Empress 611

Chapter 611: I Want to Be the Only One

The dawn awakens the sleeping city, awakens the busy people, but cannot awaken the young lovers who spent the night embracing and basking in the sun.

Feeling Roland’s renewed passion, Alina felt a bit flustered and dodged, "Don’t you have something important to do today?"

"I do, but nothing is as important as being with you."

Roland’s sincere gaze made Alina’s cheeks flush red. She buried her head in Roland’s embrace and murmured awkwardly:

"Roland, I want a child."

Since she had already pierced through the veil, Alina was straightforward and not at all pretentious.

"Alright, after we finish the wedding, it will be our priority." Such a reasonable request, of course Roland wouldn’t decline.

However, Alina wasn’t as excited as he thought she would be. Her eyes even showed a bit of melancholy.

"You already have Sylph."

"You and she enjoy the same status." Roland looked at Alina somewhat surprised and was quite puzzled.

He had heard that girls all dream of wearing a wedding dress to marry their beloved. Was what he heard untrue?

Of course it wasn’t untrue, but Alina was different from normal people.

She gently said, "You are already engaged to Sylph. Even if the wedding happens together, in everyone's eyes, she is the indisputable first wife."

Roland fell silent.

Alina was right. From any perspective, Sylph was the first wife.

Even if he publicly announced that their status was equal, Alina would still be perceived as lower.

He could only hold Alina's soft hand and gently say, "How others see it doesn't matter. I will treat you both equally well."

Alina smiled brightly. Roland's words were especially warm, and her nose slightly tinged with sourness, recalling how Roland had risked his life to go to Jin Yuan to help her avenge and seize power to ascend the throne.

Due to Roland's sacrifice, she shouldn't refuse his arrangements.

But she truly couldn't reconcile, couldn't accept being a secondary wife.

Her gentle voice carried fatigue, "Roland, I shouldn't refuse you, but I..."

"I understand."

Roland's slender fingers pressed against her lips and said solemnly: "I helped you, and after you took power, you supported me with all your might. Neither of us owes the other anything. You have the right to make a choice."

"I respect your choice; it's just a pity."

Roland shrugged, his intense gaze falling on Alina’s fair skin.

"Such a beautiful and enchanting girl drifting away from me, there is a bit of regret in my heart."

Roland’s words made Alina bristle instantly.

She sat up abruptly, glared fiercely at Roland, grabbed his chest in annoyance, and asked softly:

"Roland, what do you mean? I am a well-educated, self-disciplined girl; do you want to just play around and then discard me?"

Ah?

Now it was Roland’s turn to be dumbfounded. Wasn’t it you who said you wouldn’t marry, what’s going on?

Although he never understood girls, Alina still managed to short-circuit his brain.

Seeing Roland’s bewildered expression, Alina giggled.

She released her grip on Roland, her cheeks slightly red.

"I just said I wouldn’t marry you, didn’t say I wouldn’t be your lover."

Roland widened his eyes, even more puzzled.

Even if others saw her status as lower than Sif’s, at least she was a formally wedded wife, how could she not be a wife but a lover?

Seeing Roland’s puzzled expression, Alina’s lips curled slightly, she spoke softly yet firmly:

"Am I your first lover?"

"If you wish, you could be the last one as well." Roland somewhat understood Alina's thoughts and quickly flattered her.

"No."

Alina's soft hand pressed on Roland, "I don't want you to be bound by anything. Roland, you are free. But my world doesn't have much time for emotional matters between men and women, so I only have you."

"That's not quite fair." Roland felt a bit awkward.

"As long as you do one thing, it will be considered fair." Alina smiled happily.

"Tell me, I promise to do it." Roland felt a bit guilty, but agreed without hesitation.

He understood why Alina chose this way.

Alina wasn't alone; she was also the head of the Bonaparte Clan, the Emperor of the Jin Yuan Republic, and the national Goddess of the Jin Yuan Republic.

The Jin Yuan People are proud; they can only accept being equal to top-tier nations.

If Alina publicly married Roland, ranked after Sylph, it would mean Jin Yuan Kingdom would shrink a notch when facing Sussex.

Even if Alina is the Liberator, is the Emperor of the Republic, it wouldn't work.

Or rather, precisely because she has such high prestige, she couldn’t become a secondary wife.

Her marrying Roland would be a devastating blow to the Jin Yuan People’s dignity.

They would never again be able to lift their heads before the Sussex people.

In anger, the Jin Yuan people might even impeach or overthrow Alina.

It was the nationwide support that allowed her to ascend to the position of Emperor; if she harmed everyone, she would be spurned by all until she lost her position as Emperor.

But being a lover is different.

That is the private life within the nobility circle; no one can interfere.

The Jin Yuan People might even cheer because their emperor had ’outdone’ the Queen of Sussex.

This twisted mentality, although Alina didn’t directly express it, Roland fully understood.

Alina’s request was simple, "When you are with me, don’t think of other women!"

Such a simple request, of course, Roland wouldn’t refuse. He nodded lightly, sighed, "Just feel sorry for you. I heard every girl is the most beautiful angel when wearing a wedding dress."

"What’s there to feel sorry for?"

Alina spoke indifferently: "Even if I wear the best dress, could I steal your wife’s thunder?"

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Of course not.

Competing with Sylph in charm is as absurd as matching power with Sofia.

She possesses the charm advantages of both humans and elves; her beauty is naturally flawless.

Alina isn’t being modest, just a bit resigned.

She could speak, but Roland couldn’t respond.

He smiled and said, "Everyone has their unique charm, your independence and confidence can’t be learned by others."

Roland wasn’t just flattering; Alina truly is the embodiment of an independent woman of this era.

If she were to marry, even if only to Roland alone, her aura would lose much of its luster.

Successful in career, renowned in power, beautiful without being vulgar, she doesn’t succumb to conventional marriage.

Such a woman would be cool even in the 21st Century, let alone in the Enlightenment Era.

Singlehood is part of Alina’s charm.

Roland had nothing to say, so he hugged Alina tightly, giving her the fiercest warmth.

Embraced by Roland, Alina’s body felt as warm as a small furnace.

She finally couldn’t bear it, biting her lip and whispering softly, "If you’re free, then..."

Roland responded through action.

He couldn't understand Alina's heartbeat, after all, the armor protecting her heart was rather thick.

But he felt Alina's body temperature rising.

Like a blazing fire.

Roland, as a firefighter, started to extinguish the fire, calming the flames he had ignited.

Roland only left Alina's mansion at noon.

No one noticed his calves slightly trembling.

Perhaps because he didn't know when they would meet again next, or because of Roland's understanding and respect, or the desire to leave a legacy for the family early, Alina's passion was enough to make an Enchanting Demon envious.

Roland, sweating profusely, finally managed to leave that long tug of war with dignity.

