

Chapter 109: Deduction

The sound of running footsteps entered Klein's ears, calming him down as he stood at the entrance of the guard room.

Leonard arrived first, holding a revolver. He asked in a solemn voice, "What happened?"

Watching Leonard struggle to stop, Klein suddenly thought of something that Rozanne had mentioned in the past. Three years ago, Leonard, who had just become a Sleepless, tried to run down the flight of stairs despite not having adapted to the potion's power, causing him to fall and roll down.

With a cough, Klein pointed at Chanis Gate and said, "There was a knocking noise from the inside, which then became a loud slamming noise. Then the door was pushed open a little."

"Chanis Gate was pushed open?" the short Kenley asked in shock.

"Yes, a slit was opened." Klein continued his description. He saw that Leonard, Kenley, and Royale had stopped approaching the guard room, instead forming an arc formation a few steps away, loosely surrounding Klein.

He paused for a moment before asking, "Are you suspicious of me?"

"No, it isn't suspicion. This is protocol." Kenley shook his head.

In this tense atmosphere, Leonard maintained his flippant attitude, laughing as he added, “There have been incidents like this in other churches. The Beyonder guarding Chanis Gate lost control and pulled the bell before killing two teammates who came to help.”

“Alright.” Klein no longer felt angry and aggrieved at being ostracized. Instead, he asked, “Then how should I prove that I haven’t lost control?”

Leonard wiped away his flippant smile and tapped his chest four times. With a hoarse voice, he recited softly, “Lacking clothes and food, they have no shelter in the cold.

“They are drenched by rains, and huddle around the rocks for lack of shelter.

“They are orphans snatched from the breast, hope lost on them; they are the poor that have been forced off the proper path.

“The Evernight did not forsake them, but bestowed them with love.”

...

The holy, yet pitiful prayer reverberated around the basement, making the bodies, hearts, and souls of everyone present feel purified and tranquil.

Seeing Klein not display any abnormal reactions, Leonard stopped his recital and smiled.

“There’s no problem. You are still our trusted partner.”

Madam Royale, who had been quiet all this time, looked at Chanis Gate and asked, “What did you see when the gate was pushed open?”

“I saw a Misfortune Cloth Puppet, the one wearing the black classic regal gown, 3-0625,” Klein replied, still a little fearful. “But three seconds later, a formless power pulled it back and Chanis Gate was closed once again. What’s going on?”

Leonard, Kenley, and Royale exchanged looks.

“Heh heh, we are in the same boat as you. We don’t know the true cause. But since Chanis Gate is closed once again and there’s nothing unusual, we shouldn’t enter it at this time. We have to wait till dawn for the Captain.”

Royale calmly added, “I will wait here and guard the gate with you.”

“Alright.” Leonard moved his hand and gave a bantering laugh. “As the most powerful person here, I shall stay too. Kenley, return to the second floor just in case the police department has an emergency case and cannot open the door.”

Kenley didn’t say much, he just nodded immediately and left.

Leonard glanced at Klein and Royale.

“Perhaps we can continue our card game? It’s best to have some sort of entertainment in circumstances like this, to relax.”

“No problem.” Klein adjusted his revolver and put it back into his underarm holster. Royale didn’t voice an opinion, but instead stroked her smooth, black hair as she entered the guard room.

While playing Fighting the Landlord, no—Fighting Evil, Klein said casually, “Misfortune Cloth Puppet, I mean 3-0625, according to its description, doesn’t have any living traits...”

“Haha, three aces.” Leonard showed his hand and replied with the same casual tone, “In the past forty years, 3-0625 hasn’t displayed any life-like characteristics. We can first assume that the information is correct and make our assumptions based on that.”

“Pass. You already have an idea?” Royale asked simply.

As Klein hesitated to think about whether he should throw his three deuces, Leonard took a sip of his freshly brewed coffee and said, “Yes, since 3-0625 shouldn’t have any life-like characteristics, then its actions today must have been influenced by some other factor. This factor must also be rather recent; otherwise, we would’ve observed this phenomenon a long time ago.”

“Has there been anything different about Chanis Gate over the last month?”

Royale saw Klein toss his three deuces and pondered for a few seconds.

“There is only one thing different; the Antigonus family’s notebook and the Sealed Artifact 2-049 was stored behind Chanis Gate for a night.”

Leonard looked at the cards in his hand and as he tapped the table, he said with a smile, “If 2-049 can make the Misfortune Cloth Puppet act abnormally, then something similar should have happened behind Backlund’s Chanis Gate a long time ago. So I suspect that the problem lies with the Antigonus family’s notebook.”

