

Chapter 129: Rampager

Lost control? Klein's heart tightened as he nearly blurted out his question.

Even though Dunn and Old Neil had frequently emphasized the possibilities of losing control and the harm it caused, this was the first time he was experiencing an incident like that. He felt a little horrified, a little lost, a little scared, and a little saddened. He felt extremely mixed emotions.

"Among the cases that we... have to deal with annually, a quarter of them were a result of Beyonders who lost control... And among the quarter of cases, a large number of them are our teammates." Dunn's words flashed past Klein's mind, slowing his reaction.

Old Neil, who had experienced many incidents like this, immediately asked, "Where is the Rampager? What do you need us to do?"

Klein was taken aback from hearing this. He had believed that a sleazy, "half-retired personnel" like Old Neil would find an excuse to reject Swain's request or extort a huge sum in exchange for his help. Never did Klein expect Old Neil to participate without any hesitation, not minding the differences between Nighthawks and Mandated Punishers.

Klein suddenly understood something when he looked at the serious Old Neil. It didn't matter if they were Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, or Machinery Hivemind. Their aim was to stop supernatural powers from harming the innocent and maintain peace and stability in Tingen. If they were met with a dangerous and urgent situation, their sense of duty would propel them to help without hesitation!

Swain answered succinctly, “Be my support!”

He didn’t explain why the person lost control or where the Rampager was. Instead, he made his way to the exit quickly.

This ex-captain of the Mandated Punishers was clearly an old alcoholic, but Klein realized that he could not keep up with the man’s pace. He needed to break into a jog to ensure that he was not left behind.

He turned his head to look at Old Neil, only to see the old Mystery Pryer break into a run.

The three of them didn’t pay any attention to the gazes of the guards on their way there. One of them had an old navy uniform draped over him, another was in a dark classic robe, and the other in a black trench coat. They charged out of the billiard room and into Evil Dragon Bar.

The customers who were drinking shifted their gazes from the rat-baiting competition to Klein and company.

“Is that Boss Swain?”

“Where’s he going in such a hurry?”

“Did someone default on their loan?”

...

Amidst the soft murmurs, some of the customers focused their

attention back to the cage. They once again broke into an uproar, venting the stresses of their day. However, some of the more perceptive customers felt a faint sense of unease.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

Klein, Old Neil, and Swain ran across the road and entered the harbor district.

“On that boat.” Swain slowed down and pointed at a cargo ship not far away. “Two Mandated Punishers are circling the Rampager, preventing him from entering the Tussock River. Help me influence him and bring him under control. Leave the rest to me.”

Old Neil panted for air and said, “Alright, b-but you have to give me a minute. Phew, a minute to recover.”

Swain nodded and didn’t say any more. He charged up to the ship and joined the fight.

Upon hearing the sounds of combat on the ship, Old Neil looked at the somewhat nervous Klein. He took out a piece of silver about the size of a baby’s palm from a hidden pocket near his waist. He then passed the silver to Klein and said, “Slumber Charm. The incantation to activate this amulet is the phrase ‘Evernight’ in ancient Hermes. After you finish the incantation, inject your spirituality into the charm and then throw it at the target after three seconds.”

“Alright!” Klein extended his hand to receive the charm and felt moved.

This charm was carved with Hermes incantations on both sides, as well as the corresponding symbols, Path Numbers, and the spell's characteristics. He didn't need to activate his Spirit Vision to feel the deep, serene power flowing within the charm.

Old Neil stood up straight and took out a similar charm from his hidden pocket and held it in his palm. He joked as he walked toward the cargo ship, "Do not be too nervous, relax and think about something else. For example, I lent you that charm. If you're going to use it, remember to make one for me in return. Of course, you can wait till next month, when you receive a new quota of materials before you do so."

This... He really is the experienced Old Neil... Klein placed the charm into his left pocket, reached into his holster, took out his revolver, and adjusted the hammer and drum.

"I don't feel that nervous anymore..." He had a gun in one hand and his cane in the other. He made his way up the steps with Old Neil and boarded the cargo ship.

This cargo ship had obvious signs of age. Although it was powered by steam and had a chimney, it retained its past fixtures such as its mast and sails. Furthermore, only its surface and some other portions were plated with metal; the remaining sections of the ship were still made of wood.

As the sounds of the battle intensified, Klein and Old Neil suddenly heard a loud noise amid the din while searching for a way to enter the cabin.

The wooden cabin was instantly shattered, its fragments flying everywhere. A figure fell through the hole and crashed onto the side of the ship.

