Empress 341

Chapter 341: No Surprises Is Also a Surprise (Part 3)

Alina was at a loss for words because of Roland's statement.

She could perform divination, but it was limited to personal fate and wasn't necessarily accurate.

Foreseeing a nation's destiny was beyond her capability.

It was said that the pinnacle of divination was the Great Prophecy Skill, where words were followed by deeds, something Alina yearned for.

Her current divination was almost like fortune-telling, just for reference.

Alina wanted to say something more, but was interrupted by Roland's reminder.

"The enemy has emerged."

As the jungle was set ablaze, the jungle warfare experts hidden inside were forced to leave the now flaming Hell of a forest and charge towards the beach.

The previously disadvantaged wanderers raised their firearms, firing continuously in volleys.

Although they did not carry light cannons, the battleships' artillery support was strong enough to batter these Mysterious Race armies and Human Race jungle troops into disarray.

After their formations were bombarded apart, the ensuing fight became a one-sided slaughter.

Ferocious werewolves and swift centaurs launched a charge.

They had no disciplined formations, relying purely on instinct to sprint.

Their speed was so fast that they were hit by bullets before the human jungle troops.

This elite force of more than three thousand quickly lost half its numbers, and the remaining over a thousand, seeing the dire situation, swiftly fled.

When the sun rose, the chaotic battlefield was littered with enemy corpses, and the beach was stained a red-purple, proving the ferocity of last night's battle.

The speed of the werewolf and centaur cavalry was truly too fast; even though the wanderers were well-prepared, the defense line was still breached in several places, resulting in considerable casualties.

Even with superior numbers, firepower, and strategic deployment, there were still several hundred casualties.

According to Roland's standards, this was not a victory, but a disastrous defeat.

Watching the soldiers clearing the battlefield, Alina breathed a sigh of relief, her brows relaxing.

"Roland, we won. The casualty ratio between us and them is 623 to 1850. We achieved an almost 1:3 exchange ratio. This was the enemy's elite force; it was a great victory."

Roland smiled noncommittally.

He didn't directly strike at Alina, but couldn't help taunting, "We only have 11,000 combatants; if we have a few more victories like this, you'll be heading to the guillotine."

Alina's smile froze on her face.

She understood Roland's meaning—that Marco could afford such a war of attrition, but she could not.

"What should we do then?"

"March to Ives Port!" Roland’s gaze turned towards the northwest.

"Are you crazy? There are more than 30,000 regular troops there, all elite. Before setting off, you said we need to develop in the south, continuously expand our strength, coordinate with the northern line, and seize the opportunity to move north when something happens in West City. Why take the risk?"

Roland really wanted to say that he’d been planning to take risks from the start, and that the conservative plan was just to reassure the wanderers, but felt that saying so would somewhat make it seem like he was treating Alina as a bargaining chip in a reckless gamble, so he changed his wording.

"Times have changed. Marco could predict our landing spot and swiftly deploy the most suitable nearby troops to ambush us. He’s not simple and won’t give us a chance to grow."

"We need to race against time. The army at Ives Port is excellent and will soon be ours."

"Huh? Do you have a good plan?" Alina looked at Roland with surprise and delight.

"It’s very simple. We march towards Ives Port, and when the two armies face off, you walk out alone, arms spread wide, and remember to say something impressive."

Roland thought for a moment and smiled as he said, "I believe the wise Jin Yuan People will not fire upon the daughter of the Protector. I’m here to end your tumultuous rule."

Alina’s eyes sparkled, but she quickly calmed down and voiced her concerns, "It’s indeed a good plan, but what if the enemy shoots?"

"Don’t worry, I’m a loyal friend. I promise to take your body so it doesn’t fall into enemy hands."

After a pause, Roland added, "If there’s no time, I’ll also throw a bomb so your body isn’t left for the enemy to desecrate."

He dodged the iron glove Alina threw at him filled with angry energy, grinning shamelessly.

Chapter 342: Advance, Alina!

Although Roland's plan sounded somewhat absurd, Alina still chose to accept it.

She was well aware that she didn't have many cards in hand; without daring to gamble, there was no chance at all.

After seizing the beachhead, the landing forces assembled on shore, quickly and calmly setting up camp to prepare for the advance towards Ives Port the next day.

They had only a small number of light cannons, utterly incapable of a siege.

If the garrison at Ives Port held firm and did not come out, they had no choice but to turn back and flee.

Even if the garrison at Ives Port came out, if they couldn't make these men defect, it would also be a dead end.

Although Roland promised Alina divine protection, such power is not truly invincible.

If more than a hundred bullets hit her at the same time, the sanctuary barrier would be broken, and she would be riddled with bullets on the spot.

In short, this was a high-stakes gamble.

Betting not only on her father's reputation being high enough but also on Marco having offended everyone.

Alina gazed at the starry sky, letting out a soul's cry.

Will we win?

The stars twinkled silently.

The starry sky was not a mentor; she had to find the answer herself.

The next morning, after a short rest, the Wanderer Army began marching towards Ives Port.

They wore dazzling red tops, with a cloth band wrapped around their arms bearing the word "Freedom."

They carried firearms on their backs, singing coordinated military songs, with high morale.

They carried only ten bullets each, just enough for one battle’s expenditure.

They had no way back and didn’t want to look back.

They had long since lost everything, and each day taken away from Val City was a bonus.

They were fearless.

As the Wanderer Legion advanced, there was nearly an uproar inside Ives Port.

The seasoned mayor suggested holding fast, while the Port Authority director, worried about the war’s impact on port trade, even suggested giving Alina some money to bypass Ives Port and seek revenge in West City.

The civil servants’ opinions quickly collapsed under General Surt’s contemptuous sneer.

Surt dispelled the civil servants’ ideas with just one sentence.

"Do you want to face the President’s wrath?"

The mayor and the Port Authority director’s faces turned pale instantly.

Although uncertain why Alina would return seeking death, they were very confident Marco would win.

The President lacked anything except enemies, but they all died.

Even Carlo was no match for President Marco, let alone such a young Alina.

If she found a place to hide, she might still have a chance of survival, but walking right into this was a foregone conclusion.

Since Marco was sure to win, they naturally wanted to stand on the victor’s side.

Seeing the ashen looks on the mayor and the Port Authority director’s faces, General Surt smiled and said:

"I heard last month in West City that many troublemakers were incited to attack the palace prison. You should know their fate, right?"

The mayor and the Port Authority director broke out in a cold sweat.

Of course, they knew the rebellion’s leaders and the manipulators behind the scenes were all sent to the guillotine.

It’s said that just on November 11th, thousands were beheaded in the square.

The blood flowed into the sewers, even scaring many small animals hiding there into trembling fearfully.

Holding the city might be safer, but in President Marco's eyes, it was cowardly and incompetent. Privately paying protection money to let Alina go was blatant betrayal.

Such things would never remain hidden; once Marco recovered, none present would fare well.

Either they'd test how tough their necks were at West City's guillotine, or wait for the Imperial Envoy to come down and sentence them.

In President Marco's eyes, human lives were just numbers.

