

Shota 581

Chapter 581 A Few Casual Comments

When the officers saw me looking at them with a smile on my face, they couldn't help feeling a chill run down their spine.

But after that, they couldn't help revealing strange looks.

After all, they were proud officers of this elite army under the fourth prince, they shouldn't be scared by someone like this Count Zwein.

He was someone that had gotten the position through connections and not someone that had obtained this position through merit. So there was no reason for them to be scared of him in the first place.

But when they saw this smile on his face, it was this strange feeling that filled them.

It was as if they were looking at the smile of a devil...

Was it just his face or was it something else?

Finally, the vice general took the lead by saying, "General, though it was the fourth prince's order for you to take over as the general of this army, I don't think that you have had the time to understand everything about our army yet. How about leaving the management of the army to me for now while you acclimate yourself?"

The vice general's words seemed like he was trying to help, but it was clear what he was implying.

"You are unskilled, don't try to take command of this army from me."

But one could understand why he was acting this way.

I was someone who didn't have any experience at all, so there was no way that they would be able to trust me to command them. This was a matter that concerned their very lives, so naturally no one would risk their lives like this.

I didn't back down though as I said, "I want to talk to everyone first. When I point at you, come over so I can have a private chat with you."

Everyone immediately looked at me with strange confused looks, as if they couldn't understand what I was saying.

However, I just calmly pointed at one of the officers that was sitting there.

This officer revealed a surprised look when he saw that I was pointing at him, but he didn't come over right away.

Instead, he looked at the vice general, as if he was asking for his opinion first.

The vice general didn't have any expressions on his face as he looked at me. All he did was narrow his eyes as if he was judging me.

After a long moment of silence, he turned back to that officer and gave a nod as if he was saying that it was fine.

It was only then that the officer came over to me.

I waved my hand for him to lean in and when he did, I leaned over to whisper in his ears.

No one was able to hear what we were saying, but the face of the officer quickly changed. It went from a surprised look to a shocked look before turning completely dark.

The way that he looked at me, it was almost as if he was saying, "How do you know this?"

I didn't say anything in response to this and just said, "You can go sit back down now."

The officer looked like he really wanted to say something else, but he couldn't say anything. In the end, he had no choice but to follow my orders and sit back down in his seat.

However, this time he was looking at me with a completely different look.

It still had hostility, but there was a trace of fear in his eyes.

As well as a trace of uncertainty, as if he didn't know what to make of me.

I didn't care as I pointed at another officer.

This officer looked at me with a strange look.

He had seen what had happened with the other officer, so there was a part of him that was hesitating to come over when I pointed at him.

After a long pause, he still came over.

He didn't want to back down, it had become an issue of pride.

He walked over to me and leaned in just like the other officer.

I was surprised that he came over so quickly and obediently, but there was no reason for me to hold back because of this.

Since he offered himself up to the flames it was the same thing that happened.

From surprise to shock, from shock to a dark look on his face.

When he was sent back to his seat, he too acted like the first officer.

The other officers just couldn't understand what was happening, but they knew that something must have happened. At the same time, the bad feeling that they had from earlier was even stronger than before.

For the first time, they were scared that they would be chosen next.

When the next officer was chosen, everyone looked at him with strange looks.

He also hesitated a bit this time instead of going over right away like the other officers.

But when he did...the same thing happened once more.

Just like this, three of the officers were tamed and all of the officers were shown fear.

They had no idea what Count Zwein had said to these officers, but they knew that it wasn't normal.

They didn't want to be the next ones to be pointed at.

The vice general had been watching silently since he wanted to see what was happening, but he finally couldn't take it anymore.

The vice general suddenly stood up and came over to my side as he said, "General, if there's something you need to say, you can say it to me."

I looked at him with one brow raised, but I waved at the vice general to come over as well.

The vice general was surprised by this, but he did what I asked of him.

When he came over, I whispered something in his ear as well that caused the general to reveal a dark look on his face.

After a long silence, he looked at me and said, "How do you know this?"

Chapter 582 Let's Make A Bet

I looked at the vice general without saying a single thing, but there was the same smile on my face.

The vice general looked at me with an uncertain look, almost as if he didn't know how to feel about me.

This vice general's name was General Killock, he was one of the trusted generals under the fourth prince.

He had been serving the fourth prince for over ten years now, so there was no need to doubt his loyalty. But there was a single time where he had been disloyal to the fourth prince.

It was something that even the fourth prince hadn't been aware of, but it could be considered a blemish on his otherwise perfect record.

As for why he would do this, it was to save his men.

They had completed the mission in the end, but it had resulted in other consequences that the fourth prince had to deal with later. But the fourth prince just thought that these consequences were because of something else and not because of General Killock.

So this was a secret that he had been preparing to take to the grave.

But now, this Count Zwein who had relied on his relations to become the general had just revealed that he knew everything to his face.

The way that Count Zwein recounted this, it was clear that he knew even the minute details and not just the general event.

General Killock didn't know how he knew this, all he cared about was the fact that he seemed to know everything. There was no doubt that if this was revealed, his reputation would be ruined and he would lose everything.

If it was anyone else, General Killock might have already done all that he could to silence that person forever.

But General Killock couldn't do that to this Count Zwein.

