

Chapter 20: The Forgetful Dunn

“Okay.” Klein bowed slightly as he wore his short top hat again. However, his mind was preoccupied with how Sealed Artifact 0-08 looked.

It appears to be just your everyday quill?

It writes without ink?

Then, what is its actual use? What makes it classified at the highest level of confidentiality that it's deemed Extremely Dangerous?

Can it be a pen that kills anyone whose name is written?

No, that would be way too heaven-defying. Ince Zangwill wouldn't need to escape and hide away if that were the case...

Just as Klein turned around to leave, Dunn suddenly shouted out to him.

“Hold on. I forgot something.”

“What?” Klein turned his head; his eyes puzzled.

Dunn put back his pocket watch and said with a smile, “Later, remember to visit the accountant, Mrs. Orianna, and get an advance payment of four weeks—a total of twelve pounds. After

that, you'll earn half your salary every week until the difference is covered."

"That's too much. There's no need for this, the amount should be reduced," said Klein subconsciously.

He had no objection towards an advanced payment. After all, he didn't even have the money needed to pay for the public horse carriage trip home. However, to receive twelve pounds at once left him a little afraid.

"No, it's necessary," said Dun as he shook his head and smiled. "Think about it. Do you still wish to continue living in your present apartment? One that needs you to share a bathroom with so many other tenants? Even if you aren't taking yourself into consideration, think about the lady. Besides..."

He paused when he saw Klein nod in agreement. He smiled and sized up Klein's garbs and said with a meaningful intent, "Besides, you need a cane, and you should buy a new suit."

Klein was taken aback for a second before snapping back to reality. His face immediately burned with embarrassment since the suit he was wearing was cheap and of inferior quality.

Typically, a top hat was made of silk, costing five to six soli. A bow tie was three soli, a walking cane inlaid with silver was seven to eight soli, a shirt was three soli, while pants, a vest, and tuxedo were around seven pounds in total. Leather boots were nine to ten soli. As such, an entire suit cost more than eight pounds and seven soli. Of course, to be a presentable gentleman, one needed a watch chain, a pocket watch, and a wallet.

Back then, the original Klein and Benson scrimped and saved before managing to save up a pool of money. When they went to

a clothing store to check the price, they ended up running off without even bothering to try haggling. They each bought a set at a bargain shop near Iron Cross Street for a total of less than two pounds.

It was also because of that incident that original Klein had a deep impression of the prices of clothes.

“O-Okay,” Klein stammered a reply.

He was like the original Klein. He was someone who cared about his appearance.

Dunn took out the pocket watch again and clicked it open to take a glance at it.

“Perhaps you should find Mrs. Orianna first? I know you’ll spend quite some time at Old Neil’s while Mrs. Orianna will likely be returning home soon.”

“Alright.” Klein was acutely aware of his state of poverty and did not object to it.

Dunn returned to the table’s side and pulled at a few hanging ropes as he said, “I’ll get Rozanne to bring you there.”

The ropes began their operation as the gears ground, producing a chime from a bell at the reception area of Blackthorn Security Company. When Rozanne heard it, she hurriedly stood up and carefully made her way down.

It did not take long before she appeared in front of Klein again.

Dunn said humorously, “I did not disturb your rest, right? Oh, bring Moretti to Mrs. Orianna.”

Rozanne secretly curled her lips as she answered ‘happily—’

“Alright, Captain.”

“Is that all?” At that moment, Klein blurted out in surprise.

To get his advance payment from finance, isn't there a need to get an approval letter from the Captain? Shouldn't you write something?

“So?” Dunn returned with a question.

“I mean— Don't I need your signature to claim an advance payment from Mrs. Orianna?” Klein tried his best to use simple language.

“Oh, no. There's no need. Rozanne is enough proof.” Dunn pointed at the brown-haired girl and gave a reply.

Captain, it seems there's almost zero management of our finances... Klein resisted his urge to deliver a sarcastic comment before turning to leave the room with Rozanne.

At that moment, he heard Dunn shout out again.

“Hold on. There's still another thing.”

Can we finish it all at once? Klein turned back with a smiling face.

“Yes?”

Dunn pressed at his temple and said, “When you meet Old Neil, remember to collect ten demon hunting bullets.”

“Me? Demon hunting bullets?” Klein returned in astonishment.

“Welch’s revolver is still with you, right? There’s no need for you to turn it in.” Dunn inserted a single hand into his pocket and said, “With the demon hunting bullets, if you were to face a paranormal danger, you will be able to protect yourself. Uh, it will give you some courage at the very least.”