The mayor and the Port Authority director looked helplessly at General Surt, having no choice but to agree with his viewpoint.

They certainly understood this logic; they just didn't want Surt to hold all the power.

Once wartime conditions began, Surt's authority would exceed theirs.

He had the power to demand military expansion, take over fiscal duties, and even intervene in personnel appointments.

The mayor represented the administrative system, the Port Authority director represented the commercial and trade system, and Surt was the military representative.

The Jin Yuan Republic had no local council, and these three were the highest officials.

Their power fluctuated according to circumstances.

This time, Surt, the old fellow, would have the upper hand again.

The mayor and the Port Authority director exchanged glances, a bit resigned.

Although inwardly unwilling, they chose to respect the facts.

Soon, over twenty thousand of the thirty thousand garrison, led by Surt, set out to confront Alina.

After half a day's march, by midday, Alina and Surt met.

Alina looked back at Roland, who was following in disguise.

"Mr. Rohifuo, can I go up now?"

Roland, after all, as the Imperial Governor of the Sussex Empire, was not suited to blatantly involve himself in the Jin Yuan civil war. If discovered, it could affect Alina's support rate.

The Jin Yuan People needed a savior, not a traitor colluding with foreigners.

They were willing to support the avenging goddess Alina, but not someone manipulated by foreign forces.

Roland's disguise was necessary; even his concealed mask was something she helped make.

Alina wasn't frustrated with Roland hiding his identity, but rather with the strange name Rohifuo.

It didn't sound much like a Sussex name, nor a Jin Yuan name.

She vaguely felt it was a combination of Roland's name prefix and Sif's name.

Receiving Roland's nod, Alina garnered a bit more courage.

Some things she ultimately had to face.

Would more than a hundred soldiers shoot at her?

If her ability to rally people was truly that poor, then perhaps she did deserve to die.

The two armies met on the plain, neither side was in a rush to fire, instead arranging formations as ordered by the officers.

Chapter 343: Advance, Alina! (Part 2)

Both sides spread out as much as possible across the plain.

The soldiers in the front row raised their guns, while those in the back anxiously waited.

If the soldiers in the front row fell, they would have to step up.

The soldiers in the first row silently prayed that the bullets wouldn't hit them.

Most firearms of this era didn't even have aiming devices, accuracy relied entirely on faith. Before a shootout, soldiers would silently pray, hoping for the protection of the god they believed in.

Soldiers in the second row also prayed, hoping they'd never have to stand on the front line.

The soldiers were praying, but Alina didn't need to.

She took off her visor and calmly walked to the center of the battlefield.

She stared at Surt.

When her father secretly held power, she had met Surt a few times, but they had no close relations.

Surt was a standard neutral general, loyal to whoever was in power.

To be precise, his loyalty was to the Jin Yuan Republic. It didn't matter to him whether Carlo or Marco was in charge.

Regardless of who came to power, pure soldiers like him would always be heavily utilized.

Soldiers should not take sides at a time like this; their job is to follow orders.

President Marco had simple criteria for this mission: capturing Alina was excellent, killing her was acceptable, and letting her escape was a zero.

There were always people saying Marco was too extreme, but he never took it personally.

He thoughtfully set up the option of being acceptable between perfect and zero.

He absolutely refused to accept the accusation of extremism, viewing it as blatant slander.

Alina made her move with flair, but Surt had no intention of imitating it.

Traitor Alina was a Transcendent, but he was not.

Although he wasn't clear on Alina's current strength, dealing with him would be easy.

The gap between ordinary people and Transcendents was like an entire world. The limit for ordinary people was merely the entry-level for Transcendents.

He didn't want to casually walk up and talk to Alina.

If Alina disregarded rules and directly attacked, where would he find justice?

"Soldiers, prepare to shoot!"

Faced with Alina's somewhat arrogant actions, Surt calmly issued the command.

His brain operated at high speed, pondering why Alina was doing this.

First, eliminate the possibility of Alina committing suicide.

He had seen Alina as a little girl, knowing she had always understood when to advance and retreat.

It's hard for a person's nature to change; Alina wouldn't be so reckless.

He also didn't believe Alina planned to disperse the Ives Port troops alone, turning the tide.

Such powerful Transcendents only included Sofia.

If Sofia personally came, he would be more anxious; but now it's just Alina.

He had heard about Alina's combat performance; if she could defeat a squad of soldiers, it was considered extraordinary performance. Trying to change a battle involving tens of thousands alone was sheer madness.

Since it's not seeking death or breaking the formation alone, then it's a plot!

Surt's eyes lit up, he figured it out!

Reloading firearms was slow, at least two minutes were needed for a second volley.

A two-minute window was enough time for the enemy to launch a charge, tearing apart the entire defense line.

So Alina surely intended to use herself as bait to exhaust the first round of volleys, creating a time gap.

In fairness, Surt's conjecture was logically sound.

Unfortunately, he was dealing with Alina, who didn't play by the rules.

She wasn't here to absorb bullets nor did she allow her subordinates to fire, aiming instead at persuasion.

Persuasion wasn't easy; it was only slightly easier when one's strength surpassed the other. The ease correlates directly with the gap in strength.

Alina's army had far less paper combat power compared to the Ives Port defenders, making persuasion a farce, not something Surt considered.

Without much hesitation, he ordered his most trusted personal guards to fire at Alina, instructing others to maintain a ready-to-fire stance, guarding against Alina's army charging during the reload period.

There were over a hundred personal guards sent to the frontline; even if their aim was poor, it ought to be enough to kill Alina.

Surt breathed a sigh of relief, his tense mood relaxed considerably.

Whatever Alina planned wouldn't matter anymore.

Because she was as good as dead.

The firearms the personal guards were equipped with were different from those of the cannon fodder; during training, their first-hit rate exceeded 30%.

According to this ratio, at least forty or more bullets should have hit Alina.

Transcendents are also mortal and can die.

Alina would become the first Transcendent in Jin Yuan Kingdom's history to be shot to pieces on the battlefield.

Such a pretty young girl, and so young, what a pity. Even Mr. Carlo wasn't a match for President Marco. Could a girl less than twenty years old turn the tables?

As Alina cleared her throat and began to speak, Surt's patience ran out, issuing the shoot command to the personal guards.

With his command, gunfire responded to Alina's persuasion speech.

She spoke well, and many soldiers felt President Marco was overly extreme. Quite a few soldiers, looking at Alina, thought of Mr. Carlo.

If Mr. Carlo was still here, how could Jin Yuan Kingdom end up like this?

Marco, such a tyrannical bug, leading the country merely emphasizes how bleak the situation is.

People desperately needed a savior, but it certainly wouldn't be Alina.

Because she was about to die.

The personal guards raised rifles with simple mechanical aiming devices, all aiming at Alina.

With the general's orders, gunfire rang out simultaneously.

Only fewer than twenty bullets struck Alina.

This wasn't because the personal guards were intimidated by Alina's regal aura, perhaps shooting off-target, but because many soldiers felt Alina was definitely dead, and that one shot wouldn't make a difference, opting to slightly raise their muzzles.