The warm spring sun shone on him, slightly restoring his stamina.

Thinking of Alina's passion last night and her calmness this morning, Roland mused that being at the top of the power pyramid allows one to gain enviable power but also lose much.

Sylph could never reunite with her father like a normal family.

Sofia could never feel the warmth of family.

Alina, respecting public sentiment, could only be his lover.

Christine had to preserve the Wende Empire to repay her teacher's past care.

Even Sister Lisa, who was once extraordinarily simple, had to stand for her homeland, the Talia Kingdom.

Everyone has things they must do.

And he is no exception.

Roland found a restaurant to feast and replenish the extreme energy drained from last night, comparable to the exhaustion of a hundred battles, as his scattered spirit gradually gathered.

He squinted his eyes and began to sort out his thoughts.

In front of Sofia, he must appear composed as if everything is under control, yet the Tirol Kingdom is not easy to deal with.

It's unclear how deeply the Dark Race has infiltrated this country, or what the attitudes of the non-Dark Race Odin descendants are towards the Dark Race; he lacks useful information.

Sofia killed too quickly.

According to his understanding, rather than killing Queen Sisi, it would be better to bind her and slowly interrogate her.

After all, she is a Dark Race Pathfinder, surely her intelligence is unlike any other.

Sofia might have satisfied her desire to kill, but the difficulty of the aftermath increased exponentially.

Roland has a general idea but still many details need to be deliberated.

After enjoying lunch, he walked alone to Val City Hall.

He is the Caesar of the Sussex Empire, Prime Minister of Jin Yuan Republic, Cardinal Minister of the Vladimir Empire, and the Honorary Governor of Val City State.

Therefore, he also has his own office in Val City State.

The Guard Captain at the door recognized Roland, saluting him with slight nervousness.

The new recruit beside the Guard Captain didn't recognize Roland, confusedly following the captain's salute, yet unable to comprehend Roland's identity.

Seeing Roland's youthful appearance, outstanding demeanor, and dressed in lavish casual wear, he instinctively thought Roland was a young master or a wealthy heir.

He didn't have much respect for such people.

As Roland's silhouette disappeared at the staircase, he couldn't help but remark, "Captain, I've never seen you so tense. Is this person of great importance?"

The Guard Captain looked at the recruit with clear eyes, pondered for a moment, and slowly said:

"He has many identities, but any one of them could make our homeland vanish completely."

The recruit was terrified, his lips turning slightly white, stutteringly asking, "Is he a Monarch of a great nation?"

The Guard Captain looked at the recruit like an idiot, sighed, and said, "Monarch? He's not a Monarch, but he can sway the decisions of three superpower Monarchs and a Pope."

"At least three and a half!"

Thinking of Sofia’s forcefulness, the Guard Captain corrected his exaggerated statement.

Empress Sofia’s decisions, Roland could decide half.

As for Sylph and Alina, Roland’s will is akin to divine will.

The recruit wanted to ask more but was stopped by the Guard Captain.

"Alright, young man don’t think too much, do your job well, be less impulsive, and work hard!"

The recruit was so frightened he broke out in a cold sweat, immediately standing up straight, no longer speaking nonsense.

Just as the guards were discussing Roland, he had already returned to his office.

Entering the Honorary Governor’s office, Roland looked at the dust-free room and the orderly bookshelf, feeling somewhat emotional.

Val City indeed lives up to its reputation as the former central city of the continent and the center of international exchanges, doing things the right way.

Although he is merely the honorary governor by name, Val City State’s respect for him didn’t stay just on the surface.

As soon as he sat down, a knock was heard, and a sweet voice of at least four plus points sounded from outside the door.

Chapter 613: I Want to Be the Only One (Part 3)

"Governor, are you available now?"

"I... come in."

Roland initially wanted to say he was busy, but he couldn’t turn down a smiling face, so he didn’t refuse.

This was his first time in this office when the administrative secretary came looking for him.

He was curious, what could it be?

The administrative secretary gently pushed open the door, walked over lightly, placed the documents on the desk, and then stepped back five meters away from Roland.

"Governor, these are last year’s government work report and this year’s work plan, along with several very important documents, please take a look."

Roland really wanted to say he was just a figurehead, but looking at the secretary’s expectant eyes, he couldn’t say it out loud.

Might as well take a look.

After all, he was just casually going to glance through.

As he opened the government work report, Roland intended to just skim, but the work report moved him.

This work report didn’t have the common drivel and official language found elsewhere; it went straight to the point from the start.

How much income last year, how much expenditure, what work was done, and what got accidentally messed up, everything was included.

There was no exaggeration of achievements or evasion of problems.

Just based on this, it surpassed several major countries by far.

Last year's work report covered aspects from politics, economy, diplomacy, and livelihood, but the most important part was the Rodinia war.

The report's author honestly pointed out that Val City State was too small to inherently ensure safety.

To survive, they must firmly align themselves and bind themselves to the Freedom Alliance's chariot.

They had no choice.

Sitting on the fence would only get them pummeled from both sides.

After all, it was last year's work report; they couldn't foresee the emergence of the Rodinia Alliance, an incomprehensible entity.

The report concluded with detailed accounts of the damage the war inflicted on Val City State.

They paid the price of over twenty thousand casualties, which is a heavy blow to a city-state with only seventy thousand people.

By proportion alone, the casualty rate topped that of any country within the Freedom Alliance.

Moreover, Val City suffered significant losses in the war, with total direct and indirect losses exceeding four million nine hundred thousand pounds.

This is almost two and a half years of fiscal revenue for Val City State, far exceeding fifty years of fiscal surplus.

This war wiped out a generation and the massive wealth accumulated over many years.

Roland sat up straight and wrote a red remark on the work report.

In the world before his crossing, this was called an important directive.

Roland's directive was simple: let Val City State lead the formation of the Rodinia Inland Waterway Committee and negotiate with the Sussex Empire's trade department to establish a free trade zone.

Although Val City State has fertile land, it's limited.

They must rely on industry and commerce.

To reward their loyalty and contributions, Roland decided to give them a boost.

He even considered making Emre Port a free port for shared interests between the two countries.

Then, Val City State's goods could exit via inland waterways, departing from Emre Port.

With smooth trade and Val people's business acumen, they would surely make money.

In the second document, the annual work plan, Roland helped them revise and improve it, ensuring they employ workers from Jin Yuan Kingdom to rebuild their homes.

Rebuilding costs would be jointly borne by Val City State, Jin Yuan Kingdom, and Sussex Empire.

Though it would require some sacrifices, Roland thought it worth it.

This was a win-win-win solution.

After reading through all the documents, Roland indicated to the administrative secretary to take them away.

The administrative secretary was a little surprised.

The Chief Governor had only reminded her to prepare the documents and give them to Roland upon his arrival; if he didn't come, she couldn't proactively look for him.

