Empress 194

Chapter 194: We Only Recognize Alina! (Part 2)

"Romeo, don’t you recognize me?"

"A... Alina?" Romeo tentatively asked.

"Of course, it’s me."

Alina thought for a moment and softly said, "My earliest memory is from when I was nine, you came to my house as a guest, and I secretly hid your thesis. You were so anxious you broke out in a sweat, and then I tricked you into thinking the cat ate it. You nearly fainted from panic until my father said the thesis weighed three pounds, and the cat only weighed seven pounds. If the weight didn’t add up, the cat would have been wronged..."

"Alina!"

Romeo interrupted Alina emotionally, tears welling up in his eyes.

Only he, Mr. Carlo, and Alina were present for that incident. With Carlo dead, only Alina would know, so there was no mistake.

"How... how did you end up here?"

Alina’s smile gradually faded as she replied slowly, "It’s a long story."

She briefly summarized the events of the time using the simplest words, including how Robert was the mole responsible for her father’s death and how he, in a desperate bid, was counterattacked and killed.

Romeo was different from Robert; Alina had a good relationship with him since childhood and knew him well.

If Romeo were also an actor, she could only lament that her father had taught acting instead of philosophy.

Romeo’s expression changed several times, eventually turning into one of poignant reflection.

"Alina, we all thought you were dead. It’s a relief you’re still alive."

He asked worriedly, "Are you working for Governor Roland now?"

"Yes, and no."

Alina softly explained, "I’m temporarily working for Roland. If the time is right, he will support me in reclaiming power and becoming his ally."

"Really?" Romeo sounded skeptical.

The terms were so generous, he found them hard to believe.

Could there be hidden conditions behind them?

Seeing his disbelief, Alina gently clarified, "Roland and I are friends. If he faces difficulties, I’ll help him, so there’s no need to doubt."

Romeo hesitated to speak.

He wanted to warn Alina that gaining an advantage while at a disadvantage comes with unimaginable costs.

Although he didn’t know what more could be lost, Romeo still felt anxious.

Seeing his worried expression, Alina knew Roland had a bad reputation and explanations were futile, so she decided not to explain further.

Let time prove everything.

She could guess Romeo’s worries, mainly fearing she might become part of the price.

Alina recalled that night when she tremblingly tried to undo her buttons only to be firmly stopped by Roland, the joy of that moment still lingering on her lips.

Roland isn’t the sort of person you all think he is!

Seeing Romeo’s confusion, Alina straightforwardly asked, "Romeo, you understand the current situation. The Jin Yuan Puppet Government doesn’t want us alive, so we can only save ourselves."

"Should we join Sussex or go to another country? Romeo, you are the team leader. You decide."

"Please, Miss Alina, give the order!" Romeo directly returned the question.

"Me make the decision? You are the temporary head of the camp, Reyno has been by my father’s side for many years, and Lady Elaine knows my father best. You all are the leaders of the team."

"But we all accept your leadership."

Romeo said resolutely.

He thought of the recently deceased Robert and softly said, "Robert... sigh, I truly didn’t expect him to betray the teacher, that damn traitor, he got off easy."

"Robert had a special identity, infiltrating my father's side with an agenda. His behavior was carefully designed to target my father. His many traits resembled my deceased second brother, so my father had an inexplicable trust in him, completely unguarded."

Alina softly said, "Alright, let's not talk about him. Since you all trust me, then I decide to temporarily work for Roland."

"Roland?"

Romeo was momentarily stunned and then realized.

Working for Roland and for Sussex are very different.

Working for Roland wasn't a national act; joining Sussex would be outright treason.

This would have significant implications for the future.

Though he had many doubts, Romeo still kept his promise, considering Alina's decision as the final one.

When he left the Mary Rose, his gloomy mood brightened.

Although the future remained uncertain, at least they had some hope.

Alina couldn't appear publicly now, and the news of her being alive couldn't be spread.

This matter was known only to Romeo himself.

According to Alina, both Lady Elaine and Uncle Reyno couldn't keep secrets. If they knew, the whole world would know.

Romeo felt elated; it felt great to be trusted individually.

After settling the refugees at the Wanderer Camp, Roland had just breathed a sigh of relief when the Golden Knight Boen rushed over.

He looked a bit distressed but still reported to Roland through gritted teeth.

"Captain, those captured werewolves... they're all dead."

"How did they die?" Roland asked nonchalantly, without showing any expression.

"After capturing those werewolves last night, I organized an all-night interrogation, using the fatigue interrogation method you taught. We endured a sleepless night with those wolf pups, and by daylight, when I became a bit tired and arranged for my deputy to take over, not long after he started, all those werewolves were dead."

"All dead?"

Roland seemed surprised, "Was it an accident during interrogation, or what happened?"

"The interrogators didn't use any torture tools. To get information quickly, they dragged the wolf pups out into the sun and tortured them, yet the werewolves suddenly all died at once."

"Let's go, take a look."

Roland and Boen went to the room where the werewolves' bodies were kept.

In the dim room, over a dozen werewolf corpses were neatly laid out.

Roland carefully observed their appearance.

Two-thirds of the bodies looked entirely human, while the remaining third were half-human, half-wolf, with claws instead of nails, thick fur all over, and teeth resembling a wolf's.

Roland flipped through the Elf Race's inherited texts in his mind and soon found relevant records.

In the Elves' records, there was no concept of wolves, only house dogs and wild dogs.

Wolves were just wild dogs.

Silently mocking this arrogant terminology, Roland quipped, this was indeed typical of the Elves.

Even as the stupid Canine Folk (Werewolves) still exist, the intelligent Elves have perished, a truly poignant thought.

Translating the Elves' records into human terms, werewolves resembling wolves were called werewolves, and those resembling humans were called human wolves.

Roland pried open a human wolf's mouth and discovered traces of a strange potion.

It was obvious these potions had caused the werewolves' deaths.

He couldn't tell if it was self-ingested or controlled.

After observing for a while, Roland stood up and decided to leave the professional work to the experts.

"Boen, pack up these spoils of war, surround them with ice, and deliver them to Mr. Norton. This time, it's not your fault, so your performance points won't be docked, but your attendance performance is gone."

Hearing Roland say he won’t lose performance points, Boen let out a sigh of relief.

Before he could celebrate, he heard his attendance performance disappear, and his face immediately fell.

He was second before going out; he remained second afterward.

Even the performance points stayed the same.

This was pointless.

Seeing Boen’s look of mixed emotions, Roland secretly laughed; this was the power of the performance assessment system, which could turn someone into a devil in pursuit of improvement.

When he was PUAed, he hated this system to the core.

Now as a manager, he suddenly found the system quite scientific.

Without this method, how could an old hand like Boen be so proactive?

He patted Boen on the shoulder, smiling as he encouraged, "No need to be disheartened. This mission isn’t over yet; there are plenty of opportunities."

"You mean?" Boen’s eyes filled with hopeful excitement.

Roland hardened his expression, dismissing his probing.

"I didn’t imply anything. Don’t overthink it; just go do your job."

Boen swiftly saluted Roland, then turned and left.

His eyes were full of desire to earn more performance points.

He understood; whenever the leader went out, trouble was inevitable.

Who knows which will come first, accidents or tomorrow, but he knew too well the trouble-attracting nature of his leader.