Empress 501

Chapter 501: The Empress’s Thoughts (Part 2)

If she were an ordinary person, she would likely cry her eyes out and lead a miserable life.

However, she is a Transcendent, a powerful Transcendent.

She didn’t endure for long, and after confronting Ivan IV face-to-face, she took action.

The frozen blood turned the Winter Palace red.

According to official records, Ivan IV died unexpectedly of a "cold."

On the same day, more than seven hundred members of the Imperial Guard died of "cold."

The Rurik People, who revered strength, were shocked by Sofia’s terrifying power; after a brief moment of stupefaction, they unhesitatingly embraced Sofia as the new Emperor.

As for Ivan IV, he was just a sickly man who couldn’t even withstand a cold. Who would weep for a sickly man who froze to death?

This was the process of Sofia’s ascension to the throne.

Simple, brutal, yet in line with the Rurik People’s philosophy.

After a brief pause, Sofia once again stepped forward toward the parlor.

She smiled self-deprecatingly.

Why were the memories of the dead attacking her again? Was she too vulnerable recently, or was she feeling uneasy because the Day of Return was nearing?

No one in this world was her match; what was the reason for her unease?

Sofia slightly frowned, unable to comprehend this.

Her memory had large blanks, as if hidden beneath an ice field, hard to discern its true form.

A voice in the dark seemed to remind her that everything would be revealed on the Day of Return.

Since she couldn’t understand, she decided to stop thinking about it for now.

Even though she was somewhat wearied, this country couldn’t function without her.

Her few trusted ministers were commendably loyal, but they were all action-oriented talents; at least half of their brains were lodged with her.

She wouldn’t complain about these ministers’ incompetence.

This was her choice, her standard; she couldn’t enjoy the convenience and then hide when trouble arose, right?

As Sofia entered the parlor, several ministers were already waiting impatiently.

Upon seeing Sofia, these ministers simultaneously revealed expressions of relief.

"Your Majesty, you are as illustrious as ever; I am happy for you,"

Prime Minister Borisov smilingly flattered.

Sofia sat down expressionlessly on the throne, tapping the armrest with her slender fingertips, producing a crisp sound.

"There’s no need for flattery. How are things this month?"

"Your Majesty, this month, four more countries have disappeared or are about to disappear,"

Borisov took a deep breath and said, "First, the good news— the Wende Empire has finally given in and surrendered, but they’re still putting up a brave front, insisting it’s not an unconditional surrender, demanding we retain the Imperial Family’s directly-controlled territories, including the capital Valsa."

"What do our allies think?" Sofia didn’t rush to state her opinion but continued to inquire.

"The Tirol Kingdom only wants the coal-producing Zone Buskens, and the Prudon Kingdom has already acquired the territory west of the Vistula River; they are not very interested in the Wende Empire’s directly-controlled territories."

Borisov mumbled discontentedly, "Those two bastards both say they respect your opinion. But the Prudon Kingdom also complains about their heavy losses on the western front, that they can’t continue the attack."

"The Tirol Kingdom’s reason is that they have sharp domestic conflicts and need to recall the troops to suppress domestic uprisings."

Sofia calmly asked, "Baron Borisov, what do you think?"

"I think we can demote the Wende Empire to a kingdom, cede territories, sign a tariff treaty, and force them to stand with us. After all, our real enemies are Sussex and Jin Yuan; there’s no need to expend too much force on them."

Sofia cast her gaze to Sahalin beside her, softly asking, "Baron Sahalin, how about the military’s opinion?"

Sahalin was the chief of the Shadow Sanctuary, who was disgraced by Roland’s scheme in Val City, known as the Blade of Destruction.

After his setback in Val City, he learned from his shame and displayed the calm demeanor of a great general in the conquest of small countries like the Boli Khanate, completely different from his previous impulsive self.

Now he has been promoted to general, ostensibly the military’s third-ranked.

When Marshal Suvorov handled the front line matters, he stayed in the capital responsible for logistics coordination, an importance hard to overstate.

Facing the Empress’s inquiry, he confidently raised his head and replied loudly, "Marshal Suvorov’s stance is very firm; as long as Your Majesty needs it, he can completely resolve Wende within a month."

"Oh? With two allies’ help, it took him half a year and he still couldn’t handle that hard nut. Now without allies, he’s confident?"

Sahalin said slowly, "The Marshal didn’t explain the reason, only expressed his resolve."

Sofia looked at Sahalin with great interest, softly asking, "Baron Sahalin, where do you think the Marshal’s confidence comes from?"

"Without Prudon and Tirolians participating, although at least half of the combat strength is gone, the logistics pressure is also greatly reduced, and with unified command, it’s normal for the Marshal to be confident."

Sahalin answered with full confidence.

Isn’t that so?

The Wende Empire’s imperial army has only a hundred thousand left; if we can alleviate the logistics pressure, the gap in combat power between the two sides leaves a full chance to swallow the opponent.

Sofia neither confirmed nor denied, casting her eyes on Angelina, who stood half a step behind Sahalin.

"Angelina, what do you think?"

Angelina’s body trembled slightly, incredulously lifting her head, looking at the Empress, as a mist of tears unknowingly appeared at the corner of her eyes.

Being captured and imprisoned by Roland, losing the Ice Crystal Blue Ring, and even being forced to charge the ring, indirectly providing the enemy a chance to research the Empress’s strength, she did not just make a mistake, she committed a crime.

Driven by deep trepidation, she returned to the Empire with books gifted by Roland, to confess and atone unreservedly before the Empress, willing to plead guilty.

Chapter 502: The Empress’s Worries (Part 3)

In her understanding of the Empress, she would be executed on the spot in a fit of rage.

The Empress cannot tolerate the slightest imperfection in her eyes, and strictly speaking, her actions amounted to surrender.

However, the Empress’s disposition left her somewhat puzzled.

After hearing her confession, Sofia patiently asked a heap of questions, then told her not to feel pressured and to take a few days off before returning to work.

Originally, Angelina closed her eyes awaiting death, but she hadn’t expected the Empress to say that, returning home with the joy of surviving a disaster.

She dared not truly rest, but merely feigned staying at home for a few days before returning to her post.

However, just as she returned to the Shadow Sanctuary, she was informed to report to the Cabinet.

In a bewildered state, Angelina was appointed as Assistant to the Prime Minister, a real-level deputy minister, equivalent to a deputy Minister of the Cabinet.