After all, the situation already told him that Count Zwein was close to the fourth prince, so if he did anything, it would be him that suffered.

However, General Killock couldn't just leave this problem be...

General Killock took a deep breath and said, "Alright, let's talk alone then."

I gave a nod before turning to everyone else in the room and saying, "Can you please leave this room for a bit while I have a private conversation with my vice general? We'll call you back once we're done."

The officers didn't move when they heard this as they all looked at General Killock.

The way that they looked at him, it was as if they were asking for his permission.

In the end, it was only when General Killock gave a nod that they all vacated this room.

As they were leaving the room, they all looked at me with a strange look as if they couldn't figure out what to make of me.

They had never seen their general act like this in all the years of fighting with him.

It seemed like there was more to me than met the eye.

I just looked back at them with a smile on my face as they left which unnerved them even more.

Once everyone had left the room, General Killock looked at me with narrowed eyes, but he didn't say anything.

It was as if he was trying to put pressure on me so that he would be able to control the conversation. However, I had met plenty of people with strong auras before, so I wasn't fazed by just this.

When he saw that he couldn't freak me out, General Killock gave a sigh and said, "What do you want?"

The fact that he said this already meant that he had admitted his defeat.

He had thought about many different ways to solve this problem, but there wasn't a single one that worked. After all, he knew just too little about this Count Zwein that he didn't know what he was capable of.

As long as he didn't know this, it would be too risky to clash with him.

So he took the safer path and directly negotiated with him.

I gave a nod of acknowledgement for this before saying, "It's very simple, I just want to make a bet with you."

"A bet?" General Killock couldn't help repeating in a confused voice before asking, "What kind of bet?"

I revealed another smile before saying, "It's a very simple bet. I just want you to follow my orders completely for a single battle. If it succeeds, then I want you to follow me properly from now on. If it fails, I will personally talk to the fourth prince and leave this army."

General Killock revealed a very strange look when he heard this.

After a moment of silence, he said with a serious look, "Even if you have grabbed me by the handle, do you really think that I will risk the lives of my men just for a bet? I refuse."

I wasn't angry when I heard this, rather I had a look of admiration after he said this.

This was a sign of a good general.

He didn't care what happened to him as long as he was able to protect his men.

But I wouldn't accept this.

So I just calmly said, "It's not risking the lives of your men. I just want you to follow my instructions on how to fight the enemy. I will consult you on all of the strategies and you can decide when we can retreat. I just want you to support me in this following battle without any hesitation."

This time, General Killock couldn't help wavering.

He didn't know what it was about the way that Count Zwein said this, but he couldn't help being moved a bit by these words.

After a moment of silence, General Killock said, "Why are you doing all of this?"

The smile disappeared from my face at this as I looked right into his eyes and said, "I just want to protect the people that I care about."

General Killock revealed a slightly surprised look, but he gave a nod in the end as he said, "Alright, just this one time."

I said with a nod, "Thank you for understanding."

General Killock just shook his head and said with a sigh, "I hope I don't regret this."

Chapter 583 Organizing The Troops

When it was all over, we called the officers back into the room.

They looked at us with a strange look, but General Killock just maintained a calm expression on his face as he ignored all of this.

The officers looked at me with an even stranger look when they saw their general acting this way, but I also ignored them.

Once they were all seated, I calmly said, "I have already discussed this matter with the vice general and have come to an agreement. For the next engagement, I will be the one in charge of everything. You will just have to follow my orders and everything will turn out alright."

The officers all revealed shocked looks when they heard this before turning to look at General Killock.

But they found that General Killock was looking away as if he couldn't match their gazes.

It was as if he was guilty about something and wouldn't look in their direction.

Almost as if he was giving his silent approval for this.

The moment that they realized this, they couldn't help being shocked even more.

Just what had happened in the time that they were alone that General Killock was acting this way now?

They couldn't understand at all...

Or at least the ones that didn't have the private talk with Count Zwein couldn't understand.

The ones that did were even more shocked since they knew what kind of tactics he used.

He had exposed their secrets and had forced them into submission. The minor things that they had thought that they had hidden well enough had all been laid bare by this Count Zwein who shouldn't have known these things.

If he were to expose them, there was no doubt that they would have suffered from it.

So they were shocked to find that General Killock was hiding something as well.

Just what did their valiant and upright general have hidden?

It must be something very shocking for him to even listen to Count Zwein...

Seeing the looks that they gave me, I wasn't surprised at all.

I just calmly said, "Now that we've established this, it's time to organize ourselves for our first engagement."

All of the officers still looked at me with strange looks, but there was a seriousness that came over them when they heard this.

Even if they were shocked by everything that happened, they were military personnel and recovered quickly.

They all looked at me with serious looks, as if they were judging me.

It seemed that within the next few minutes, what I said would determine their view of me.

However, I wasn't nervous at all.

I had plenty of information and plenty of cards to play, I had only just begun. With all of this, there was no need for me to be worried about anything.

Over the next hour, I laid out the plan that I had for our first engagement.

At first, they just listened to me silently with serious looks on their faces. All the while, it seemed like they were judging my plan, seeing if it was feasible or not.

But halfway through, the expression on the faces of officers completely changed.

It was as if they couldn't believe what I was saying.

When it was over, General Killock was the first to say, "Are you serious about this?"

