

— *June 30th, 1934. Berlin, 10:50 P.M.* —

Aigis was sent to the Reichstag building in the passenger seat a black Mercedes-Benz 770 W07. Oswald was the one tasked with driving her there. Nobody told him why exactly he needed to drive Aigis to the building at such a late time in the night, but the man didn't seem to mind. He got to drive a luxury car and hang out with his best friend some more. Not many cars were on the streets at this time, so the 770 cruised through the night streets with its headlights illuminating the road ahead, alongside the uniformed street lamps.

Aigis was deep in thought as the car massaged her back, looking at the lights from the building windows and street lamps. Her mind went back to everyone that she killed. She thought about the ugly faces and rotten breaths of the drunkard Imperial soldiers who took Otto's life. Instead of facing punishment, they were rewarded iron crosses for their "bravery". She never got to watch their final moments. But she could marinate herself in the idea that they went very painfully. Then to Vergil, her father. Practically his whole life was a failed power grab, ready to throw his entire family away because they didn't suit his goals. She looked him dead in the eye as she pressed the barrel of her Luger pistol against his forehead and pulled the trigger. To Etta, her grandmother. It didn't matter to Aigis if she had changed. She created that monster Vergil with her horrible parenting. Her and Frieda went through hell at that bastard's hands all because of some old, shriveled up raisin. She was glad to know any memory of that woman would've been melted down in that library fire alongside her flesh.

Yet, she tried to come up with some reason as to why Dieter Heinrich had to die. Sure, she heavily disagreed with his life goal and political career, but it wasn't like she had any desire to kill him. He never did anything to her. His intentions never harmed her in any way, shape, or

form. All he wanted was what was best for his people. No matter how dangerous she personally found his goals, she struggled to find a reason for him to die by her hands.

Oswald, on the other hand, was completely engrossed by a jazz song playing on the car radio. It had a deep jazzy, funky melody. Its lyrics spoke about true love and how beautiful the connection between the two was. The singer had a husky and velvety voice, adding even more charm to the song. It made Oswald think about Hannelore and Konrad back home. Oswald glanced over at his side and saw Aigis fiddling with the Nazi party pin on her uniform tie.

“You don’t like jazz?” He asked. “I would’ve changed the channel, but when I asked you about what you like, you didn’t answer me, so I just picked something.”

“It’s fine.” Aigis replied, still flicking the red, white and black pin around. Oswald turned his eyes back to the road.

“What do you think Chancellor Hitler’s big promotion is for me?” He squealed, a celestial sparkle in his light green eyes. Oswald wasn’t immediately promoted like Aigis was, and he was still a part of the SA as a lowly man.

“Anyone’s guess.” Aigis shrugged, straightening her hair.

“If you get to join the SS, I hope they put me in the Motor Corps!” Oswald drummed the steering wheel.

Aigis chuckled, momentarily distracted by her mission. “If you joined the NSKK, I could see you being one of the motor school instructors. You’ve got a good way with people.”

“Motor school teacher could be good, but I really wanna be a dispatch rider!” Oswald clenched his right fist, staring up at the dreamy face of the starry sky.

“A dispatch rider?”

“I’ve always wanted to ride a motorcycle. Dispatch riders basically get paid to ride them,” Oswald chanted like an excited toddler. “A Volkmann family motorcycle ride sounds like the perfect family bonding time to me.”

Aigis tried her best to laugh and seem interested in whatever Oswald was talking about. But her mission kept weighing down on her mind. Eventually, they reached the Reichstag building. The towering edifice seemed even more intimidating at night, likely because of how poorly-lit it was. Oswald pulled over to the sidewalk leading to the entrance. He took the key out of the ignition and stuffed it in his uniform pocket. Aigis opened the glove box and pulled out a fresh black magazine for her Luger P08. With a cupped hand, she inserted the mag into the handle of the pistol and cocked it, listening to its loud mechanical clicks.

Holstering the gun, she noticed Oswald also prepared to get out of the car.

“Oswald.” She called out. Oswald paused and slinked back into the driver’s seat.

“Yeah?”

“Stay in the car until I get back.” She instructed him. She opened the door to her side and got out of the chair.

“You sure?”