Today, Roland finally came, and she wouldn't miss the chance.

She originally thought Roland was just going to skim, but she didn't expect him to make red marks.

Not only that, Roland helped by standing on Val City's side to plan opportunities.

The Honorary Governor truly didn't see himself as an outsider.

The administrative secretary was ecstatic.

Born and raised in Val City, the administrative secretary was very familiar with the city's changes over the years.

She also knew how important it was to have strong backing for Val City State.

Roland was their strong support.

Now that he actively responded, every Val person would be happy.

Seeing the secretary's joyous expression, Roland thought to himself, every benefit has its price.

Val City would become a future global center city, and his assistance was valuable but not free.

Val City couldn’t choose to be neutral; they must clearly stand with Roland.

After the administrative secretary left, Roland had just picked up tea to alleviate fatigue, when less than half an hour later, there was another knock at the door.

Roland furrowed his brows lightly but still spoke in a low voice, "The door’s unlocked, come in."

Entering the room was the head of the integrated office.

He brought news that surprised Roland.

The former Prime Minister of the Tirol Kingdom, Meinette, came to visit.

Roland’s ultimatum to the Tirol Kingdom hadn’t even been sent out, and here they were proactively visiting, what to do?

First, rule out violence.

A proactive visit makes them guests; how could the host be in a bad mood and start hitting the guests?

No matter what, meet them first.

Soon, an elderly gentleman full of energy walked into the Governor’s office.

Roland was surprised to look at Meinette.

This old gentleman, over fifty, appeared at least seventy.

Aging too fast.

While Roland exchanged courtesy with Meinette, the former Prime Minister of the Tirol Kingdom suddenly knelt on one knee before him.

"Roland, save Tirol!"

Roland couldn’t accept such a grand gesture from the elder and quickly helped Meinette up, seriously saying:

"Mr. Meinette, if it’s to save you, I might be able to try, but the Tirol Kingdom and I have no relationship; I’m not your official, possibly even an adversary, how could I save it?"

"As long as you’re willing, you can be!" Meinette said resolutely.

Roland furrowed his brow lightly and still chose to decline politely.

"Sorry, I am now the Cardinal Minister of the Vladimir Empire; some things can’t be done impulsively."

Meinette wanted to comment a bit, but Roland wasn’t really rejecting; he was raising the price.

He quickly offered a second reward, promising Roland the vacant Earl’s Domain, Vistana Land, within the Tirol Kingdom as new territory.

Not only that, but he also suggested to Roland that he could choose any lady from Tirol; even if she was married, he would persuade her husband to make every concession short of divorce.

As long as Roland was willing to go!

Praise with ulterior motives often means ulterior motives aren’t noble; this old man wasn’t a good person.

Roland, with a half-smile, looked at Meinette and gently asked, "Tell me, what specific problem does your country need me to solve? If it’s within my ability, I won’t refuse."

"You certainly can, as the Knight of Light; dispelling darkness is your duty."

Meinette candidly looked at Roland, without hiding anything, and said, "The Dark Race is invading our country, and even the late King’s legitimate wife, Queen Sisi, is among them."

"Your Highness the Light, save us."

Roland stood stunned, confusedly asking, "Who is your new King; are you sure he has no ties to the Dark Race?"

"I’m very sure, the new King comes from a collateral royal branch with an excellent reputation. I watched him grow from the age of three; I know him well. After all, I am his uncle."

Roland suddenly understood.

So that’s what’s happening.

True to your style, Meinette, waiting for me here.

Though it’s a trick, it’s a sincere one.

Roland nodded, only asking for one thing; he wanted to conduct a lecture tour throughout Tirol.

Spread knowledge to every corner of the world. He did this not out of nobility but out of selfishness.

He must become stronger through spreading knowledge.

Faced with Roland’s "unreasonable demand," Meinette beamed with joy.

As long as Roland was willing to help, any condition could be proposed.

Even if Roland curiously wanted to taste what Queen Sisi, after death, was like, he would arrange it.

Seeing Meinette’s fervent eyes, Roland felt a little uneasy.

This old man surely has some mad ideas, right?

Anyhow, good luck to him.

Chapter 614: Sincerity Breaks the Routine

Roland and Meinette’s closed-door meeting lasted for a long time.

The old and the young fox engaged in light-hearted conversation, casually probing and exchanging interests.

Originally, Meinette did not have the qualification to sit at the same table as Roland and the three major countries behind him to discuss business, but he had new bargaining chips.

As Queen Sisi’s "loyal dog," his defection held significant meaning.

As a subordinate under Queen Sisi’s command, he had a deep understanding of Queen Sisi herself and, by extension, a profound insight into the Enchanting Demon and other Dark Races.

Although Roland was skeptical of the old fellow's sincerity in defecting, he still accepted the cooperation.

The emergence of the four prophetic verses made him sense a crisis.

The first appearance of the war machines finally made humans, other than Roland, realize the obsolescence of their technology.

A few foot soldiers could destroy a human fortress; how should elite and leader-level war machines be dealt with if they appear?

The war machines powered by petro-energy remain in eternal slumber, while the ones powered by electricity awaken one after another. What if the Alamanni Empire controlled more advanced technology?

Like war machines with miniature nuclear reactors.

Others may not know the future's tech tree, but Roland knew the general direction.

Can the flesh and blood of humans in the Seventh Era withstand these war beasts?

The emergence of the Dark Race challenged the uniqueness of the Transcendent.

According to Meinette, this old fellow, the Dark Race is just a general term; their internal tribe divisions are quite complex, with branches that follow the path of the Transcendent star path, and others who are proficient in Magic and Martial Arts.

The Dark Race's technology is very backward, but their individual combat power surpasses humans.

Roland remains skeptical about this.

Humans have defeated Giant Dragons, and have given rise to the Transcendent race of the gods.

The range between the upper and lower limits of humans is huge, with weak and strong coexisting, and a very high upper limit.

The Dark Race is boasting so impressively, how many of them have achieved Ascension to Divinity?

The Dark Side, where the Dark Race resides, is dependent on the Material Plane, being a part of the Theia Plane.

If they were truly that formidable, why would they become a subordinate? Instead of the Material Plane depending on the Dark Side?

Roland didn't ask these questions, but he believed the old fox knew them too.

Otherwise, Meinette would not come to him for cooperation but would follow the King of the Dark Race to the bitter end.

To see a person's true attitude, don't look at what he says; look at what he does.

Roland couldn't see through the old fellow's true intentions for the moment, so he thought of a way to steady him.

His reason was simple: this matter was of great importance and must be discussed with Sofia and the others.

Meinette agreed with Roland's reason, but he set a deadline.

Three days.

His urgency is quite normal; betraying the Dark Race is no trivial matter.