I just gave a simple nod in response.

The officers all looked at General Killock as if they were expecting him to say something, but General Killock hesitated.

After all, this plan was a plan at the very least...

It wasn't the best plan, it wasn't even considered a good plan.

If he had to describe it, he would have used one single word.

Sloppy!

That was the only thing that this plan could be described with.

It was clear that Count Zwein was an amateur when it came to the art of war based on the plan that he had just proposed. This was a kind of plan that had many holes that the enemies could take advantage of and would be easily dismantled when facing any normal strategist.

However, the one thing that was special about this plan was that it was low risk.

Though they would lose territory if they lost this battle, it was territory that wasn't important.

At the same time, the plan even seemed like it emphasized retreat.

This kind of plan couldn't be considered a plan of attack, but rather a plan for retreat.

Count Zwein's information network was clearly nothing to scoff at with the things that he had said before, so would he really be this kind of fool?

That was the only thing that General Killock was hesitating about.

Still, for the sake of his bet, he was considering accepting the plan that Count Zwein had proposed.

After all, it was clear that there was no chance of winning with this plan, but there was a high chance of avoiding any casualties to his men.

So this seemed like the perfect chance for him to win this bet.

The only real downside was that they would lose prestige for losing this battle, but that could always be made up later in the war. As long as they still maintained their power, it would be easy to make up for this besmirching to their prestige with a single battle.

In the end, General Killock took a deep breath and said, "Alright, let's do as the general says."

All of the officers looked at General Killock in shock as if they couldn't believe what he said.

But since General Killock had spoken, it wasn't as if they could say anything.

In the end, they just had to accept that they would be following their new general's plan.

Seeing that General Killock agreed, I gave a satisfied nod before saying, "You will soon understand the true genius of my plan."

Hearing this, General Killock and the other officers all revealed bitter smiles.

Instead of seeing the genius of his plan, all they could see was his foolishness...

Chapter 584 Strange Formation (1)

Rising Land Plains.

This was where the army was deployed on my request.

It was a strange request since this wasn't a position that was very important, it was just a crossing into our kingdom that was hard to defend.

From the very beginning, it had been regarded as a lost cause and was left to the enemies to freely use.

But of course, they didn't care about it either since there was nothing important in this area.

This was a remote area that didn't have any cities or towns, just a few villages in the surrounding areas that didn't have anything important in them. As for why no one built in this place, no one really knew.

So there was no value in crossing from this place since it would take too long to reach anything meaningful. When they reached that meaningful place, it would already be too late since they would be found out by all the scouts along the way.

There was nothing that was worth doing if they were caught like this.

It was just one of those places that had been glossed over by both kingdoms.

But the moment that our army came, there was an enemy army that came to match us.

There was no way that they could just ignore us as we came all the way out here.

After all, leaving an army like ours unattended was without a doubt dangerous.

So there was an army that came to face us.

As we came this way, there were letters that came from military command that were asking us what we were planning. All I had them send back was that we had a plan and to trust us.

The fact that they didn't order us to turn back was most likely the fourth prince exerting his influence, but I was sure that he would be worried about this as well.

Still, it would only take a single battle for us to show them all.

When we arrived, we found the enemy not far away from us.

The reports from the scouts showed that they were camped out on the opposite side of these plains, waiting for us to arrive.

But the worst part of this report was that...

"They have twice our numbers?" General Killock asked with an ugly expression on his face.

The scout revealed an ugly look too before slowly giving a nod.

Since he was giving a report, there was nothing else that he could do.

The information that he gave was related to the lives of everyone here, so he had to be truthful.

In fact...

"It isn't just double our numbers, it seems that they are close to two and a half times our numbers."

This was the final nail in the coffin.

With the plan that we had, it was clear that we wouldn't be able to do anything against them.

After a long moment of silence, General Killock turned to me and said, "We need to retreat, now."

Instead of folding like he had expected, I just calmly looked back at him and said, "No."

General Killock and the officers all revealed ugly expressions when they heard this.

The officers looked at General Killock with looks as if they were asking him to do something.

General Killock didn't ignore these looks as he said, "You said before that I had the right to call a retreat if things looked bad. If this situation isn't bad, then I don't know what is."

I gave a nod to show that I agreed with this which made General Killock's eyes light up, but then I said something that crushed his hopes.

"I did say that, but there's no need to retreat right now, right? Our plan has plenty of room to accommodate this and we would be able to run at any moment as long as the situation turned sour. Not to mention, it wouldn't look good if we just ran right away, right?"

General Killock revealed an ugly expression when he heard this, but there was nothing that he could refute this with.

Everything that I had said was true, so there was nothing that he could say to refute it.

Though it was clear by the look on his face that he didn't want to do this.

Still...he had already made the bet and it was true that it would look very bad if we ran without even attempting a fight...

So General Killock said, "What do we do then?"

I just calmly said, "Get in position like I've stated before. All we have to do is take our position and victory will be ours."

There were looks of doubt on the faces of General Killock and the officers, but no one said a thing.

After all, at best Count Zwein's skills could be considered shabby and at worst, it could be considered a disaster.

Still, there was nothing that they could do...

...

On the other side.

"It seems like they aren't backing down." A person in a military uniform suddenly said.