“Just trust me. I won’t be gone long.” Aigis let go of the handle and shut the door, then headed straight for the building, leaving Oswald by himself. Oswald, without many better options, decided to turn the car back on and jam to the radio.

Because of how dark it was, the single Honor Guard soldier standing at the entrance drew his Karabiner 98b rifle at the shadowy figure. But as soon as he saw the familiar black SS uniform, he returned the rifle to his side, and gave her the Nazi salute with his right arm.

“Heil!” He defensively asserted his allegiance as his eyes glimmered under his black stahlhelm.

“It’s just me.” Aigis reassured him.

“Forgive me,” He sighed. “I didn’t recognize you, it’s so dark out here.”

“Were you out here by yourself?”

“The Chancellor requested I stand out here until you arrived.”

“Where is Dieter Heinrich?” Aigis interrogated him. The Honor Guard soldier pointed behind himself.

“In the assembly hall.”

Aigis nodded thankfully before brushing past him and entering the dark halls. The only source of light came from the assembly hall. As Aigis marched slowly toward the legislation chamber, a foreign pair of footsteps followed her. She looked behind her and the same guard had been following her.

“Stay out in the hall unless I call for you.” She ordered.

“Yes, ma’am.” He promptly saluted her, halting in his tracks.

“What’s your name?”

The soldier, still nervously eyeing the walls, piped back up. “Volker Heidel, ma’am.”

Aigis proceeded forward. Slowly, she trailed along the dark walls. The thick silence in the hall was unnerving. The sound of her leather boots thumping echoed from the walls and high ceiling. Eventually, she came to the assembly hall. There were only two light sources: Candles surrounding Dieter Heinrich’s old seat. Both of them sat on top of each armrest. In the center was Dieter himself. His eyes were shut as he silently sat cross-legged on the floor. He had been in

some sort of deep prayer. His shut eyes quivered, as two clean streaks of tears poured out of them. Momentarily, Aigis forgot her mission. A voice brought her back to attention.

“Who’s there?” He barked. It was less of a bark and more of a tame exclamation. His eyes were now open, but he didn’t look back at her. He only looked forward, staring into the giant, glaring Swastika banner that fluttered over the speaker’s podium. Aigis looked at his hands. They didn’t clench. Not even a tensing up. He showed no signs of wanting to put up a fight. Aigis slowly approached the man unarmed. He looked over to her. His hair was beginning to fall apart, his suit wasn’t done properly, and his eyes were glossy.

“It’s you again,” He listlessly chuckled, like a zombie. “What’re the chances?”

“What are you doing here?” Aigis probed. She still stood over him.

“Mourning the death of my democracy,” He bitterly answered, keeping the same somber smile. His voice was trembling, but it sounded full of acceptance. “It’s funny. Even now, it all feels like this whole Nazi thing is one big fever dream. Like I could wake up and everything would be normal again. My family was safe, my friends in the SPD would greet me and we’d laugh together. Then I’m reminded of how it’s all real. It makes waking up the most excruciating part of my day.”

Aigis began to pity him as she looked into his lonely, wet eyes. He acted so pitiful. The way he talked. The way he moved his wrinkly body and arms. This man was only 40, yet he resembled a dying, starving old dog.

“Why bother coming back to pine for a dead republic?”

Dieter caressed the grooves of his seat’s armrest. “This is only a week’s trip for me. As much as I love my wife and son, gardening with them daily to fill the void of politics doesn’t mean much to me anymore. I wanted to pay my respects, you know?”

Aigis got sick of hearing this old fossil ramble. If he thought being pathetic would make her not want to kill him, she was going to put his delusions to rest. Aigis reached for the gun on her waist.

“Why do you follow that man?” Dieter’s voice overpowered hers. Aigis moved her arm away from the holster.

“*That* man?”

“Adolf Hitler. You know how much hatred that man bears? How could you in good conscience listen to what he has to say?”

Aigis crossed her arms. “My reasons are my own?”

“Even as he turns Germany into an oppressive dictatorship?”

Aigis’ feet shifted as she stood in place. “He’s restoring the German economy and making people happy. If it works, it works.”

Dieter’s glare intensified. It wasn’t angry. It wasn’t hatred. It was a look of deep sorrow and empathy.

“You and I both know he does not have the interests of Psychokinetics at heart.”