Chapter 344: Advance, Alina! (Part 3)

Alina, after all, was known for fighting for the people and freedom, and many soldiers who knew Mr. Carlo didn't want to personally kill the only daughter of the Liberator Carlo.

Even if Alina had to die, they didn't want to be the executioners.

In any case, let others bear the sin of killing Alina.

Among the Personal Guard, there were many who sympathized with Alina and showed restraint, but there were also those firmly standing by General Surt's side.

Even though they were reluctant, they still fired their guns.

Their salaries were paid by the government, and their loyalty was to President Marco.

As for Alina? They could only wish her smooth passage across the Nether River, preparing for the cycle of reincarnation.

The sudden gunfire startled the soldiers on both sides.

Many new recruits from Surt's main force instinctively fired, not even realizing that this range exceeded the design distance of ordinary firearms.

At the moment they pulled the trigger, Roland activated the Divine Protection.

[Divine Protection], activate!

With a change of his thoughts, Roland enveloped Alina in a pale golden light.

Her beauty was already ranked in the top ten of the Magic Mirror Female Chart; now, covered in a sacred golden glow and taking twenty bullets without a scratch, the soldiers were dumbfounded.

Is this still a human? This is simply a miracle.

The soldiers who had just started shooting were even more terrified.

"Soldiers, if you want to kill the Saint of Vengeance who is leading you to freedom and victory, then continue to shoot."

"The Saint of Vengeance has returned from the Netherworld on flames to lead you in the advance to Xidai. Lay down your weapons and come to me; this is your last chance."

Alina’s voice was magnetic and exceptionally pleasant to hear.

After taking dozens of bullets just now, many soldiers began to doubt their lives.

Not only were the soldiers dumbfounded, but even Surt was stunned.

Are Transcendents this powerful? He had interacted with some Transcendents before, and their displayed abilities couldn’t compare to Alina’s at all.

Could he have made a mistake again?

With peripheral vision, seeing the golden light on Alina gradually dim, Surt gritted his teeth, preparing to take a risk.

This golden light was Alina’s Protective Talisman.

Since the light was dimming, the mysterious power protecting her should be fading.

"Personal Guard, continue the volley!"

With Surt’s command, the personal guards unhesitatingly continued their shooting.

But this time, the effect was far less, achieving the performance of snake oil by raising the muzzle a little.

The second round only nineteen bullets hit Alina, and her previously dim golden light suddenly became as dazzling as sunlight.

Her speech was still continuing.

Surt’s face was difficult to look at, resembling a corpse.

In the instant he made eye contact with Alina, he understood her meaning.

"Fool, the dimming gold light was just an act."

Surt was completely rigid, having difficulty breathing.

He saw countless gun barrels aimed at him.

Obviously, these soldiers had been shocked by Alina's god-like performance.

They decided to abandon darkness for light.

Surt was their token of allegiance to Roland.

He knew he was doomed; he was not a Transcendent capable of using his body to withstand bullets.

Just as the movie of his life played briefly in Surt's mind, the gunfire rang out.

At least five hundred angry soldiers chose to act, and although they were lacking in aim, they had a lot of guns.

Surt was not a Transcendent; he died.

When his body fell heavily, the light he saw gradually disappeared.

This damned beautiful world no longer had anything to do with him.

Chapter 345: Do Not Become Marauders

The gunfire didn't stop; it just shifted.

The soldiers who had decided to defect needed a gift to prove their sincerity.

Surt and his Personal Guard were the perfect gift.

Surt was already dead, and now it was his guard's turn.

Although many soldiers in the Personal Guard didn't lose their bottom line at critical moments and, out of conscience, chose to raise their guns by ten centimeters, giving the Jin Yuan Kingdom a chance, giving Alina a chance.

But this was precisely the cause of their death.

Having the qualification to take sides is a privilege beyond the reach of ordinary people.

They were Surt's Personal Guard, already marked with a distinctive imprint; this little bit of goodwill wouldn't change anything.

If Alina could control the situation, she might have spared them generously, but unfortunately, she couldn't.

She knew these defectors needed an outlet for their emotions.

They even killed Surt, so naturally, there was no reason to spare his guard.

Most of these people were brought by Surt from his hometown, with extremely high loyalty.

Letting them live to avenge Surt? That wouldn't be funny.

The gunfire rang out wildly.

The few in number Personal Guard put up the most heroic resistance. They were well-equipped, skilled in marksmanship, and well-organized, truly elite.

However, in the face of a huge numerical gap, all this was meaningless.

The gunfire gradually subsided.

The heroic resistance of the Personal Guard at least took twice as many ordinary soldiers with them.

Many Personal Guard members died with unclosed eyes.

They also wanted to defect, but no one gave them the chance.

Until their deaths, they couldn’t understand that this world is not just light and darkness. There is a wide gray area between black and white.

This mutual slaughter under a moving facade was exactly that gray area.

Coldly witnessing all this, Alina felt no ripple in her heart.

She raised her right hand and loudly announced to everyone, "People yearning for freedom, please follow me!"

Freedom is not in the history gene of the Jin Yuan people. They once had a long royal rule, which was the ideological resonance given to the Jin Yuan people after Mr. Carlo broke the shackles of royal power.

"Freedom?"

This beautiful word made the Jin Yuan people proudly hold their heads high over the past decades, and then suddenly disappeared over the past year.

Hearing this familiar word, the soldiers were silent for a moment, then erupted in earth-shattering cheers.

They put down their weapons and rushed to Alina’s Wanderer Legion, embracing each other.

Not long ago, they were still enemies.

But now they are intimately close brothers.

Surt and his Personal Guard’s bodies were trampled on chaotically by countless soldiers, unrecognizable.

Fortunately, they were already dead and wouldn’t feel pain.

Watching the astonishing scene that occurred on the plain, Lisa, standing shoulder to shoulder with Roland, sighed lightly:

"Roland, was this also part of your plan?"

Roland looked at Lisa’s complex eyes, smiling, and said, "First of all, I am now Rohifuo. Secondly, I am not a Prophet, so I can’t guarantee whether it will work."

"What if it fails?" Lisa couldn’t help but ask the question she always wanted to ask.

Before the action started, she didn’t want to be a Crow and refrained from asking, but now she couldn’t hold back.

"If it fails, run away. Otherwise, what, wait to die?" Roland calmly gave the standard answer.

He helped Alina because it was profitable. If she got killed, what good would it do? Of course, he would turn and run.

Lisa stared blankly at Roland, suddenly remembering his promise of living and dying together, her lips slightly curling, and the little worry from the start of the journey vanished.

Looking at Lisa’s pure smile, Roland just smiled back.

Lisa was still so pure, never changed.

This result, Alina surely knew about it.

He could help her because he had long surpassed the boundary of friendship; this was a risky investment with huge upfront costs.

Now it was time to collect the interest.

After the "moving" mass defection ceremony, Alina reorganized the army.

She boldly employed the officers of the Ives Port garrison to continue managing the army.

Although she knew very well that these people surrendered under duress and weren't necessarily sincere in following her, it didn't matter.

As long as she can keep winning, these opportunists' disloyalty would disappear.

If she lost, nothing would need to be said.