If he really intends to bring order out of chaos, Roland must ensure his safety.

If he is a puppet controlled by the Dark Race, Roland could quietly play along with him.

Roland didn’t wait long, as Sylph and others returned the next day.

Upon inviting Meinette for another discussion, Sylph merely glanced at him and almost threw up.

Becoming impatient, she quickly found an excuse to end the meeting, then held back her nausea, took a few deep breaths to stabilize her emotions.

"This is a genuine scumbag, human virtues are nowhere to be found in him, yet human depravity is perfectly displayed."

"He is naturally greedy, acts vilely, is hedonistic and unruly, and does things without any principle."

Sylph suddenly paused, then softly said, "Compared to him, you seem almost saintly."

"But indeed, he is unwilling to be a lackey to the Dark Race, that’s not an issue."

Roland exhaled a long breath, feeling Sylph’s gaze linger on him for a bit longer, he simply and straightforwardly explained his affairs with Alina.

"Dear, I met Alina."

"It’s okay, I completely agree, after all, she is also an Emperor, we’ll hold the wedding together,"

Sylph sighed in relief, smiled and said.

Internally, she was wrestling with whether or not to use Insight.

She was quite reluctant to use Insight on Roland, sometimes it’s better to be deliberately vague about certain things.

Roland’s honesty dispersed the slight displeasure in her heart.

Before the Battle of White Mountain, she promised to accept both Alina and Lisa, but she had to wait until the Battle of White Mountain was over.

Roland kept his promise; the time of the Sixth Era completely belonged to her.

That was enough.

Embarking on the star path, time left for family will become less and less, and the star path Roland chose cannot be a path of seclusion, it requires him to walk in the mortal world.

When she reopens the Elf Secret Realm, she will reside in the realm for a long time, and the time to accompany Roland will gradually decrease.

Having a few more women to look after Roland is always a good thing.

Sylph watched Roland with a smile, softly saying: "Though I’m a year younger than Alina, I knew you first, so I entered the family earlier, I’ll prepare a generous gift for Alina."

"No need for the gift, she refused to marry me."

Thinking of Alina’s reason, Roland still felt regret.

Not seeing a bride Alina in traditional Jin Yuan style dress, indeed felt a bit disappointing.

Sylph was momentarily stunned, then her face suddenly flushed.

This Alina is simply too ungrateful.

After finally coming to terms, willing to share with other women, and yet this person gets all pretentious?

Sylph huffed slightly with some anger: "What, do I need to go talk to her?"

"You’re mistaken, she just doesn’t want to be bound by marriage."

Roland fashioned a romantic reason for Alina, "You know, Jin Yuan women like romance, Alina is no different, she doesn’t want to be bound by marriage."

Chapter 615: Sincerity Breaks the Routine (Part 2)

"So she chose to be your mistress?"

Sif was stunned for a few seconds, vaguely understanding Alina’s thoughts.

She wasn’t unwilling to be bound by marriage; she just didn’t want to be second.

Beyond that, there were political considerations.

Sif smiled and shook her head, "Roland, you don’t understand women. In name, she’s a mistress, but in reality, she’s still your wife. She can be willful; I mustn’t be rude."

Roland never understood women, and this time was no exception.

He tactfully did not continue the topic.

Sif was no longer the simple and easily angered noble girl she was back then; she had her own sense of propriety.

Roland quickly used Meinette as a shield.

"My dear, I want to infiltrate Tirol to probe the truth about the Dark Race."

"I'll go with you!" Sif said without hesitation.

"The time we disappear together will be suspicious to everyone," Roland shook his head, refusing.

Though rejected by Roland, Sif was not angry; she knew Roland was right.

Their disappearance had been too long, and with Queen Sisi's entire family dying mysteriously, the forces behind it would surely be alert.

The number of people going had to be limited, and it couldn't be her.

Sif felt uneasy; after much consideration, she said solemnly, "Let Christine accompany you. She is blessed with the Power of the Goddess, her strength is not inferior to yours, and with the Light's restraint over the Dark, her combat power can be fully unleashed. Moreover, she is even less likely to compromise with the Dark Race."

"If you don't accept, then don't go." This was Sif's bottom line.

Roland exaggeratedly saluted Sif, "As you command!"

"You go find Christine, I won't go." Christine had a close relationship with Roland, but was indifferent with others, so Sif naturally wouldn't invite humiliation upon herself.

Shortly after Roland left the residence, Sif also left the mansion, crossing Friendship Street, heading towards a mansion in the East City District.

The person she was looking for was Sofia.

When the maid informed Sofia, Sofia was stunned for a few seconds before responding.

She thought for a moment and chose to meet Sif in the small study in the backyard.

The front yard of the noble mansion was for external affairs, where friends were received and business was conducted. Most of the servants lived in the front yard as well.

The backyard was generally where the nobility themselves and family members lived.

The servants who could serve in the backyard were often loyal servants who had been with the family for several generations.

Receiving someone in the front yard meant they were an outsider, no matter how good the relationship was.

Receiving someone in the backyard meant they were family, no matter how bad the relationship was.

Considering Roland had been working diligently these days, Sofia couldn't bear to place Sif in the front yard.

But meeting in the small dining room in the backyard felt a bit awkward, after all, just a few months ago, they were enemies.

So she chose the small study.

The study had a front door connected to the front yard and a back door linked to the backyard, so it could be seen as part of the front yard or as part of the family's living area in the backyard.

She had received an elite noble education from a young age and was familiar with social etiquette and interpersonal relations.

Although she cared less about these things after becoming overwhelmingly powerful, some things engraved in her bones couldn't be forgotten.

Sif naturally understood Sofia's choice.

She was somewhat surprised.

It wasn't that she was surprised by Sofia's choice, but that Sofia actually took the time to seriously consider the details.

Being cold and choosing the front yard, or being completely indifferent and choosing the backyard, both fit Sofia's domineering style; it was unique for her to seriously think about reception etiquette.

Without showing her emotions, Sif quietly sat down at the desk in the small study.

Her gaze landed on a book placed on the desk.

"On Light."

"Is this the last work of the Goddess of Light before she left?" Sif tentatively asked.

"Yes, it was written by Tiya."

Sofia smiled as she sat down, about to summon the servant, but then suddenly realized that for such a private discussion, it was unnecessary to have servants nearby. She then casually took out a bottle of wine from the desk and placed it down carelessly.

"Help yourself if you want a drink." Her expression resumed its coldness, but the frostiness between her brows had diminished.

Sif wouldn’t stand on ceremony with her, she deftly removed the cork, poured herself a glass of wine, and swirled the glass, appreciating the action of swirling the wine.

Crude people drink wine in one gulp; elegant people pay attention to pouring, decanting, and tasting.

Sif was once the last Empress of the Elf Race and was the most beautiful woman of her time, so naturally, her demeanor was of utmost grace.