A second person in military uniform gave a disdainful laugh before saying, "It seems like they really have idiots on their side. This will be a simple battle with our numbers."

The first person didn't laugh along with this second person, but he still said in a voice of disdain, "It's clear that whoever's in charge of this army is incompetent. They wanted to ambush us by coming here and now that they're outnumbered, they refuse to retreat. They clearly do not know the art of war."

The second person didn't deny this as he said, "Well, we've seen the banners that they have. It's the dreaded army of the fourth prince, the one that everyone was afraid of, so do you really think that this is the case?"

The first person just gave a firm nod as he said, "It's clear that something has happened, but since they've come, we'll give them a proper burial."

"I don't think that's the case." A voice suddenly rang out.

Chapter 585 Strange Formation (2)

When the two people in the room heard this, they immediately turned to look at the one that had suddenly come in.

Seeing this person, the two of them immediately bowed their heads and said, "Your highness, what are you doing here?"

The person that walked in that had been called your highness was the second prince of their Midra Kingdom. The two that had been talking in the room were the general and vice general of this army.

So of course they bowed the moment that they saw the second prince.

The second prince just waved his hand and said, "Technically, I'm not here, so don't say anything like that."

Both the general and the vice general revealed bitter smiles when they heard this.

It was clear that they were familiar with the personality of the second prince, so they weren't surprised to see him doing something like this.

However, it wasn't as if they could just indulge the second prince on his whims since this was a battlefield.

So the general said, "Your highness, please return to the capital right away. This place isn't safe."

The second prince didn't care at all as he said, "Don't worry, I'll only be observing from afar. I was curious about the person who was appointed as the new general of the dreaded army of the fourth prince."

The general and the vice general both gave disdainful snorts before the general said, "Your highness, it's clear that you've made a wasted trip. Just one glance is enough to tell that the other side is an amateur who knows nothing of war. This will end instantly, so much so that it would be an embarrassment to us to show this battle to your highness."

The vice general nodded in agreement, but the look on the second prince made it clear that he didn't think the same.

The second prince just shook his head and said with a sigh, "General, sometimes underestimating the enemy too much is detrimental. I hope that you will at least keep a flexible mind when facing the enemy later."

The general and vice general looked at each other with disdainful looks in their eyes, but they still nodded in agreement since it was the second prince that said this.

At the very least, they had to show some kind of respect to the second prince when he said all this.

The general then said, "Your highness, we will make sure to..."

Before he could finish what he was saying, the flap to the tent they were in was thrown open and there was someone else in military uniform that came in.

After coming in, they immediately found the general and fell onto one knee in front of him as they said, "General, there's an urgent situation!"

The general glared at the officer that came in before cautiously looking at the second prince.

Seeing the second prince just casually waving his hand as if telling him to do what he needed to do, the general kicked that person and said, "I already told you to be less agitated! There's no need to freak out over every little thing!"

The officer revealed a bitter look, but he didn't complain as he let the general discipline him like this. It was almost as if he was already used to being treated this way by the general.

When the general was done, he said, "What is it? What is the situation?"

The officer fell to one knee again and said in a calm voice, "The enemy is moving into formation."

The general revealed a surprised look before kicking this officer again and saying, "Why didn't you say that earlier!"

Without even waiting for the officer to say anything, the general and the vice general left the tent.

The officer's bitter look became even more bitter as he thought, "General, you're the one who told me not to freak out over every little thing!"

It was only the officer and the second prince who were left in this tent.

The officer didn't recognize the second prince, but he was certain that this person wasn't a normal person since he was in the tent with the general.

The second prince just ignored the officer as he had a look of thought on his face.

After a while, he went out of the tent to follow after the general and vice general.

The officer was just left there with an awkward look on his face before following behind them.

After the general and vice general rushed out, they immediately went to the observation tower that had been set up in their tent.

After coming up, they took the binoculars that were there and started looking at the enemy formation.

As they watched the enemy in the distance, they had very complicated looks on their faces.

Then after a long moment of silence, both of them couldn't help saying, "That's it? That's all they have?"

The complicated look on their faces wasn't because they had realized that they had underestimated the enemy, but rather that they had overestimated their enemy. The formation that they had taken could only be described as...

Sloppy and disorganized!

This was something even a student in the military academy could have arranged better, but here was the enemy taking this formation in front of them.

As they were in a daze over the enemy formation, the second prince came up and looked at the enemy formation as well.

After a while, he said, "That's definitely interesting."

"Interesting?" The general and vice general repeated before the general said, "It's clear that we're being looked down on. This is clearly the work of an amateur. Do they really think that they can win like this?"

The vice general was even more incited as he said, "Right, we have to show them our power or they'll keep looking down on us! Let's set out right now and crush them!"

The general nodded in agreement.

The second prince looked like he wanted to say something, but he didn't say it in the end. Instead, he said, "Alright, but please remember what I said earlier."

The general had a serious look on his face as he said, "Your highness, don't worry. We will make them regret this decision."

The second prince just gave a slight nod in agreement, but the expression on his face didn't change.

Chapter 586 Retreat

"General, the enemy is coming out to meet us."

As soon as I heard this, I gave a nod and said, "Hold formation and wait for them to come."

General Killock standing beside me had a very ugly and confused look when he heard this.