Accepting over twenty thousand soldiers from the Ives Port garrison, plus the original Wanderer Army, Alina formed two army-level combat units and marched on Ives Port.

Though she wanted to head north immediately to march on West City, Roland firmly opposed it.

Roland's reason was simple: recapturing West cannot be rushed, and Marco should be given ample opportunity to continue making more brutal moves under pressure.

If Marco doesn't push the Jin Yuan people to the last resort, how could they possibly follow Alina with peace of mind?

If this reason was somewhat far-fetched, Roland's other reason was very sufficient. Rebellion must have a stable base, or it would just be banditry.

The southern region of the Jin Yuan Kingdom was originally Mr. Carlo's base when he started. As long as Alina raised the banner of freedom and republic that Mr. Carlo proposed back then, she could attract the disillusioned being oppressed by Marco to join.

Ives Port was close at hand, but by no means a pushover.

Although Surt took away more than twenty thousand soldiers, the remaining garrison still had more than seven thousand people.

Ives Port had strong city defenses, and a frontal assault was definitely out of the question.

However, the food reserves in Ives Port weren't large, and it was very dependent on trade for daily necessities and medicines.

To make Ives Port surrender was simple: blockade it.

The Sussex Empire and the Jin Yuan Republic had not declared war, and on paper, at least, were friendly countries.

Directly involving the Fourth Fleet in combat would bring enormous diplomatic pressure, definitely not feasible.

Even if Roland didn't care and made the Fourth Fleet fight, warships of this era could hardly cause substantial damage to fortified ports.

Fortunately, he didn't need to siege; a blockade would suffice.

Under his orders, the Fourth Fleet assembled twelve nautical miles offshore of Ives Port and, under the guise of military exercises, blockaded the sea area.

When Ives Port officials sent protest, Bridges calmly responded.

"This is international waters. I can stay as long as I want."

The Ives Port officials were left speechless.

While Bridges' statement was somewhat forceful, it wasn't wrong. Beyond twelve nautical miles off the coast is international waters, where anyone can go.

The Fourth Fleet did not openly declare a blockade but merely prohibited ships from passing through the exercise area under the name of military exercises.

If any ships could dive into Ives Port, they naturally didn't care.

Entering Ives Port from the sea was also possible, but only after the exercises ended.

As for when the exercises would end, that was a military secret and not disclosed.

Under Roland's arrangement, the Fourth Fleet in effect blockaded Ives Port under the name of military exercises.

Ives Port had a large population, and while the food reserves might barely support for a while, daily necessities and industrial products needed trade to replenish.

The blockade might not be deadly, but it would certainly be painful.

Alina led the main force to surround Ives Port from the land and then sent people to the surrounding small towns to persuade them to surrender.

Hearing that Mr. Carlo's daughter was leading the army back to defeat the terrifying Dictator Marco, the simple folk responded enthusiastically, joining Alina's resistance army.

Alina selected soldiers from among them and formed a new army.

She had long remembered how Roland’s new army transformed into a combat-capable team, and now she was merely putting it into practice.

The resistance in Ives Port didn’t last long.

On the fifth day of the siege, good news came from Ives Port.

The mayor and the Port Authority’s director "died unexpectedly," and their deputies decided to heed the people’s call to open the city to Alina and surrender.

Chapter 346: Bad News

The West River flows through the center of the city, and West Island in the middle of the river is also the source of the city’s name.

West Island is not large, but it is a fortress that has existed for thousands of years, easy to defend and hard to attack.

It used to be a refuge for monarchs throughout the ages.

Although not many monarchs were truly sheltered by the West Palace, the strong defensive system still led many rulers to hide here in fear.

Marco despised these monarchs.

In his view, no castle can protect a decaying feudal lord.

He once thought he would never hide in a turtle shell until someone stormed the presidential residence.

He truly realized that he could die, be overthrown, and even no longer represent progress, all his pride vanished into thin air.

He no longer lived in the presidential residence but moved into the West Palace.

This place favored by former monarchs as a sanctuary.

Also where the last Emperor was dragged out and sent to the guillotine.

His eyes glanced at the mirror, Marco looked at the person in the reflection.

For a moment, he seemed to see the once spirited youth.

He was a few years younger than Carlo, that group of old comrades buried the last Emperor together, completely sending the decaying monarchy into the dustbin of history.

After that, they started to have disagreements.

Mr. Carlo from the Buanaba Clan is Count Jacques, a standard member of the Nobility.

He advocated for a relatively gentle policy towards feudal lords other than the Emperor, not to imagine resolving all problems in one go, allowing lords not directly opposing them to continue to exist.

Carlo's reasoning was simple, the feudal lords still had strong power, and they didn't support the Emperor because Emperor Roiss was too absurd.

This last monarch, through several meetings and comical performances, precisely offended feudal lords, capitalists, ordinary citizens, and even farmers.

The entire nation wished for his death, that's why the revolution could succeed.

Once the flames of revolution spread to other groups, support would turn into opposition.

Marco firmly opposed such a compromise.

He was an extreme reformer, advocating for an immediate change. He even put forth the astonishing assertion that "incomplete revolution equals no revolution at all."

Because he was too radical, there was no place for him in the government led by Carlo.

Though appointed by Carlo as a ministerial-level official, he had no real power, and could only write articles at the Jin Yuan News Agency to while away the days.

Marco was discontented; this was not the new world he wanted.

He gradually found the root of the problem, which lay in remnants of the old forces like Carlo who had infiltrated the revolutionary ranks, obstructing him.

After understanding the root of the problem, he proposed a series of theories, earning himself a good reputation.

Carlo’s moderate reforms, while more in line with reality, also faced many problems.

How to address the interests of each class, how to unite everyone, he sometimes found himself overwhelmed.

Faced with a complex political situation and the awakened resistance consciousness of the Jin Yuan People, Carlo adopted an advanced strategy of manipulating the political situation from behind the scenes.

If something went wrong, it was the government’s fault; if there were achievements, Mr. Carlo was the mastermind.

Carlo’s approach also drew opposition from many people.

Marco won a lot of support from radicals with his sharp articles and radical views.

A coup eventually erupted.

The radicals defeated the moderate reformists and seized the reins of power.

But they also knew the means of their rise to power were less than honorable.

Although Mr. Carlo had many faults, his prestige was high, and Marco had to clear away dissenters under the guise of revolution, forming a de facto autocracy.

Now he lived in the Emperor's castle, enjoyed life like an Emperor, possessed more authority than an Emperor, except nominally he wasn't an Emperor, how was he any different from one?

The Marco in the mirror, his face slightly haggard, with slightly darkened eye circles, even those decadent Emperors indulged in alcohol and women looked healthier than him.

Watching his haggard reflection, Marco suddenly jolted awake.

To relieve stress and comfort the young lover left behind by the last Emperor, he had been numbing himself every day with alcohol and women.

This couldn't go on. Starting today, he must quit drinking!

Marco released his clenched fist, frowned slightly, and began to peruse the documents on the desk.

Just as he was contemplating whose head would roll today, the head of intelligence hurriedly approached and knocked on his door.