Shock and ecstasy enveloped Angelina, and she burst into tears of joy, inwardly vowing to burn everything for the Empire.

Just as she was filled with fighting spirit, ready to achieve something, she realized she was merely a nominal Assistant to the Prime Minister, having a high rank but no power.

According to the Empress's Holy Edict, she must observe every Cabinet decision and participate in every meeting, but not utter a word.

Moreover, her name was included in the list of monthly audiences with the Empress.

To put it simply, she was to be completely involved in national decision-making but remain silent.

Aside from having no power, she was no different from a normal Cabinet deputy.

Her salary increased, her mansion expanded, she gained a title, was assigned a maid, and had a special car for commuting.

Those unaware of the truth envied her, committing a mistake outside but not being punished, and instead being promoted.

If not for the mismatched ages, some even suspected she was the Empress's illegitimate daughter.

Could anyone not related enjoy this treatment?

However, the Empress was only six years older than Angelina, and even the boldest would not dare suggest a five-year-old child could do such things.

Such gossip, even The Sun wouldn't dare fabricate.

Thus, a new rumor emerged, saying Angelina was the Empress's half-sister, born from a night of romance during the Empress's father's trip to Saint Rurik Palace years ago.

Considering Angelina's striking appearance and her temperament, a mixture of fury and indifference, this rumor had a broad audience.

This gossip, The Sun not only dared to report it but even issued a special edition.

Outsiders envied Angelina, but only she, in the middle of it all, knew the discomfort.

The feeling of only being able to look but not touch, oops, only watch but not speak, was truly painful.

Knowing better options but unable to speak out was suffocating her.

Perhaps this was the real punishment from the Empress, more agonizing than death.

After adjusting her mindset, Angelina accepted this punishment called Silence.

She watched calmly as the Cabinet and the General Staff made all decisions, as well as Sofia's monthly Holy Edict during the audience with the Empress.

Initially on the verge of madness, she gradually settled down, cold-eyed observing.

Unconsciously, she adapted to her new role, almost forgetting she could still speak, even at home she was lost in the sea of books.

The books Roland gifted her were eclectic and diverse, even though most were donated to the Imperial Library, the remaining dozens greatly enlightened her.

Though the Empress was punishing her, perhaps out of consideration for her years of service, she retained permission to read at the Imperial Library.

And so, spring passed into summer, another half-year without realizing.

Angelina hadn’t even noticed her gaze was no longer piercing, her smile no longer a forced facade.

She chuckled at the foolish policies the Cabinet came up with off the top of their heads.

She also gave a knowing smile at the excellent strategies discussed by the Cabinet.

She gradually got used to not speaking at all and adapted to the nightly racing thoughts.

When she turned punishment into enjoyment, Sofia suddenly called her name and asked her to speak.

After a brief jolt of surprise and excitement, Angelina used the back of her hand to wipe away tears.

The Empress never liked cowards and detested tears even more.

Her brain whirled rapidly, the snippets of the past half-year flashed by swiftly, the sight and sound of things, books from ancient and modern times, seemed to fuse in an instant.

Sahalin spoke correctly but overlooked a crucial point.

"Because... because the enemy wouldn’t think of it either."

Having not spoken for over half a year, her vocal cords were slightly unaccustomed, her voice hoarse and deep.

A sharp gleam burst from Sofia's eyes, she exhaled a breath.

Talent needs to be honed.

Angelina was excellent in all but too impulsive, always preferring force over intellect.

Yet her prowess wasn't as formidable as she thought, nor was her mind as poor as others believed.

Intending to cultivate Angelina into a wise general, she hadn't expected this fellow idolized her, preparing to follow a path of violence.

It's not wrong to believe in strength; the error lies in insufficient strength.

Sofia had long wanted Angelina to change, just lacked the right opportunity.

Seizing the chance when Angelina was captured by Roland, she imposed pressure on Angelina, leading her to awaken.

Fortunately, it seems the effect is good.

To be fair, the answer Angelina provided might not be identical to what Suvorov thought.

But that doesn't matter.

What matters is Angelina was independently thinking and pinpointed a crucial element Sahalin overlooked.

The human heart.

Sahalin’s ability and experience admittedly outpaced Angelina’s, but his level of cognition would never surpass Suvorov or Borisov, no matter how trained, he’d merely be another Executive Officer with superior execution.

Chapter 503: The Empress’s Concerns (Part 4)

But Angelina was different.

She had been manic, foolish, and frustrated, but she never gave up easily.

Even when confined by Roland, even when gagged by her, she still quietly explored her path forward.

Sofia smiled with satisfaction.

Although still a half-finished product, she finally saw the embryo capable of independent thought.

Sofia did not comment on Angelina’s answer. Instead, she softly asked:

"Angelina, I intend to have you succeed Marshal Suvorov and make him your deputy. How are you going to fight this battle?"

Sahalin’s face changed slightly; he never imagined that the marginalized Angelina would suddenly make a comeback.

Could the rumors be true, that Angelina is indeed the Empress’s sister?

Thinking of this rumor, his suffocating chest felt a bit more relieved.

Even if Angelina really rose above him, it wasn’t due to ability, but due to those damned familial connections.

Sahalin clenched his hand tightly, then slowly loosened it.

He tried to maintain a calm expression, unaware that every move was being watched by the Empress.

Sofia was not surprised by his reaction.

Yet she still felt a trace of regret for the lack of surprise.

There was never any surprise with Sahalin, whether a flash of genius or a foolish act—nothing at all.

He was like a precision machine, operating accurately.

You couldn't expect a machine to think like a human, at least not yet.

Sofia certainly wouldn't abandon Sahalin; precision instruments have their use, and as a leader, one must let everyone fulfill their potential.

Faced with the Empress's inquiry, Angelina was flattered and was about to speak when she suddenly remembered the military theory books and war histories she had read.

Changing generals at the eleventh hour was a major taboo in warfare.

Especially replacing a decorated veteran with a recently defeated, sidelined general—it's sheer folly.

If this near-farcical suggestion hadn't come from Sofia, Angelina would have opposed it without hesitation.

Since it was the Empress who said it...

Even if it was the Empress, a wrong is still a wrong!

Beads of sweat rolled down Angelina’s forehead, dripping onto the ground and gradually spreading into a small puddle.

Drenched in sweat, Angelina had to face the harsh reality.

If what the Empress said went against common sense, and if it clashed with her understanding, should she point it out?

In a flash, she thought of Roland.

