

— *October 4th, 1917. Berlin, 6:40 A.M.* —

The train ride from Werder to Berlin took only about 30 minutes. Kollner tried to explain how because they were a part of the imperial German army, they had to sit in one of the first class cabins. The assistants and conductor didn't listen and made the Gibor units in one of the last cabins in the second class section. Kollner sulked on his pipe by himself. The six other men sat in pairs. Aigis and Oswald, as usual, had a seat to themselves. The Greenblood and the idiot isolated away from the competent soldiers. Aigis didn't mind. She hated the men in the squad anyway.

The black steam engine came into the Berlin station, puffing dark smoke through the air. The engine stopped, and the assistant conductor opened the doors. People flooded out of the cars, eager to get off the cramped train. The unit filed out of the car and into the streets. This was Aigis' first time seeing Berlin in person. Ruheplatz was nearly on the other side of the country.

People were everywhere in the city. Men in suits and coats, women holding flowery parasols, children in fancy clothes. They all had some place to go, someplace important. Two things held her attention the most. There was not a candle or lantern in sight. Light seemed to come from black poles with glass bulbs attached to the tops. Electricity in person. The other thing she noticed were wheeled contraptions that rolled down the street. Even in the most populated cities around Germany she's been to, they used horses to get around everywhere. Not in Berlin. There was not a single horse anywhere. Only the wheeled contraptions.

"Psst, Oswald," Aigis tapped Oswald's shoulder. He leaned next to her while keeping eye contact with Kollner. "What're those things rolling on the street?"

"You've never seen a car before?" Oswald said, surprised.

“Oswald, I saw electricity for the first time six months ago, you expect me to know how one of these... ‘cars’ work?”

“I’m guessing your village still uses horses?”

“Not even. We walk everywhere.”

Oswald turned his head toward Aigis with pure shock. “You poor thing.”

“So where are the horses?” She pointed at one of the cars. “Are they inside the car?”

“Cars don’t need horses. It’s powered by an engine.”

Aigis’ blue eyes twinkled with a childlike wonder. “Tell me more.”

“That’s about all I know. I was skimming through a catalog a while back. Didn’t pay much attention.”

Kollner then dispersed the soldiers to hunt down their powerful Psychokinetic. With Oswald trailing behind, they scoured the streets of Berlin to try to get Aigis to even find a feeling or sense to hook onto. Berlin was way more massive than all the other big cities Aigis had visited throughout Germany. Thirty minutes of walking felt as if they only covered a centimeter of the entire city. It didn’t help that a lot of the Berliners did not make way for the two Gibor unit soldiers. They had been fed up with the Great War and all of the fighting that had been ongoing in Europe since 1914. They had no qualms about expressing their discontent with their empire. Aigis was too busy admiring the new environment to be angry at the people bumping into her. The tall, brick buildings, the cobblestone paths, the street signs, the electric lights, and especially the cars. A whole different world. Oswald didn’t care that much either. He was just happy to be along for the ride.

Aigis and Oswald spent two hours walking across all of Berlin with not much progress. No trace of their target anywhere. Aigis' feet swelled up under her boots from the sheer amount of walking they had to do. In front of a pub, she bent down and put light pressure on her toes.

"Great," She cursed. Oswald stopped walking. "My feet hurt."

He pointed at the nearby pub with his thumb. "We can take a breather in there."

"I didn't think you were the type to drink."

"I don't," He casually admitted, adjusting his pickelhaube helmet. "We can just sit down and let our feet rest for a moment."

Aigis pushed open the pub doors with both arms, Oswald trailing behind. The inside of the pub was a lot emptier than the outside. Only about a dozen men sat in the room, most of them sitting in small groups and chatting. They sat at a small, round table in the corner, near the door. The moment Aigis stepped in the bar, she was struck by a spell of lightheadedness. It was a similar feeling she got when she could sense another psychokinetic. Except it was much stronger this time. Much closer. Her face was drained of all color. Oswald saw her clutching her head.

"Are you okay?" He asked.

"Our target's here."

"You sure?"

Aigis slowly walked to the bar counter, following the sensation in her brain. It faded a bit. They were at one of the tables. Trudging at a snail's pace, Aigis kept her head down. A few of the patrons gave her odd looks. Oswald stood back, watching. Aigis tracked the debilitating feeling to one round table with four men playing doppelkopf. The feeling was radiating from a man in a beige bowler's hat and a light brown trench coat over a darker brown suit. Aigis stood tall over him.

“I don’t have money for you, bum.” A gruff middle-aged man’s voice said to her, not even bothering to turn around. He knew she was there without even looking. Had to be him. But why did his voice sound so... familiar?

Aigis clawed her hand into this man’s shoulder and yanked on it, forcing him to look at her. Aigis froze. The man looked at her with an expression that started as annoyed, but slowly melted into one of fear.

Vergil.