

# **In the Name of Empress**

## **Chapter 6: Chapter 6: Sis, We're Champions!**

The dream has ended.

Roland rose despondently.

In the dream, the Elf Maiden rested her chin on her hands, a smile playing on her lips, as she listened to his stories of the pauper and the Empress defying class barriers for love, heard him speak of the three-year vow, and watched him crookedly perform the arrival of the Dragon King.

Regardless of the story, she listened patiently.

The Elf Maiden's smile was the finest ode.

What a lovely dream, but alas, it must end.

The moment he opened his eyes, even though he had never been in love, he had already suffered heartbreak.

At the age of greatest powerlessness, he met the first girl to move his heart, and it happened in a dream.

This world remains as cruel as ever.

Roland got up numbly, washed, dressed, and found a suitcase to pack his belongings.

Even though there were no valuables worth bringing, he couldn't leave empty-handed and let the Jin Yuan people mock the broke Sussex as a beggar.

Even if begging, one must be neat and polished.

Going to work was out of the question. With the rain beginning tomorrow, why work today?

But the post office was a must-visit.

The painstakingly written manuscript was still in the office.

At least leave it as a memento.

Goodbye, Sussex.

Goodbye, Imperial writing contest.

To hell with literary dreams!

Packing finished, he straightened his collar and left the tiny apartment he had lived in for eighteen years.

As he stepped out, an autumn breeze swept by, scattering countless sycamore leaves, leaving the departing young man a touch desolate.

When he arrived at the post office, it was almost closing time, with a few people sparsely scattered, communicating with clerks in the lobby. The face of the front desk clerk was weary and devoid of smiles.

Everyone was busy, leaving him feeling like an outsider.

Just as he was about to move upstairs, Lisa appeared in a rush.

"Roland, there's a lady of noble status in your office."

"A noble lady?"

Roland suddenly became alert and whispered, "How many people did she bring? Where are her men ambushed?"

"Ambushed?"

Lisa quietly said, "The noble lady only brought a butler and a maid, no soldiers. She's reading the novel you wrote in your office. Do you want to check it out?"

No armed personnel?

Seems like it's not an arrest.

Anyway, nothing to do, so might as well go and see.

With the thought of rain descending, his mood was much calmer.

It's just a noble lady, not like Her Majesty the Empress waiting to interrogate him in the office.

As he went upstairs, his steps became nimble again.

"Dear Lady, I am Roland, a clerk at the Imperial Post Office. How may I assist you?"

Roland stood at the office door, gently knocking.

The noble girl said nothing, merely pointed to the seat opposite.

Roland casually sat across from her, looking at the noble girl with interest.

Unfortunately, there was nothing to see.

She wore a tightly-fitting dress and a butterfly mask, obviously unwilling to reveal her true appearance before commoners.

Typical of the old nobility of Sussex in their arrogance.

To them, it was an affront for commoners to share the same blue skies' air as them.

A moment later, the noble girl closed the manuscript, softly asking, "After young Arthur fulfilled the three-year vow, did he marry Red Beard's daughter? They were once lovers, after all."

"Red Beard's daughter tore up the marriage contract in public, so of course Arthur wouldn't marry her. In the end, Red Beard's daughter became Arthur's slave."

"How could this be? I thought Arthur still loved her?" the noble girl murmured softly, her fair fingers against her lips.

"Arthur indeed loved her. If not, he should've killed her entire family."

The noble girl: "..."

Roland's expression was also a bit unnatural.

These Otherworld barbarians simply didn't understand flashy novels, utterly throwing pearls before swine.

"Dear Lady, you were seeking me for something?"

"Apologies, I got engrossed in the novel just now and haven't introduced myself. I'm Count Sif Tyrone. I read your name among the shortlisted works for the Imperial writing contest and was moved to visit out of admiration."

The noble girl stood up, pinching her skirt edge and performing a standard noble lady's courtesy.