If Sif misspoke, Roland would point it out; if Roland made a misjudgment, Sif would also point it out.

Angelina suddenly raised her head, not having time to wipe the sweat-soaked clothes, and murmured with all her might: "Your Majesty, please do not change generals at the last minute. I cannot replace the Marshal."

After saying this, her body was nearly exhausted, and she almost couldn’t stand upright.

Sofia was silent for a moment before bursting into clear, hearty laughter.

Accompanying her laughter, snowflakes appeared out of thin air, swirling in the Summer Palace during the summer.

Although the Summer Palace never truly had summer, the current temperature was around 15°C, making snowfall impossible.

These snowflakes clearly arose from the Empress’s summoning.

No, not summoning, but the temperature disorder caused by her unstable emotions.

Sahalin’s face changed drastically; this was a prelude to the Empress’s impending outburst.

This is bad, what is Angelina thinking? The Empress asked for an answer, not for you to oppose her arrangements!

He glared fiercely at Angelina and rushed over to grab her shoulders, forcing her to kneel before the Empress.

"Angelina, how dare you! Apologize to Her Majesty immediately!"

He looked at Angelina anxiously.

Although somewhat envious of Angelina’s favor, they had been comrades in arms for many years, and he certainly didn’t want to see Angelina executed on the spot by the Empress.

Angelina certainly understood Sahalin’s goodwill.

He was protecting her, just as he had protected her, the last-seat member of the Shadow Sanctuary, before.

At another time, she would certainly have gratefully accepted his goodwill, but today, she was inexplicably stubborn.

"Your Majesty, please do not change generals at the last minute!"

Sahalin almost fainted from Angelina’s stubbornness.

He always knew that the fifth’s mind wasn’t the best and was exceedingly stubborn, but he never expected her to be this stubborn.

Thinking of the tragic outcome of Angelina being frozen into an ice sculpture, his sight went dark, nearly fainting.

Sofia’s carefree laughter gradually subsided. With a light wave of her right hand, Sahalin’s massive bear-like body staggered and fell aside.

The other ministers did not dare to face the Empress’s wrath and quickly stepped aside, hiding to the sides.

In the center of the hall, only Angelina remained.

She lifted her head, stood up, her tone as cold and stubborn as ever.

"Please reconsider, Your Majesty."

Sofia’s voice, although cold, had a touch more softness.

"Angelina, you did well."

Angelina’s body trembled slightly, a sigh escaping her heart as her gaze drifted out the window, toward the distant sky.

Ha, it turns out to be a sunny day; dying on such a bright day isn’t too bad.

If the Empress said, "you did well," it surely wasn’t praise but immense anger.

The Empress’s fury must be cooled by blood; today would be her end.

Angelina maintained a composed demeanor, only wanting to see the scenery one last time.

Sofia stood up, gently clapping her hands, walking towards Angelina.

The ministers closed their eyes.

It had been a long time since they had seen the Empress kill in a fit of rage, but that didn’t mean she had no temper.

Angelina, ah, this child was indeed too stubborn.

For the Empress to step down from the throne, even dying peacefully was a luxury desire.

In the nervous glances of the ministers, Sofia approached Angelina.

She gently patted Angelina’s shoulder and said warmly, "Angelina, from today onward, you will serve as my personal assistant. In my absence, you may give orders on my behalf."

Chapter 504: The Empress’s Concerns (Part 5)

She took a bracelet from her pocket and personally put it on the stunned Angelina.

"Don’t take it off, and communicate with it often."

After a brief consideration, she took down the dagger she carried and solemnly said:

"This Frost Gaze represents my authority. If anyone disobeys, you can use this sword to execute them. When to draw the sword, is up to you."

As she returned to the throne amidst everyone’s astonishment, Sofia showed a slight smile, raised her right hand to draw attention, and softly asked:

"Is there anything else?"

The hall fell silent, and Borisov was the first to react, though his face looked somewhat unpleasant.

According to the Empress's orders, he, the Prime Minister, now had to follow Angelina's commands.

Although he didn't think the Empress's deputy would dare draw the sword on him, Angelina was different.

She was stubborn enough to challenge even the Empress's authority; what was killing a Minister in her eyes?

Borisov's face, already sullen, looked even worse.

Even though he was displeased, the work had to continue, and failing to report intelligence would be negligence.

A bit dejected, he continued to report to the Empress.

The second country to disappear was the Oden Kingdom.

Empress Sylph personally led an army of 180,000 to conquer the Oden Kingdom, quickly surrounding its capital with the close cooperation of the navy and army.

People thought this would be a protracted and brutal war of attrition, yet the Siren's Song changed the course of the battle.

The Sea Demon Munina and Empress Sylph sang together, causing the front city walls to fall into a triple effect of charm, chaos, and sorrow.

The Sussex army took the opportunity to break through the city gates and enter the city.

Although the inner city was still in the hands of King Oden, Sven the Seventh, he had long lost the will to fight.

His courage had been completely drained in the wars years ago.

Holding the inner city could allow for a staunch defense, but without external aid, defeat was inevitable sooner or later.

Rather than waiting to be captured when supplies ran out, it was better to surrender early and seek leniency.

The result of surrendering was the downfall of the Oden Kingdom, with Sven the Seventh being demoted to a Duke and relocated to the Weimar Region.

Just days before the fall of the Oden Kingdom, the Weimar Federation became the first to surrender.

The Weimar Federation collapsed under the wild onslaught of the Jin Yuan Kingdom's forces.

Christine's command artistry reached its peak, slicing through several lines of Weimar Federation defenses with surgical precision, reaching the capital before reinforcements could shore up defenses.

Had the Weimar Federation had the resolve to resist and defended the capital while waiting for reinforcements, maybe they could have held out for months, but the merchants and politicians of the Weimar Federation lacked such courage.

They surrendered with grim faces, declaring the extinction of the Weimar Federation.

Five provinces were annexed into the Jin Yuan Kingdom, and three provinces into the so-called Mediator Sussex Empire.

In this way, combined with the four provinces recently taken from the Oden Kingdom, the number of provinces the Sussex Empire acquired overseas increased to eleven.

In just three years, the Empire expanded to acquire eight overseas provinces (originally having three), propelling the prestige of Sylph and Roland to its peak.

Within the Sussex Empire, the fighting spirit was high, with numerous enthusiastic youths and industrial workers signing up to join the military.

After reading all this information, Borisov felt somewhat deflated.

