Empress 22

Chapter 22: Your Majesty the Empress, Go All In!

Although Sif was temporarily unsure of the purpose of engaging deeply with ordinary people, the viewpoints Roland proposed were unprecedented. She clung to them desperately, like a drowning person grasping at straws.

It’s not that straws can save a person, but the desire to survive is too strong.

Roland smiled and explained, "When His Majesty Edward was in power, these Cabinet Ministers didn’t have so much authority and had to restrain themselves. Now there’s no one to control them, what do you think they’ll do?"

"Abuse their power without any scruples." Sif knew this answer.

When she was seven or eight, her parents went to the Northern Territory to escape the summer heat, leaving her in Teacher Wald’s care. It just so happened that the teacher fell ill, leaving her as an unattended princess.

The freedom of being unsupervised is always a pleasant memory.

"Exactly, they might initially restrain themselves, but soon they will reveal their true colors and unscrupulously pursue personal gain."

"That’s simply terrible." Sif clenched her fist.

"No, it’s actually wonderful, even our only opportunity."

Roland calmly said, "The thing with comparisons is that people fear them. Maybe in the eyes of the common people, Her Majesty the Empress is just a decorative vase, but a vase isn’t useless. At least it’s pleasing to the eye and harmless."

"Once they suffer at the hands of these greedy ministers, they'll start missing the vase. After all, Her Majesty the Empress is the legitimate emperor, her invisible influence cannot be ignored."

"When contradictions reach their peak, she just needs to raise her arm, and naturally, people will follow. She should know what to do next."

Sif nodded.

She didn't quite understand politics, but being a royal child, she knew more than the average person.

Her Majesty the Empress personally rescuing the people and the nation, punishing traitors, has happened countless times in history.

But...

"Even if the people support us, assassinating the traitorous ministers still depends on the military, and our strength is too weak."

Sif sighed softly, speaking with a gentle tone: "Perhaps you don't know, over a hundred years ago, the Imperial Army followed the power minister Chris in rebellion, even committing regicide and deposing the emperor. Later, the new emperor set things right, and the army was permanently stripped of the royal title."

"This punishment was satisfying but also ensured that the army no longer supports the Imperial Family. They will surely side with the Cabinet."

"The Navy is loyal to the Imperial Family, but they are mainly deployed overseas, convincing them to participate in a coup won't be easy. Even if they're willing, the navy on land can't defeat the army."

The hope that had burned in Sif's eyes gradually extinguished.

Roland gently reminded, "Beyond the navy and army, there are actually other armed forces."

"You mean the knights?" Sif asked, puzzled.

Indeed, the Sussex Royal Family has the Imperial Knight Order.

The knights, clad in heavy armor and skilled in combat, once dominated the battlefield.

Until magic appeared.

Armor-clad knights became a joke in the face of area-effect magic.

Against explosive magic, lightly equipped and low-cost infantry charges are the solution.

Magic counters knights, knights counter infantry, infantry counters magic.

Logically, all three should exist on the battlefield.

But alchemy technology matured.

As long as infantry hold explosive bombs made by alchemy, they can blast knights upside down.

The high-cost, high-training, and long-growth warriors faced near extinction.

With the prevalence of magic and alchemy, knights shifted from a combat species to a ceremonial unit.

Fight a war with a ceremonial team?

Sif was about to give Roland a military lesson, but he calmly said:

"Not them. I myself accepted knight training and deeply understand the shortcomings of knights. No one knows better than me why knights are obsolete."

"Then whom do you refer to?"

"Brook, Sailin, Hansa, the three overseas provinces."

The color drained from Sif's face immediately.

Although the Sussex Empire occupies an entire small continent, it is still overseas, separated by the sea from the world's central Rodinia Continent.

Powerful countries on the Rodinia Continent are numerous, and the area is more than ten times that of Sussex.

To maintain its interests on the Rodinia Continent, Sussex found every possible way to gain control over provinces on the continent's periphery through redemption, marriage, inheritance, and war.

The overseas three provinces are the maximum Sussex can maintain on the Rodinia Continent.

If they expand further, the Rodinia countries will unite to crusade against them. Though strong, Sussex without naval cover cannot conduct deep inland warfare.

After several wars, Sussex and the continental countries found a boundary for coexistence.

Finally, Sussex and these countries reached an agreement, recognizing the sovereignty of the three provinces as Sussex's, in return, Sussex does not demand territories from the major powers on the Rodinia Continent.

The three provinces are vast, their people staunch, producing quality warriors, but they feel little allegiance to the Empire's core. Can it work?

Sif wanted to refute but understood Roland’s point.

This was already the last hope.

Embarking on this path to imperial rule, when is it ever easy?