Though her face wasn't visible, her actions were elegant and dignified, her every movement carrying an indescribable noble air.

Roland hadn't anticipated such politeness, finding himself somewhat at a loss.

He didn't even know how to reciprocate the courtesy.

A gentleman's greeting? He wasn't nobility.

A military salute? He wasn't a soldier.

A knight's greeting? He wasn't a knight.

In hesitation, he focused on the girl and gave a dedicated salute with his eyes.

Luckily, Miss Sif didn't mind his lack of etiquette, merely gesturing for him to sit down.

"Did you write these novels?"

Roland silently apologized to his peers in another world, forgiving himself with the justification that "it doesn't affect their profits in this world," then calmly said:

"At least in this world, their copyrights belong to me."

"Your words brim with a literary scholar's unique humor." Sif smiled lightly.

She began discussing the books' plots with Roland with keen interest.

Since these works had all been rejected, they were incomplete, naturally making Sif curious about their endings.

After Roland briefly described the conclusions, Sif's eyes grew increasingly curious.

"Mr. Roland, your stories all seem to have perfect happy endings, which contrasts with the mainstream tragic style of literature. You must know, the most famous works in our literary scene are the four great tragedies."

Roland shrugged, calmly saying, "I understand. Most readers are nobility or social elites. They generally lack life's pressures, having wealth and beauty but devoid of worries, so they seek troubles in literature."

"They aren't fond of tragedies but seek psychological satisfaction."

"I prefer writing stories for ordinary people. Hence, I aim to write more tales where good folks find happy endings, family reunions, and such."

"There are plenty of stories exclusive to the nobility. I won't be missed."

Sif silently observed Roland, sensing that he was channeling a long-held, pent-up emotion through his words.

The image of a struggling writer, selflessly committed to storytelling for ordinary folks, quickly filled her mind.

She almost produced the invitation letter for Roland, but a draft from the leaky window jolted her back to reality.

"Is this why you wrote the sensational piece 'Oh my, Her Majesty the Empress is Pregnant, Who's the Father?'"

"Do ordinary people enjoy such novels?"

Facing Countess Sif's soul-searching inquiry, Roland knew she was an envoy sent by the Empress to assess his literary prowess.

Perhaps he should've put on a good show, perhaps he should've clarified that while writing, Her Majesty was still a Princess and that he meant no slander.

But the words that came out were simply, "Yes."

Kidding aside, sensational topics of violence and sex unfailingly draw attention; coupled with the tantalizing mystique from the Empress's noble status, who could resist?

The air fell into a deathly silence.

The silence was deafening.

After a moment, Count Sif quietly said, "I understand, you didn't mean to harm the Empress's reputation, it was necessary for the plot."

"Dear Miss Sif, you truly are a sage blessed by the light of wisdom."

Roland didn't hesitate to offer his praise.

If only Her Majesty the Empress had even a fraction of Count Sif's intelligence, what troubles would he have?

Seeing Roland's expression of relief, Count Sif softly said, "I am Her Majesty the Empress's close confidant, dispatched to assess your literary talent."

"Congratulations, you've won the writing contest championship."

Count Sif retrieved an invitation letter from her small crocodile leather purse, pressing it forward on the table.

The invitation letter drifted before Roland, slowly coming to a stop.

"In two weeks, Her Majesty will host the first art salon of her term at Sheffield Palace. The writing contest champion will be a special guest at the salon."

"You probably haven't attended such gatherings? Don't worry, there will be professionals preparing your attire and etiquette training."

Sif stood up, ready to leave.

Roland quickly rose, prepared to see her off.

"If you wish to thank me, complete these stories. I want to read them."

Count Sif left behind this phrase and gracefully departed.

Two maids holding the ends of her long skirt, the silhouette of the noble girl slowly dissipated at the doorway.

Ha ha, finally no need to run away.

Roland couldn't help but want to laugh aloud.

But after the laughter, he realized another serious matter.

What about the agreement with the Jin Yuan Female Spy?