Originally, it was just a polite remark, but unexpectedly, Sif began to leisurely savor the wine, causing Sofia to slightly furrow her brows.

But she didn’t interrupt.

This wasn’t a battlefield, and battlefield rules could be set aside for a moment.

Sofia seriously pondered the part about imperial etiquette in her mind, and softly said:

"Should I address you as Lady Sylph or Lady Roland?"

Sif corrected her earnestly, "The correct address is Lady York, but of course, you can choose as you please."

"Alright, Lady York, I know your time is extremely valuable, and so is mine. Feel free to speak directly. But let me say upfront, Roland can offer services in Val City for half a year each year, but the other half he must spend with me, this is my greatest concession."

Sofia stared at Sif alertly.

Originally, Roland was only allowed half a month’s leave each year based on the agreement, and now it’s almost half a year; she’s already made a significant concession.

Sif smiled and said, "Miss Sofia, thank you for your generosity. Rest assured, I’m not a fool who doesn’t know when to stop."

"What I want to say is, the guide of the Dark Race has defected."

She then explained the entire incident about Meinette’s defection in detail.

Sofia’s expression turned slightly stern; she roughly knew what Sif intended to convey.

She hesitated slightly.

It was a crucial moment for her to re-plan her stardom path, and she didn’t intend to act rashly, but Sif had already spoken, so outright refusal seemed unreasonable.

Chapter 616: Sincerity Breaks the Routine (Part 3)

Sofia raised the empty wine glass in front of her. In a daze, the glass touched her lips, and she felt a chill from the empty cup.

She was slightly bewildered, catching sight of the empty glass from the corner of her eye.

Silence, the air seemed to freeze.

Sif dared not breathe loudly; she wasn't quite sure what Sofia was thinking, but she knew Sofia's mental state wasn't right.

Saying anything at this moment would be wrong and could potentially anger this capricious, icy woman.

Though she no longer walked the path of Frosty Winter, her cold personality remained unchanged.

Sofia stared at the empty glass, countless memories surfacing in her mind.

Perhaps because she had lost most of her power, her demeanor had softened somewhat recently.

Somehow reminiscent of her time in the Prudon Kingdom.

Innocent and fond of dreaming, weak and unable to control her fate.

Just as Sif was contemplating whether to say something, a flash of insight hit Sofia.

Since she had made a choice, she shouldn't hesitate.

Destruction is the endpoint of life, but also its starting point.

Without destruction, how could rebirth occur?

She gripped the glass tightly and smashed it hard, shattering it into pieces on the ground.

If she couldn't even let go of a glass, what else could she let go of?

Sofia, through smashing the glass, had an epiphany and no longer had any doubt about the path ahead.

She felt relieved after the act, but Sif was startled.

Sif instinctively tightened her grip on the smoke bomb, almost ready to flee.

But after assessing the power disparity between them, she ultimately abandoned the idea of using force.

Footsteps echoed from the hallway outside.

But Sif wasn't alarmed; the sound was distinctly that of a maid, not a Blade Axe Hand.

Moreover, she didn't sense any killing intent from Sofia.

On the contrary, Sofia appeared in good spirits and particularly joyful.

Sif teased with a smile, "Sofia, how many Blade Axe Hands are outside?"

Sofia didn't respond to her mockery, simply stating calmly, "I'm going with Roland to dismantle the Dark Race's tentacles together."

Sif felt a bit of a headache.

This was indeed a response in line with Sofia's style—if something could be solved with force, then there's no need for more words.

But this wasn't a time when force was needed.

She quickly shook her head and said, "With an insider leading the way, Roland can definitely spot something. Your invincible strength is the trump card, not a pawn for assault."

Although Sif refused, her words were pleasant to hear, and Sofia reluctantly accepted.

Seeing Sofia slightly frown, Sif feared she might have some strange idea again, so she quickly offered her own suggestion.

"Let Roland handle the dirty and tiring work; you just need to watch from a distance and provide protection."

Sofia's frown deepened.

She didn't particularly like such sneaky tactics, but as Sif said, she wasn't responsible for specific tasks, so she really had no reason to oppose.

"Fine."

Sofia's voice gradually cooled, and Sif knew she was being dismissed, so she hastily got up to leave.

If it weren't for a request, she wouldn't want to be in this forsaken place at all.

Sif silently complained to herself—had Sofia really bid farewell to the Frosty Winter Star Path? Why is the room still so cold?

The fool who refuses to light the fireplace in spring should be severely punished with arthritis when they grow old!

...

While Sif and Sofia were consulting, Roland found Christine.

The priest at the entrance warmly welcomed Roland into the Great Hall of Light and pointed him towards Christine's Prayer Room.

"The Pope always prays over there, and she mentioned that you needn't notify her when you come."

Watching Roland leave, the priest's gaze was filled with envy.

He had a clear understanding of Roland's status; though envious, he wasn't jealous.

Roland was a Knight of Light and the most trusted person of His Holiness the Pope, ranking above the overt second-in-command in the Divine Court of Light in terms of power.

He was indeed the Pope's confidant.

Inside the Prayer Room, Christine was kneeling on a cushion, her hands crossed over her chest, devoutly praying.

When Roland entered, she didn't stop her prayers but gestured with her eyes for Roland to pray beside her.

Christine was conducting her weekly hymn prayer, a pious ritual that couldn't be interrupted. Being able to accompany the Pope in opening one's heart to the Goddess at such a time was a great honor.

If it had been another believer, they would likely have been ecstatic, prostrating themselves, but Roland couldn't do it.

Kneeling before the Goddess of Light wasn't out of the question; he just felt a little agitated inside.

Recalling Christine's past advice to pray more often, Roland felt a bit embarrassed.

Though he had orally agreed, this was his first time coming.

Since he was here, he decided to pray.

Roland bent his knee slightly, ready to mimic Christine, when suddenly, a thought sparked, and he turned towards Christine.

Praying directly to the Goddess was certainly an option, but humble believers had another choice: they could pray to senior clergy members to relay their prayers.

As the gap between high-level clergy and ordinary believers widened, this second form of prayer had gained popularity in recent years.

Roland cleverly faced Christine, dropping to one knee.

This posture more resembled a vassal expressing loyalty to their lord.

He was also a high-level clergy member of the Divine Court of Light, held territory in the Holy City, effectively making him Christine's vassal.

Similarly, Christine also had a Duke's Domain in Sussex.

Roland was the Vice Emperor of the Empire, Christine's sovereign.

And he, in Christine's domain, was akin to a Cardinal and a Knight of Light, holding a Diocese.

Legally, they were mutual vassals and masters.

Kneeling to her on one knee wasn't discourteous.

With lips slightly curved upward, Roland was in a good mood, and, unconsciously, even his voice in the hymn rose by a few decibels.