Aigis attempted to come up with some sort of rebuttal, but she was totally speechless. The look on her face matched Dieter's. He seemed to empathize with her, however, so he decided to keep on going.

“You came to kill me, didn’t you?” He chuckled again, making more tears trickle down his soft cheeks. Aigis assumed a fighting stance, but Dieter immediately held his palm up to her.

“Why else would you come to see me at this hour of the night?”

Dieter wiped the tears off of his cheeks. "Don't worry. I don't plan on fighting you. I shall go peacefully," He lamented. "I would hate to see what'll happen to Ingrid or DJ in this new Germany. There is one matter I would like to discuss before you make your decision."

"And that is?"

Dieter stood up and adjusted his pants. The pride and intelligence were now gone from his eyes, replaced by those of hopelessness and defeat. He gently placed a ginger hand on top of Aigis'

"I can tell you're in pain. An indescribable amount."

Aigis nearly interrupted him, yet the power of his words stunned her.

"What else could drive a PK girl to turn against her own heritage? When her people need to unite, to stand against tyranny, would she rather use the police to brutally suppress her brethren's cries for peace? For justice?"

"Look at you," Aigis snorted. "Acting as though you're in the right."

Dieter didn't reply. He simply returned a caring, fatherly stare at her. Aigis pushed him off of her and took a few steps back.

"Of course that idea sounds appealing. Who wouldn't want to openly celebrate their heritage and shout it from the rooftops," She ranted. "As a girl, I remember being ecstatic finding out I was a PK. Instead, that discovery brought me more suffering than I could ever imagine. I shudder constantly knowing how filthy my blood is."

"I figured that's where this was coming from," He sighed. His head tilted upward, staring into the ceiling. He took a deep breath before saying anything. "There's this beautiful community we've built from ourselves. Entirely hidden from the Germans. A community where Psychokinetics can live peacefully together. Me, my wife and my best friend built it from the

ground up. We'll give you food, shelter and security. You can live amongst your PK brothers and sisters without any fear of being shunned for who you are. And with the biggest support group you'll never find anywhere else, we can help you reach mental stability. Turn your whole life around. It's never too late to be saved from yourself."

He turned around and returned to where he was sitting. He assumed his meditative position once more. "I just wanted to give hope to my people. To show them that if they just kept fighting for a little longer, they could achieve the equality I knew they could reach."

Aigis stared at the meditating pacifist who sat a couple meters away from her. His guard was completely down. He intentionally left it down. Aigis slowly approached him. She stood directly to his left side. He did not move. He did not open his eyes. Aigis opened the flap to her holster and gripped the handle of her gun. She slowly pulled it out as if it weighed a hundred tons. She extended a perfectly straight arm, to where the barrel was millimeters away from Dieter's temple. His body did not falter. Even when her thumb clicked off the safety, Dieter didn't even jump a little. She mulled over his words. *Hope*. He believed in *hope* for the Psychokinetic people. To give them enough hope to where they could freely express their identity, culture and religion. To create a whole new generation of German Psychokinetics. The candles illuminating the hall whimpered out, leaving the hall in complete darkness.

*That's exactly why he needs to die.*

The hall lit up again for only a brief second as the discharge from the pistol. In her mind, two images would be forever ingrained in it. The peaceful side profile of Dieter's face, and the hole that stunk of gunpowder that now bored itself into his temple as blood spurted from it. Darkness enveloped the chamber once more before another light source illuminated the room: The escaping Aurae reserve within his body. The green particles of the life energy floated from



his body lit up the chamber in a faint, viridian light as they swirled about the room. Aegis' whole being felt clouded, and absorbing his Aurae didn't seem to help with her mental confusion. A pair of footsteps approached her yet again.

"You did it!" Volker cheered for her before getting distracted by the Aurae. "Wait, how did fireflies get in here—"

"Volker," She interrupted him. She pointed to the pistol at his side. "What sidearm do you have?"

Volker pulled out his pistol. "A Luger P08. Why?"

"Give it to me." She beckoned with a hand. Volker looked at his pistol, then back to her, then back to his pistol before grabbing it by the barrel and placing it in her hands. She carefully planted the pistol in Dieter's lifeless hand and helped angle the fingerprint correctly around the trigger.