There’s no need for you to add on the final sentence... Just as Klein was vexing over the problem, he answered without any hesitation, “Alright. I’ll remember to do so!”

“This will require me to write a formal document. Wait a moment.” Dunn sat down and picked up the dark red fountain pen. He scribbled a ‘note,’ signed it, and stamped it.

“Thank you, Captain.” Klein received it sincerely.

He slowly walked back before turning around.

“Hold on.”

Dunn shouted one more time.

...Captain, you look to be in your thirties. Why do you have the symptoms of dementia? Klein squeezed out a smile and turned around to ask, “Anything else?”

“I forgot earlier that you are not trained in shooting, so getting demon hunting bullets would be useless. Let’s do this; collect thirty normal bullets every day. Take the opportunity when you are out to go to the street corner—the underground shooting range at No. 3 Zouteland Street. Most of it belongs to the police department, but there is one that is specially for us Nighthawks. Oh, right, you also need to get a badge from Old Neil. Otherwise, you won’t be able to enter the shooting range.” Dunn smacked his forehead and took back the note from Klein. He then added the information and stamped it with another seal.

“A good marksman is produced by expending bullets. Do not think lightly of it.” Dunn handed back Klein the modified note.

“Got it.” Klein, who was fearful of danger, yearned to visit the shooting range that very day.

He took two steps towards the exit before carefully turning around halfway. He deliberated before asking, “Captain, is there anything else?”

“No.” Dunn nodded firmly.

Klein heaved a sigh of relief and walked straight out the door. While walking, he had the strong urge to turn around to ask another, “Are you sure there’s nothing else?”

He resisted that urge and finally left the Keeper room successfully.

“Captain has always been this way. He often forgets things.” As Rozanne walked by his side, she softly disparaged the captain, “Even my granny has a better memory than him. Of course, he only forgets the trivial stuff. Yea, trivial stuff. Klein, I’ll call you Klein in the future. Mrs. Orianna is a very affable person. It is easy to hit it off with her. Her father is a watchsmith with excellent skill...”

As Klein listened to the brown-haired girl rattle on, he stepped into the stairwell and returned to the upper floor. He found Mrs. Orianna in the far office on the right-hand side.

She was a black-haired woman dressed in a flounce lace dress. She appeared in her thirties and had fashionable curly hair. Her pair of green eyes were clear and smiling, and she seemed refined and elegant.

After Orianna heard Rozanne repeat Dunn Smith’s instructions, she took out a note and wrote an advance slip.

“Sign here. Do you have a seal? If not, you can leave a thumbprint.”

“Alright.” Now familiar with the procedures, Klein completed the formalities.

Orianna took out a copper key and opened the safe in the room. As she counted the pounds, she said with a smile, “You are lucky. We have enough cash today. By the way, Klein, were you invited by Captain because you were involved in a paranormal activity and the fact that you have a specialty?”

“Yes, you have an impeccable intuition.” Klein was not stingy with his compliments.

Orianna took out four notes with light-gray backgrounds with deep black patterns printed on them. After locking the safe, she turned around and smiled.

“That’s because I had a similar experience too.”

“Really?” Klein showed an appropriate level of surprise.

“Do you know about the serial killer that sent Tingen City into a frenzy sixteen years ago?” Orianna handed over the four gold pounds to Klein.

“...Yes! It’s the one which had five girls killed consecutively. Some had their hearts and stomachs removed by that Bloody Butcher? My mother often used that matter to scare my sister when we were young,” said Klein as he thought about it.

He received the notes and discovered that two of them were in five pound denominations and two of them were in one pound denominations. All of them had a gray background and were inked in black. The four corners had complicated patterns and special ink to prevent counterfeiting.

The former notes were slightly bigger and in the middle of them was Loen Kingdom’s fifth king, George III’s direct ancestor, Henry Augustus I. He wore a white hair band above his rotund face. His eyes were slender and he had an abnormally serious expression. However, Klein felt an indescribably sense of closeness to him.

This was a five-pound note!

It’s almost equal to four weeks of Benson’s salary!

In the middle of the one-pound note was George III's father, the former king, William Augustus VI. This Might-wielder had a thick mustache and a firm gaze. While he was in power, he freed the Loen Kingdom from the shackles of the old order, allowing his nation to regain the pinnacle spot.

They were all 'good kings...' Klein could faintly smell the notes' ink that elated and refreshed him.

