing needs thanking?

Roland blushed slightly, lightly coughed, and whispered, "Um, if there’s nothing else, I’ll be off to handle the Sea Demon Race."

Sif released the hand held by Roland, the back of her hand felt strange.

Somewhat ticklish, rippling through the heart’s lake.

Warmth flourished, dispelling the winter chill.

Just when Roland turned to leave, Sif’s gentle voice drifted over.

"Roland, fishbones prick your hand; leave the fish killing to others, don’t do it yourself."

"Alright."

Roland’s voice and footsteps together faded at the doorway.

Sif slightly raised the corners of her lips, smiling happily.

The Magic Mirror truly doesn’t understand human emotions, it’s entirely nonsense.

How could she be jealous of other women?

She is the most beautiful girl in the world; it’s the others who should be jealous of her.