"You'll get it replaced later." She half-heartedly reassured the young guard before leaving the building. Volker sat down in one of the seats, humming to himself.

Aegis stormed out of the Reichstag building and got back into the passenger seat. Oswald was in the middle of a soulful solo to a song on the car radio before he realized she was back.

"Oh, you're back. So what happened?" He obviously asked her in a cheerful tone.

"Drive." She commanded impatiently.

"You sure you don't want to talk about it—"

"Just DRIVE, Oswald." She howled. Oswald remained shocked as he stepped on the accelerator and pulled away from the spot.

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In the Reich Chancellery, Hitler sat at his desk with a paintbrush and easel. He originally stayed up to work on some Nazi papers, but decided to take a break from his role by painting a nighttime landscape of the countryside. Aigis came over to his desk. She didn't bother to salute this time, seeing as how he wasn't paying attention.

"Chancellor," She droned, her voice not modulating an iota. "It is finished."

"Dieter Heinrich is dead?" He asked, lowering his paintbrush but still looked at the painting.

"Yes, sir." She replied. Her hands twitched at her sides as her mind kept replaying the gunshot. Hitler placed his paint-tickled brush on top of his desk. He cackled.

"Excellent. With their leader martyred, those disloyal magicians will think twice before crossing us again," Hitler turned his chair to greet Aigis with a toothy smile. "You've done an excellent job, Aigis."

Aigis listlessly nodded at her leader's compliment. Hitler immediately noticed how she was reluctant to meet his gaze.

"You seem agitated." He observed. Aigis chose not to answer his statement. Hitler took a moment to use this silence to get up and approach her face-to-face. Similarly to Dieter, he placed a firm grip on her wrist.

"You may not understand it now, but his death was a necessary sacrifice. Had he lived, more and more Psychokinetics would be proud of their heritage. Like a fungus, they'd keep growing and growing. With him gone, they will assimilate into our culture, left to be forgotten."

The storm within Aigis quelled some upon hearing this. Unfortunately, it had stopped at a calm, rather than a full blown tranquil. Something still ate away at the peace that tried to settle within her. Hitler went back to his painting and dismissed her.

Aigis laid in her bed that night. Beds without canopies to her felt much larger and emptier without them. The whole day, while she was binded to that black uniform, she had tried her damndest to repress the burning memory of Dieter's killing. She stood tall over him as she shot him, making her feel like an executioner. She shuddered when she mentally heard that bang. That creepy, tiny hole in the side of his head. She wasn't destroyed with grief, but something just kept tickling her on the inside. The question came down to which part of that sequence hurt her the most: Killing him, or his last words to her. His advice sounded very enticing. When he touched her and reassured her that he would fix all of her issues, it seemed almost foolish that she refused.

That was the moment she decided to stop repressing it. She welcomed the intrusive memory as she forced her mind to put it on repeat. It was only one shot, one sound of him hitting the floor and dying. That man was no hero. He wasn't fighting for the rights of his people. He did it for ego. Yes, his ego. He must've gotten high off of the rush of his own self-righteousness. He was a purely performative man. A man who would be completely willing to throw his own people into a life of suffering so he could feel good about himself. Aigis drilled these thoughts into her mind, and the tingling pain melted into a sort of numbness. She didn't do anything wrong. Dieter was the horrible one. He was the one filled with naive delusion. In fact, she actually did a good thing. The great Psychokinetic repression would finally come. While it may have felt oppressive, it was for their own security. Freedom of expression paled in comparison to everlasting safety.

"I didn't do anything wrong." Aigis whispered to herself. The memories seemed less and less grotesque as she repeated those words. The stress within her being slowly went away. She

lulled herself into a sleepy stupor with the soft, rhythmic breathing her newfound revelation gifted her.

“Dieter Heinrich was the evil one. Killing him was a good thing.”

Another thought crept into her mind. Between Nazi suppression and the murder of Dieter, she was an unsung hero. The one unafraid to get her hands dirty to bring about the ultimate good. Why feel bad about it? It was a good thing. A necessary thing. If it meant it was in everyone’s best interest, she was free to do anything she needed to. This was the final thought before she peacefully fell asleep, with a newfound weight lifted off of her.