He might have been better off silent; once he began, the formerly stern-faced, displeased Christine couldn't hold back her laughter.

She turned around, signaling with her eyes for Roland to shut up.

The two of them knelt face to face, eyes locked, one knee on the ground, bodies stiff.

The posture was impeccable, symbolizing the mutual loyalty between ruler and subject.

But Roland sensed a certain awkwardness in this posture.

Fortunately, the prayer ceremony was nearing its end, and the awkward feeling was soon dispelled as Christine's voice crescendoed to a bright and clear conclusion.

Christine slowly stood up, her gentle gaze falling on Roland.

"Roland, you must come here more often in the future. After you came, the strength of the Holy Blessing significantly increased. It's evident that the great Lord of Light is very pleased with you."

Roland almost rolled his eyes in exasperation, convinced that he wasn't the reason for the enhanced Holy Blessing, but wisely chose not to debunk it.

"By the way, did you have any pressing matters to discuss when you came to see me?" Christine, seeing Roland unwilling to continue the topic, didn't stubbornly insist.

"Of course, I need your help. I..."

"Alright."

Christine promptly interrupted Roland.

Her gaze was as clear and pure as that of an untainted infant.

Chapter 617: Heartbeats at Zero Distance

Roland and Christine hid inside the wagon carrying Meinette's precious treasures, blending in with the convoy on the journey to Tirol.

This wasn't Roland's first time coming to Tirol, but his previous visit was a secret, so he had to feign curiosity as if it was his first time.

Meinette wasn't particularly focused on investigating the cause of the old King Franz's death.

He had neither the ability nor the motivation.

No matter how the old king died, his death was already a fact.

To kill silently during a concert, after much thought, only a few people could pull it off.

He could more or less guess that Sofia was somehow involved in this matter.

Queen Sisi sent people to assassinate Sofia during her weak period, only to be killed in return.

With Sofia's vengeful nature, it's a wonder Queen Sisi survived at all.

Meinette just didn't expect Sofia's revenge to be so fierce, not only targeting Queen Sisi but wiping out her entire family.

To this, Meinette could only wipe his tears and pop the champagne.

His family was a branch of the royal lineage and originally had no chance of inheriting the throne, but Sofia directly erased Franz's entire family, solidifying an otherwise fragile legal claim.

There were several other family branches with inheritance rights, but only he had both the strength and the legal basis.

After a brief internal struggle and a few unexpected accidents, his nephew, who was actually his son, Hamos, obtained the right to inherit the throne.

Having gained the most benefits, he had no reason to continue the investigation.

He neither stopped nor supported the investigation.

The old king was finished, and there weren't many willing to seek justice for the dead, at least not here.

In short, the succession of the throne in the Tirol Kingdom settled quietly without much turmoil.

After gaining royal power, Meinette still faced many challenges.

The internal royal disputes subsided, but troubles remained numerous.

First of all, how to deal with Roland and Sofia.

This question posed no difficulty for the old fox Meinette; as long as he didn't acknowledge Sofia as the murderer, there was no need to avenge the old king.

But the old king's death had to be explained; one couldn't just say the entire family caught a cold at the concert and died, right?

Such an absurd cause of death would leave a stain in history.

After much deliberation, Meinette finally found a good way to twist the story.

Find Roland.

Roland and Sofia were the ones who killed, and they also had the need to cover up the facts.

The Dark Race was preparing to use the Tirol Kingdom as a springboard to invade, and once successful, it would be a disaster for all humanity. Roland and Sofia also had the motive to stop this.

Aligned interests and a common enemy gave Meinette the confidence to approach Roland.

He wasn't wrong. Upon learning about the loosening dark barriers and the encroachment of the Dark Race, Roland unhesitatingly made the wise decision.

In the face of the Dark Race threat, personal grudges were insignificant.

Roland didn't like Meinette, but he didn't refuse to cooperate.

Though Meinette wasn't a good person, he hadn't made mistakes in major issues.

If that guy was determined to side with the Dark Race, covering up the truth, that would be a real disaster.

Compared to the Franz family and Marshal Mattson, who were bewitched by Queen Sisi, Meinette at least hadn't fallen completely.

As for Meinette's personal moral corruption, greed, lechery, and lack of boundaries, Roland chose to selectively forget.

Personal morals aren't the primary criterion for evaluating political figures.

As long as the major issues are handled well, a private life in shambles is minor.

Roland's plan was to infiltrate with Christine, using Christine's sensitivity to the Dark Attribute to identify high-ranking officials corrupted by the Dark Race and then capture them all.

If possible, try to understand the principles of the Dark Race's invasion and rectify the situation.

Completely plugging the loophole wasn't something Roland placed much hope in; he only hoped the crack wouldn't become a highway, allowing free passage as they pleased.

According to known information, the Dark Race was a collective name for the branches of human tribes that failed during the Second Era.

In the Age of Gods, the victors ascended to the Divine Domain, while the losers either fell into reincarnation or were exiled to the most barren Exile Land, also known as the Dark Side.

These Dark Side tribes had another name, the Demon Race.

They were once members of humanity but failed in the competition over opportunities with the Three Goddesses' descendants, thus becoming the Demon Race.

The Dark Side is impoverished in resources, and the living environment is exceptionally harsh, making the plight of the Dark Side remainders imaginable.

If a harsh environment can't crush a population, it will surely temper them into steel.

To survive in such a godforsaken place, the average combat strength of the Dark Race far surpasses that of ordinary humans.

Once they invade, it would be akin to nomadic tribes trampling over an agrarian society long at peace; victory or defeat would be an unprecedented catastrophe.

Meinette rode alone in one wagon, while Roland and Christine hid in another.

The two exchanged hardly any words along the way, casting a somewhat somber atmosphere.

Thinking of Tirol, the city of music, possibly becoming a rift for the Dark Race's invasion weighed heavily on their minds.

Perhaps finding the atmosphere stifling, Christine attempted to recall something cheerful, smiling as she shared it with Roland.

"Roland, I have good news. In the past few months, the promotion rate among Light Believers has accelerated."

Roland's smile froze at his lips, sighing inwardly.

What kind of good news is this?

Unless he chose to betray Sofia, the conflict with the Goddess of Light was irreconcilable.

The strengthening of the Light Believers was not good news for him.

Christine usually spoke in her original voice, but once she got into character, her voice became exceedingly sacred, carrying an unassailable dignity.

Chapter 618: Heartbeats at Zero Distance (Part 2)

Although Roland wanted Christine to shut her mouth, when she began to speak, he couldn't muster a single thought of interrupting her.

This is the power of Holy Sound Possession.

Christine introduced the breakthrough of the Holy Hall of Light since the new era.

In previous years, having a dozen ordinary sanctuaries annually was considered a success, while high-tier sanctuaries were more of a matter of chance.