He never dreamed that in this race to annex small nations, the Vladimir Empire would actually lose to the Sussex Empire, which was not known for land battles.

After the report, he habitually sought instructions from Sofia on subsequent policies.

However, this time, Sofia did not give direct instructions but calmly said:

"Regarding the national affairs, you all should discuss them with Angelina. Do not come to disturb me unless there are important matters."

"Your Majesty..."

Though a bit troubled, Prime Minister Borisov stubbornly questioned, "Are you abandoning us?"

Sofia’s gaze drifted into the distance, and she slowly said, "Of course not."

"Everyone, continue the attack according to the set plans. On the day of the decisive battle, I will personally sweep away any obstacles. This world needs a new order, an order we will establish."

Borisov and the other ministers breathed a sigh of relief.

Their greatest fear was that Sofia would completely let go of the government.

As long as she was willing to lead the Empire forward, nothing else mattered.

What’s the big deal about entrusting Angelina with power?

After all, she’s the Empress’s sister. If an elder sister lazes while a younger sister helps manage things, what’s the issue?

In any case, the Empress is wise!

Concluding the report, Borisov and the others bowed and left Sofia.

Angelina did not leave; she stayed, restless and anxious.

She still didn’t understand many things and had to ask the Empress face-to-face for instructions.

Once the ministers dispersed, Sofia turned her gaze to Angelina and calmly said:

"I know you have many questions, but I’ll only answer two. Cherish the opportunity."

Angelina’s mind raced, and she finally made her choice, "Your Majesty, where is the predetermined site of the decisive battle?"

"White Mountain."

"Why?" Angelina asked with some confusion.

"Is this counted as the second question? If not, I refuse to answer."

Angelina quickly shook her head and gritted her teeth as she asked the second question, "Your Majesty, am I really your sister as the rumors say?"

"Leave!"

Sofia suddenly raised her voice, expelling Angelina.

She didn't want to answer because she didn't know either; she only found out later that she wasn't even her father's biological daughter, which is why she was used as a political pawn.

Chapter 505: Emperor or Clown?

"Welcome the great Emperor's triumphant return!"

"His Majesty Sylph is our sun!"

"Long live the Empress!"

...

The excited crowd squeezed at the city gate to welcome Sylph's triumphant return after the annihilation of the Oden Kingdom, and the fervent cheers echoed high above the city.

This is the grand scene that Sylph encounters when returning home with her army through every city.

Sylph personally led an army of 180,000 northward to conquer the Oden Kingdom, wiping out a complete kingdom in just fifty days and expanding the territory. Such a feat is illustrious even in the Empire's glorious history.

This is not a colony developed in the wildernesses of the New Continent or the South Continent; this is the fertile land of Rodinia.

The Oden Kingdom may not be a first-class power, but it is a medium-sized kingdom that has stood on the Rodinia Continent for over five hundred years.

The last time the Sussex Empire annexed such a level of a kingdom was over a hundred years ago, and such an achievement is certainly deserving of praise.

The fall of Frank Castle left the people of Hansa City anxious, with many even planning to flee overseas and return to the homeland as soon as possible.

People urgently needed a resounding victory to turn the situation around.

This victory came at the perfect time.

When Sylph appeared, dressed gloriously and bringing the spoils of war, the cheers of the crowd came from the heart.

They are proud Sussex people, they need victories, one victory after another.

While Sylph enjoys the glory, the Jin Yuan Kingdom feels the same way. The Weimar Federation occupies the fertile land on the east bank of the Rodinia River; they have long coveted it but never had the opportunity.

It’s not that they couldn’t win, but that international perceptions had to be considered.

To annex a medium-sized country, one must consider how other great countries view this, whether allies would be astonished; this is a more complex consideration than the outcome on the battlefield.

But now, they no longer need to consider it.

The opposing camp will be astonished no matter what, and the allied Sussex will support them no matter what, so Jin Yuan Kingdom no longer pretends.

They mobilized over 300,000 troops, equipped with an astonishing number of cannons, advancing in straight lines and completely annexing the Weimar Federation.

Though this violent approach incurred significant losses, it was simple, crude, and effective.

The new army also gradually grew during the tests of blood and fire.

More important than the new army growing in blood and fire is the gain in people's hearts.

The glory of victory made the Jin Yuan People accept Alina's alliance with the Sussex Empire and also accept the new allied commander Christine.

Though sharing some of the spoils with the Sussex Empire upset some extreme Jin Yuan nationalists, such discordant voices were quickly suppressed before they could be heard.

Under the invisible guidance of public opinion, any such statements were brutally suppressed as soon as they surfaced, being criticized harshly as traitorous speech.

While celebrating victory, several waves of minstrels set off from the capital, traveling across the country to begin their performances.

This group of minstrels was personally trained by Adam, and the scripts of their performances were all carefully compiled by him.

This set of scripts consists of several theatrical programs.

Main Content I: Promoting the traditional friendship between the Jin Yuan Kingdom and Sussex Country, downplaying the numerous historical conflicts between the two nations, especially diminishing the presence of the Jin Yuan Kingdom's heroine respected as the Red Lotus Saintess.

Main Content II: Promoting the traditional hatred between the Jin Yuan Kingdom and the Odin Empire. What, you say the Odin Empire is gone? That doesn't matter; the Weimar Federation, Tirol Kingdom,

and Prudon Kingdom all claim to be the successors to the Odin Empire. Hatred doesn't disappear; it can be transferred.

Main Content III: Praising Miss Alina's brilliance and valor, surpassing many monarchs in history.

Main Content IV: Promoting that Saintess Christine is the real War God, and that the historical Red Lotus Saintess was merely hyped up; her actual military accomplishments were exaggerated.

Main Content V, and the most important part: To celebrate victory, Miss Alina announced that there would be no taxes this year, and anyone daring to collect taxes would be considered a traitor and could be killed on the spot with a hoe.

...

After this set of propaganda punches, the emotions of the grassroots populace were quickly ignited.

They knew nothing of history or international situation; they believed whatever the minstrels told them.

To them, full bellies were most important.

Miss Alina isn't collecting taxes this year, so she's a good person.

Since Miss Alina is a good person, Christine with her is also a good person.

Who is the Red Lotus Saintess? Not familiar.

...

West Palace.

Alina stood by the window watching the emotional crowd outside, suddenly feeling somewhat dazed.

These people cheered when her father overthrew the Old Empire, cheered during Marco’s coup, cheered when she regained power, and still cheer now.