Klein thought for a moment and nodded.

“That is the most likely explanation... Leonard, I never expected you to be this good at deduction.”

Typically speaking, being a romantic poet and a person with excellent deductive skills was mutually exclusive...

“That’s because he’s recently into detective novels,” Royale explained indifferently. “Two Kings, a straight from 8 to King. Does no one want it? Three 6’s and no more.”

Upon seeing this, Klein and Leonard fell silent.

Having not been concentrating on the game, they forgot something important.

Royale was the ‘Evil’ in this round!

Watching Royale cut the deck, Klein took the opportunity to ask, “Then what power pulled 3-0625 back?”

Leonard glanced at him and chuckled.

“Do you really think that the defensive mechanisms behind Chanis Gate only consists of the buried sealed chamber and a few elderly keepers?”

“In reality, when the sun sets fully, the keepers would have already left Chanis Gate and returned to Saint Selena Cathedral.

“The power in the gate is strongest at night and is no longer safe for any living creature. The power only weakens when the sun rises again. That is also why the Captain asked us not to enter Chanis Gate no matter what we hear.”

In other words, the Captain had forgotten to tell me the reason... Klein thought for a bit before asking, “Defensive mechanisms such as nexus formations?”

Like magnified versions of amulets and charms?

“Yes.” Royale nodded as she stroked the edge of her cards. “There is a reason that Chanis Gates are placed in the central cathedral of each city. The gate is maintained by the followers that go to these churches every day. Their sincere prayers allow a part of their spirituality to enter the nexus formations, and from small contributions comes abundance.”

“I see...” Klein nodded as he saw that he had a lousy hand.

At that moment, Leonard laughed and said, “There isn’t just one defensive mechanism behind Chanis Gate. Saint Selena’s ashes are buried inside. She was a High-Sequence Beyonder when she was still alive.”

The ashes of Saint Selena? Ashes of a High-Sequence Beyonder?

Sacred ashes? What use do those have? Klein was as puzzled as he was curious.

Saint Selena was a devotee when the Church of Evernight was being established. She was active during the Third Epoch and her deeds were written in many holy scriptures. Thus, Saint Selena was a fairly commonly-used name among the commoners who believed in the Evernight Goddess.

Leonard seemed to read Klein's mind as he continued, "Rumors suggest that the skeleton or ashes of High-Sequence Beyonders still contain incredible power. Of course, those are just rumors."

Klein nodded, focusing his attention on the cards in his hand.

There were no unusual incidents in Chanis Gate for the next few hours, but Klein lost exactly two soli. It pained his heart, but Leonard, who fully expressed his romantic poetic vibes while playing, lost four soli and five pence, leaving Royale as the undisputed winner.

"The sun has just risen, it's my turn." The quiet Author, Madam Seeka Tron entered the guard room at six.

Klein wrote the incident he encountered the previous night into the record book and returned to the Blackthorn Security Company with Leonard and Royale.

He felt unusually exhausted, but the Midnight Poet and Sleepless beside him remained energetic.

This is the difference between the different Sequences... Klein was just about to make his way past the partition and catch up on

some sleep at home when he suddenly saw the Captain enter.

“Good morning, Captain.” He couldn’t help but yawn when he greeted him.

Dunn, who was in a black trench coat, took off his hat and looked at him with his gray eyes.

“Good morning. You should head back home for some rest. Did anything happen last night?”

Klein immediately gave a succinct summary of the incident regarding the Misfortune Cloth Puppet and Leonard’s deduction.

“Okay.” Dunn didn’t give his opinion. He concentrated on making his way to his office. “I will send a telegraph to the Holy Cathedral.”

Klein didn’t stay any longer. He slowly walked out of 36 Zouteland Street and breathed in the cool morning air.

He felt a little more energized, suddenly remembering something he had forgotten all this time.

I forgot to tell the Captain and the rest about the piece of paper in the Misfortune Cloth Puppet’s hands!

How could I have forgotten?

It was as if some power was influencing me, stopping me from telling this to the other Nighthawks...

It has been some time since the Antigonus family's notebook was present at Chanis Gate. The Misfortune Cloth Puppet 3-0625 should have been affected long ago. Why did it only show abnormal behavior last night?

Was it because it was the first time I was on shift at Chanis Gate?

It used all of its power to show me the picture on the paper?

What is the motive of the Antigonus family's notebook?

*Has it got to do with my survival despite making contact with it?
And that I became a Seer?*

...

Many suspicions flashed through Klein's brain, rooting him to the spot. He was unsure if he should pretend that he didn't remember anything and make his way home to sleep, or head up and report it to the Captain.