Empress 171

Chapter 171: Don’t Be So Extreme, Okay? (Part 2)

"Monopoly?" Sif’s eyes lit up.

Stanley cleared his throat, preparing to start his lecture.

It wasn’t easy to explain the new concept of monopoly to the Empress, who had no background in economics, and this was his leverage for seeking personal gain.

He intended to expose the elaborate disguise crafted by these greedy Samaritans.

"Lord Count may not have heard of monopoly, let me think about where to start."

"No, I know. And I’ve seen it firsthand."

Sif cut in before Stanley’s lesson, giving him a brief lesson herself.

She used Roland’s experience with the price hike incident at the Alchemy Association as a case study, summarizing what Roland had taught her.

Stanley’s eyes widened.

Seeing his astonished look, Sif’s lips curled slightly in triumph, and she shot Roland a somewhat prideful glance.

Roland was pleased, but he held back from laughing.

Be serious, this is a recruitment scene.

He cleared his throat to remind Sif to handle the main business first.

After a long time, Stanley finally recovered from his shock, looking at Sif's ability with newfound admiration, and humbly said:

"Lord Count, your understanding of the causes and harms of monopoly is truly admirable."

"Not at all, just a shallow understanding," Sif said modestly, though her smile was unstoppable.

"Since you know about monopoly, it makes things much easier. The issues in the Governor's Territory are complex, involving politics, culture, ethnic groups, commerce, security, and other factors, but ultimately it boils down to money."

"As long as you get enough money, you and the Lord Governor can realize your visions."

Stanley's position was clear, he avoided discussing other fields, focusing solely on making money.

The truth was as such.

Money can solve most problems.

Problems that money can't solve are often more daunting than the lack of money.

Sif's eyes brightened, "Mr. Stanley, what are your insights?"

"It's simple, manage the granary, catch the rats."

There was a sharp glint in Stanley's eyes, "Merchants are profit-driven, liking money is normal, I like it too, but the Samaritans are too greedy. They have no long-term vision, and whenever they arrive somewhere, they can't wait to squeeze the local oil dry, and then, like locusts, they leave, leaving chaos in their wake."

"Their presence will ruin the entire environment, it should be called..."

As Stanley paused, pondering the precise term, Sif answered for him, "What they're destroying is the business environment."

"Business environment? Well said, Lord Count."

Stanley looked at Sif with increased enthusiasm.

He had been somewhat apprehensive about joining the Empress, fearing rejection, or that the Empress was merely Roland's puppet.

But he had no choice.

The Samaritans had ruined everything for him.

If it weren't for the instigation of his Samaritan wife, he might not have been driven to the madness of trying to eat from the Emperor's bowl.

The past few years had been like a nightmare.

His wife's betrayal had set him free.

This was not just a personal vendetta, but commercial competition.

Everyone knows, in straightforward business warfare, there's no room for tricks, you just aim to take out your opponent directly.

The Samaritans, sheltered by the Three Provinces' officials, had in recent years squeezed out Sussex's native merchants and other local traders, suppressing foreign merchants, causing public outrage long ago.

No matter how the market expands, only a few get to eat the meat.

What do others eat after the Samaritans finish the meat?

If you don’t get rid of the greedy rats, how can there be grain left in the granary?

Stanley spoke passionately about the collusion between Samaritans and officials of the Three Provinces in squeezing out other merchants, and how the Samaritan Merchant, by monopolizing, extracted excess profits, completely disrupting market order.

What he said was all true, there was no need for slander.

"Samaritans are particularly skilled at packaging themselves as the embodiment of diligence and wisdom through ever-advancing media."

Stanley sneered, "Diligent? What a joke! If diligence led to wealth, rural farmers and factory girls would all be wealthy."

This remark stirred up unpleasant memories for Roland, who lightly coughed, reminding Stanley not to expand the topic lightly.

"Mr. Stanley, we must have faith in the progress of human civilization. In both past and future eras, diligence remains a commendable trait."

Stanley quickly stood up and apologized to Sif, "Lord Count, I was being extreme. Please disregard my previous remarks."

Sif remained silent for a long time, then softly said, "What you said, though harsh, is the truth."

Feeling uneasy, she cast her gaze toward Roland, murmuring dreamily:

"Roland, will the future you spoke of really come?"

"It will, I promise!"

Having glimpsed the Light, Roland was very certain of this.

But he left one thing unsaid.

The three people present were remnants of the old era; the new era might not have a ship for them.

Roland decisively ended this increasingly dangerous topic.

"Leave future worries to the future, let’s focus on the present."

"As Mr. Stanley said, we need money, and in astronomical amounts. Since the Samaritans took money that doesn’t belong to them, let’s make them spit it out."

Sif bit her lip, enunciating each word deliberately, "That’s my money, these damned rats!"

"Mr. Stanley, tell us, how should we deal with these rats?"

Stanley pondered for a moment, then slowly said, "We in Sussex are a nation of law, naturally we must use legal means to punish them. We should first push for anti-monopoly legislation, then use the anti-monopoly law to break up these rats’ companies, dismantle their alliances, and make them spit out what doesn’t belong to them."