Perhaps they just needed a reason to cheer; why they cheer isn’t important.

For a moment, she found amusement in her naive complaint and laughed, "Heh."

The uneducated populace is like this. They just cheer, while the helmsman has to consider many things to ensure that the Jin Yuan ship sails in the right direction.

Alina put aside her slight worries, as she already heard footsteps coming from the corridor.

Crisp boot sounds, steady and powerful, with a consistent pace—this is the sign of a super expert.

No need to guess; the arrival is Saintess Christine.

Without waiting for Christine to knock, Alina waved her hand, and the door was already open.

Christine was not surprised; Alina was not only a Transcendent but also an Astrologer. If she didn’t know about her arrival, that would be odd.

"Alina, there’s something very important you need to know."

Chapter 506: Emperor or Clown?

Christine spoke softly.

"What is it?" Alina was somewhat surprised, all preparations for the expedition were complete, what could have been overlooked?

Christine, like performing a magic trick, took out a crown she had prepared earlier from under her robe, placed it on a tray, and lifted it with both hands. Alongside, she also lifted a thick stack of documents.

"This is the voice of the people, Miss Alina, please follow the public sentiment and ascend the throne to become Emperor."

Alina: "..."

She looked at the crown in Christine's hands with a complex expression.

This crown was designed very cleverly, perfectly combining golden irises with the family crest, representing both the wearer's nationality and the family.

Moreover, on the side of the crown, there was an engraving of the Civil Code and a sword and shield symbolizing expansion and the protection of the nation.

She inexplicably wanted to laugh.

The juxtaposition of the progressive Civil Code with the despotic crown felt as discordant as a supposed virgin who is known to everyone.

Contradictory and absurd.

"This crown..."

Christine thought Alina was inquiring about the crown's origin and calmly responded, "It was crafted by the top jewelers and artists of your country, with Mr. Victor's signature on it."

"I'm not talking about that, I can appreciate the artistic taste of this crown."

Alina laughed self-deprecatingly, gently mocking, "But I always feel that wearing it on my head doesn’t feel like a crown at all, more like the pointy hat a clown would wear in a shabby troupe."

Christine was not moved by Alina’s nonsense, and simply said calmly:

"You’re right, this world is inherently a giant shabby troupe. You, I, or anyone else strong, in the eyes of the Great Goddess, are no different from clowns."

"Stop!"

Alina warily interrupted Christine’s words. She couldn’t let her continue, once she started talking about the goddess, this woman would endlessly belittle humanity.

Any divine oracle given by the Goddess had to be obeyed by believers; any doctrine of the Goddess had to be accepted without question.

Fanatics are like that, very stubborn.

Alina often discussed life and philosophy closely with Roland, enjoying gazing at the night sky and pondering life. She had her own judgment and couldn’t listen to this.

Christine did not insist.

Those with unsteady faith always find excuses for their divergence. The sincerely devout have far fewer things to consider.

Faith is sincere, it’s that simple.

Despite their great differences in faith, it did not affect their friendship.

During Christine’s aid in building the new army for the Jin Yuan Kingdom and leading the forces to annex the Weimar Federation, they assisted each other, trusted each other, and developed a deep friendship.

Apart from faith, they found countless brilliant points in each other.

Facing Christine’s crown, Alina didn’t rush to refuse. They’re all foxes, so there was no need to play coy, just some things needed to be clarified.

"Do the people truly support me?"

"Very much so, they generally believe that the chaos of the past twenty years was due to the lack of a wise and capable emperor, replaced by irresponsible politicians."

Christine didn’t name names, but Alina knew very well that her father, Carlo, was also among those irresponsible politicians.

Was it grievance?

Grievance.

Grievance, my ass!

It’s the common people, harmed by political chaos, who have the right to cry grievance. Although her father’s intentions were good, he misjudged character and made mistakes in employing people, overly trusting the likes of Robert, a sinister person, and failing to rein in opportunists like Marco, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

He indeed did wrong.

The public may not necessarily need an emperor, but they definitely need a strong leader.

The atmosphere had come to this point, it would be somewhat impolite to continue declining.

But Alina still had a moment of caution and asked, "Do the nobles support me?"

This was a standard pointless question.

Of course the nobles support her; the emperor is the greatest noble, how could they feel at ease without an emperor.

Christine didn’t speak, but just picked up several letters, "These are handwritten letters from eleven dukes and seventy-three counts in the country, all supporting you."

"What about the Parliament and the Cabinet?" Alina continued to ask.

"Unanimous support, here’s the meeting minutes." Christine picked up another document.

Alina smiled self-deprecatingly, showing a complex expression, softly saying, "If that’s the case, if I don’t accept, it would be inappropriate, right? This is turning back the wheel of history."

Christine slowly shook her head, "I don’t know if it’s turning back the wheel of history, but the country needs an emperor now. If you find it unsuitable, then be a lifetime emperor, with no succession rights for descendants."

Her gaze towards Alina carried a hint of mockery and ridicule, Alina followed suit and laughed.

People cannot go backward.

A family that once held the emperor’s title would either stay at the top forever or be exterminated upon stepping down; thinking of retiring peacefully is a pipe dream.

The Old Empire’s Luise Clan surrendered, did it help?

They were still sent to the guillotine by the angry populace, the entire family, young and old, tied to stones and thrown into the West River to drown.

If Alina really let her descendants relinquish the throne, the outcome wouldn’t be much better.

In politics, what you want to do is not important; what you can do is crucial.

The offspring of the Imperial Family naturally have the right to claim the nation, wishing to stand aloof is impossible.

Alina is a competent politician, obviously would not make such low-level mistakes, her earlier words were just a bit of sentimental pretense.

Chapter 507: Emperor or Clown? (Part 3)

She sighed helplessly, "According to tradition, shouldn’t I refuse three times?"

"You’ve already refused."

Christine said in a low voice, "The first refusal, the public expresses their wishes; the second refusal, the nobility voices their opinion; the third refusal, the parliament makes a resolution. Please don’t refuse anymore."

Is it really possible like that?

Alina knew, it really was possible. In the history books of later generations, it would indeed be recorded that after she refused three times, she could not resist public opinion and was forced to wear the crown, and she herself was helpless.

Although this reason sounds absurd, history books will certainly write it this way.

People need to save face while living; even ordinary people can’t say they want to sleep with someone when getting married, they have to talk about love.

Those who want to be emperors can’t say they covet power; they have to say they comply with the people’s will.