"Yes, if the Nighthawks had not come in time, I would have been the sixth victim." Mrs. Orianna's tone still hinted at a sense of lingering fear despite the incident having happened more than ten years ago.

"I heard that the serial killer, no— The Butcher was a Beyonder?" Klein carefully folded the paper notes and placed it in an inner pocket of his suit. Then, he patted the area a few times to confirm it was there.

"Yes." Mrs. Orianna gave a firm nod. "He had killed even more before that. The reason why he was captured was because he was preparing a ritual for the devil."

"No wonder he wanted different organs... Sorry, Mrs. Orianna for making you recall such unpleasant memories," said Klein sincerely.

Orianna smiled. "I'm no longer afraid... I was studying accountancy in business school back then. After that incident, I've been here ever since. Alright, I'll stop keeping you from what you should do. You still need to head to Old Neil's."

"Goodbye, Mrs. Orianna." Klein took off his hat and bowed before leaving the office. Before he went downstairs, he could not help but pat his inner pocket to make sure the twelve pounds was still

there.

He did a turn at a cross-junction and headed right. It did not take him long to see a half-closed iron door.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

While he knocked, an aged voice sounded from inside.

“Come in.”

Klein pushed open the metal door and discovered a cramped room which only allowed for a desk and two chairs.

There was a tightly locked iron door inside the room and behind the desk was a hoary elder dressed in a class black robe. He was reading a few yellowed pages from a book with the illumination of a gas lamp.

He raised his head and looked at the door.

“Are you Klein Moretti? Rozanne said you were very polite when she came over a while ago.”

“Miss Rozanne is really a friendly person. Good afternoon, Mr. Neil.” Klein took off his hat as a gesture of respect.

“Have a seat.” Neil pointed to the silver tin can with complex flowery patterns on the table. “Would you like a cup of handground coffee?”

The wrinkles at the edge of his eyes and mouth were deeply recessed. His dark red pupils appeared slightly turbid.

“It doesn’t seem like you drink coffee?” Klein acutely noticed that Neil’s porcelain cup was filled with clear water.

“Haha, it’s a habit of mine. I do not drink coffee after three in the afternoon,” Neil explained with a laugh.

“Why?” Klein asked in passing.

Neil held back his smile as he looked into Klein’s eyes and said, “I’m afraid that it would affect my sleep at night. It will make me hear the murmurings of the unknown existence.”

Klein was momentarily unable to answer him as he changed the subject.

“Mr. Neil, what documents and books should I read?”

As he spoke, he took out the note written by Dunn.

“Anything that has to do with history, or is complicated and incomplete. To be honest, I have always been trying to learn, but all I can achieve is a rudimentary grasp. It’s just too troublesome for the other material, such as people’s diaries, contemporary books, epitaphs, etc...” lamented Neil. “For example, the things I have here require more detailed historical records to determine the exact content.”

“Why?” Klein turned confused.

Neil pointed to a few yellowed pages in front of him.

“These are from Roselle Gustav’s lost diary before his death. In order to keep things secret, he used strange symbols he invented to take records.”

Emperor Roselle? The transmigration senior? Klein was taken aback as he immediately listened attentively.

“Many people believe that he did not truly die, but instead became a hidden god. Therefore, cults which revere him have always been holding various rituals to attempt at gaining power. We will occasionally encounter such incidents and obtain a few original or duplicated copies of the diary,” Neil said with a shake of his head. “Till date, no one has been able to decipher the special symbols’ true meaning. Therefore, the Holy Cathedral has permitted us to keep copies for research, hoping that it would bring them a pleasant surprise.”

With that said, Neil revealed a smug smile.

“I have already deciphered a few symbols and have confirmed that they represent numbers. Look at what I discovered. It’s actually a diary! Yes, I wish to use history from different periods, especially events that revolved around the emperor. By comparing those records to the ones written in the diary for the corresponding day, I can try to interpret more of the symbols.

“That’s the mind of a genius, right?” The old gentleman with white hair and deep wrinkles looked at Klein with bright eyes.

Klein nodded in agreement.

“Yes.”

“Haha, you can also take a look at it. Tomorrow, you will have to help me with this diary.” Neil pushed the few yellowed pages towards Klein.

Klein turned them around and took a glance at them, but it immediately stunned him!

Although the ‘symbols’ had been copied in terribly ugly fashion, to the point of looking a little distorted, there was no way he could be mistaken...

This was because they were words he was most familiar with.

Chinese!

*And it's f**king Simplified Chinese!*