The strong can choose and abandon, the weak can only go all in.

Should they take this gamble?

Seeing Sif hesitate, Roland added another weight to the scale.

"This is just the military aspect."

"Are there any other reasons?" Sif asked in surprise.

"If the Empress stays in the Imperial Capital, she won’t be able to escape responsibility if the ministers commit wrongdoings."

Sif nodded in understanding; this was what’s called leadership responsibility.

When she was mischievous as a child, her father would scold her brother first because it was the brother’s fault for not setting a good example when the sister misbehaved.

How to be a good brother?

Staying in the Imperial Capital means accepting leadership responsibility.

If she goes to the Three Overseas Provinces, she can completely absolve herself.

She looked at Roland with interest and asked softly, "These two reasons are enough to convince me, but perhaps the Empress will have doubts. Are there more reasons?"

"Of course. There are also economic considerations. The Three Overseas Provinces control key maritime traffic, are in a prime location, and have flourishing trade, yet they pay very little tax to the central empire. This money should belong to Her Majesty the Empress but has been taken by others."

Sif's face changed slightly, her breathing quickened, and her chest heaved.

This time, she was truly angry.

Roland was right; this was her money!

The Three Overseas Provinces must indeed be visited.

Anger consumed her fears, and Sif bit her lip, asking, "If the Empress leaves the Imperial Capital for a long time, the Cabinet Ministers will surely disagree. What can be done?"

Roland scoffed, "It's a joke. Her Majesty the Empress can go wherever she pleases. When did it become the ministers' turn to dictate?"

"The Empress is young and cannot govern the country alone, so she temporarily granted them power. When did it become their decision to determine the Empress's itinerary?"

"Moreover, going to the Three Overseas Provinces has a reason no one can refute."

Sif fell silent; Roland had not finished. That reason was to investigate the cause of the Late Emperor's death.

Indeed, it's an irrefutable reason.

Who dares to obstruct the investigation into the murderer of the Late Emperor?

"Well said. Her Majesty the Empress can go wherever she pleases! But the Imperial Navy won't take part in this mess. Providing a ship implies taking sides."

Roland confidently patted his chest, "I'll find a way!"

No one expected that Captain Alina's old ship ticket would come in handy. Fortunately, he framed it as a keepsake and preserved it well.

Though Roland didn't say what to do, Sif was infected by his confident smile and subconsciously nodded.

After settling the general direction, Roland and Sif discussed the current situation in detail. By the time he finished explaining, night had already fallen.

Sif cordially invited Roland to stay the night.

Her estate was large.

Thinking of Lisa waiting at home, Roland smiled and shook his head.

"I have family; no matter how late it is, I must return home."

Seeing Roland's insistence on leaving, Sif didn't force him and personally escorted him to the door.

"Roland, we're both working for the Empress. Just say if you need anything."

"I'm not serving the Empress; I'm helping my friend Sif."

"Is there a difference? I mean, I’m working for the Empress. Isn’t helping me the same as serving the Empress?"

Under the cover of night, Sif stuck out her tongue, nearly letting it slip. She must be careful next time.

Roland did not press the matter further; he just stopped and said, "I hope you can protect Sister Lisa for a few days to prevent me from being tied up."

If enemies lurking in the dark are capable of murder, dismemberment, and pillaging, they surely wouldn’t mind kidnapping family members first.

Knowing there’s danger and still allowing one’s own sister to be abducted and then getting frantic, that’s the mark of a fool.

He directly addressed the potential threat.

"No problem, I’ll send someone to pick her up tomorrow," Sif agreed with a smile.

"No."

Roland shook his head calmly, "If you pick her up, the hidden serpents will become alert."

"Then what to do?" Sif was a little troubled.

"Tomorrow night, arrange for trustworthy people and have her kidnapped," Roland said expressionlessly.

"Ah?!" Sif’s brain nearly overheated. After a moment of shock, she quickly caught on. By kidnapping Lisa first, the bad guys wouldn’t have a chance.

After all, it’s difficult to kidnap the same person twice.

Roland grinned slightly, feeling a bit smug. This was a method he learned from Russian counter-terrorism.

Get to the target before the criminals do, and the criminals will only be left in confusion.

As Roland was preparing to leave, Sif suddenly shoved the delicate crystal pendant into his hand.

"If you encounter a danger you can’t handle, crush it."

"What’s this?"

Could it generate a Magic Shield to protect him?

"Crush it, and the White Rose Knight will come. Of course, you’ll have to hold out first."

"Thank you. Hopefully, it won’t be necessary."

After expressing his thanks, Roland slipped out through the back door in the cover of night.

Watching his retreating figure, Sif softly whispered, "The White Rose Knight doesn’t draw the sword for money, but friends are an exception."