This world has always been so hypocritical.

Alina suddenly felt a bit tired, and after a moment of silence, she slowly said, "The code left by Emperor Bonaparte is the foundation of building the nation. To commemorate him, following his will, from now on my clan name will be changed to the Bonaparte Clan."

In history, Emperor Bonaparte became an emperor within the republic.

This precedent exists, so she as the second one doesn’t seem abrupt.

Christine’s lips slightly curved up, revealing an approving gaze.

As expected of Alina, well informed, she quickly found a reason for her enthronement.

If the ancients could sit on the emperor’s throne, why can’t I?

It’s imaginable, Mr. Adam will be busy again soon, he has to prepare for Alina’s enthronement.

It’s best to publicize that the Buanaba Clan is the direct descendant of the Bonaparte Clan.

Who dares to doubt? Treason charges can be directly arranged.

After discussing the preparations and details for the enthronement, Christine took her leave.

Watching her distant silhouette, Alina felt all her strength leave her body.

Slumping into the wide leather chair, Alina recalled that this office was the very place where her father, after overthrowing the Old Empire, had spirited discussions with comrades about the future of the nation.

At that time, they were filled with a rationalistic romance, and from the written records they left behind, one could see that period of passionate years.

However, twenty years later, his daughter was making decisions here, reverting to an imperial system.

If her old father truly could see this scene, who knows if he would be so angry that he could come back to life.

Alina fell silent.

Of course, she could argue that she was forced, but was she really forced?

The education she received from a young age was only partly from her father, most of it came from several teachers, so her thoughts differed from her father's.

But due to her admiration for her father, she previously dared not persist in her beliefs until her father passed away.

She finally realized that regardless of whether it was an imperial system or any other system, it ultimately relied on people to execute.

Was the Jin Yuan Kingdom governed by Marco truly stronger than the Old Empire?

Alina closed her eyes, leaning weakly against the seat back.

After an indeterminate time passed, Roland's words flashed in her mind.

"History spirals upwards; progressive societies are destined to replace the backward, but it certainly comes with repetitions."

Roland not only said this but also mentioned something from the time of the Magic Empire.

"If you let five peasants and one mage vote together to choose who the suspect is and then kill him, it's almost certain the chosen suspect is the mage. Truth is not necessarily in the hands of the majority."

Alina's complexion turned pale. The books she's read, her father's disappointed expression, Roland's tempting voice, and records from the Magic Empire period continuously impacted her consciousness.

She suddenly screamed, opening her eyes wide.

Staggering to the mirror, she looked at her haggard appearance and reddened eyes, barely recognizing herself.

This was the critical moment determining the survival of Jin Yuan, only she could lead everyone.

The future could worry about itself in the future.

At least at this moment, she must wear the crown and shoulder the entire Jin Yuan.

...

Hansa City, Triumph Square.

After the Oden Kingdom was completely annexed, this square was changed to Triumph Square.

Originally, Ados even proposed constructing a Triumph Arch, but it was tactfully declined by Sif, under the reason of empathizing with the public's sentiments.

In truth, Sif rather wanted that Triumph Arch, having seen the design, which was grand and elegant without losing dignity—a true artwork.

She very much wanted to pass underneath it dressed in splendor, receiving the people's reverent worship.

Unfortunately, it was not possible.

The residents of Hansa City were unaware that this city was not the ultimate battle site but a piece that could be abandoned based on circumstances.

If the Triumph Arch were built now, it would be for Sofia.

A foolish move offering the enemy a chance to exploit their psychological pain cannot be made.

Some faint regret hiding in her heart, Sif smiled and waved to the surrounding people, sharing the joy of victory with others.

In the crowd, she saw Roland standing at the forefront of the line welcoming the procession.

He wore a specially designed Caesar uniform, holding a Golden Staff, standing there imposingly, like a mighty structure all by himself.

Sif's lips slightly upturned, any lingering regrets evaporated.

Her Triumph Arch was there waiting for her, so why expend cement and steel to build one?

Sif tightened the reins, slowed her speed, letting the horse step lightly with a "tap-tap-tap" rhythm, approaching Roland step by step.

She suddenly thought of the moment when she and Roland performed a stage play together.

At that time, the sea of cheering champions and now the cries of "long live the Empress" echoing above the city were actually the same.

It was their acknowledgment of her, and more so, the result of her and Roland’s united efforts.

Chapter 508: Emperor or Clown?

As long as Roland is here, she’s not afraid of anything.

Even if the sky falls and the earth shatters, the stars dim, and divine wrath descends, she is fearless.

Roland raises the scepter, his clear voice echoing above the square.

"Cheer for Her Majesty the Empress, cheer for victory, cheer for the invincible warriors!"

Once again, cheers rise, even more fervently this time.

Among the crowd, those responsible for maintaining order lead the prepared slogans, and under the influence of conformity, others follow suit with inspiring slogans.

Sif lightly leaps towards Roland, taking the scepter he held up and raises it high.

As the scepter is raised, the atmosphere reaches a climax.

With a "pop," champagne corks pop from the bottles, the glasses filled with fine wine hold not only the joy of victory but also the aura of the Empire as the world’s number one power.

It’s good, everyone’s back.

Standing behind Roland, Wald suddenly feels a slight darkness before his eyes.

He struggles to steady himself, not wanting to show a hint of weakness in the public's sight, and doubly not wanting his student to see his exhausted expression.

Luckily, his student was embracing their lover and would not notice him over here.

The young ones are growing up, and the old man should step down too.

Wald forces a smile, but there is a slight chill in his heart.

Even in the scorching summer, he inexplicably feels a bit cold.

It must indeed be age; after this battle, he truly needs to retire and enjoy his later years.

Wald lowers his head, maintaining a steady pace, blending into the crowd as he heads towards the Empress's Palace.

At the moment of his daze, someone suddenly hooks his right arm.

He's somewhat displeased; do I look that old?

Just as he was about to glare at the reckless fellow supporting him, he sees the smiling face of Sif.

"Teacher, I encountered many things outside this time, and I want to share them with you. Are you interested in hearing some little stories?"

Wald's anger dissipates, a smile spreads across his face lined with wrinkles.

"How nice, I used to tell you stories, never thought my good student could narrate the outside world's tales to me, I'd love to listen."

He knows well enough that storytelling is an excuse, supporting him is the real intent.

No one noticed his weakness, yet Sif did.

