Empress 54

Chapter 54: Life Is Like a Play, All About Acting Skills

Does it separate victory from defeat as well as life from death?

A dignified literary scholar resolving conflicts with physical means?

Roland shrugged, put down his wine glass, passed by Alben, and walked in another direction.

Sounds ridiculous, but on careful thought, it’s reasonable. Since ancient times, there has been no second in literature; when writers break up, the scene can be truly tragic.

Who says literary scholars don’t like duels?

Anyone who can shoot someone dead instead of bickering.

After shouting two names, Alben "stormed off" angrily, and everyone could see that he and Roland had a "very unpleasant" conversation.

The Cabinet Ministers watching from not far away thought Roland and Alben would reach some shady deal, but it seems they were overthinking.

After watching veteran Alben leave, Roland searched his mind for relevant information.

Ever since learning that Old Macbeth feigned death, Roland had no fondness for this family.

Unless a delectable sacrifice appeared, the old schemer would never easily show himself; the deaths of a few younger family members wouldn’t make him change his plans.

Since someone voluntarily offered their head, how could he refuse?

Based on the clues provided by Alben and existing intelligence, Roland quickly locked onto two Tier Nine Transcendents from the Macbeth clan.

Finley Macbeth, [Writer].

Calvinson Macbeth, [Knight].

If the Macbeth family challenged with a knight, Roland would choose the novelist's favored gun duel format—life and death by fate.

Although the combat skills taught by his father were strong, he knew himself well and wouldn't blindly inflate his confidence to beat a [Knight] head-on with body techniques.

Unable to win with body techniques, a gun duel under the cover of a smoke bomb is the only choice.

If the opponent sends a [Writer] for the challenge, he would unhesitatingly choose a contest of body techniques.

After all, gun dueling is gambling with life; if he can avoid it, he should avoid it. His combat skills might not work against professional knights, but can't they deal with mere [Writers]?

Fairness?

What a joke.

Facing a fair duel with the enemy while holding an intelligence advantage reflects flawed thinking.

He's merely curious about how the Macbeth clan will choose.

After the atmosphere of the banquet was pushed to a climax by melodious music, the Chief Steward stepped onto the podium, raising his right hand high.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to take a moment of your time."

The Chief Steward’s smooth voice echoed in the hall, prompting silence.

His voice discomforted Roland.

Sussex is a civilized country that doesn’t use eunuchs as officials like the Alba Kingdom in the eastern Rodinia Continent.

But other men appearing in the emperor’s court is unrealistic; with trade comes slaughter, leading to torture even more brutal than castration.

Thanks to highly advanced alchemy, the Internal Affairs Department uses alchemy potions to raise orphans from a young age, depriving them of developmental rights.

The Chief Steward is such an alchemical eunuch.

After captivating everyone’s attention, the steward received the Imperial Decree handed by the maid and read it publicly.

The decree was very simple, appointing Roland as the Knight Order Leader.

Upon hearing this appointment, some unacquainted Cabinet Ministers exchanged glances.

They didn’t understand the Empress’s arrangement.

The grand leader seems prestigious, but it’s genuinely dangerous and powerless.

This method of entry, they truly don’t mind.

Yet the unexpected result left them with a feeling akin to stepping into thin air while climbing stairs.

Compared to Roland's entry, their greater concern was Sylph's loss of control.

This Empress hasn't yet ascended the throne, yet she brings so many surprises, what will happen after her formal ascent?

Something must be done.

The Cabinet Ministers, each harboring thoughts, did not step forward to congratulate Roland, but others were different.

The title of grand leader of the Imperial Knight Order is very imposing.

To those nobles and officials not within the power core, Roland's promotion speed seemed like the fireworks launched on Nightfall, shooting high into the sky.

The second-tier elites lucky enough to be invited couldn't hide their envy.

The second-tier mainly comprised clergy, wealthy merchants, and various celebrities; they weren't nobility but possessed immense wealth or considerable social influence.

These people held complex feelings towards grand nobles and high officials.

Relying on them, yet fearing them.

Half a month ago, Roland was just an ordinary Imperial Citizen, a third-tier member; now, he's jumped to the first tier.

That’s practically rocket-like...

No, not even fireworks fly this fast.

It’s practically at the speed of climbing into the Empress’s bed!

Recent rumors resurged in people’s memories.

To many, this wasn’t rumor but rather clearly substantiated evidence.

If Roland and the Empress did not have a clandestine relationship, how would this happen?

Just as Roland replaced Sylph as the focal point of the entire scene, surrounded by congratulating crowds, a disharmonious voice unexpectedly arrived.

"Mr. Roland, I do not consider you qualified to be Her Majesty the Empress’s Guardian."

As everyone turned to the voice, they looked at the challenger.

A towering, nearly two meters stature with rugged facial features; no matter how you looked at him, he seemed like a brute. Despite wearing a tuxedo, he felt out of place among elegant gentlemen and Ladies.

Seeing the challenger’s figure, those who had just surrounded Roland quietly dispersed.

There’s good drama to watch.

Someone revealed a schadenfreude smile.

The challenger didn’t even bother to address Roland as "Your Excellency," using the general term "Mr." instead.

Even a blind person could see this was a deliberate provocation.

Calvinson Macbeth, the current most renowned young talent of the Macbeth clan, embarked on the [Knight] path as a Transcendent.

He had many times used his extraordinary abilities publicly to defeat opponents; many knew his special ability was [Unshakable Power], but few knew how skilled he was in combat techniques.

He strode toward Roland, stopping seven or eight meters away, staring fixedly at Roland.

Roland didn’t feel surprised about the provocation; he smiled teasingly and said:

"Mr. Calvinson, you should now address me as Your Excellency and apologize. I don’t converse with ill-mannered individuals."

Calvinson was choked by Roland’s words.

Roland was right; regarding the Knight Order leader Roland, formal occasions require respectful address.

The Macbeth clan’s strength is formidable, but this isn’t a reason to trample on rules.

He couldn’t have anticipated Roland being so calm, directly avoiding the provocation, standing on the moral high ground of manners.疯狂输出

Seeing the spectators with diverse expressions, Calvinson knew he couldn’t defy rules; he gritted his teeth, his face turned ashen as he mumbled:

"Macbeth Clan, Calvinson, apologizes for the earlier offense."

With his forced submission, the spectators’ interest grew stronger.

Calvinson seemed brutish but wasn’t foolish.

His goal was to kill Roland in the duel, not in a clash of temper.

Honor duels concern reputation; they transcend life and death, even the Emperor cannot prevent them.

If Roland dares accept, then he dares to kill.

As everyone waited for Roland to accept the apology and initiate subsequent drama, Roland shook his head with a mocking smile and slowly said:

"Mr. Calvinson. A true apology should clearly explain the offense, reason for apologizing, and most importantly, it should show sincerity. Only then might it be forgiven."

"I don’t accept a perfunctory apology."