He could see that our troops were all placed on the plains in front of us.

The formation that we had taken was the most basic formation of all, the square formation.

This was a basic formation that every army was trained in because it was the most simple and effective method that any army could use. However, that was only when facing those that didn't have any strategy at all.

When facing another army that was also trained, this square formation wasn't as useful since there were many formations that could break it.

So as long as the other side knew what they were doing, it was easy to break this formation.

The worst part of it all was that their cavalry was kept far back, off the plains themselves where they would demonstrate the most power. Instead, they were so far back that the enemy would be able to easily react if anything happened, allowing them to escape if needed to.

So General Killock just couldn't help being confused as to what I was trying to achieve with this.

In no time at all, we could see the cloud of dust that was being raised in the distance.

This cloud of dust was being raised by the enemy army that was approaching us.

When they came closer, we could see what formation they had taken.

They were marching forward in a line, but they were in a much different formation from ours. This was a formation that seemed like it was very advanced, far beyond what our formation was.

It was a formation that was certainly for dealing with this square formation of ours.

The only thing that was missing from their formation were their cavalry that was placed in the back.

When General Killock saw this formation, he had a very ugly look as he explained, "The cavalry is being kept in the back because they know that the square formation counters it. They will be using shields of their own and sending out archers to deal with us. However, since we've sent our archers away, there's nothing that we can do to fight back."

He was right about that, there weren't any archers behind our shield wall, so there really wasn't a way for us to fight back if they were to shoot arrows at us.

But why weren't there any archers?

That was because I had placed them somewhere else for another matter.

I could tell what he wanted from me, but I just calmly shook my head and said, "It's not time yet. Just wait to see how they approach."

General Killock had an ugly expression, but he remained silent as he observed the enemy.

They slowly approached us with this formation and soon came closer and closer.

Once they were in range, the archers that were behind their shields suddenly raised their bows and started to shoot upwards. They weren't aiming for anything specific, they were just trying to send arrows at us.

Since it was just a wild shot, there wasn't much that they could do with these arrows.

Most of them came short of us and there were a few that landed on the shields that were raised.

General Killock narrowed his eyes before saying, "Get ready to return fire."

I raised a hand to stop him before saying, "There's no need, we're retreating."

General Killock looked at me with a shocked look when he heard this.

He took a moment to look at me as if he was trying to figure out if I was being serious or not.

Seeing that way that I just calmly looked at him, he figured that I was indeed being serious.

Taking a deep breath, General Killock asked, "General, are you sure about this?"

I gave a calm nod before saying, "We should retreat before it's too late."

General Killock's eyes filled with disdain the moment that he heard this, but he gave a nod in the end.

He seemed disappointed, but that wasn't strange.

After all, I was ordering a retreat before we even clashed with the enemy.

The way that I acted made it seem like I was a scared fool who was in way over his head and was running at the first sign of danger.

But this was what General Killock wanted to see in the end.

With a nod to one of the soldiers on the side, the flag was raised for our army to retreat.

The soldiers were all confused when they saw this, but they still followed orders since that was how they had been trained.

They broke formation and quickly turned to run.

It wasn't a normal retreat, but a full out retreat since that was what I had discussed with General Killock again.

The enemies were stunned when they saw us retreating, but then they started moving faster.

It seemed like they wanted to catch us before we could escape.

Seeing this, I said, "General Killock, get our archers ready."

General Killock was surprised by this order for only a second before he gave a nod in response. But before he could give the order for the archers to fire to cover our escape, I said, "Tell them to wait for an opportunity to shoot the enemy. One will be coming soon."

General Killock was even more confused when he heard this.

There was a part of him that wanted to ignore this and just give the order to fire, but he still followed my orders in the end.

As we ran, I was watching what was happening behind us with a calm look on my face.

It was only when I saw the faint tremble of the stones on the ground that I revealed an excited look.

It was finally happening.

Chapter 587 Save Me! (1)

The troops of the Midra Kingdom sped across the plains when they saw their enemies retreating.

At that moment, their confidence was maxed out and they only had a single thought on their minds.

Slaughter the enemy.

Since they were focused on this one goal, there were certain things that they missed.

The stones on the ground trembled underneath them, but no one seemed to notice. Even if they did notice, they would have only thought that these stones shaking were just the result of their marching.

With how many troops there were, it wasn't strange if the ground trembled under them.

But that wasn't what this was.

At this point, the Midra Kingdom army was completely on the plains and they were about to catch up to the enemy.

That was when the ground suddenly collapsed under them.

There were many holes that appeared on the ground and there were soldiers that fell into these holes.

Not a single person was able to predict that these holes would suddenly open up in the ground, so they weren't able to stop themselves from falling. Only those that were at the edge were barely able to react in time and jump out of the way so that they didn't fall into the holes.

But with how dense their formation was and how wide these holes were, there were quite a few soldiers that fell down.

The holes were over ten to twenty meters in diameter, covering several hundred troops at once. With the hundreds of holes that appeared, in just a single moment, they lost over ten thousand troops.

This was considered a devastating event for the Midra Kingdom army.

In response to this, the soldiers all stopped marching forward and gathered around the holes. All of them had their weapons raised and they were all on guard just in case something happened, but it was clear that they were trying to save their comrades who had fallen in.

