Empress 24

Chapter 24: Did the Operation Succeed?

Roland’s determination to defend the Imperial Authority was unwavering.

Ultimately, the Imperial Authority was limited, and if others consumed it all, there would be none left for the Sylph he supported.

Without the support of the Imperial Authority, how could he progress? By writing rebellious articles?

Although he hadn’t met Sylph, they were already bound by interests.

After explaining everything to Lisa, Roland prepared to leave.

Lisa grabbed his arm without saying a word, but the intent in her eyes was clear.

"Where are you going so late again?"

Roland shrugged and said with a smile, "To find someone who cannot see the light of day and discuss some shady deals."

"It’s best to go for such deals in the middle of the night."

Lisa roughly guessed Roland’s intentions and couldn’t find a reason to oppose him, so she firmly gripped his wrist, as if trying to transfer strength to him.

"Roland, no matter who they are, don’t let them take advantage of you."

...

Roland met Alina.

Even though it was late, Alina still crawled out from her covers, complaining as she met Roland in the reception hall.

Roland glanced at her.

Wearing glasses, her eyes slightly drowsy, yet her gaze was particularly sharp; she was Captain Alina.

This was good. It’s always better for a rational person to discuss business.

Roland straightforwardly asked, "Miss Alina, I want to buy some intelligence."

"You want to buy intelligence from me?" Alina was stunned for several seconds before finally reacting.

"Yes, recently my personal safety has been seriously threatened, and I need accurate intelligence to find the hidden enemy."

Alina: "..."

After confirming several times that Roland was not joking, she pondered for a long while and slowly said, "What do you plan to pay in return?"

"Can I pay according to the content of the service?"

Alina shook her head and softly said, "Although my country has built a good intelligence network in Sussex, they are national staff, not my servants."

"Each piece of intelligence was obtained at great risk, even life danger. I cannot exchange such precious intelligence for money. That would trample on the dignity of intelligence personnel."

Seeing Alina’s serious yet somewhat wistful expression, Roland realized his mistake.

"Sorry, I didn’t think it through. In that case, I’ll take my leave."

If Alina wouldn’t sell, then he’d have to turn to the Adventurer Association and the Thief’s House. But finding them was expensive and troublesome.

Seeing Roland’s urgent demeanor, Alina sighed lightly, "Don’t you even have time for a cup of tea and a few words?"

Roland’s just lifted hips sank back into the seat.

Hearing those words, was there still room for negotiation?

Alina stared at Roland and slowly said, "If you can erase from your heart the offense of me prying into your fate, I can provide intelligence services."

Is that it?

Roland lightly patted his chest and said loudly, "You’re welcome to pry whenever you need; I’m quite curious about my fate too."

"That’s not necessary."

Peeking too many times can cost one’s life.

Alina silently complained in her heart and said with a smile,

"Recruiting overseas talents with potential is in line with our national interests. You’re my chosen target, and providing intelligence to protect you aligns with national interests, not abuse of authority."

"Tell me about the specific situation."

Alina’s explanation was somewhat far-fetched, but Roland didn’t mind.

Don’t listen to what a person says; look at what they do.

Even a goodwill with discounts is better than unadulterated malice.

After providing the basic situation, Roland stood up to take his leave.

This time, Alina did not stop him, nor did she have the Demonic Puppet Maid see him out but personally escorted him to the door.

"Do you need support in terms of force? It’s helping a friend; there’s no additional cost."

Roland flexed his right arm, posing in a "strong" stance, "I can handle it."

The free lunch is always the most expensive; not paying a price often means you are the price.

This was a painful lesson he learned from playing free games for years.

Alina nodded and said with a smile, "Being confident is good, but having more tolerance for errors isn’t a bad thing."

She took out an ancient-looking badge and handed it to Roland.

"If you encounter an enemy you cannot deal with, squeeze the badge hard. Maybe there will be an unexpected surprise, maybe not, who knows. You can never predict whether accidents or tomorrow come first."

"I've invested in you and I expect a return, so don't you dare die."

With those words, Alina gave a gentle push, and the iron gate closed behind Roland.

While he didn't fully understand the support effect of the badge, it was good to keep it.

Even just as a souvenir, it was nice.

Nothing happened overnight.

The next morning, Teacher Mary's class went by quickly. She was pleased with Roland's learning speed and ended the lesson with a smile.

"Your current level is enough for the salon; the rest can be learned later. Class dismissed."

Empress Sylph had approached her, hoping she would reduce etiquette class time, saying Roland had more important matters to attend to.

Although simplifying the course went against teaching principles, the Empress's orders were above all.

It was most important that Sylph listened to her and employed Roland.

Roland took Lisa to see the house on Belphar Street.

Lisa really wanted to go, but she restrained herself, saying it was Roland's matter.

Seeing her eyes filled with "I want to go," Roland smiled warmly and issued a second invitation, and when Lisa refused again, he simply grabbed her hand and led her out the door.

Saying no didn’t mean she didn’t want to go. From choosing the house, it became Lisa’s solo show.

From "Oh, I don’t want to go" to "Listen to me, just buy this house," her attitude changed as quickly as flipping a book.

After selecting the house, she even began planning how to renovate the new home; leaving such a large property unarranged would be a waste.

Lisa’s smile was infectious, and the long-awaited bright sunlight of the Imperial Capital returned.

After choosing the house, they broke their routine by enjoying a luxurious lunch in a downtown restaurant before signing the purchase contract through an industry association’s real estate agency.

Next came a series of cumbersome procedures such as house inspection, handover, and renovation.

It would take at least a few months of busy work before they could move into their new home.

After leaving the association building, Roland and Lisa went their separate ways.

Shortly after Lisa left, a nondescript man in black emerged from the shadows of an alley, his gaze fixed on Lisa.

Target locked, execute Plan A.

According to the intelligence they possessed, although Roland and Lisa weren’t blood-related, their emotional ties were very strong.

No matter how greedy Roland was, he would bleed for his sister’s rescue.

Dealing with Roland in the city was very troublesome.

His identity was sensitive, being both an orphan of a martyr and the Empress's guest.

Killing him publicly would be a slap to the Imperial Family, with consequences too severe to bear.

It was only convenient to lure Roland outside the city for a secret ambush and to dispose of the body.

The man in black summoned an assistant, gave a few instructions, then pulled down his hat brim and followed Lisa unhurriedly.

He didn't plan to act immediately.

After all, Belphar Street was an upscale residential area.

The police presence here was several times that of the poor zones.

Once Lisa returned to the old district, it would be time to act.

He had already stationed his men, just waiting for Lisa to enter the trap.

Just as he was following Lisa out of Belphar Street, a carriage appeared suddenly, stopping in front of Lisa.

A white-gloved hand stretched out from the carriage, muffling Lisa's mouth with a handkerchief. The poor girl slumped down and was then dragged into the carriage and taken away.

The man in black behind was dumbfounded, watching this scene as his mind went blank.

After several seconds, he jumped up, raging with anger.

Damn it, who was this?

Wasn't it agreed that this matter would be fully handled by the Taimashi Gang?

He'd have to let Reyno boss severely reprimand this group for acting on their own.

It's obvious that this must have been done by other gangs trying to ingratiate themselves with Mr. Lori.

Thankfully the action succeeded; otherwise, he'd really be furious.

If he failed Mr. Lori's matters, could these worthless fools bear the responsibility?

Reckless idiots!