

In the Name of Empress

Chapter 2: Chapter 2: You're in Trouble, Kid!

"Order!"

The gavel struck the table heavily, producing a dull thud, and the Noble House, which had been in chaos moments ago, instantly returned to peace.

The noble lords, who had been red-faced and nearly at each other's throats, sat upright and calm, as if they had not just been exchanging sarcastic remarks.

The Speaker's gaze swept across the room as he calmly asked, "Gentlemen, if your in-depth friendly exchanges have concluded, let us proceed to the main agenda."

"The simultaneous demise of His Majesty and the Crown Prince leaves us all in mourning. But the nation cannot be without a leader, and we must quickly decide upon a new Emperor."

The Speaker turned his gaze towards the head of the Heraldry Institute.

In the Sussex Empire, the Heraldry Institute not only managed the crests and archives of the nobility but also handled numerous affairs of the Imperial Family.

Faced with the Speaker's inquiry, the elderly, feeble head of the Heraldry Institute, who seemed ready to collapse at any moment, quavered as he spoke:

"The throne should pass to the heir. If the heir also perishes, then it should be inherited by others in line of descent according to blood relation."

"First male members, then female members, first direct line, then collateral line..."

The head droned on for quite a while, finally concluding the explanation of the succession rules with a fit of severe coughing.

All present were nobility and very familiar with the law of succession.

Everyone knew, according to the law of succession, that Princess Sylph, the youngest daughter of His Majesty, had the highest claim to the throne.

The aged head of the Heraldry Institute fainted on the spot and was carried out, leaving only a silent chamber.

"Distinguished gentlemen, those who agree with Princess Sylph's succession need not speak up, but any opposed may express their opinions."

The silence was deafening.

The Speaker's resonant voice rang out.

"No objections, unanimously approved. I hereby declare, Princess Sylph, who has won over the public, becomes the thirty-fifth Emperor of the Empire. As Her Majesty is still underage, the Cabinet will temporarily handle governmental affairs, and the coronation and coming-of-age ceremony will be held simultaneously."

...

Imperial Post Office.

Immersed in his literary dreams, the young Roland hummed a light tune, casually sealing the ghostwritten letters and handing them to the postman.

Just as he finished his work and was daydreaming leisurely, Lisa rushed in like a whirlwind, bringing with her a hint of the autumn chill.

"Sister Lisa, the essay contest results aren't out yet, no need to rush me like this."

"Forget about that boring contest; this is a matter of national importance!" Lisa sat down hurriedly across from Roland, slightly out of breath.

"Sister, don't talk nonsense. Our great Sussex Empire is invincible; what could possibly happen."

Roland teased with a smile, "You seem so flustered—don't tell me His Majesty has passed away?"

Lisa's expression froze instantly.

She scrutinized Roland carefully, full of suspicion.

After a long pause, she spoke, slightly puzzled, "It doesn't make sense. A friend's brother-in-law works as a Forbidden Guard at Sheffield Palace, and I found out by chance. How did you know?"

"Read it in The Sun's political section."

Squinting her eyes at Roland, Lisa, seeing his frank gaze, finally believed him but remained slightly surprised, "His Majesty has passed away, and you're so calm?"

"What else can I do, do I look like someone who can perform resurrection spells?"

Roland responded nonchalantly.

He casually filled Lisa's cup with what was claimed to be Marlan red tea, smiling as he offered it, "Sister, the weather is getting cold, have some tea to warm up."

"Matters of great importance are unrelated to ordinary people like us."

Putting down the teacup, he spread his hands, adding with a hint of jest, "No matter who becomes Emperor, we still have to pay taxes; it makes no difference."

"Instead of pondering these things, wish me luck in winning that essay contest. The first prize is a hefty five hundred pounds."

Roland's eyes were full of longing.

"Let me think about how to spend that money. First, spend a hundred pounds to buy a house on Belphear Street, then hire servants and a chef to look after my sister and me, and then get a cat, two dogs..."

"Not enough."

Though Roland's future plan, including his non-blood-related sister, was touching, Lisa cruelly interrupted his fantasy, saying flatly:

"The price has gone up; a big house on Belphear Street now costs at least one hundred and twenty pounds."

"Damn profiteers," Roland pouted.

"Roland!"

There was a hint of discontent in Lisa's eyebrows, but she maintained a gentle voice as she said:

"You're an adult now; the time for dreaming is over."

A man remains a boy until his death, Sister, you don't understand.

Roland shrugged, raising the teacup.

Never argue with two types of women.

Serious women and non-serious women.

Seeing his indifferent expression, Lisa felt somewhat helpless.

Roland was fine in every way, just that his mind was too fanciful.

He'd rather imagine himself as a literary giant than meet with Miss Alchemist.

Is that what they call a man remaining a boy until his death?

Though it's cruel to crush a boy's literary dreams in person, she had to be the villain in this situation.

"Roland, I'm curious, why are you so confident you can win?"

Because this essay won in a royal competition in another world.

It covered all the elements and was concise enough.

If this doesn't win, there must be a scandal.

Seeing Roland brimming with confidence, Lisa softly reminded him, "Even if your genius concept is worthy of winning, have you considered the potential scandal in the judging process?"

Roland's smile froze at the corners of his mouth.

Indeed, a scandal.

Often, the winner is pre-determined even before the contest starts.

But that's beyond his control.

Such matters, leave it to fate.

The frozen smile blossomed again.

"If I'm fortunate, it's my luck; if I miss out, it's my fate. If there's indeed a scandal, there's nothing I can do." The boy with literary dreams still put on a brave front.

Lisa followed with a smile.

"With such an open mind, why don't you meet with Miss Elizabeth?"

Please, she's an alchemist.

A girl constantly handling chemical reagents and heavy metals ages very quickly.

Marry the bride, and within three years, she's aged.

He definitely didn't want that.

This little worry couldn't be explained to Lisa, so he resorted to his literary dreams as an excuse.

After all, he had used this reason countless times; one more didn't matter.

Lisa had long been accustomed to Roland's excuses, but this time she didn't want to let him weasel his way out.

"I don't care if you fail, you must go..."

"Wait!"

Suddenly standing up, Lisa's face turned pale.

"Roland, you're in trouble."

"Sister, don't scare me, what's wrong?" Roland was startled by Lisa's sudden change.

Lisa murmured, "His Majesty passed away!"

"Sister, you've said that before, no need to repeat it." Roland sighed.

"The new Emperor is about to ascend!"

"Sister, I think you'd better rest early." Roland was somewhat speechless, as Lisa seemed a bit off.

"The Crown Prince is dead, and the throne should pass to Princess Sylph." Lisa insisted.

Roland teased with a smile, "I know, she's the one who has never appeared in public, more mysterious than the witch of Alpha Mountain. Rumor has it she's blessed by the Wind Elf and extraordinarily beautiful."

Exasperated, Lisa pinched Roland's ear.

"Is this the time to be concerned about the Princess's appearance? She's about to become the new Emperor!"

Roland's lazy smile instantly froze.

Sweat trickled down his brow.

It's over, things have escalated.

Participating in a royal essay contest hosted by a nation with the world's strongest military, ruled by an Empress, and writing a novel titled "Oh my, the Empress is pregnant, who's the father?"

It's not just courting death; it's seeking death.