"Come in!"

The person Marco least wanted to see during this time was definitely the intelligence chief.

Every visit brought bad news.

"Speak, what bad news is it again?"

The intelligence chief looked troubled, but some things could not be left unsaid.

He hesitated for a moment, finally abandoning the idea of masking sorrow with joy, and reported honestly:

"Mr. President, Alina she..."

"I know, she and her ragtag band are almost landing, right?"

A bit of flush appeared on Marco’s face.

He might not be good at construction, but he’s too adept at fighting with people.

He had long since obtained channels to track the movements of the Fourth Fleet.

With accurate intelligence, he easily calculated the possible landing site of Alina and made preparations.

The Sussex Empire is very strong but also very weak, with their Cabinet and Empress locked in open and secret battles.

The Sussex Navy boasts four fleets capable of challenging any other national navy individually, yet their Empress can only command half a fleet.

The departure of the Fourth Fleet signaled that Empress Sylph was standing firmly opposed to him.

Although the act of harboring vagrants had already exposed Empress Sylph's real stance, such a direct breach still irked Marco.

The damned Empress Sylph, instead of vying for power with the Cabinet, she wanted to meddle in Jin Yuan's internal affairs, utterly absurd.

Considering the Empress's young age, Marco had reason to believe this was Roland's machination.

He never fully trusted the reports of the Dilas Envoy.

Although this envoy stationed at Sussex had dispatched competent personnel to examine Alina's body, and reported the entire incident thoroughly, he remained skeptical.

The reason was simple, Alina died too smoothly.

Her every move seemed like the best solution in a desperate situation, only her luck was a bit off at the end.

Marco did not believe Alina could be this smart in despair.

He had been waiting for news of Alina's appearance, and now it had finally come.

He waited for Alina to crazily land and foolishly seek her death.

There was no doubt about it.

The Fourth Fleet was the only naval force Empress Sylph could mobilize, extremely important.

While helping to transport some soldiers might be okay, directly engaging in conflict was against her interests.

The Fourth Fleet directly joining the conflict would mean war between two nations.

In the backdrop of deteriorated relations with the Vladimir Empire, Sylph had no reason to provoke Jin Yuan.

Marco’s lips slightly upturned, waiting for the intelligence chief’s triumphant report.

Without continuous naval support, over ten thousand people landing would be a gift in vain.

"Let me guess, has poor Miss Alina been captured alive? Or has her head been taken by General Surt?"

The intelligence chief lowered his head, his voice slightly trembling.

"Mr. President, Alina she..."

"What about her? Was her body blown to pieces and couldn’t be found?" Marco was somewhat displeased.

He needed Alina alive or at least a complete body to intimidate the opposition.

Body fragments couldn’t prove her authenticity.

Seeing Marco’s unpleasant expression, the intelligence chief reluctantly said:

"Alina successfully landed, persuaded General Surt’s subordinates to surrender, and Surt died on the spot."

Marco was silent for a long time, then slowly asked: "And then?"

"Afterwards, her troops surrounded Ives Port."

The somewhat tense Marco upon hearing this news instantly beamed a smile.

"Foolish, Ives Port can’t possibly fall, she’s seeking death."

"Mr. President..."

The intelligence chief pulled out a handkerchief to wipe the sweat from his face, his voice very low: "Ives Port surrendered."

Chapter 347: The Skies of Xidai

Has Ives Port surrendered?

Upon hearing this bad news, Marco was stunned for a full five seconds before coming back to his senses.

After a moment’s pause, his expression grew more gloomy, and his voice carried a somber tone.

"Are you saying that Ives Port, with thirty thousand elite troops stationed, equipped with over a hundred large-caliber cannons and three permanent fortresses, and deploying mines to prevent a naval landing, has surrendered?"

The head of intelligence felt a chill down his spine, and his throat was parched with distress.

If given a choice, he would have turned around and fled right then.

He saw Marco’s pupils constrict.

From his knowledge of President Marco, this was a sign that he intended to kill someone.

Despite his inner panic, the head of intelligence, Allen, hardened his resolve, responding with a sighing murmur as if from someone at their deathbed: "Yes."

Marco fell silent once again.

Surprisingly, he did not fly into a rage, nor did he order anyone to be killed; instead, he gazed at the sunless sky outside the window as if pondering something.

After an indeterminable amount of time, he slowly spoke in a solitary voice, "Allen, I need detailed intelligence. What is Surt doing, what is the Port Authority doing, tell me everything."

The head of intelligence wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, his body trembling even more.

When Marco receives bad news and immediately acts out, it often means the situation isn't too severe. If he remains especially calm, it only means he's thinking about whom to kill.

Despite his inner fear, Director Allen maintained a high level of professionalism, clearly sorting out the intelligence of Alina's landing and the fall of Ives Port, reporting it truthfully.

His report contained not a hint of subjectivity; it was purely a factual account.

This is why, though many ministers close to Marco have been sent to the guillotine, he remains unshaken.

Speak less, do more; Marco doesn't like subordinates who have too many ideas.

After listening to Allen's report, Marco pondered for a long time, then slowly said, "Go arrange for the execution of the former ambassador to Sussex, Dilas."

The head of intelligence, Allen, stood still, momentarily at a loss for words.

As he was dumbfounded, Marco frowned and glared at him discontentedly, "Don’t ask so many questions, hurry up and get it done!"

"Your Excellency, Dilas... was executed three days ago."

Three days ago was the exact day they learned of Alina’s miraculous "resurrection." The ever decisive Marco certainly wouldn’t allow a derelict to live long; the former ambassador Dilas was thus sent to the guillotine.

Marco’s lips twitched imperceptibly.

He didn’t even notice the documents at his hand being crumpled into a ball of creased waste paper.

"It’s not just Dilas who’s negligent; what about the counselor responsible for inspections, what was her name? Send her to the guillotine too!"

Allen lowered his head, sighing internally.

It was clear that President Marco’s mind was somewhat troubled.

He even forgot that Counselor Lina had also been sent to the guillotine.

Too many things had happened recently: there were rebels in the capital, Southern turncoats returning; if he were president, he wouldn’t sleep well either.

But...

If a more moderate policy had been adopted, none of these things would have happened.

Allen couldn’t help but want to remind Marco of a few things, but seeing the madness burning in Marco’s eyes, he instantly chose to keep quiet.

He had a vague illusion that the once omnipotent Marco had lost his composure.

On the eve of plotting a coup against Carlo, Marco remained calm and composed, not only encouraging co-conspirators to stay calm but also going straight to sleep that night.

Where had the cool and composed Marco, who swore to sweep the old world into the dustbin, gone?

The path they insisted on was correct, so why were the results sliding in the wrong direction?

As Allen prepared to leave, Marco’s somewhat hoarse voice drifted over.

"Allen, our choice is correct, and our reform will surely triumph; this is just a setback before victory. Rest well, I need you."

"I... yes." Allen stood up straight, saluted Marco, and turned to leave.

Walking out of the West Palace, crossing the stone bridge to the opposite side, Allen’s mood remained somewhat low.

He and Marco had been old friends for many years; he knew Marco too well.

