Empress 28

Chapter 28: The Power to Grant Power Is Also Power

Friends who frequently commit murder know that killing is easy but handling the aftermath is difficult.

In a country governed by the rule of law, murder inevitably faces legal punishment.

Sussex is a country governed by the rule of law, as explicitly defined by its constitution.

Killing in Sussex means facing the iron fist of the law, unless one has power beyond the law.

For example, imperial authority.

The law of the monarch is the law of the Imperial Family.

The Emperor possesses the ultimate power of interpretation and judgment.

Now His Majesty Sylph is about to exercise power.

"Sir Alben, I received an anonymous report this morning. How do you think it should be handled?"

The gentle yet authoritative voice of Empress Sylph came from the throne.

The maid presented the crystal ball with both hands to Francis Alben, the Minister of Justice and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

With a solemn face, Alben took the crystal ball and applied slight pressure, bringing the recorded images before him, depicting the fierce battle in Dragon slaying Valley.

Though unclear about the specifics, Alben recognized the unfortunate victim.

Uncertain of the Empress’s stance, he cautiously said:

"Your Majesty, for such a large-scale murder to occur under your reign, resulting in the death of a key figure in our literary world, is truly shocking. I will investigate the case as soon as possible!"

According to the constitution, Sylph could not govern temporarily, but that did not mean she was without power.

The power of the Cabinet was assigned from her, and she had a say in to whom it was assigned.

Even if unable to govern directly, she remained the Supreme Leader, with the authority to summon Cabinet Ministers for reports and give instructions.

Not only did she have it, but she wielded it skillfully.

As the honeymoon period of the new monarch’s ascension, ministers, having gained power, were relatively amiable toward the new monarch.

Unless it violated fundamental interests, Cabinet Ministers would not argue with her over trivial matters.

Her Majesty the Empress is young, and the ministers shared the consensus of flattering her by indulging her.

Except for the unwavering loyalty of Wald, others carried some self-interest.

Seeing Alben not grasping the intention, Sylph bit her lip and reminded:

"Sir Alben, it was the Imperial Family’s essay contest champion who was lured outside the city and murdered, forcing him to fight back."

Alben suddenly realized.

It turned out the Empress wasn’t protecting that unlucky fellow Lori, but Roland.

He lightly coughed and, with a smile, said, "Your Majesty, I did not misunderstand. The key figure in the literary circle I mentioned is indeed Roland, the essay contest champion. Rest assured, I will investigate the truth promptly."

Sylph was so pleased by Alben’s words that she almost nodded with joy, quickly remembering Roland’s advice from last night.

Not to be swayed by sweet talk; it was crucial to clarify the timeline of action.

Both investigation and trial had procedures.

If the Minister of Justice delayed slightly, this case could take months to conclude.

Being involved, Roland must undergo investigation.

During the investigation, he couldn’t publicly partake in social activities and naturally couldn’t attend the Imperial Family art salon.

If unable to attend, combined with targeted propaganda, public opinion could easily turn severely against Roland.

Then forcibly granting the championship to Roland would harm Imperial dignity.

If the championship were revoked, the Imperial dignity would suffer similarly.

An impression of the Empress’s poor judgment would take root.

"Whether I get the championship isn’t important, but the dignity of the Empress cannot be compromised!"

Last night, Roland had earnestly exclaimed to Count Sif.

Roland hadn’t lied; he had already received triple the champion’s rewards, so the title really didn’t matter.

Empress Sylph is Sif’s long-term patron, and Sif is his long-term patron, meaning indirectly, his livelihood depended on the Empress; their prosperity was intertwined. Preserving the Empress’s interests equated to preserving his own.

Sif’s insight saw Roland’s sincerity, deeply moving her heart.

Even now, wearing the heavy crown and wielding the cold scepter, Roland’s "loyalty" brought her a slight warmth of sweetness in the late autumn.

In a political arena where everyone had self-interest, only teacher and Roland were genuinely kind to her.

The rhetoric of the Minister of Justice was entirely within Roland’s predictions.

Sylph knew what to say next.

She grumbled with discontent, "Sir Alben, I’ll give you only a week."

Before Alben could protest, she raised the scepter in her hand.

"Handle this urgent matter quickly."

At this point, unless Alben wanted to directly oppose imperial authority, he could only comply.

"Rest assured, Your Majesty, not even a week; I'll provide the result within three days."

Since delaying was impossible, showcasing one's capability and efficiency was the way forward.

Alben's change in attitude was swift.

Watching Alben obediently leave, Sylph felt relieved, almost wanting to reward Roland with a large estate plus a few maids for him to enjoy the pleasure.

But recalling the depleted treasury squandered by her father, she could only sigh lightly in her heart, putting Roland on the record for future compensation when finances allowed.

She had been slightly anxious, not expecting the Minister of Justice to be so cooperative.

She had long been conscious of being a puppet.

However, Roland never thought this way.

After Roland suggested the idea last night, she had raised a concern.

"What if Sir Alben resolutely disagrees and insists on principles?"

At that time, Roland had smiled and said:

"Although the Empress must entrust the judicial power to the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Justice doesn't necessarily have to be Alben."

"If Mr. Alben doesn’t wish to be Minister of Justice, there are plenty outside who want to advance."

"The law serves Your Majesty, not vice versa; Mr. Alben will understand."

Roland made it clear.

Don’t underestimate a puppet; even the noble Count almost carved out a realm, let alone Sylph, who was a real monarch merely unable to exercise power because of her age.

There wasn’t just one Cabinet Minister; imperial authority was inherently shared among many, and those outside eager for advancement formed a long queue.

Before these guys could form a clique, she had to control them firmly.

Before Alben accepted the order, Sylph was anxious but felt much more secure afterward.

Roland’s thinking wasn’t something Teacher Wald had mentioned, yet upon reflection, it made sense.

That was her power, only temporarily lent to them!

After Alben departed, Sylph yawned and reluctantly stood up.

Having spent the night with Roland, Alina, and others, followed by a custom lesson from the teacher on dealing with Cabinet Ministers, she returned to the palace in the wee hours.

She was weary.

Just as she rose, she frowned.

Last night's fight was indeed a one-sided slaughter, but she charged too aggressively, though uninjured, leaving her exhausted and sweaty.

Rubbing her sore arms, Sylph slowly walked toward her bedchamber, lightly frowning.

The Empress's work was done.

Later, her good friend Count Tyrone was going out to celebrate victory with Roland.

These treacherous ministers, eyeing her power daily, trying to deceive and sideline her—truly an appalling ambition!

Thankfully, with Roland's assistance, she would eventually deal with them!

Then her power...

Sylph, just stepping out of the room, suddenly froze.

An unforeseen question lingered relentlessly in her mind.

She had to rely on Roland to reclaim her power.

To defeat these treacherous ministers, she required stronger power than theirs.

Would such power one day backfire?

Her hands trembled slightly.

Roland, Teacher Wald will eventually age, leaving only you to trust.

Will you one day bully me like them?

The young Empress’s eyes were hollow, filled with nothing but confusion.