

Menu 163

Chapter 163: Arrival

Dock area, harbor.

Squads of Harbor Guards appeared here at dawn, initiating martial law.

All transportation and unloading were postponed.

Residents also began to evacuate.

No one complained.

Because Gerard offered a certain, even substantial, compensation.

With compensation in hand, people immediately treated the martial law like a holiday, with many wearing wide smiles.

However, the guards tasked with enforcing martial law wore serious expressions.

Especially little Reed, who commanded these men, gripping the long sword at his waist without ever easing his hold.

‘The Piper’!

Upon learning that someone was expected to appear here today at noon, Reed’s heart hung suspended in midair.

Because he didn’t know how to confront such a powerful enemy.

An enemy whose strength couldn’t be measured by numbers.

For Reed, or indeed for most people, this truly was the most terrifying kind of enemy.

And when the other party requested to meet only one person...

The danger escalated drastically.

“I hope the Lord can handle it, I hope Jason remains unharmed,” Reed prayed as his gaze shifted toward the entrance ahead.

This was the only road leading to the Octopus Tavern.

If 'The Piper' were to come, he would inevitably pass through here.

And there was less than a quarter of an hour left until the agreed-upon time at noon.

Time ticked away second by second.

The nerves of the Harbor Guards stationed at the dock area were already taut, their breathing becoming uniform, a martial aura unconsciously coalescing among them, and when their gazes swept over, those civilians who were peering curiously at the harbor from a great distance became terrified, instinctively wanting to dodge such gazes.

The more timid were scared pale, retreating unconsciously.

Meanwhile, the morale of the Harbor Guards continued to grow and soar.

Swiftly, as the sun rose to its zenith, their morale peaked.

During this moment, their armor rustled as if moved by an unseen wind, a cutting sharpness emanating from each of them, reminiscent of unsheathed swords.

The sound of the waves unconsciously grew quieter.

The seabirds in the sky had already fled far away.

It seemed as if the world contained only this single troop.

And then—

Whoo!

The fierce wind howled.

The fog rolled in.

A fog so thick that one couldn't see their own hand suddenly appeared in front of Hans Port, at the harbor.

And rather,

Behind Reed and the others!

“Behind us!”

“From the sea!”

Startled, Reed instinctively turned around.

All others followed suit.

The next moment!

All pupils contracted.

Within their view, obscured by the fog, loomed a figure so gigantic it sent shivers down their spines.

It was a height they had never seen before.

Compared to this giant, the city walls of the harbor looked like mere mounds of dirt, seemingly crossable in a single step.

What was even more terrifying was that with each step the giant took, a tempest roared, and the previously silenced roar of the waves burst forth like a volcano that had been suppressed to its limit and then violently erupted.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Like thunder strikes.

Making hearts tremble.

The already unprepared Harbor Guards were impacted once again, their earlier sharpness blunted as if rusty.

Reed felt an electric sensation racing through his body, reaching his scalp.

He felt his body stiffen, his mind freezing.

It was as if he were becoming a puppet.

He bit the tip of his tongue fiercely.

The taste of blood spread in his mouth.

The pain jolted the guardian of the harbor's brain.

Bringing him a moment of lucidity.

It was brief.

But it was enough.

"Fight!" Reed bellowed.

His cry acted like a starter's pistol.

The surrounding Harbor Guards, stunned until that moment, almost instinctively joined in the roar.

"Fight!"

Their voices were not perfectly in unison, nor were they very loud.

But it was enough to awaken the Harbor Guards.

And then—

“Fight!”

“Fight! Fight!”

“Fight! Fight! Fight!”

One cry succeeded another.

One sound followed another.

By the time the last cry of “battle” had left the mouth, that sound had already pierced the heavens and once again drowned out the noise of the waves.

Clang!

The sound of a longsword being unsheathed was faint within the roar.

An invisible sword pierced the sky.

The wind died away.

The waves fell silent.

The mist disappeared without a trace.

On the sea's surface, only a small boat slowly approached.

There was only one person on the boat.

In the noonday sun, his features were indiscernible.

But the flute in his hand was clearly visible.

"Harbor Guard?"

“Indeed,”

the person on the boat praised lightly, laughing.

The admiration in his voice wasn’t feigned.

But in the next moment, his smile vanished.

Gloomy and icy coldness spread across his face.

Murderous intent filled his eyes.

“But too conspicuous!”

He said this, and gently lifted the flute in his hand.

A clear and pleasant flute note sounded.

Then—

Crack!

The invisible sword trembled, and cracks appeared on it, all the Harbor Guards, including little Reed, looked as if they had been struck by lightning, with pale faces and trembling bodies.

But not a single one of them retreated.

They grasped their swords, raised their shields, clenched their teeth, and stared intently at the figure approaching from the sea.

Under such scrutiny, the figure seemed to grow even angrier.

He was about to raise the flute in his hand again.

"You're also quite a nuisance,"

a faint voice arose.

It came from within the port.

To be precise, from 111 Duron Street.

With a calm voice, Gerard, who had been sitting in a chair, stood up and walked toward the bay window.

He stood there, gazing out at the sea.

In an instant—

Roar!

A proud roar.

A scorching breath.

In the sky, a griffin's phantom coalesced from the clouds, staring down at the person on the boat.

An undisguised murderous intent shot out of the "griffin's" eyes.

The man who was about to raise his “flute” stopped.

He lifted his head to look at the “griffin’s” phantom.

Then, he bowed his head slightly, turning his gaze towards 111 Duron Street deep in the port.

Separated by ten thousand meters.

Their line of sight was not affected in the least.

They clashed directly.

Boom!

An even louder thunderous sound than before erupted.

It was as if the sky itself would split open.

The billowing clouds were blown apart.

Nothing remained but the sun.

The air itself seemed to freeze.

The small boat stopped, no longer advancing.

Gerard stood up straight, his breath catching.

One second, two seconds, three seconds.

Suddenly, Gerard's complexion whitened, and he took a half step back.

The prow of the small boat dipped sharply downward.

Then the boat moved forward again.

The "flute player" now had a hint of a smile on his face.

People still couldn't make out the face of the "flute player," but they could feel that he was smiling.

Such a smile was uncomfortable to witness.

Was the Lord slightly inferior?

Everyone's morale faltered.

But then,

suddenly!

Everyone saw the "flute player's" smile freeze.

Crash!

The small boat shattered.