Empress 26

Chapter 26: Are You Going to Bloom Too?

The late autumn night carried a biting chill.

Although the Imperial Capital's autumn and winter are warmer than other places of the same latitude due to the ocean's warm currents, it's still late autumn, and the temperature is quite low.

Roland's face was solemn, a fleeting glint of fierce killing intent in his eyes.

A few minutes ago, he signaled to Alina and Sif that it was time to begin the operation as agreed.

It's time to set off now.

He hid a knife inside his coat, a short sword in his boot, and strapped throwing daggers inside his lining, then set Alina's smoke explosive bombs in place.

If Reyno knew how to gather intelligence, he'd surely know that Roland's father was a knight, and Roland himself had undergone rigorous knight training.

Knights uphold honor and fight openly, never using hidden weapons.

But Reyno surely couldn't imagine that Roland merely received knight training and isn't actually a knight.

Even if he were, he would definitely still use hidden weapons to pave the way.

Roland didn't see anything wrong with this.

In his hometown, even modern armored knights used cannons in battle, this was nothing.

It’s well known that the eight virtues of knights are "humility, honesty, compassion, valor, fairness, sacrifice, honor, soul."

Written in black and white in the knight’s manual, every knight must recite them continuously from their apprenticeship.

Who said not to use long-range weapons?

Anything not expressly forbidden by law is permitted!

Justice must be fiercer than evil to crush it.

He’s not a knight, but today he must let that scoundrel Lori know what true knight combat techniques are.

Eliminating the criminal currently doing evil, that’s damn well called justice!

To the suburban Dragon slaying Valley, let’s go!

This is a dead valley that can only be entered from the east side, it’s said that in ancient times a human hero slayed a giant dragon here.

That’s not important.

What’s important is that there’s nowhere to escape from the ambush here.

Reyno thinks Roland is on the first layer, while he himself is on the second layer, unaware that Roland is actually in the stratosphere.

It’s not that Reyno isn’t smart, but in the face of a crushing intelligence gap, all calculations seem like jokes.

Without accurate intelligence, even the most astute person becomes reckless.

Roland strode confidently towards the valley.

Walking on the path, he saw a strangely shaped bird flying overhead, dispelling the last bit of unease in his heart.

He couldn’t name this bird, but he knew it was a magic tool.

Its rear would light up.

There are glowing birds in nature, but surely none with illuminated rears signaling codes.

This was a reminder to him that everything was in order, it was time to proceed.

Alina is quite reliable, she pulls through in crucial moments.

Without her intelligence and personnel arrangements, Roland’s plan would be difficult to execute.

Just as Roland stepped into the valley, several shadows emerged from the ambush spots, led by a gaunt middle-aged man with a mocking smile on his face, applauding "clap clap clap".

"I really didn’t expect you would come to die for a girl without blood relations. Could it be she’s your love interest?"

Roland calmly looked at the middle-aged man in front of him.

The perennial runner-up of Sussex’s literary scene.

In the past few decades, at least three literary giants became recognized as the foremost figures of the time, and by chance, the runner-up was always Lori.

His literary works always carried an indescribable madness.

Roland had read his books; the openings were very impressive, but later on, they always became a vehicle to vent dissatisfaction, and this guy never finished his books, generating terrible reviews.

Facing Lori’s mockery, Roland said indifferently, "You ghost without a family even at home, of course you don’t understand family affection."

"I brought the money, let her go."

Lori squinted his eyes, burning with fury.

Although unsure if Roland had done so intentionally, he was indeed wounded.

He had been chosen by Count Rude’s daughter years ago, thinking it was the beginning of his rise to prominence, only to find he was of less status than a dog at home.

He snorted coldly, then let out an unpleasant laugh, like a night owl.

"Roland, do you still dream of redeeming her? Let me tell you, that girl is already dead, killed after being toyed with by more than a dozen gang members, hahaha!"

"All done talking?"

Roland calmly looked at Lori, without inner turmoil.

