Empress 197

Chapter 197: Holy Water Overflowed

"What are they doing?"

Sif watched the two Saintesses exchange whispers, curious since she couldn't hear anything, she asked Roland.

Roland knew a lot; he surely would know.

Sif's trusting gaze made Roland's mouth curl slightly upward, and he casually replied, "Most likely a transaction."

"Transaction?"

Sif's eyes widened.

During the sacred Holy Spring Revival Ceremony, right in front of the goddess's statue, are the two Saintesses of the Goddess engaging in a transaction in broad daylight?!

This absurd behavior was beyond her comprehension.

Roland said indifferently, "What's strange about that? Judging by the amount of water from the Holy Spring, it seems a bit overwhelming, Christine herself wouldn't be able to handle it, so another Saintess is needed."

"Sharing half the effort is better than backfiring; this transaction is bound to succeed."

In Roland's eyes, religious ceremonies were not sacred, but equivalent transactions were.

As if to verify Roland's words, the two candidate Saintesses positioned themselves on either side, placing their hands on the statue, their faces as angelic as ever.

The Revival Ceremony finally began.

Holy Water gushed from the base of the Holy Spring, with the flow increasing steadily.

The sacred spring water evaporated into mist, a coolness rushing in.

The onlookers, expecting a bloody scene, were surprised by the river-like flow of water, their initial disappointment turning into mild indifference.

Only Sif, clutching Roland, excitedly probed further.

"Wait, I meant something else. Of course, I know there's a basis for their transaction. What I meant is, won't the goddess be angry?"

"Because the transaction is being done in front of her statue, will the goddess be angry?"

Roland smiled slightly and calmly said, "The goddess cares more about whether the Holy Spring revives. As for which believer completes the ceremony, she probably doesn't care."

"Did you ever watch ants fighting when you were younger?"

Sif was silent for a long time, then slowly said, "I've only seen ants in natural history books."

This probably was that damned high wall of ignorance.

Roland shrugged and softly explained, "Ants are a communal creature, ant games are about observing the behavior of these little cuties, occasionally stepping in to intervene."

"The Observer might toss down a few crumbs to see how they'll carry them back to the nest. If two small ants discuss a bit to share the crumbs and cooperate to complete the task, do you think he would be angry?"

"No, he would just find it interesting." Sif replied instantly.

"They are the ants," Roland said calmly.

There was another half sentence he didn't say.

Everyone is, including the goddess.

Sif paused for a few seconds, understanding Roland's meaning.

If the revival of the Holy Spring is a game watched by the goddess upon the world, then Christine and Erin are the ants.

The great goddess naturally would not be angered by a few mutterings between ants.

Sif was just about to speak when a terrifying thought flashed through her mind.

In the eyes of the Goddess of Fengrao, were she and Roland also two little ants?

Her hand trembled slightly.

In the face of the immense gap between gods and mortals, she indeed was an ant.

She could accept this comparison, but it went against the education she received since childhood.

The theology she grew up with told her that the divine nature is loving, fair, and merciful to mankind; the great goddess shares her glory with the believers so they can have enough food and clothing.

All suffering was due to lack of piety.

Yet Roland unmercifully stripped away this veil of warmth, clearly telling her that the great deity merely enjoyed watching the ants fight.

She wanted to retort, but the transaction between Christine and Erin was right in front of her.

The goddess would not blame them.

Sif's gaze was hollow, only confusion remained.

If Roland had dared to say such things when they first met, she would've drawn her gun without hesitation.

But now she wouldn't.

Her faith was still devout, yet she was in a common interest group with a not-so-devout Roland.

Somewhere along the way, she found herself unable to leave Roland.

If Roland were to disappear now, she would be utterly lost.

If someone were to ask her now who was more important, the goddess or Roland?

She would shoot that nosy bastard dead without any hesitation.

Thankfully, no one asked.

So there was no need to answer.

While Sif was lost and the other spectators had mixed feelings, Heitensen, who had already been so nervous he was standing up with sweat on his forehead, noticed something was off.

Christine and Erin were young after all, their spiritual power limited; they seemed to be struggling a bit.

He had initially been annoyed with Erin for her disruption, but now he was grateful she was there.

If it had only been Christine, this revival ceremony would most likely fail.

As Christine's teacher, failure meant they would together face the judgment of the tribunal.

He would choose to commit suicide before the arbitrator arrived.

Before committing suicide, he would force poison down Christine's throat.

Death was better than going to the tribunal.

Luckily Erin was there, thank goodness.

With trembling hands, Heitensen pulled out a handkerchief and wiped the sweat from his forehead, his breath somewhat heavy.

He already had high blood pressure, and now his vision was slightly dimming.

Shaky, he took a few pills and swallowed them hard, finally able to stand upright with difficulty.

His right eyelid twitched again.

"Get lost! I don’t believe in this; I only believe in the goddess!"

He roared frantically in his mind.

As Heitensen’s temples throbbed wildly, another phenomenon unexpectedly occurred at the Holy Spring.

The water volume of the Holy Spring was gradually decreasing.

Heitensen’s knees buckled, and he fell to the ground.

He almost fainted.

Under normal circumstances, a reduction in water volume signifies the end of the Holy Spring Revival Ceremony.

If a mist-formed goddess doesn’t appear above the Holy Spring, then indeed, that’s the case.

However, the mist-formed goddess was indeed there, her visage dreamlike, neither joyful nor sorrowful.

The reduced Holy Water transformed into mist, the mist forming into the image of the goddess.