She is the Empress, the perfect figure admired by thousands, yet in front of him, she remains the straightforward student.

The river of time seems to have never flowed.

Sif holds Wald's arm, walking slowly as she casually speaks of the experiences attacking the Oden Kingdom.

There's really nothing much to say; Wald, with much experience and knowledge, has seen everything.

Though intending to support the tired teacher waiting outside for a long time, some topics are necessary.

For example...

"Teacher, did you know? The Sea Demon's singing on land sounds different too. Munina..."

Siren's Song?

Wald raises an eyebrow, intrigued.

He only learned the general course of the war from the reports; the specifics only Sif, who was on the frontline, knows well.

Sif clears her throat and begins from the siege of Oden's Imperial Capital.

Oden’s Imperial Capital truly deserved the title of an impregnable fortress.

Despite complete preparation and the two massive fleets surrounding the solitary city from the high seas, attacking the city still faced numerous troubles.

It was ultimately the voices of Munina and Sif that opened the gates.

"It was a magnificent concert, my collaboration with Munina was flawless."

Recalling the scenario of singing amidst flying artillery, Sif still feels a thrill.

Wald listens intently, then sighs lightly, "Unfortunately, this secret trick works best the first time. Subsequent enemy capitals will be precautionary."

Once the potency and range of the Siren’s Song are known, it can be dealt with smoothly.

Whether through interference or other methods, a song can’t topple two cities.

Sif merely smiles slightly, her gaze drifting towards the distant east, towards Saint Rurik Palace.

She never expected much from the Siren’s Song.

Did they hope the song would charm Sofia?

There’s no more siege warfare ahead, only defensive battles, and the enemy defenses are tokenistic.

Seeing Sif not continuing the topic, Wald doesn’t either, instead softly sighing:

"Sif, all of you have grown, I can rest at ease now. Once this battle ends, this old skeleton of mine can’t take the strain, I’m really retiring."

"Be sure to visit my estate to taste the wine sometime."

Wald chuckles easily.

Sif looks at her teacher with a complicated expression, opens her mouth but stops short.

Wald feigns a grumpy manner, murmuring dissatisfiedly: "What, don’t you want this old man to retire early?"

Sif helplessly nods her head.

Her words were on her lips just now, but the teacher was faster.

She certainly doesn’t wish for the teacher to overstrain; his earlier state of mind truly worried her.

She intended to use the pretext of "asking the teacher to oversee the homeland" to let him semi-retire sooner.

She’s genuinely worried he might die at his post, unable to explain to his wife.

Seeing the teacher’s eyes blazing with fiery passion, Sif can only extinguish the thought.

The teacher’s gaze is so unwavering, refusing him would indeed be impolite, perhaps even memorable.

Alright, she’ll work harder with Roland in the future, trying not to trouble the teacher with vexing issues.

Chapter 509: Emperor or Clown?

The cheers persisted, and the minstrel’s song was melodious, yet Sif no longer felt like appreciating it.

...

Three days later, an invitation from the government of the Jin Yuan Republic was placed before Sif and Roland.

"Become emperor in the Republic and change your family name to the Bonaparte Clan?"

Sif sneered, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, but inwardly she gained a new understanding of Alina.

This person really knows how to adapt to the circumstances, and is shameless enough for it.

To become an emperor in a republic—given the chance, she would not hesitate to do so herself.

Over the years, having been influenced by Roland, Sif was no longer the idle Count she once was, as pure and simple as a blank sheet of paper.

Politicians care about reputation, but can also sacrifice it, and Sif was now an excellent politician.

She handed the invitation to Roland, smiling as she said, "A hard trip for you."

Roland glanced at it and slowly shook his head.

"No need to avoid suspicion. I trust you," Sif thought Roland was avoiding suspicion due to a promise, and her smile grew.

It was enough to have the intention; she believed Roland would not break his promise.

A clever woman would never let her man be embarrassed.

She had sent Roland before, and this time she refused to, lest Alina think ill of him.

She did not want Roland to bear the infamy of fearing his wife.

Yet Roland still shook his head, "We'll go together."

"Why?"

"There's little chance Sofia will go, but it's not zero," Roland said with a smile.

"So you mean the leaders of the major nations in Rodinia will all be going to Xidai, and this is the last chance for compromise?" Sif's eyes lit up.

"Although I'm pessimistic about rapid peace, we still have to try. Besides negotiating, if Sofia suddenly turns against us, we must be there."

Sif did not speak, only nodding with her eyes.

Indeed, if Sofia decided to attack Alina without honor, the soul blood link would backfire.

Beyond a certain range, the link's effects would be halved. Alina might not be buried with them, but they would indeed suffer irreversible damage.

At such a time, serious injury would be no different from death.

They had no other choice.

No wonder the invitation was not phrased as a request, but directly informed them of their accommodation location.

...

Summer Palace.

As Sofia observed the sea, a Deep Blue Ice Spirit formed behind her.

The Ice Spirit’s voice was as cold as ever, "Master, your human servant Angelina has an urgent matter to report."

"Let her come over."

Sofia did not turn back, continuing to watch the sea.

Moments later, hurried footsteps echoed from behind.

"Angelina, your heartbeat is a bit fast, what happened?"

Sensing the heartbeat’s pace from ten meters away did not surprise Angelina.

In her eyes, Sofia was synonymous with omnipotence.

She firmly believed that with the coming of the final return day, Sofia would certainly reach ascension to divinity.

Isn’t that so? Who else in this world is more qualified than Sofia?

Angelina dispelled her rambling thoughts, holding up the invitation with both hands.

"Your Highness, the invitation from the Jin Yuan Kingdom, asking you to attend the new emperor’s inauguration ceremony in fifteen days."

"The new emperor is Alina?"

Sofia was slightly surprised, then showed seven parts disdain and three parts regret.

"What a pity, though Carlo was pedantic, he had his ideas, yet even in his wildest dreams, he wouldn't have imagined his precious daughter usurping his achievements."

"Who would have thought his republic would last barely over twenty years before disappearing; what a pity, what a sigh."

Sofia's long hair fluttered in the sea breeze, its blue deeper than it had been months ago.

"I won't be going, you go on my behalf, and see how those kids are doing. I'm quite curious about the new empire's name."

Angelina was silent for a few seconds, then said softly:

"Your Highness, Jin Yuan Kingdom... Jin Yuan Kingdom has not changed its name, they remain a republic."

"Huh?!"

