

Gods Daily 148

Chapter 148: Submission or Death

"Aurek?!"

Henry froze when he heard the name.

Then, as if he had just heard the most ridiculous joke in the world, he let out a few short, mocking snorts through his nose.

"Heh... that far-off city of Eryndor, which has nothing to do with us, actually wants to stick its nose in here?"

He chuckled and shook his head. "Well, that's... unexpected."

There was no way he believed these uninvited guests had come with friendly intentions.

At this point, Revor Province was no longer under the effective control of the Empire.

For years, the Emperor had ignored this land entirely—so his sudden decision to send envoys now was, to Henry, utterly laughable.

One of his officials spoke cautiously.

"My lord, shall we find an excuse to leave them hanging at the inn?"

Henry waved his hand dismissively, his tone filled with scorn.

"Just tell them I'm busy with important matters, no time to receive guests. That'll do."

A calm but cutting voice drifted in from outside the Governor's Mansion gate.

"Is Governor Henry truly occupied with state business?"

Henry's expression froze.

Outside the mansion gates stood three figures astride tall warhorses—Rand, the swordsman Wak, and the towering general Overthunder.

Their eyes pierced through the space like sharp blades, landing squarely on the men inside.

Henry's gaze turned cold and shadowed.

He flicked his sleeve angrily and strode toward the entrance.

When he stepped out, his eyes swept over the three riders.

First, he paused briefly on Rand, his eyes narrowed in wary assessment.

Then he shifted to Wak, the sword-wielding man, and allowed a faint, mocking smile to tug at his lips.

Finally, his gaze landed on the silent giant—Overthunder.

And in that instant of eye contact, Henry's pupils contracted violently. His heart lurched.

He couldn't read this man's strength at all.

But the oppressive aura rolling off him—like thunder rumbling in the depths of an abyss—made Henry's very soul tremble.

He forced the unease down and turned to Rand, who was clearly the leader.

He cupped his hands with a faint bow, speaking with thin politeness.

"And you are...?"

Rand's voice was deep and commanding, heavy with the authority of an imperial general.

"I am Rand, General of the Empire, here by direct order of His Majesty the Emperor!"

His eyes locked onto Henry's.

"Governor Henry of Revor—receive the decree!"

He lifted high a rolled imperial scroll.

At once, all eyes—Henry's, the officials behind him, even the onlookers outside—focused on that decree.

A moment of silence. Only the wind rustled through the courtyard.

Then Henry bent slightly, offering the barest gesture of respect.

It was not reverence, merely a perfunctory nod to a name—the Crossbridge Empire—that he already considered doomed.

Rand was utterly unmoved by this veiled insolence.

Without hesitation, he unfurled the scroll and glanced at Henry.

His voice was crisp and echoing.

"Kneel—and receive the decree."

"What?"

Henry froze.

The officials behind him exchanged bewildered looks.

Even the onlookers outside murmured in confusion.

Just one sentence? That was all?

Henry's eyes flickered with irritation as he stared up at Rand.

The general rolled the scroll back up and waited patiently, saying nothing more.

Kneeling meant submission.

Refusing meant annihilation.

The message was clear: this was the Empire's final offer—one simple choice.

Of course, Henry understood perfectly.

But instead of taking the scroll, he straightened his back.

His gaze hardened as he subtly signaled an aide behind him.

He had already pledged allegiance to Grand Duke Sentino.

Why would he kneel to a dying empire?

If word of this reached Sentino, how could he face the Grand Duke—or maintain his authority in Revor Province?

Soon, Revor would fall completely under Sentino's dominion. The Crossbridge Empire would be nothing but a memory.

Why should he bow to a ghost?

That young emperor in Eryndor... could he truly not see the tides of the world?

The thought made Henry inwardly sneer.

One of his officials, understanding the signal, stepped forward and took the decree from Rand's hand.

Rand did not stop him. He simply lifted his gaze toward the crest above the mansion gate—the imperial eagle, symbol of power.

"The basic reverence due to one's sovereign..."

"It seems, Governor Henry, that you've forgotten."

Henry scoffed inwardly.

Outwardly, he kept a polite smile and spoke with feigned helplessness.

"General Rand, please forgive my discourtesy. These old knees have been stricken with rheumatism for years. I fear I cannot manage the solemn act of kneeling. I hope you will understand."

Rand's eyes narrowed.

"Knees unfit to bend?" His lips curled into a cold smile.

"Then what about your hands, Governor?"

"Are they also afflicted—so feeble that you cannot even unroll a simple piece of parchment?"

His tone dripped with mockery.

"Governor Henry, refusing to heed His Majesty's will... may prove to be the most fatal misjudgment of your short life."

Henry's eyes thinned to slits. He shot a sidelong glance toward the official holding the decree.

The man hesitated, then slowly unrolled it.

Beneath the bold characters 'Kneel and receive the decree', there was one more line—written in dark, forceful ink:

"Those who defy—shall see their clan erased."

"My lord!"

The official's pupils shrank in terror.

His trembling hands held out the parchment toward Henry.

"Ah—!"

Almost at the same instant, a chorus of gut-wrenching screams erupted from deep within the Governor's Mansion.

Henry's face drained of all color.

He turned instinctively, ready to rush inside—

But Overthunder moved.

He raised one massive hand and pressed downward through the air.

A crushing, invisible force slammed down from the heavens like a falling mountain!

Henry felt an unbearable weight crush his shoulders. His legs buckled uncontrollably.

Thud!

The sharp crack of kneecaps echoed as he was driven to the cold stone steps, his knees shattering under the pressure.

Agony shot through his body.

At the same moment, masked Doomsday Warriors poured into the mansion like a flood from the underworld.

Within seconds, the estate filled with the clamor of steel, screams of despair, and the sickening sound of blades meeting flesh.

Soon after, every relative, servant, and officer connected to Henry was dragged out—like livestock bound for slaughter.

They were forced to kneel outside the mansion gate, rows upon rows of trembling captives surrounded by blood and dust.

"You—damn you! What are you doing?!"

"Guards! Guards, to me!"

"Seize these madmen!"

The official still holding the decree shrieked until his voice cracked.

Then came the thunder of boots and clashing armor as the Revor City garrison rushed in from all sides, encircling the mansion in a steel ring.

Towering knights lowered their lances; archers drew back their bowstrings, the tips glinting coldly under the sunlight—

All of them aiming straight at Rand and his companions.

The courtyard was instantly filled with killing intent, the air so tense it seemed ready to snap.

Rand remained seated upon his horse, utterly still.

Wak's hand rested casually on his sword hilt, while Overthunder's aura rumbled like distant thunderclouds.

No one spoke.

Only the sound of the wind whispered over the corpses now littering the steps.

The message was simple—

Submit... or die.