Empress 179

Chapter 179: Great Script, Bad Actors_2

He took a deep breath, trying to adjust his mood, wanting to retort, but Roland began explaining for him.

"Sif, don’t be so harsh. Blackthorn Bishop is here to negotiate with us. Although his acting is a bit clumsy, his intentions are good."

"Blackthorn Bishop, our visit has nothing to do with the Holy Spring Revival, nor do we wish to witness it. If there’s nothing else, let’s not waste each other’s time."

"I promise not to interfere with the Holy Spring Revival Ceremony, and I ask you, Bishop, not to interfere with our actions."

Saying not to waste their time was actually a reminder for them to leave.

Roland spoke rather unkindly, but since Blackthorn’s basic goal was achieved, he didn’t want to stay longer; he stood up abruptly, ready to leave.

Just as he turned around, Christine, who had been silent all along, suddenly asked, "Lord Roland, leading such a grand fleet of over a hundred transport ships, what business are you engaging in?"

"Sorry, that’s a commercial secret."

Roland naturally wouldn’t reveal his cards just because of one question.

The relationship between Fengrao and the Divine Court of Light can’t be said to be irreconcilable, but at the very least, they dislike each other.

Speaking to heretics should not be too polite, lest they think you’re afraid of them.

Faced with Roland’s somewhat cold attitude, Christine also matched his chilly gaze with her own.

"Lord Roland, some words are better said upfront. Rescuing the distressed at Val Lake Shore is part of the Holy Spring Revival Ceremony; disrupting the rescue is indirectly disrupting the Holy Spring Revival Ceremony and is akin to opposing the servants of the Goddess of Light."

Roland frowned slightly, exchanged a glance with Sif.

Indeed, trouble always comes unexpectedly when you step out.

What does the Holy Spring Revival have to do with these refugees?

Despite the complaints, Roland instantly grasped the Divine Court of Light’s reasoning for their actions.

Political achievement.

Holy Spring Revival, accepting refugees, then coordinating with a publicity campaign, could potentially create a living saint.

Roland’s gaze turned towards Christine, vaguely thinking of a possibility.

This image, this demeanor, this cold and arrogant little expression.

This is damn well a ready-made Saintess.

Understood, all understood.

With a smile, Roland asked, "Miss Christine, I don’t quite like what you said. How could I be against the Divine Court of Light? I’m just a bit curious about how you plan to settle these refugees after accepting them."

Hearing Roland say he didn't want to be against them, Christine breathed a sigh of relief, and responded calmly, "Take them back to the Wende Empire, settle them near Light City."

"I'm curious, Val City State is at least over two thousand miles from the Wende Empire, and it's winter now with so many elderly, women, and children. How do you guarantee their safety?"

"The Goddess will protect them."

Christine said calmly.

Roland's expression stiffened a bit.

So there's no plan, just taking them on the road, huh?

But thinking about it, it's not surprising; the Divine Court of Light is powerful, yet it is, after all, a religious institution without a robust administrative system or a readily deployable standing army, which indeed makes it difficult.

Roland extended his index finger, eyes stern, and said loudly, "A team of over thirty thousand walking in temperatures around or below freezing, do you know how many tents are needed?"

Christine was momentarily stunned, not knowing how to respond.

Roland took a step forward, extending a second finger, pressing further, "From here to the Wende Empire passing through the Weimar Federation, Prudon Kingdom and other countries, how is the public order in these countries, and what protective strength do you have? If encountered by bandits on the road, how will you respond?"

Christine was unflappable in this regard, she looked Roland in the eye without backing down, coldly stating:

"We have seven hundred Temple Warriors, which is enough to ensure their safety!"

Seven hundred, is it? Well, that’s settled then.

No wonder you came to scare me, trying to compromise, turns out there’s not enough manpower.

Upon hearing Christine inadvertently reveal her hand due to Roland’s arrogant attitude, Blackthorn was so anxious he wished he could cover her mouth, but it was too late.

Blackthorn’s old face really darkened this time.

This child Christine is fine in every way, just too inexperienced, tricked by this little fox Roland.