There were some that called out to the ones that fell in while others tried to find ways down in the hole to help the ones that had fallen.

But they couldn't see a single thing when they looked into these dark holes.

The darkness almost seemed like it consumed everything as they looked down, so they weren't able to see that deep into the hole.

"Just how deep are these holes?"

"How would I know?"

"But what are these holes? Where did they come from?"

These were the questions that were being asked by the soldiers of the Midra Kingdom army.

They all had confused looks on their faces as they looked down into these holes.

After the initial shock disappeared, the officers started to give orders for the rescue of the troops that had fallen down. Though they didn't know if they were still alive, they would still do their best to save them.

It was a good thing that the enemy had already retreated, or else this would have been the perfect time to attack.

But there was a sudden shaking that came from the ground.

This time, they didn't mistake this shaking for the shaking that came from their marching.

This time, they could clearly tell that this shaking was coming from something that was under the ground.

But just what was this something that was under the ground?

They didn't have any information on this, so they really had no idea what this place was.

After all, as far as they knew, this should have been a place that was remote and abandoned. There shouldn't have been anything here according to the records they had that dated back several decades.

Before any of the soldiers could react, there was something that suddenly popped out of the hole in the ground.

It was just one thing that came out at first, but then there were multiple other things that came out as well.

These were giant red tubes that soared into the sky after coming out of the ground.

With the way that they stood, it seemed that they were over ten meters tall. At the same time, it also seemed like they completely filled the holes that they came out of.

All of the soldiers just stared in shock as these red things came out of the ground.

There was a moment of silence as the red things remained still and the soldiers couldn't move as they stood there in a daze.

It was during this time that the soldiers recognized that these red things that were poking out of the ground were some kind of giant creature. If they looked at it closely, it seemed like some kind of giant red worm.

"Is it docile?"

There was one person that said this before he immediately received his answer.

The worms suddenly looked down at the soldiers and then opened their mouths that were filled with razor sharp teeth.

As they opened their mouths, there were some things that dropped down from their opened mouths onto the ground.

When these things landed on the ground, they were able to see what these things were.

Human parts.

These were parts of the human body that had been severed!

As well, they could recognize the armour that these human parts were wearing.

It was the same armour that the soldiers of the Midra Kingdom were wearing.

These were parts from the soldiers that had fallen into the hole!

That answered the question of whether those who had fallen into the hole were still alive or not, but there was another problem.

It was clear that these giant worms weren't satisfied just yet.

Before anyone could raise their weapons, the giant red worms suddenly started to attack.

Since they didn't have any weapons raised and weren't in any formations, the giant red worms hit them like a truck and scattered them all.

In an instant, the soldiers of the Midra Kingdom were thrown into chaos.

What they didn't notice was that there were sharp eyes that were watching from afar.

Chapter 588 Save Me! (2)

"This..."

That was all that could be said when they saw the giant red worms pop out.

As for me, I was just watching with a faint smile on my lips.

After all, this was my real plan.

When he slowly came back to his senses, General Killock turned to look at me with a strange look as he slowly said, "You knew about all of this?"

I just gave a casual nod before saying, "Why else would I have come all this way? It isn't as if we're here to take in the scenery, right?"

General Killock's expression became even more strange when he heard this, but he didn't ask anything else as he turned back to look at the scene in front of him.

The Midra Kingdom army was completely in disarray from the attacks of the giant red worms. Even when they recovered and could group up to face the giant red worms, it didn't have any effect at all.

These giant red worms had thick hides that blocked the weapons that they were stabbed with.

In many cases, the weapons that hit these thick hides were snapped or even shattered apart. The arrows fired could pierce their skins a bit, but the arrows just weren't strong enough to withstand the pressure that they snapped before they could do any real damage.

It really seemed like there was nothing that they could do against these giant red worms.

Slowly but surely, more and more casualties came about because of the giant red worms.

In total, they had over one hundred and twenty thousand men.

With the casualties that they had suffered earlier and the casualties that they were currently suffering, a fourth of their men had already been incapacitated. At the same time, there were only more and more casualties that were happening.

It seemed at this rate, the Midra Kingdom army would be completely wiped out.

But before the situation could get much worse, there was a sudden change on the battlefield.

The cavalry had arrived.

Led by the general of the Midra Kingdom army, the cavalry were able to use their powerful lances and quick mobility to kite around the giant red worms while damaging them.

With these cavalry knights providing support, it seemed that they were able to carve out a small safe zone that they were able to gather in.

Seeing this, I turned to General Killock and said, "It's time. Prepare the archers and have them rain their arrows down on that group."

General Killock looked at me with a very strange look when he heard this before slowly saying, "Do we really need to do that? They'll be destroyed by the giant red worms at this rate, there's no need for us to go that far, is there?"

I looked at General Killock with a sharp gaze as I said, "Are you showing mercy to the enemies? They're the ones that invaded our kingdom and now you want to show them mercy?"

General Killock couldn't help trembling when he heard this, but he slowly came back to his senses.

He had felt pity for the Midra Kingdom army when he saw the sorry state that they were in. As a soldier, he could imagine what kind of suffering they were going through because of the giant red worms.

So he could sympathize with them and wanted to just let them be destroyed by the giant red worms.