Sofia slowly turned, a rare flicker of surprise in her ocean-deep eyes.

She took the invitation from Angelina, her eyes brightened.

"To actually be the Republic's emperor, how interesting. By the way, who is presiding over her inauguration ceremony, the Pope of the Divine Court of Fengrao or the Divine Court of Light?"

"Neither, it’s said to be the Holy Daughter of Light, Christine," Angelina enunciated carefully.

"That little butcher?" Sofia was taken aback for a moment, then laughter spread across her lips.

"These kids are quite interesting after all, arrange it, I’ll attend in person."

Angelina breathed a sigh of relief and quickly went to fulfill her duty.

Before leaving, she couldn’t help but remind Sofia, "Your Highness, actually you are just a few years older than them..."

Sofia smiled and patted Angelina’s shoulder, saying nothing.

Her age was indeed not much, yet her experiences were too many, causing her to often forget her age.

Watching Angelina leave, Sofia once again stood on the cliff by the sea, observing the slightly bluish clear water.

It was clear that Alina still wanted to make a last effort for peace.

She was curious to see what cards Miss Alina still held. Surely, she wouldn’t attempt to persuade her with mere eloquent debate?

If that were all, she would be thoroughly disappointed.

In any case, it’s worth a look.

Whether it’s being an emperor within a republic or persuading her to go vegetarian, it’s all quite interesting.

Chapter 510: The Price of Peace Is Actually Roland?

Van Gogh Museum, this place was once the palace used when the last Emperor with the title of Great Emperor of the Old Empire ascended the throne. After the Republic was established, it was confiscated by the government and converted into a museum.

The exhibits in this museum mainly consist of the life items and weapons, armor, and various trophies of famous Emperors from the Old Empire period.

This museum carries the past glory of the Jin Yuan Kingdom and records the decline of the old Imperial Authority. After its conversion into a museum, it also displays relics of Freedom Fighters.

After overthrowing the Old Empire, Mr. Carlo called out here, announcing that the Jin Yuan People would henceforth embrace freedom and move towards a republic, no longer having to be slaves to Emperors and Nobility.

On the same day, his daughter Alina was born.

He had high hopes for Alina, hoping she would inherit his will and let the light of freedom shine on every corner of Jin Yuan.

Twenty-two years later, his daughter Alina ascended the throne as the Emperor in this museum.

What a Hell of a joke.

The freedom fighters who overthrew the imperial system died at the hands of those also pursuing freedom, and the daughter who stood up to clean up the mess ultimately ascended the throne where the imperial system was overthrown.

At four o’clock in the morning, Alina stood alone in front of the Fanxi Palace, expressionless.

No one knew what she was thinking, and no one approached the location of the upcoming enthronement ceremony in a few hours.

Alina stood quietly, closing her eyes, wanting to listen to her father’s voice.

Unfortunately, there was nothing.

If her father safely crossed the Nether River, he would likely have been arranged to enter reincarnation a few years ago, becoming a brand new infant without all past memories.

If unable to cross the Nether River, her father’s soul would completely dissipate, becoming nourishment for the Nether River.

Alina clearly knew that even if her father successfully embraced a new life through reincarnation, he would be a completely different person, with no kinship with her.

In any case, she would never have a father again, nor hear the teachings of anyone.

Except Roland.

Alina heard footsteps approaching from behind.

Without turning her head, she knew it was Roland. He did not hide his footsteps, the even and steady pace had an ability to calm the heart.

Alina did not turn around, softly murmuring, "Roland, did I do something wrong?"

Roland replied frankly, "I don’t know."

"Don’t know?" Alina suddenly turned around, eyes wide open.

"Of course I don’t know. Some things can’t be judged right or wrong by those involved, it’s left for history to judge."

Roland looked into Alina’s eyes shining in the night sky, calmly saying:

"Having wise or strong individuals guide the country’s direction is certainly not the best system, but sometimes it’s the most appropriate. Like now, if no one takes responsibility, even discussing whether to join the Freedom Alliance might take several months, and by the time there’s a result, it would be too late."

"Let us just do what we need to do, and leave the judgment of right and wrong to posterity."

Roland’s words did not take a stance, but "not caring" is also a strategy.

Alina accepted Roland’s advice, exhaled a long breath, and slowly said:

"You’re right, the future of fifty-three provinces nationwide and seven overseas provinces, as well as one hundred and thirty million people, rests on my shoulders. I have no choice.

"Thank you, Roland."

There was an indescribable emotion flowing in Alina’s gaze, Roland did not meet her eyes but waved his hand and asked:

"Putting that aside, did you think Sofia would come when you invited her?"

"Although unlikely, I did consider it." Seeing Roland’s evasive gaze, Alina felt a slight disappointment in her eyes, speaking calmly.

Roland nodded, softly reminded, "Have you thought about what to say to her? If it’s to petition for peace, I suggest you save your effort."

He was genuinely worried Alina might be naive in diplomacy.

Peace is the most expensive luxury in the world; only through blood and courage can it last long. A peace that’s given is not peace, but poison.

Alina rolled her eyes at him in dissatisfaction, grumbling peevishly, "Prime Minister, is my political acumen that poor in your eyes?"

"Negotiations without strength are meaningless, so I will prove to Sofia that I have the strength to discuss peaceful coexistence on equal terms."

This time it was Roland’s turn to be surprised.

After careful observation, he confirmed Alina was neither drunk nor confused, her mind was clear, and she could be accountable for her words.

"Do you have a new trump card?" Roland couldn’t resist his curiosity.

"Yes, it pertains to my identity, but I cannot reveal it to you before using it." Alina timidly lowered her head, softly murmuring.

Roland’s assistance was unreserved, yet she had difficulty speaking on this matter, though she had her reasons, it felt somewhat uncharitable.

Seeing Alina’s cautious demeanor, Roland knew she always had an internal struggle, feeling indebted for his frequent help, forming a mental knot.

Roland did not want this mental burden to grow heavier, as it would severely affect her mindset to continue her journey on the path of stardom.

He reached out to hold Alina’s somewhat uneasy hands, calmly saying:

"No matter the obligations, they were settled the moment the soul blood link was established. Now neither of us owes anything to the other, or rather, there’s no need to dwell on these between us."

Life is so precious, and after gaining power, Alina didn’t change her heart, continuing to face Sofia, an almost invincible presence in their understanding, with Roland.

Not only that, she also proactively sought to establish a Soul Blood Link, binding her life and soul entirely to Roland.