Klein didn't have the luxury of time to evaluate the man's injuries. His gaze was focused on the monster which was charging towards the hole.

The monster was over 1.8 meters in height and was wearing a tattered shirt and trouser. Its ankles were covered with dark green scales, and a layer of skin had formed between its fingers and toes, as if they were the webbed limbs of an aquatic creature.

It had a head covered in wrinkles, still barely resembling a human. Its scales were coated with a sticky fluid that continuously dripped onto the floor.

Sizzle!

The sticky dark-green liquid corroded the deck slightly, leaving visible marks behind.

Bam! Swain punched the monster from the side, causing it to stagger two steps to the side.

Bam! Bam! Bam! Even with the ridiculous muscles Swain had, he was clearly inferior to the monster. Despite having his punches and kicks connect, they were unable to smash through its scales and cause physical harm. Swain was momentarily reduced to a wretched state as he staggered.

If not for Swain's astounding sense of balance and the efforts of the other Mandated Punishers to shoot and suppress the monster, Klein suspected that this blue-eyed elder would've been beaten to death by the monster.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Swain took multiple steps back, then advanced once again, like a moth to a flame.

But Klein could sense that he was accumulating something, waiting for something.

Bam!

Swain was sent to retreat, his body obscuring another Mandated Punisher's field of vision.

The monster took this chance to charge towards the opening.

It wanted to escape the ship and jump into the Tussock River!

Looking at the wrinkled, sticky head of the monster, Klein lifted his right hand and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

The silver demon hunting bullet hit the monster's body just as he predicted. But it had only hit its scales and failed to fully penetrate its body.

The monster let out a ear-piercing shriek before it exerted strength with its feet and pounced at Klein.

When a stinking fishy smell hit him, Klein suddenly hunched down and rolled to the side.

Clang! He felt the ship shake as fragments had hit it as well.

At the same time, he heard an old but deep voice recite an incantation in ancient Hermes, “Evernight!”

Klein rolled over two more times. He couldn’t care about his cane as he lifted his head and revolver in a fluster. All he saw was Old Neil tossing out his charm calmly, despite being incredibly close to the monster.

The piece of silver was instantly swallowed by a dark red flame and released the faint sound of an explosion.

A deep, serene power spread forth. The monster, who had almost destroyed the side of the ship, rocked. Its movements became sluggish.

Swain charged out from the cabin. He approached the creature and pulled back his arm, hitting the monster like a jackhammer. His punches connected with the head of the monster.

But he could barely inflict a wound, let alone cause any fatal damage. But Klein could sense that whatever the blue-eyed elder was accumulating had finally reached its peak.

Boom! The monster seemed to recover. It flailed its arm and made Swain take five steps back in retreat. Each of his steps caused cracks to form on the deck.

Seeing that the monster was about to turn around and jump off the cargo ship, Klein took out the Slumber Charm from his pocket in a hurry.

After which, he expertly recited the phrase in Ancient Hermes, “Evernight!”

Suddenly, Klein felt the silver charm in his hand turn ice-cold, as if it was made from snow.

He didn't think too much about it. He injected his spirituality into the charm, then pulled his arm back before throwing it forward, sending the charm flying towards the monster.

Meanwhile, the murloc-like monster had jumped into the air.

The dark red flames illuminated the surrounding darkness and the faint explosion was like a prelude to a slumber as it quickly radiated outwards.

Bam!

The monster fell onto the dock, squirming into a ball. It was temporarily in a half-asleep state.

Klein was just about to rush to the side of the boat and shoot at the monster's head when he suddenly saw Swain charge out and jump over, his navy uniform already long gone.

He changed his posture in the air, his muscles tightening.

Using his spiritual perception, Klein could feel something that had been suppressed erupt. Swain descended from the sky and slammed into the body of the monster. He then straightened his back and landed a heavy fist on the head of the monster.

Crack!

The monster's skull shattered into pieces. Dark red blood and grayish brain matter laced with the green sticky liquid splattered all over the ground.

"This is one of the abilities of a Folk of Rage?" Klein muttered to himself as he stood near the broken side of the ship.

Old Neil held his left arm and leaned over to look at what had happened below.

At that moment, Swain was standing straight. He stared at the monster under his feet that had just lost its life.

He took out a metal flask and opened the lid. He drank a good half of the liquor before tilting the flask, pouring the remaining liquor onto the monster.

After finishing this, Swain looked like he had aged considerably, his back hunching a little.