But when he heard Count Zwein's words, he realized that he was being too naive.

Though he pitied them because of the slaughter that was happening, that didn't mean that he should show them mercy.

In the end, the soldiers of the Midra Kingdom army were here to invade their kingdom.

These were enemies that had to be taken care of, so they couldn't show them any mercy.

After all, it was unlikely that they would have shown them any mercy if the situation was reversed.

So he knew what he had to do.

Taking a deep breath, General Killock brought his hand up and slapped himself across the face.

Seeing this, I couldn't help revealing a surprised look.

Then after slapping himself, General Killock said, "I apologize for my unsightly behaviour. I will go organize the archers right now."

I gave a nod of acknowledgement, but I also had to say, "Be careful, don't get too close to them. Also, if you feel like it's dangerous, make sure to retreat. We want to keep our casualties as low as possible since the Blood Worms will do all the work for us."

"Blood Worms?" General Killock couldn't help repeating.

I gave a nod before pointing in front of me at the giant red worms that had popped out of the ground and saying, "That's what those things are called."

General Killock once again looked at me with a strange look when he heard this, but he didn't say anything.

He just bowed to me and then headed off to take care of the archers.

Without knowing it, General Killock had already started changing the tone that he spoke to me with. It was as if the final knot in his heart had been released and he finally accepted that I was the leader.

That was what I had been hoping would happen.

After he left, I just watched the Midra Kingdom army being slaughtered by the Blood Worms.

It was truly a terrifying sight.

Even though they were able to fight back with their cavalry, most of the infantry were still facing the Blood Worms without a way to fight back.

There were limbs and blood that scattered in the air, creating the smell of blood in the air.

It really was a gruesome scene that was hard to watch, but I watched it without even blinking.

That was because I had already accepted all of this.

They had crossed my bottom line, threatening the people that I cared about, so they should expect no mercy from me.

I just silently watched and prayed for the souls of the ones that had been forced into coming here.

That had been forced into this slaughter.

Chapter 589 Save Me! (3)

"How did it come to this?" The Midra Kingdom general whispered under his breath.

As he led his men through this carnage, he couldn't help remembering the words of the second prince.

Were these the consequences of underestimating the enemy?

But how could he have possibly expected something like this to happen?

How could anyone have known about this?

No, there was someone that had known about this. The enemy had known about this, which was why they had done all that they had done.

They should have known that this was a trap the moment that the enemy retreated. The retreat came so suddenly that it didn't make sense at all.

They had just assumed that this was due to the incompetence of the enemy commander when they saw their formation.

No...the fundamental reason was because of the arrogance of the general.

The general didn't want to believe that the enemy was his match. He wanted to believe that the enemy was inferior to him, so he accepted the conclusion that the enemy was a fool so easily.

But just what kind of god was the enemy commander that would know that there were these giant red worms here?

As the general was slightly distracted by this thought, one of his men shouted, "General, look out!"

The general looked up to find that there were sharp glowing arrowheads falling down on him.

Though he was distracted, he was a soldier that had served for many years. He had an instinct that was developed over the long years of service.

So the general was able to twist on his horse at the very last moment to dodge out of the way.

The only problem was that he twisted so suddenly that he wasn't able to stop himself from falling out of the saddle.

He dodged out of the way of the arrows, but he had lost his mobility...and he was surrounded by the giant red worms.

This was without a doubt a very dangerous situation.

But that wasn't the general's only concern.

The biggest problem that he was facing now was the rain of arrows that fell down on his troops.

When he looked in the distance, he saw that it was the enemy who were firing arrows down on them. These enemy archers had been hiding in the forest on the side the entire time and they had only started shooting now that their formation was in complete disarray.

When the general saw this, he was certain of one thing.

This had all been planned, they had fallen into the enemy's trap...

There was no way around it, the enemy's commander was far greater than him...

So there was only one thing that the general could do.

He looked around and found the corpse of one of his subordinates. Then without care for the dangers around him, he ran over to the corpse of that subordinate and started digging around in his things.

When he finally found the thing that he was looking for, he lifted it up and waved it back and forth.

In the wind, this white flag danced as the general said, "We surrender! We surrender!"

But even though this white flag was raised, the arrows never stopped.

The only thing that the general could do was wave the white flag back and forth and shout, "We surrender! We surrender!"

During all of this, he could hear the screams that came from around him.

"Please help me! Save me!"

"No, no, no! I don't want to die! I don't want to die!"

"Mom, dad, please save me!"

These were cries of desperation from his soldiers, all of them pleading for help in some form.

But there was no help that came.

It was like hell on Earth as they suffered through the attacks of the giant red worms, the rain of arrows falling on them, and from time to time, explosions that fell from spells being cast on them.

There was no escape, there was no hope...

There was only despair as they realized that they had made a mistake coming here.

The general could only laugh like a madman as he waved the white flag back and forth.

His mind had been completely broken from this scene.

...

On the other side...

"This is..."

That was the general consensus of the soldiers under Count Zwein.

As they watched the Midra Kingdom army being slaughtered like this, they couldn't help taking a cold breath and revealing looks of terror.

Not a single one of them had expected this to happen.

From time to time, they also turned back to look at Count Zwein who had a calm look on his face the entire time. They knew that this had to be his plan, but they never thought that he would be so cruel that he would watch this with such a calm look on his face.