Marco wasn’t truly confident; it was more like he was hypnotizing himself into self-belief.

Was their choice really correct?

Allen thought of Mr. Carlo’s proposals.

No reform can succeed overnight; one must respect the facts and proceed step by step.

Carlo believed that although the monarchy had ended, the power of the old nobility and feudal lords still existed. The most pressing issue was not to settle accounts with the old forces but to bring them into the framework of the new world.

In the world Carlo envisioned, with the continuous expansion of Jin Yuan Kingdom, the entrenched forces of the old nobility would gradually be diluted.

As their power and influence are continuously diluted, they would either voluntarily join the new class, or become completely marginalized, becoming elders mired in the glory of the past.

Carlo's proposals were very moderate, and also somewhat compromised by necessity.

He felt that too much blood had already been shed in this grand reform, and the country must be left with some legacy.

Though the old nobility were arrogant and stubborn, they held land, wealth, knowledge, and power.

If they fully supported the Last Emperor, the reform could never succeed.

The old nobility had also contributed to toppling the Emperor and stripping away the Imperial Authority.

Some did not contribute, but even their neutrality was a form of goodwill.

The Emperor was just sent to the guillotine, and now you're expected to turn the blade on once fellow comrades? Carlo felt this was unacceptable.

Carlo's political views were somewhat moderate but respected the reality of Jin Yuan Kingdom.

In fact, the old nobility forces within Jin Yuan Kingdom are still above the reformers.

If they are pushed to the edge, their backlash would be hard to deal with.

If a highly influential old noble appears, the entire country could fall into endless civil war or even split apart.

Mr. Carlo is from the old nobility, but his proposals definitely stand on the position of the entire nation.

To show his position, Carlo even returned most of the ancestral lands to the state, retaining less than one-fiftieth.

However, all his efforts, in Marco’s eyes, were nothing but betrayal.

The phrase Marco said, "An incomplete revolution is equivalent to no revolution at all," was not said for nothing; he acted upon it.

When facing former comrades, he hardened his heart and raised the butcher’s knife.

Carlo is old nobility, a double agent within the revolutionary ranks.

Carlo must die!

Marco secretly allied with the radical reformers, launching a coup in the capital, and overnight, scattered Carlo and his followers.

Carlo knew Marco disagreed with his political views, so he never entrusted Marco with important tasks and remained wary of this ambitious fellow.

Yet he still underestimated the anger of the disappointed.

Allen sighed lightly, looking up at the sky.

That's how it is in West City during winter; though there's sunshine, it's mostly gloomy, just like his current mood.

He didn't want to comment on who was right or wrong between Carlo and Marco.

But he always felt that there should be better solutions to political differences, as after all, they were comrades who fought side by side to overthrow the old dynasty; they shouldn't be killing each other.

He didn't agree with Carlo's political stance, but he also disagreed with Marco's black-and-white attitude and the labels he put on Carlo.

Carlo was merely born into a noble family; he was not a part of the decaying old forces.

If Carlo was aligned with the old nobility, why didn't he make himself Emperor, but instead drafted civil rights codes and other laws, providing the Jin Yuan People with the basis of freedom and equality from a legal perspective?

This doesn't make any sense at all.

Marco accused Carlo of being power-hungry, yet Carlo retreated to a secondary position, while Marco, after coming to power, continuously struck dissidents, holding power firmly in his hands.

Thinking of this, Allen only felt a headache coming on.

If given a choice, he would rather choose Carlo over Marco, though unfortunately, he had no chance.

He had long been branded as Marco's loyalist, an imprint he couldn't remove.

He had done too many things against his conscience for Marco, which couldn't be cleansed away.

Though uncomfortable, he could only stay tied to Marco's big ship, advancing and retreating together.

Compared to Marco, he even less understood what Alina wanted to do.

Surely she didn't really think a mere few tens of thousands of rebels could take back West City, did she?

Times have indeed changed.

During the time Carlo was killed, and Alina was in hiding, Marco continuously nibbled away at the territory of the old forces, finding various reasons to send the old nobility to the guillotine.

Though the resistance from the old forces was intense, President Marco truly had a gift for struggle.

Using various means, he divided the old nobility, making many nobles believe he really was only eliminating the scum of the nation rather than settling scores with the nobility.

By the time the old nobility reacted, the most powerful dukes were already dead.

The remaining nobles, though not lacking in strength, had lost their backbone and couldn't unite at all.

They either fled overseas or hid in their castles waiting for death.

The downfall of the old nobility was just a matter of time.

In Allen's view, as long as President Marco systematically eliminated the old forces, providing visible benefits to civilians and merchants, he could unite the majority and reshape a new order.

Though this path was strewn with thorns and rivers of blood, it could definitely succeed.

If there were no accidents.

No, as long as he's around, no accidents are allowed!

Allen thought fiercely.

He was so focused on his thoughts that he didn't pay much heed to the few people approaching him from the opposite direction.

These people wore hoods, their faces obscured. Though somewhat unfamiliar, Allen's professional intuition told him these individuals had formidable combat capabilities.

Presumably, they were recruited by President Marco to execute special tasks.

Allen shrugged, not thinking much of it, and continued walking.

Until he felt a chill on his back.

The sense of danger, honed by years in intelligence work, allowed him to evade a fatal strike.

However, the enemies were prepared, and he didn't avoid the fatal second and third attacks.

Allen wanted to shout, but a handkerchief was pressed over his mouth.

He struggled desperately, but the assassin's strength was astonishing.

With his throat tightly choked, he couldn't make a sound.

He was held up by two assassins, and the three of them staggered along, appearing like drunken revelers leaving together in pairs.

Allen's vision gradually blurred; with his last strength, he looked up at the sky.

It remained overcast and gray, though a few rays of sunshine streaked across the horizon.

Allen disappeared.

The director of intelligence was kidnapped at the gates of the President's Mansion, vanishing into the vast crowd.

It sounded like a cold joke, yet it happened so real.

Hearing the news, Marco was stunned for a long time before deciding whom to kill.

Coldly, he ordered that dozens whom he suspected were involved were added to this week's guillotine queue.

The guillotine was used so frequently lately that it was worn out, requiring regular maintenance and a daily limit on its use.

The guillotine had dulled from overuse, indicating the sheer number of deaths during this time.

Marco's face was contorted; this time, his anger was indeed genuine.

Chapter 349: Xidai's Sky_3

After the coup, many comrades betrayed him, and quite a few were sent to the guillotine by him.

He essentially had no friends, but Allen was an exception.

Allen might not have been his friend, yet he was among the few who could speak to him in the tone of a friend.

At least, it was so in the early days of the revolution.

In recent months, Allen also gradually fell silent, not daring to speak much with him.

He knew what the old buddy was thinking but didn’t know how to break through it all.

He had initially wanted to have a good talk with Allen soon.

Unfortunately, there was no chance anymore.

Thinking about replacing Allen with that useless Deputy Intelligence Officer gave Marco a bit of a headache.

Just when he held a sliver of hope that the people who kidnapped Allen were only after money, waiting for them to send a ransom note and demands, bad news arrived once more.

