Empress 37

Chapter 37: Fighting Rumors with Rumors

"This is pure slander, complete fabrication, and must be brought to justice!"

Sitting in the carriage on her way home, having finished reading the newspaper, Sif crumpled it up, her originally rosy lips turning slightly pale with anger.

She called out to the coachman, and the carriage turned around towards Roland's new residence.

This newspaper was indeed too absurd, causing her quite a headache, and she needed to find someone to share the burden.

As the carriage turned back, Roland and Lisa were planning their new home.

Watching Lisa meticulously consider how to decorate each room, Roland's smile held a touch of awkwardness.

Lisa was unaware that it was uncertain whether they could even move into this house, or how long they could stay if they did.

The old ticket from Alina would eventually be used.

Empress Sylph was touring the territory, and he had to follow her.

If he stayed behind, the furious Cabinet Ministers who couldn't find the Empress would surely tear him to pieces.

Lisa, of course, had to come along too.

However, he couldn't even tell Lisa the truth.

She couldn’t hide anything on her face.

Just like Empress Sylph, she was the weak link in the sailing team.

The entire team consisted of just him and Sif in charge of confidentiality.

The principle of confidentiality was such that, to keep secrets, the circle of those who knew had to be kept small.

There was a classic dialogue.

"Can you keep a secret?"

"Of course, tell me quickly."

"I can keep one too."

Roland could only reveal part of the truth to everyone, concealing part of the reality.

This wasn’t deception, definitely not.

Just as Roland and Lisa finished planning the new home and were about to leave, Sif’s carriage returned.

Roland waved at the carriage with a smile, "Did you find workers that quickly?"

Of course, it wasn’t possible so quickly; he was just teasing.

The curtain lifted, and Sif, with a serious expression, waved at Roland.

"No time to explain, get in the carriage!"

She nodded towards Lisa at the same time, indicating the urgency of the situation.

Lisa laughed and pushed Roland forward.

"Business is more important, go quickly, remember to come home for dinner tonight."

She could sense that Roland and Miss Sif were plotting something important.

Roland’s silence meant she didn’t need to know.

She wouldn’t throw a tantrum over not knowing the details.

Watching the carriage leave in a cloud of dust, Lisa felt a tinge of disappointment.

Roland and Sif were Transcendents, known to possess extraordinary abilities and long lifespans far beyond ordinary people.

They were beings whose level of existence surpassed normal people.

Roland and Sif were the true companions.

Thinking of this, Lisa felt even more despondent.

She heard that awakening extraordinary abilities mostly stemmed from strong obsessions and skilled fields.

She had an obsession and a skilled field, like cooking.

Could a chef not become a Transcendent?

Lisa was unconvinced.

She quickened her steps, heading towards the old house.

Regardless of how late it was, being able to taste homemade flavors when returning home was always a nice thing.

Just as Lisa was pondering what to make for dinner, Sif handed the newspaper to Roland.

Although crumpled into a ball, the words were still legible.

This matter was indeed very tricky.

A famous Writer known as [Anonymous] had submitted an explosive piece to the Sussex Sun.

As everyone knows, when authors want to remain anonymous, everyone is [Anonymous].

That’s not the focus; the focus is the content of the novel.

"Oh my, the Empress is pregnant, who’s responsible?"

Roland was directly enraged, wasn’t this his novel?!

But he had no place to file for infringement.

In this era, there was no concept of intellectual property. Although cultured and distinguished literary figures wouldn’t plagiarize others’ work, no one would care about using this title either.

The damned author had somehow turned this idea into an inappropriate story that couldn’t pass review.

Although the author began with a disclaimer, saying this was a tale from the previous Magic Era and bore no connection to reality, any resemblance was purely coincidental, readers wouldn’t think that way.

In this article, the culprit responsible for the Empress’s pregnancy was a young Literary Scholar.

This Literary Scholar, arrogant in his youth, had captivated the Empress, driving her to surrender herself to him, considering him a confidant, and even awarded him the championship of a national essay competition.

This was far from "any resemblance is purely coincidental."

This was clearly using ancient tales to satirize the present.

Damn rebellious literary folks!

Using ancient tales to satirize the present, huh? Alluding with ulterior motives, huh? Despicable enough to deserve death!

Roland thought viciously, gradually calming down.

Killing was easy, but it wouldn’t silence the public.

The last Emperor who tried to silence people incited a rebellion in the Imperial Capital, getting himself exiled to a place called Yezhu Town, never daring to return until his death.

Silencing surely wouldn’t work.

Refuting it wouldn’t work either.

These things were better left unchallenged, as people might not believe them. Trying to debunk them would only confirm their authenticity.

Like most decaying empires, the Sussex Empire’s credibility was about as intact as a prostitute’s chastity, only bringing knowing smiles.

Moreover, they hadn’t named anyone; what rumor were you refuting?

That would amount to an official endorsement.

Seeing Roland remain silent, Sif grew more anxious.

She muttered quietly, "These damn bastards are reprehensible! Clearly, it’s a tabloid, yet they won’t dig for gossip and instead publish such a novel, utterly disregarding any bottom line."

Roland was amused by Sif and teased her with a smile, "Gossip? Do you think there’s more explosive gossip than this?"

Sif was momentarily speechless, retorting with a hint of annoyance, "Roland, I didn’t call you here to make fun of me, think of a way, I know you definitely have a plan!"

How would I know about this stuff?

Roland initially planned to dismiss her with a few words, but Sif’s phrase "you definitely have a plan" ignited his fighting spirit.

If the world’s most beautiful girl looked up at you with pitiful eyes and firmly told you that you could do it, could you just stand by?

Roland could.

Because he was never swayed by beauty.

But he decided to help Sif anyway.

After all, they were the best of friends.

Roland quickly activated his pre-transcendence memory, recalling various public relations crisis case studies.

Though the methods for handling public opinion in the internet era were different from now, the principles were the same.

His fingers rhythmically tapped on the armrest of the chair as Roland slowly said:

"Sif, a fish’s memory spans only seven seconds, while as humans, our collective memory lasts seven days."

Sif was slightly dazed, murmuring with some reluctance, "Do we have to wait seven days?"

"Of course not!"

The fire in Roland’s heart was reignited by Sif’s dejected eyes.

"To be that passive, you wouldn’t need to find me."

"There’s a way to make people forget about this issue faster. No, not just forget it—most people need to not believe it completely."

He spoke with determined resolve, "Most people find it difficult to maintain a clear mind amidst the tide of public opinion, unless it becomes too outrageous."

"You mean, drown out this issue with even more outrageous rumors?" Sif’s eyes lit up, seemingly grasping Roland’s idea.

Roland nodded with satisfaction. As expected of his good friend Sif, she understood right away.

If it were Empress Sylph here now, she’d surely be panicking, at a complete loss of what to do.

Knowing Sif only understood the concept without a specific tactic, he explained directly:

"We need an even more outrageous story involving the Empress. Let’s brainstorm together."

Roland’s mind began to whirl.

According to Sif, Empress Sylph’s appearance was very similar to hers, though slightly different in temperament.

They were both girls with dreamlike elven features.

Wait, an elf?!

Roland suddenly thought of the Dream Elf.

He had an idea.

"Sif, Her Majesty the Empress is so beautiful. Do you think it’s possible that she has the blood of the Ancient Elf Race running through her veins?"