But this year, within just three months of the beginning, more than a hundred ordinary sanctuaries were born; even under the strictest standards, seven individuals could ascend to high-tier sanctuaries.

The annual quota for high-tier sanctuary promotions is not that large, so Christine had to make them preparatory sanctuaries, waiting for the opportunity to mature before promoting them.

"It's evident that the Great Goddess's will is strengthening, and the power projected to our homeland is also growing."

Christine's conclusion made Roland's heart leap and accelerate fiercely.

Seeing Roland's conflicted expression, Christine asked softly, "Roland, can't you still make a decision? Sofia is beyond saving, eternal divine punishment is her inevitable fate, but you can still be rescued."

She lowered her voice and reminded, "Roland, physical and spiritual destruction is not the harshest divine punishment; it is even a merciful outcome. The true divine punishment is letting the blasphemer live, forever enduring the endless pain of soul burning until the end of the world."

Roland's lips trembled slightly.

Compared to that kind of outcome, annihilation is indeed merciful.

If he fails, he must self-explode ahead of time, not giving Tiya a chance.

If Christine knew Roland's thoughts, she'd probably faint with anger, but fortunately, she doesn't know.

Seeing Roland's expression, she's convinced that Roland's really listening.

She smiled and reminded him, "The Lord of Light is merciful and kind. As long as you make enough merits, even the blasphemer can be redeemed."

Perhaps afraid Roland might misunderstand, she hastily reminded, "Roland, redemption is a gift. The redeemed can escape the cycle of suffering on the Material Plane, indulging in the paradise of the Divine Realm. Not everyone can be redeemed, at least Sofia cannot."

"Roland, even if you don't think for yourself, you still have a wife, and there's a future with children; you need to think for them."

Facing Christine's sincere gaze, Roland's expression finally showed a hint of relaxation.

He increasingly understood why bosses fear their employees not marrying.

With attachments, you can't act without consideration.

On Descent Day, Sofia dared to bring destruction to the whole world, but he couldn't.

Sofia's greatest strength is not her power but the fact that she's not bound by anything.

Facing Christine's fervent and expectant gaze, Roland found it hard to continue being evasive.

"If Sofia wants to destroy everything, I will stand against her. But she's still my ally for now."

Christine let out a long breath, her eyes bursting with an unprecedented glow.

She softly murmured, "I know, her power is too strong, we can't force it."

"Roland, don't feel guilty; as long as your heart is towards Light, even temporarily joining other camps doesn't count as betrayal."

This is the usual tactics of religious washing.

If you want to save someone, he/she is forced by circumstances to compromise.

If you want to kill someone, he/she is the rotten scoundrel from head to toe.

As long as there's a need, they can fabricate any reason.

Roland cast his gaze out the window and spoke softly, "The concert hall is here."

He didn't meet Christine's gaze; he was somewhat afraid of being exposed.

With Christine's devotion to the Goddess, she shouldn't have made such concessions, but she still did.

Her regard for him was evident.

Roland understood Christine well, her likes and dislikes were extreme.

If Christine eventually finds out that he chose to stand in opposition to Tiya, she might become his most extreme enemy.

Roland's palms were slightly sweaty.

Thinking of having so many crazy enemies, he felt a bit concerned.

If they really become enemies, can he take action?

While Roland was lost in thought, his somewhat cold hand was enveloped by soft light.

Christine held his hand, conveying warmth and light.

"Roland, I know you're struggling, but please persevere. As long as you bravely face it, the darkness before dawn will eventually dissipate, and we will embrace the light."

Christine's voice possessed an indescribable magic, even as Roland's will remained firm, he began to imagine the dawn after the darkness under her guidance.

He suddenly awakened from his fantasy.

Tiya's light was completely different from the light Christine envisioned; she just happened to ascend to the Divine Domain via the path of Light.

She doesn't represent Light.

This time, Roland did not evade, he looked at Christine firmly and said in a deep voice:

"Anyone who obstructs Light is our enemy, and I will defend the Light alongside you."

No one can stop Roland from defending Light, not even the Goddess of Light.

But Christine doesn't know what Roland is really thinking; she looked at him with surprise, unable to hide the smile at the corners of her lips.

She reached forward with both hands, crossing them into a cross, her passionate gaze penetrating into Roland's heart.

Roland knew this was the Light Cross Oath.

Anyone who breaks it will eternally fall into darkness, never to rise again.

Without hesitation, he moved forward, threading his arms under Christine's, likewise crossing them into a cross.

Hands crossed in a ten, resting on the other's chest, feeling each other's heartbeat.

Fast, somewhat chaotic.

They were both a bit nervous.

Even though his hands rested on Christine's chest, Roland had no amorous thoughts, only felt a piercing pain.

Christine was originally somewhat barren, at least there was a bit, now there was nothing left.

Chapter 619: Heartbeats at Zero Distance (Part 3)

Her injuries were severe, and surviving was already a blessing.

Christine looked serene, softly saying, "Don't be sad, at least you can feel my heartbeat closely."

Her smile was pure, while Roland's was somewhat forced.

As they exchanged heartbeats, he silently made a wish, adding another person he must protect.

He wanted to awaken Christine from her false beliefs, to make her live for herself.

As they exchanged heartbeats, the carriage slowly entered Mei Quan Palace.

Roland and Christine stayed inside, continuing to hide.

Meinette conversed briefly with a dark-faced man in black, who then walked over to Roland's carriage.

He lifted the curtain and saw the stacked boxes.

Roland and Christine were right behind the boxes.

They held their breath, without any fluctuations in their aura.

Concealing oneself is a core skill for the strong, hardly challenging for them.

The man in black hesitated for a moment, then put down the curtain.

Queen Sisi's mysterious death means the future ruler of the Kingdom will be Meinette.

Despite looking down on Meinette, the man in black still gave him face.

Suppress when necessary, console when needed; pure-blood Dark Races passing through the cracks are few, many tasks require these Secondary Dark Races to handle.

The essence of Dark Race is still human; even though internally divided into Enchanting Demon, Red Demon, Azure Demon, Blood Demon four branches, there's no reproductive isolation from humans.

Since they are of the same race, transformation is simple.

Just accept the dark ritual and produce a Seed of Darkness within, becoming a member of the Dark Race.

Such members are called Secondary Dark Race.

The traitors are always despised, yet they persist.

After the man in black left, Roland and Christine slightly sighed in relief.

They didn't expect the one checking the carriage was the High tier Shadow Councilor from the attack on Sofia.

The power of seven High tier Shadow Councilors formation can rival the Soul Blood Link Array, but their luck was bad; Christine's strategy broke them and the formation was defeated before it could start.

After the failure, five died and two fled, with the fleeing ones being evidently stronger.

If exposed, Roland and Christine would only have to fight their way out and escape.

