Empress 200

Chapter 200: Explaining the Meaning of Honorary Knight (Part 2)

No doubt, that damn bastard Herman would definitely do this.

If we don’t do something now, it’ll be too late for regrets.

In a flash, Blackthorn thought of the only way to salvage the situation.

He quickly switched his frown to a smile.

The speed of his change of expression made the royal young actor Sif exclaim his professionalism.

He cheerfully expressed thanks to Roland and Sif, then threw out the main event.

"Mr. Roland, on behalf of myself and the Divine Court of Light, I thank you for your noble deed. Your kindness and generosity transcend the barriers of different denominations and break the bounds of nationality..."

All this exaggerated praise made Roland find it hard to keep a straight face.

If they praised him any more, he was about to become a saint on earth.

He really didn’t want to bear such an empty title.

Although the title of Saint could make fanatical believers support him blindly, it would also seriously restrict his words and actions.

Moreover, those with the "Saint" title often had a fatal connection with fire, frequently becoming a vivid part of the scenery on a pyre.

Considering that he didn’t have the Phoenix bloodline, Roland didn’t want to get involved with the "Saint" title.

He quickly stopped Blackthorn and humbly, from the depths of his heart, said, "Bishop, I’m really not being modest, I’m just a passerby who happened to witness all this by chance. Everyone here participated in the rescue, and their faith is more devout than mine. I just happened to make a minor contribution."

"The Goddess is merciful and compassionate. Even without my intervention, the Holy Spring would definitely have been resurrected."

There was a hint of something odd in the way Blackthorn looked at Roland.

If he hadn’t been extorted by Roland just a few days ago, he might actually believe him.

But that greedy face of Roland’s would never be forgotten.

Cut the crap.

He silently ridiculed inwardly.

If Roland were so kind-hearted, he would be a saint among men!

What he thought was not important; appearances were still essential.

Judging by deeds, not intentions. Regardless of what Roland thought, he did indeed save Blackthorn and Christine.

Thinking about Roland’s thirst for money, Blackthorn quickly lowered his voice to say something that only they could hear:

"Lord Governor, we'll cover all the resettlement costs for those over thirty thousand refugees!"

Roland smiled with satisfaction.

Now that's more like it. No more of that empty stuff. Knowing he needed money and not compensating him financially, what were they thinking?

Accepting Blackthorn's goodwill, Roland's attitude softened a lot, and he very humbly began sharing little stories from his hometown.

"Archbishop Blackthorn, I once heard a story about digging a well. In a place suffering from a water shortage, the well needed to be dug one hundred yards to hit water. Someone dug ninety-nine yards without seeing water and, exhausted, gave up. At that point, his friend helped dig the final yard, and water was found."

"That last yard was important, certainly, but were the first ninety-nine yards any less important?"

Good news: Roland's words could command respect from people who didn't know him.

Bad news: Many present were quite familiar with his illustrious past.

Though he couldn't maintain the saintly halo, his character as a humble person who doesn't claim credit now stood firm.

But Roland's performance was never for those biased against him; it was always for the neutral and persuadable.

He never missed an opportunity to perform.

Sif's boot lightly tapped Roland's again, her eyes turned upward, the smile at her lips reflecting the royal actor's approval.

Roland’s humility improved Blackthorn’s mood significantly, prompting him to offer the biggest bait.

"Mr. Roland, no matter how modest you are, this achievement will indeed be recorded in history. To commend your achievements, I hereby, on behalf of the Divine Court of Light, award you the title of Honorary Knight."

"Honorary Knight?" Roland was somewhat surprised.

"Mr. Roland, an Honorary Knight of the Divine Court is entirely different from a worldly Honorary Knight. This is the highest title awarded to non-believers. An Honorary Knight enjoys the same prestige as a Cardinal. Every Light Believer you meet will treat you with the same respect as a Cardinal."