Allen’s body was found in a stinking ditch.

The enemy left a line of small characters on Allen’s corpse.

"He is not the last one."

This was a blatant provocation.

Marco looked at Allen’s body, his face calm, without any expression.

Suddenly, he became calm.

Who did this? There were no answers for now. But the enemy wanted him to lose his mind.

During this period, everything was going wrong, making him hover on the brink of madness. If he continued to be dominated by anger, he would certainly make wrong decisions.

He pondered for a long time and summoned the Secretary of State, speaking in a deep voice:

"Notify the ministers of all departments, I want to hold an emergency meeting."

...

While Marco was holding a meeting, Alina was also convening a meeting almost simultaneously.

Although Ives Port and West City were more than 2,300 kilometers apart from north to south, they happened to be in the same time zone, so the meeting times naturally weren't too far apart.

Unlike the grave-like oppressive atmosphere of Marco's meeting, Alina's meeting was full of laughter and happiness.

The first thing she did after taking over Ives Port was to publicly announce the list of criminals, with Marco and his henchmen prominently listed, but the officials of Ives Port and ordinary officials of the Jin Yuan Interim Government were not included.

Only the main culprits are questioned, accomplices are not pursued.

It's a simple principle, yet few can achieve it.

Humans are emotional creatures, easily influenced by emotions like joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness.

But Alina was different.

She was equivalent to having died once, having a deeper understanding of life and death.

Since becoming Miss Fuchou and then reverting to her original identity, she was no longer her former self.

She calmly comforted the surrendering officials of Ives Port, painting a beautiful blueprint for everyone.

She implemented feasible changes in the national construction concept her father left behind.

She did not agree with many of her father’s practices.

Mr. Carlo viewed the world too ideally, always hoping to inspire the citizens with concepts like ideals, beliefs, and common goals.

Unfortunately, in this era, the education level of ordinary people was very low, and they simply couldn’t understand such profound topics.

Those with good education could understand but didn’t want to support it.

They held knowledge, wealth, and power, so how could they accept the concept of "equality for all"?

Alina modified her father’s ideas, making them more realistic and utilitarian.

Utilitarianism was indeed not good, but those willing to follow her all hoped for a better life, that’s reality.

Alina wasn’t just talking; she needed the support of the old forces to implement her father’s ideas.

Sitting in the conference hall, Alina addressed the officials of Ives Port and people from all walks of life, simplifying the concept of absolute equality.

Alina’s slogan was simple, "Defend freedom, enjoy freedom, become freedom."

Everyone understood.

Alina didn’t want to infringe on everyone’s legal rights.

People from all walks of life engaged in heated discussions, pondering over it, and everyone was more willing to accept Alina’s strategy.

Following Alina indeed had a considerable chance of getting shot, but following Brother Marco meant heading to the guillotine at any moment.

With no way out, they were naturally willing to gamble again with Alina.

They yearned for progress, desired wealth, craved beautiful women.

So they could only unite around Alina.

As for whether Alina could succeed?

They couldn’t be bothered to think about it, it was Alina’s own concern.

Chapter 350: Outlaws Must Be Punished!

From Saint Rurik Palace to Sussex City.

From the Dome Cathedral of the Divine Court of Nature to the Divine Hall of Resurrection of the Divine Court of Light, everyone is pondering the same questions.

What is Alina doing? What is Marco doing?

The whole world wants to know the answer.

They completely cannot understand how this internal conflict, which was supposed to be a life-and-death struggle in their eyes, has turned out like this.

Since Alina landed, she did not immediately gather an army to march towards the capital as per the usual rebellion process, but instead leisurely stockpiled supplies and recruited troops at Ives Port.

She didn't even raise the flag of another Jin Yuan.

Countries and major powers around the world were puzzled.

What kind of maneuver is this?

After all, opposing Marco does not equate to supporting Alina; the total number of troops she can gather does not exceed a hundred thousand. If she doesn't march towards the capital while morale is high, is there any chance of saving the rebellion once the resolve dissipates?

Does this still look like she's avenging her father?

Alina's unusual actions were baffling, and Marco's response was even more unexpected.

He acted as if nothing was happening in the south, steadily organizing the order of the capital.

With the deployment of the gendarmes and police, the originally chaotic West City miraculously returned to its previous order.

Though puzzling, everyone was very clear that there's no possibility of reconciliation between Alina and Marco, as this is the matter of avenging a father.

Everyone is anticipating their next move.

While the entire world couldn't understand, Marco and Alina were not idle.

Marco had to work late into the night every day.

Allen's assassination took away his last trace of a smile.

His comrades either died in the struggle or were sent to the guillotine by him, and Allen was the only remaining sprout.

Since the day Allen was assassinated, he had no friends, no family, not even subordinates he could exchange heartfelt words with.

He had never felt so isolated. Beside him were only enemies and those who could help him deal with enemies, devoid of any emotional fluctuations.

Entering a completely cold-blooded mode, Marco completed the organization of West City's order and military in a month's time.

After Allen's assassination, he did not appoint Allen's deputy to manage intelligence work but casually found a reason to throw Allen's deputy into prison, using the Great Memory Recovery Skill.

Allen's deputy survived several rounds of torture before finally collapsing under agony.

Reluctantly, he asked Marco a question.

"How did you know it was me?"

"Guessed." Facing an already subdued enemy, Marco was quite honest, unwilling to lie.

"Guessed?" Allen’s deputy was almost in despair; he couldn’t believe this reason.

Marco handed him over to the Torturer without saying much.

Some things he couldn’t tell a prisoner.

The one who benefits most is the one most suspect.

According to this logic, Allen’s deputy Lun had significant suspicion.

Marco guessed but not entirely, there was a rational deduction.

What if he caught the wrong person?

No problem, just let it be. Many innocent people have died in the Palace Prison, one more doesn’t make a difference.

An imperceptible glint of coldness flashed in Marco’s eyes.

He didn’t miss catching those without suspicion; moreover, those who truly were suspect?

Lun was still too young.

With Lun’s confession, Marco obtained the answer he expected.

The Flower Moon Faction made their move.

It was a faction representing the old nobility and the military, also his mortal enemy.

Indeed, he was still too merciful, allowing those who should have been utterly destroyed to have a voice.

Holding the interrogation report, Marco stayed awake through the night, silent the entire evening.

When he walked out of the small study room, no one knew that a cold, emotionless reformer had emerged.

He decided to burn this decaying old world and reshape a new one.

He would surely succeed.

Even if he unfortunately failed, he would burn away all the corrupt chains, allowing future generations to establish a new free nation on this unlocked ruin.

For this ideal, sacrificing as many people as necessary was worth it.

Unlike the cold and determined Marco, the main thing Alina, in Ives Port, did this month was constantly compromise and coordinate.

Roland almost never offered any opinions on her governance plans.

No matter how Alina asked, he generally declined with the reason of not wanting to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

Feeling a bit helpless, Alina had to basically adopt her father’s policies wholesale, with minor modifications.

In her view, the monarchy is indeed corrupt, but in an era of Transcendents' existence, how could humans be truly equal?