It seemed that all of them had been wrong about him and there was a deep fear towards Count Zwein that formed in their hearts.

They now knew...that he was not someone to be messed with.

There were some of them that even wanted to ask him to save the Midra Kingdom army, but they couldn't because of that fear.

They wanted to save them since they were all humans and in the face of this slaughter, they couldn't watch this anymore.

They could see the white flags that were being raised, but they didn't go help them or accept this surrender since Count Zwein didn't say anything.

There were many in the archer unit that had wanted to stop shooting, but they had no choice but to continue since General Killock had personally come to supervise. Once they saw him, they were afraid for their own lives if they stopped firing...

After all, Count Zwein wouldn't send General Killock here unless he knew what they were thinking...

So they were scared that they might be the next ones to die if they stopped.

Just like this, this battle became known as the Slaughter of the Rising Land Plains.

Chapter 590 The end of the slaughter

?On a hill on the other side of the plains.

"Hu..." There was only a long sigh that rang out, there were no words that were said.

The second prince's group watched the slaughter that was in front of them without a single word.

The looks on their faces were more than enough.

They looked on with terror as they watched all of this happening in front of them.

After a long silence, the second prince said, "It seems that there's someone else terrifying in this kingdom that we can't look down on...First there was the fourth prince and now there's this person..."

One of his followers couldn't help saying, "Could it be that this was just luck?"

The second prince immediately glared at that person that had spoken and said, "Do you think that it's just luck?"

When that person heard this, they immediately lowered their head in shame.

After all, the ones that followed the second prince were anything but useless.

The second prince was not an empty vase, so the ones that followed him were naturally not empty vases either.

These people were elites that had been chosen from all over their Midra Kingdom, so of course they could see through the situation in front of them.

If he wasn't an idiot, why would he ask this kind of dumb question?

Well it was because he was just too shocked...

How was he supposed to react to this slaughter that he was presented with?

The second prince knew that this was the case, so he didn't hold it against this follower of his for too long. He knew that this scene was just too shocking for normal people to react to, so it wasn't strange for them to act this way.

After a long silence, the second prince said, "Alright, forget it. Let's go back, we need to make our preparations."

He turned to leave, but his followers didn't leave right away.

They took one more look at the slaughter that they were leaving behind them and revealed worried expressions, but they still followed the second prince in the end.

...

On the other side.

I suddenly went over to where General Killock was and said, "You can stop them from firing arrows now. There's no point in wasting more arrows."

General Killock almost seemed like he was going to let out a sigh of relief when he heard this, but he stopped himself in the end.

He just gave a simple nod before giving the order.

When he turned back, he asked in a hesitant voice, "What do we do about the rest of them? Do we accept their surrender or...?"

His voice trailed off as he said this, but it was very clear what he was implying with the tone of his voice and the way that he looked at me.

I didn't answer right away as I looked at the carnage that was in front of us.

After a long silence, I said with a nod, "You can capture anyone that wants to surrender and as for the corpses, just leave them for the Blood Worms."

General Killock revealed a strange look when he heard this, but then he said, "How are we supposed to capture them? If we go out, we'll be attacked by the Blood Worms as well, right?"

I shook my head as I said, "No, that's not the case. After the first attack, the Blood Worms will go into hibernation since they have enough food now. At the same time, it's noise that will wake them up, so just make sure to send small groups to capture the enemy soldiers."

The way that General Killock looked at me became even more strange.

I could see this, so I said with a smile, "Is it strange that I know so much about these Blood Worms?"

General Killock just kept looking at me with the same look on his face for a bit before slowly shaking his head and saying, "No, if you didn't know about these things, you wouldn't have been able to set this trap in the first place."

I just said with a simple nod, "There's no need for you to worry so much about this. This is my secret after all. Just go and capture the surviving enemies."

General Killock just looked at me with a complicated look for a bit before nodding in agreement.

Our soldiers were surprisingly very sympathetic to the enemies and did what they could to rescue the ones that were alive. However, the slaughter had been very thorough and they weren't able to escape in time, so there were many casualties.

In total, we rescued only around twenty thousand people.

There were a total of one hundred and twenty thousand troops that came to invade in the first place.

That meant that there were a hundred thousand people that had either been killed or gone missing.

As for our side, there were only a few hundred casualties and that was because they had misjudged the trajectory of the arrows. They had suffered minor injuries because of these arrows, so they couldn't really be considered casualties in the first place.

We had been outnumbered fifty thousand to one hundred and twenty thousand and yet this was the result...

When it was all over, General Killock looked at me like I was a monster.

Well, it wasn't just him that looked at me like this, the other officers all looked at me the same way.

There was no one that doubted my abilities anymore, so even the tone that they spoke to me had changed.

I didn't care about any of this since this was what I had already expected.

Instead, I asked, "Did you manage to capture any of the enemy's commanders?"

General Killock was still dazed when I asked this, but he eventually said with a nod, "We managed to capture the general and vice general..." He had to pause for a bit as he revealed a strange look before saying, "Though I don't think we'll be able to get any useful information from them."

I raised a brow in doubt, but I still had General Killock take me to meet them.

When I did meet them, I understood what he meant by this.