Blackthorn Bishop knew he couldn’t show weakness now, so he snorted lightly to remind Roland, "Lord Governor, Miss Christine’s seven hundred Temple Warriors are not ordinary soldiers; they have undergone strict military training, are well-equipped, devout in their faith, and can fight for the Goddess to the last man."

"Even thousands of ill-intentioned villains must be wary of the valiant Temple Warriors."

His meaning was clear, these seven hundred are not ordinary soldiers, they are fearless of death, and even if thousands of regular troops fight desperately, they may not match them.

Andrew’s acting, Blackthorn’s stubbornness, and Christine’s stance, sketched a rough picture in Roland’s mind.

The signs of the Holy Spring Revival likely appeared suddenly, or else it would have been known across the continent by now.

Due to the sudden event, the nearest Blackthorn Bishop and the prospective Saintess Christine, with all available troops, rushed urgently to Val City State.

Coincidentally, there are over thirty thousand refugees there, allowing them to stage a perfect redemption ritual, cloaking the Holy Spring Revival in sacredness.

As long as this play is well performed, the halo of Christine as the pure savior is maxed out.

Saintesses from other religions competing with her would find it difficult to turn the tables.

The plan was good, but unfortunately, their luck was bad, encountering Roland's massive fleet as soon as they set out.

After considering the power balance, the cunning Blackthorn designed this drama.

Andrew played the white face, he played the red face.

If the leader today was not Roland, most others would have settled the matter to avoid conflict.

After all, offending the Divine Court of Light is quite unbearable for normal people.

The boldest might have just asked Blackthorn for benefits and compensation.

A massive force of thousands out the door, can't go back empty-handed.

But what they encountered was Roland.

Everything else could be negotiated, but not these thirty thousand.

Blackthorn didn't know Roland's limits, having only heard of Roland's flexible style, so he said with a smile:

"Lord Governor, the Divine Court will not let you run in vain. We'll cover all your expenses and offer double compensation."

Roland did not speak but turned his gaze to Sif.

All the intelligence that could be gathered was in hand, and he wanted to see how Sif would handle the situation.

Dealing with such a complex scenario was more beneficial than reading a hundred books.

Sif did not rush to decide, but said gently, "I have a suggestion, please consider it seriously. The Holy Spring Revival Ceremony requires refugee redemption, I support that. Afterward, we'll take the refugees and help you settle them, and we'll split the settlement costs."

Roland clapped with approval.

Christine has the Wende Empire and the Divine Court of Light behind her, and Sif has the Sussex Empire and the Divine Court of Fengrao behind her.

In terms of backing power, Sif is not at a disadvantage; she might even have an advantage.

In terms of current strength, it's three thousand five hundred against seven hundred, with Roland's side having destroyer firepower support.

If a conflict actually occurred, the small, rickety ships of the Divine Court of Light would sink to the river's bottom at once.

No matter how capable the Temple Warriors are, they couldn't hope to gain anything here.

With superiority in strength, naturally, more benefits should be seized.

The cost of settling these refugees is no small amount; it’s best if someone can share the burden.

Christine’s face changed dramatically, her voice trembling with anger, "What did you say?"

Sif looked calmly at Christine’s chest, proudly standing tall, and said loudly:

"According to your immature plan, if half of these thirty thousand refugees reach the Wende Empire, it would be considered good. What you’re doing isn’t saving anyone, it’s outright mass murder!"

"I’m taking over the refugees to save your reputation."

"Christine, you wouldn’t want to be called the ’Bloody Saintess’, would you?"

Christine’s face changed instantly.

Although this era’s media isn’t very developed, it’s not backward enough for thousands to die on the road without anyone knowing.

If no great power or major force intervenes, then just do as done.

But now there’s the Sussex Empire represented by Sif.

She bit her lip, clenched her fist, and said unwillingly, "Count Sif, what you’re doing will provoke major diplomatic conflicts and even conflicts between the two great religions. Can you bear the historical responsibility?"

"Can you bear the sin of causing the death of thousands?" Sif countered without answering.