With Sofia backing them, Roland wasn't worried.

He was just concerned about Christine.

Who knows how many Dark Races Tirol has, Sofia probably won't protect her; it was truly dangerous just now.

Seeing Roland's tense expression, Christine felt a bit scared too.

With Divine Power protecting her, she didn't need to panic.

She was just worried about Roland.

Who knows how many Dark Races Tirol has, Goddess likely won't protect him; it was truly dangerous just now.

Meinette didn't even turn back to look at the carriage; although the most dangerous hurdle was over, he couldn't relax.

He has already chosen; next will be Roland's performance.

He trusts not Roland, but the series of miracles Roland has created.

After all, Roland boldly confronted Sofia and still protected himself and his family.

Thinking of the ever-growing Seed of Darkness inside him, he shivered.

Even though the High tier Councilor code-named Nine kindly told Meinette this was the Holy Mark, Meinette was outwardly grateful, yet internally cursed the councilor's family.

He doesn't want to become a slave of the Dark Race.

Collaborating with Roland might just give up some interests.

Dealing with the Devil, even the soul can't be preserved.

He clearly knows which is more important.

Looking up at the tallest building within Mei Quan Palace, Meinette frowned.

With a Seed of Darkness in his body, he can see the darkness beneath the light.

This magnificent palace has long been shrouded in darkness.

Roland, can you create another miracle?

Chapter 620: Skipped!

If Roland could hear Meinette's words, he would probably burst into laughter.

Create miracles?

If Sofia is in the shadows providing support, and he still can't capture a few lucky escaping Darklings, that would indeed be a miracle, a miracle created by the Darklings.

What he needs to do is simple: stay steady and don't take risks.

The combat prowess of a High Tier Shadow Councilor had already been experienced at the Arctic Glacier.

Very strong, but manageable.

If not forming an array, one-on-one, they are not stronger than him.

Both being Tier Five, the High Tier Shadow Councilor is a strong fighter, having emerged from the mountains of corpses and seas of blood on the Dark Side, but Roland and Christine rose to their rank over equals in the Battle of White Mountain.

Anyone who survived the fourth Reversion Day at the White Mountain qualifiers is no weakling.

At least thirty percent of the Darkling's combat power comes from their stealth abilities.

Regardless of strength, Darklings like to hide in the shadows and ambush.

Unfortunately for them, they encountered someone more proficient at ambushes, Roland.

This time it was Roland's turn to hide in the shadows, secretly observing them.

Under Meinette's cover, Roland and Christine disguised themselves and used their prepared identities to quietly approach the potential Secondary Darklings.

Christine had an unusually keen sense for Dark attributes; under her discerning eye, all that was dark was laid bare.

In just three days, she marked more than seventy Secondary Darklings and five true Darklings.

The widespread distribution of these Dark pawns, from Marshals to Cabinet Ministers to young junior officers, even surprised Roland.

It's not even the Kingdom of Tirol anymore; it's entirely a Darkling outpost.

If not for Queen Sisi rashly attacking Sofia, and if not for Sofia launching a counterattack in fury, had they been given a few more years to hide and develop, things would have been dire.

Fortunately, discovery was timely.

There's still a chance for remedy.

Roland couldn't mobilize the army, couldn't use mobile units, and he also preferred not to bother Sofia.

How, with just the power of himself and Christine, could they clear out all the Darklings?

To this, Christine, the expert in dispelling darkness, gave a clear answer.

"Impossible, completely unachievable."

"First, we can defeat High Tier Councilors, but killing them is difficult. Secondly, these Secondary Darklings have been corrupted by the Seed of Darkness, they cannot turn back. Lastly, even if we could annihilate the enemy, why would they gather for us to kill?"

Christine didn't want to crush Roland's mad plan, but she still slowly shook her head, trying to awaken Roland with cold facts.

But Roland had a different idea.

"Indeed, under normal circumstances, it's impossible, but what if the crack is attacked?"

"Christine, we need not bother with those Secondary Darklings for now. As long as the crack is risked, there are ways to deal with them; we only have to contend with two High Tier Councilors and their guards."

Roland's eyes burned with a wild intensity, calmly saying, "Even if there is just the possibility of the crack being destroyed, they wouldn't dare stand idly by."

He gestured for Christine to come closer, not speaking, but instead using his fingertips in the air to sketch out the plans.

After all, this was a Darkling outpost; mentioning specific keywords too frequently might attract attentions from the void.

Seeing Roland's plan drawn in the air, Christine fell silent.

Roland's plan was rather simple: disguised as a Divine Envoy, she would launch a Holy Impact on the crack, disturbing the surrounding space.

Once the space around the crack was destroyed, spatial turbulence would form.

The good news was that the Darklings definitely wouldn't be able to come through; the bad news was nobody knows what completely random events might occur once turbulence forms.

If the luck were completely terrible, it might even temporarily form an unstable passage leading to the Divine Domain.

While proper strong individuals wouldn't dare easily step into chaotic space cracks, Outer Demon Gods can't enter material planes other than their birthplace, but it was still some crazy stuff.

If there happened to be some Tier Three or higher evil strong individual fleeing in a desperate life-threatening chase, plunging into the crack in a moment of desperation, it would be a disaster for the entire plane.

Even though Christine knew Roland was crazy, she was still taken aback by Roland's wildness.

Unable to help it, she stared at Roland, coldly asking, "Are you serious?"

"Very serious. I know you don't want to accept Sofia's help. This is the best option after refusing her assistance."

Christine fell silent.

So Roland wasn't insane, just premiering this staged act because he worried she couldn't accept it.

She let out a soft sigh, "I understand. Are you sure Sofia can step in in time? I will be exposed to everyone when causing space disturbance."

The Pope of Light dismantling the Dark Base Camp and exposing would have obvious consequences.

She trusted Roland, entrusting him with the choice.

And Roland likewise placed his bet on Sofia.

Reversion Day is the peak showdown of returning strong individuals, moreover, a life-or-death racing game.

Swift in one step, and it's possible to be swift in every step.

If not for the pressure of Reversion Day, naturally, the safer course would be to mobilize the coalition forces to garrison Tirol, capture suspicious individuals in one fell swoop, block the crack, and then find a way to seal it.

No matter if the Darkling scouts escape or resist doggedly, the outcome remains similar.

Even if they were pressed into demolishing the crack directly, with the Rodinia Alliance's abundance of strong individuals, it could still be suppressed.

But now there was no time.

Mobilizing troops and experts requires coordinating various relations, needing time.

As long as the intelligence system of the Kingdom of Tirol was not as incompetent as the former Sussex Military Intelligence Bureau, suspicions would surely be uncovered.

By then it would be a series of tough battles.

Although victory was in hand, the losses would be immeasurable.

Resources and time are very precious, not to be wasted.