If he didn’t know his sister’s whereabouts, these words would have made him explode with emotion.

But not now.

Who would be upset by the antics of a clown.

The kind of scene where a protagonist doesn't know how to protect their family and gets bullied by petty thugs is only found in third-rate movies.

He wouldn't give the enemy any chance.

Sister Lisa is currently a guest at Sif's residence, most likely enjoying a seafood feast, taking a nice bath, and sleeping comfortably.

When an unlucky bluffer encounters someone with foresight, the result is this absurdity.

Not only did Roland not fly into a rage, he even found Lori's performance ridiculous and laughable.

Seeing Roland's expression, Lori quickly realized something was off.

He's rotten to the core, but not foolish.

Knowing Lisa hasn't been kidnapped yet still coming, there must be deceit.

He felt somewhat guilty but reassured himself thinking Roland had no significant background or power, sternly asking, "You've already figured it out?"

With the aim of buying time for Alina and Sif's troops to arrive as quickly as possible, Roland's lips curled slightly, switching to a sharp-tongued mode.

"Moron, you just figured it out now? No wonder you're always second, always a step behind!"

"In contests you've placed second, in literary status you're second, to your wife you're a spare tire from her first love, and even your supposed son is someone else's child. Your life is like this ridiculous kidnapping operation, always eating the dust of others!"

Roland, having received modern education, rarely stabs at people's scars.

Everyone has hurdles in their lives, be kind.

But towards those who wish to kill him and even harm Sister Lisa, he speaks without mercy.

Not only will he curse, later on, he'll personally send the old beast to hell.

"You!" Lori's old face flushed like boiled pork liver, and in a fit of anger, he spat out a mouthful of old blood.

Lies can hurt, but truth is an even sharper knife.

Roland's sharp-tongue cut into Lori's major artery.

Lori was talented and capable from a young age, aiming to carve out a career through his talent but always one move short.

Ultimately, he chose to compromise with reality, "reluctantly" accepting an inglorious marriage, thereby gaining a count as a father-in-law.

He thought he was being magnanimous, but on his wedding night discovered his wife had many pre-marriage friends who were quite wild, ultimately resulting in a fatal outcome with no known father of the child.

He's a spare tire, lushly colored and well maintained.

This is his greatest shame in life, with his increasing status, few dare mention it in front of him.

But Roland didn't care, towards his enemies, he was never merciful.

Especially Roland's final stab, which directly pierced Lori's heart.

Roland's wild laughter resonated in the valley, signaling time to reel in the net.

His peripheral vision caught the sight of the intelligence officer on the mountain holding a magic crystal ball recording the scene.

Although Lori was utterly despicable, he was nevertheless a significant figure in Sussex's literary world.

Killing him would be easy, but Roland wanted more than his head, he aimed to destroy his reputation.

He needed a cameraman.

The magic crystal ball is expensive, using it to record images is both wasteful and lavish, but it was a necessity.

This piece of evidence will be submitted to the court as ironclad proof.

Enraged, Lori drew his sword and charged at Roland.

He's a transcendent.

His promotion direction is the same as Roland's, both are [Writer].

To ascend from a writer to a literary scholar requires either leaving behind classic works or killing a fellow transcendent [Writer] competitor, using their blood as a sacrifice.

Colleagues are enemies, and if they are competing for promotion and advancement opportunities, it becomes a life or death struggle.

The path of transcendent advancement doesn't determine strength; battle prowess solely depends on the individual.

[Teacher] can be strength, [Writer] can lead troops, it's all commonplace.

With rich combat experience, Lori instantly spotted the flaw in Roland's plan.

And that's himself.

Roland's plan was straightforward, to enter the encirclement himself to draw all attention, buying time for the outer secondary encirclement.

A classic blossom center tactic.

Triumphant success means total victory, failure means the one blooming goes to the grave.

Kill him!

Killing intent surged in Lori as his longsword sliced through the night sky like a meteor, aiming straight for Roland's throat.