"Not only that, but you may also seek help from the Divine Court. We will try to provide assistance as much as possible. Of course, this assistance mainly involves manpower and the realm of faith. As you know, the Divine Court’s wealth is all meant for worshiping the Goddess and protecting believers, so it’s not wealthy."

Recalling Roland’s greed, Blackthorn quickly made additions to the Honorary Knight’s privileges.

Seeing his somewhat embarrassed expression, Roland instead found this old guy quite genuine and someone he could get along with.

He wanted to accept it but really didn’t understand the Honorary Knight title. An encyclopedia could only find data on secular Honorary Knights, with sparse information on the Divine Court of Light’s Honorary Knights.

He turned his gaze towards Sif.

However, Sif was only a believer, not clergy, so naturally, she did not know.

It was actually Herman who very straightforwardly explained to Roland.

"Roland, an Honorary Knight is both an honorary title and has real power. If you aren't concerned about angering the Goddess of Fengrao, changing your faith to embrace the Light even lets you participate in the election of the Pope."

After simply explaining the powers of an Honorary Knight, Herman began introducing the obligations.

"Roland, power is met with obligation. Accepting the Honorary Knight title equates to acknowledging a close relationship with the Divine Court of Light. When they encounter difficulties, they will also seek help from you. Naturally, how much you assist is up to your ability; there's no enforced obligation."

Blackthorn looked somewhat dissatisfiedly at Herman.

The old guy was being so devious; what was he trying to achieve by explaining everything so clearly?

Fearing Roland would refuse, he hastily explained: "Mr. Roland, your contributions to the Divine Court of Light far exceed our return. The Divine Court will only offer more gifts without asking for anything in return."

Herman didn't like hearing that and bluntly pierced Blackthorn's hypocrisy.

"Bishop Blackthorn, having the person who resurrected the Holy Spring stand with you is the greatest contribution."

The point was evident: accepting the Honorary Knight title was to declare allegiance and recognition.

Considering Roland's status, wasn't his public support invaluable?

His words are somewhat divisive, but also true.

Blackthorn quickly said, "Mr. Roland, some matters exceed my authority, but the Divine Court will never underappreciate your contribution. Every effort deserves a reward, otherwise, it dishonors the effort."

Roland was well aware that the Divine Court of Light had to win his endorsement to balance the awkwardness of heretics completing the resurrection ceremony.

This offer wouldn’t be low.

Blackthorn, after all, was only a Diocesan Bishop, not even a Cardinal, so this offer indeed exceeded his authority.

His hesitation, instead of boasting, indicated he genuinely thought about how to honor his commitment.

If Blackthorn had without question offered a high price, Roland would have outright declined.

His dilemma, on the contrary, piqued Roland’s curiosity about the offer.

He glanced back at Herman, smiling as he asked, "Archbishop Herman, can I accept the Divine Court of Light’s honorary title?"

Despite Herman’s reluctance, the nice words had to be said.

"Of course, you can; it’s your freedom. The Goddess of Fengrao is a tolerant and loving deity, she would be happy about this. As her servant, the Divine Court of Fengrao holds the same stance."

"You may do whatever you wish, as long as you don’t betray your devotion to the Goddess."

That settles it.

Roland thought to himself, having never believed in that Goddess, what betrayal was there?

A bird chooses the tree to nest in, from Fengrao Wood tonight, to Light Wood tomorrow, no issue at all.

He wouldn’t hang himself on one tree.

Since Herman didn’t oppose it, he no longer hesitated, smiling as he said:

"Bishop Blackthorn, this honor truly humbles me, and I can’t give you an answer right away. I’ll respond after escorting and settling the refugees."

Blackthorn breathed a slight sigh of relief and said with a smile: "I completely understand. Besides, I also need to report to the Pope details to offer a reward commensurate with your achievements."

If it’s a transaction, then good.

Do as much work, get paid as such, very reasonable.

Perfectly in line with Blackthorn’s stereotype of Roland.

Everyone gradually dispersed as the holy spring gently flowed, the mist of the Holy Water permeating the air.

But they knew very well.

There was no miracle—just a transaction.

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