Old Neil sighed as he looked at the scene below. He whispered to Klein, "I know this Mandated Punisher who lost control. He had followed Swain for almost thirty years, once clearing water ghosts who had been killing people on the shore. He also captured evil Beyonders who were trying to escape through the Tussock River..."

He didn't continue, but Klein understood what he wanted to say: A guard who had made many contributions and killed countless monsters ended up becoming a monster himself.

This was not an isolated incident. It was a possible outcome that many members of the Nighthawks, Mandated Punishers, or Machinery Hivemind would one day face.

TL Note: Hi, CKtalon here, the translator of LoM. I've included the author's notes before the book went Premium in China below.

Author's Notes:

It has been two months since LoM was first released, and it's time to go Premium.

In the past two months, I nearly didn't say much in the Author's Notes or interact much with you. The main reason is that I'm increasingly convinced that the best communication between author and reader is inside the novel. I will write whatever I wish to express or describe inside the story, so there's no need for me to say anything else.

Yes, back to LoM, I probably had this idea to find the joy from first coming into contact with web novels. That feeling of "wow, there can be such a world" or "there's actually such a magical world."

Back then, every book presented a variety of different and interesting worlds. It always exposed me to more, making me unable to extricate myself from those worlds as they expand my imagination. Of course, it has to do with me having little exposure to similar novels.

Therefore, when I felt that I had made sufficient preparations in creating the framework of a relatively new world and an interesting and amazing system, I began this book with uneasiness and courage.

With “acting” the 22 Pathways as core, with 220 potions and 220 “jobs,” this is a part that I hope the most that can interest everyone. In addition, it mixes in Cthulu mythos, SCP Foundation elements, and the vibes of the first Industrial Revolution’s era and a steampunk world.

I read many books and created many settings, but I know that what’s most important is to carefully tell this story. I took my time to tell it, which is why the first volume’s pace is extremely slow. It’s also why chapters consisting of more than 410,000+ Chinese characters (255,000+ English words) were released free. I wanted to honestly develop the plot and accentuate the characters to portray the world. I didn’t seek so-called climaxes and presented the scenes in my heart to you.

Thanks to MAM’s writing, I was able to have standards that can attract others when writing slice of life parts, allowing me to be equipped with the ability and writing flair needed to honestly tell a story.

In the past, I learned how to express, or it could be said that every writer or author can innately express. But now, I feel that I’ve begun restraining myself. Many a time, I would not describe it, but use actions, speech and expressions to present the emotions, without any inner monologue. I might not even use actions, speech, and expression, just describing it coldly, like the chapter with the female lead workers. It’s also my wish to maintain standards at critical points in LoM.

This book’s various frameworks are probably the most complete one among all my books. Look forward to how I handle everything.

This is my thoughts and attempts for this book. I hope everyone will like it. I wish you can support me by paying for Premium chapters; after all, I still need to make a livelihood. I still need to meet the demands of my wife...

I've always been a normal person, and I've never had any doubts to that. At the same time, I'm also a person who's very lazy and have many personality problems.

I once thought of organizing my own fan club like other authors, but, aiyah, it's really frustrating and tiring. Then, there was no more 'thens.'

I once thought of having a Weibo [1] to amass some popularity, but, aiyah, it's really frustrating and tiring. Then, there was no more 'thens.' I've already lost track of the last time I updated on Weibo.

I made a public WeChat account and attempted writing somethings, but, aiyah, it's really frustrating and tiring. Then, there are updates only once in a while.

I attempted to hire others to help me run the social media account, but I always find it awkward and embarrassing seeing the content posted by others. So, I stopped it.

Phew, I wish to be a mediator for myself. Admit it, you are a lazy person. You are a person who is flawed when it comes to social interactions. You are a thin skinned person who wants face at the cost of your life. You are a person who doesn't like getting disturbed by various miscellaneous matters. You are just like it is to wash a pig is to waste both water and soap.

Perhaps, what I can do well and am willing to do well is to write novels, the depiction of the story in my heart.

That is how I reconcile with myself, not to live on awkwardly or force myself to become popular. For the public account, I'll post something when I think of it. If there's nothing, forget it. Well, reconciliation is just an artistic way of saying convincing. The accurate description should be to live in self-abandonment.
Rubs hands nefariously.

After this communication, we will have Premium chapters for the next update. I'll make my plea here for you to support Premium and vote with your Power Stones. There will be a mass release! Really, I have a stockpile!

Well, there will at least be 5, maybe 6!

1. Chinese Twitter.