Letting a Transcendent being like Sofia enjoy the same political treatment as an old farmer on the roadside, isn't that a joke?

Alina recalled Roland's only advice to her.

Respect reality.

The reality is that Jin Yuan is a complicated country.

More complicated than any other country in the world.

Jin Yuan is the only major country where all three religions are legal in the world, where over twenty percent of the population are from the Mysterious Race.

In other countries, the Mysterious Race is merely other ethnic groups of Human Race, whereas in Jin Yuan, the Mysterious Race is of other races.

In Jin Yuan Kingdom, as long as the taxable population reaches a certain number, it can gain recognition.

If the taxable population is insufficient, enlisting in the army is an option too.

This inclusive foreign policy allows Jin Yuan Kingdom to have the richest variety of both peoples and soldiers.

It's a fantastical army comprised of Druids and Priests, Wizards who play with voodoo dolls fighting shoulder to shoulder with Knights who believe in Light, Centaurs, and Werewolves serving as mobile units.

Unlike Sussex with its pure bloodlines, Jin Yuan Kingdom is far too complicated.

If it were only the issue of the Mysterious Race, perhaps Jin Yuan wouldn't be considered the most complex.

After all, many countries also have Mysterious Races, such as the mysterious Bearman Berserkers in the Vladimir Empire's army.

The complexity of Jin Yuan exists in all aspects.

In the commercial field, the nobility merchant guild, civilian merchant guild, and the once-existing imperial merchant guild compete for profit, hindering each other, never forming a united effort.

In the industrial field, the archaeology faction and the reform faction argue endlessly.

In the alchemy industry, the Mithril Society and the Black Iron Society have been long-standing adversaries.

There is a magical legend on the Rodinia Continent that a united Jin Yuan is invincible.

This legend is also a classic joke because no one can unite Jin Yuan.

Even the historically renowned Emperor Iris couldn't do it, Carl couldn't do it after overthrowing the imperial system, can Alina do it?

Roland originally thought of advising Alina, but after fully understanding Jin Yuan's diversity, he chose silence.

Just a small Ives Port opened Roland's eyes.

He witnessed brown striped centaurs and black striped centaurs fighting fiercely over which magic pattern color looks better, personally experiencing the disdain hierarchy within the werewolves.

According to different degrees of wolf transformation, those more human-like are called werewolves, those more wolf-like are called werewolf humans.

This was Roland's perception before coming to Jin Yuan, but after arriving at Ives Port, his perception shattered.

It turns out there is also a distinction within werewolves between humanized werewolves and wolfized werewolves.

And among werewolf humans, there is a difference between werewolf wolves and human wolves.

Simply put, in the eyes of werewolf humans, the higher the wolf content, the more noble.

While in the eyes of werewolves, having too high a wolf content is a departure from civilized society, it is barbaric.

Within humanized werewolves, the most humanized group looks completely indistinguishable in appearance.

Even on a full moon night, they do not turn into wolves crouching on the ground, but only enhance their claws and fangs during battle.

After the werewolf historian introduced by Alina finished explaining the sixteen detailed divisions of werewolves and werewolf humans, Roland went completely silent.

He chose to give up.

Let the matters of Jin Yuan be handled by the Jin Yuan people themselves.

He only did two things.

First was to stop Alina from losing control, second was to remind Alina to respect reality.

The bewildered Roland spent every day in the best hotel in Ives Port, enjoying the soft bed and the meals personally prepared by Lisa, then waited in a daze.

Unlike Roland's bewilderment, the accompanying Fourth Fleet commander Bridges was a bit restless.

Under the guise of military exercises, he blockaded Ives Port, forcing the port to surrender, feeling proud while eagerly anticipating a chance to excel further.

However, he was soon disappointed.

After the Fourth Fleet stationed in Ives Port, there was nothing to do.

Bridges initially ordered the sailors to stay on the ships ready for combat, but for the next month, there was no order for action.

Facing more and more grumbles from the sailors, Bridges had no choice but to allow them to go ashore to release pent-up emotions.

Before the sailors went ashore, Bridges made a final effort, he lectured the sailors, asking them to respect local laws.

However, on the day the sailors went ashore, all the brothels in Ives Port were packed.

Jin Yuan people have pride.

Even shameless prostitutes were unwilling to entertain the filthy and crude Sussex people, yet as soon as the Sussex sailors offered twice the overnight fee, their dignity floated to the ground along with their clothes.

As long as there’s a hundred percent profit...

Haha, Carl said it very well.

That night, Sussex people and visitors from other places fought fiercely in many nightclubs, keeping the police busy running around.

The next morning, a frustrated and helpless Alina couldn’t think of how to deal with these disruptive sailors, so she found Roland.

While Roland was enjoying a uniquely flavored sea snake stew, Alina walked in with slightly dark circles under her eyes.

Seeing Alina looking a bit unusual, Lisa wisely found an excuse to leave, leaving the small dining room to Alina and Roland.

She didn’t understand politics, nor did she like it.

She preferred to create dishes that could touch Alina’s soul, hoping for more top-quality reviews.

Watching Lisa leave, Roland placed a piece of boiled snake meat into his mouth, enjoying while smiling and asking:

"Alina, it seems you didn’t sleep well last night. I suggest you share this delicacy and then go back for a beauty sleep. Lack of sleep is beauty’s greatest enemy."

"I never care about such superficial things. Well, I do care a lot, but right now I have no mood for sleep."

Alina considered various ways to start the conversation, but ultimately chose to be truthful.

After she finished talking about the chaos of the sailors' night last night, Roland asked solemnly:

"Were there any casualties?"

"Yes."

Alina's voice was somewhat hoarse, pushing her gold-rimmed glasses up, somewhat helplessly saying:

"You know how angry someone gets when being dragged out from a woman's bed after drinking; of course, sailors from the Fourth Fleet would resist. As far as I know, at least a dozen officers and three soldiers died in the conflict."

Roland shrugged, teasingly said: "How would I know? I don't have such a colorful experience."

Alina felt speechless; was Roland in the mood for jokes now?

She sighed softly: "Don't worry, I won't make things difficult for your subordinates. In a few days, I'll secretly release them, but not now, I need to provide an explanation to those who follow me, even if it's just superficial."

"Bang!"

Roland slammed his palm on the table, startling Alina to stand up.

"These lawless thugs must be severely punished! Let judgment be done as needed!"

Alina's mind momentarily couldn't process, she asked softly: "Aren't you angry?"

"Angry? Of course I’m angry!"

Roland suddenly stood up, hands on hips, looking "furiously" at Alina.

"Even if my people committed a capital offense, it shouldn’t be up to you to handle. Moreover, your ability to seek revenge and counterattack is all thanks to me, yet you dare to touch my people, it’s simply ungrateful."

"Hence the bonds must be cut!"

"I, I never meant that."

Alina didn’t expect Roland to suddenly be so angry, quickly explaining to Roland.

She had just spoken half of her words when, looking into Roland’s blinking eyes, she instantly understood.

This was a play staged by Roland and her.

Marco dared not act, likely due to the presence of the Fourth Fleet.

If Alina and Roland openly fell out, what would he fear?