

— *January 2nd, 1924. Munich, 8:00 A.M.* —

Aigis and Oswald were still sleeping on the snow-covered streets of Munich that early morning. Things have been eerily calm and quiet since the Nazis were arrested nearly two months prior. It was scary how quickly they were able to assimilate back into their homeless life, even after everything that has happened. Except this time, the duo had a wagon loaded with stacks of marks near them at all times. On the street, a random man with rags for clothes passed by the duo, but stopped upon noticing the sheer amount of cash near them.

“Oh? What do we have here?” he asked with a grin on his face. He made sure no one was looking in his direction before inching slowly toward the huge amount of money. Right as his fingertips were grazing the money, he heard a distinct, mechanical click. He looked down at the supposedly sleeping Aigis, except this time she had her Luger pistol pointed directly at him.

“Keep walking, buddy.” She warned him. The man held his hands up in defeat. He ran off, cursing under his breath, nearly slipping on the icy sidewalk. Oswald awoke with a yawn and a stretch. He was surprised that he was still able to get a good night's rest on the streets. He had to learn to sleep with his mouth closed. One winter, it got so cold that his saliva froze his head to the ground while he was sleeping, and he couldn't get off the street until Aigis used her fire magic to melt it.

“Did someone try to rob us again?” Oswald yawned, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles.

“Dirty bastards can't keep their hands to themselves.” She sighed, puffing out a cloud of white mist from her mouth. She holstered the gun to her hip.

“How do we know that someone didn't just take bills from us while we were still asleep?”

“No point in glossing over the past, Oswald. So what are you feeling for breakfast?”

Oswald scratched his neck. “Bread?”

“Sounds good.” Aigis agreed. They both stood up and took a short trip to the store, Oswald rolling the barrel full of cash. Every German citizen on the street had just about as much cash on them, taking it with them to any grocery store for basic necessities. It was a pretty easy trip, the only hiccups being that Oswald would sometimes get the wheel stuck on a rock and it would be hard to get out. Once they made it to the store, Aigis read the price tag on bread that was on the front window.

“190 billion marks?” She exclaimed in pure shock. “That’s actually cheaper than it was last month.”

Oswald looked at the money in the wheelbarrow. “How much cash do we have here?”

“Let’s start counting.” Aigis sat on her knees. Oswald did the same. One by one, they flipped through every single mark bill, making sure not to mix up the ones and the zeros. In total, it took them a little over 30 minutes, and when they were done, Aigis had her eyes shut, trying to comprehend how many marks were in their possession.

“Aigis...” Oswald hesitantly called out.

Silence. The young man decided to continue. “We’re about a million short.”

Aigis clasped her hands together loudly and smiled. Oswald looked at the girl. She was smiling. She looked like she was at peace despite the fact they wasted half an hour counting the money, only to be a million short. Instead of exhaling shortly, she punched through the display glass window. Everyone inside the store turned around, wondering what all the commotion was about. Aigis then let out a scream so primal and so visceral, it would have woken up anyone in the vicinity. It was a scream filled with rage, pain, anguish, and the sheer frustration of a person who just counted a barrel full of money for nothing. All she wanted was some damn bread.