

Chapter 80: Banquet Invitation

After having dinner, a satiated Klein casually lounged on the living room sofa. He used a small letter opener to open the letter he received from his mentor.

Melissa was sitting by the dining table at the time, working hard on a textbook problem, with the gas lamp for illumination. Benson was cradled in a single seater, reading Accountancy for Beginners.

Klein found three pages in the letter that he read with both fear and anticipation.

“...very happy to receive your letter. It reminds me of the good old days over the past few years. Unfortunately, Welch and Naya have left us forever...”

“I attended their burials separately and could feel their parents’ anguish. The two of them were young adults who were supposed to have beautiful, bright futures ahead of them...”

“Fate is always so unpredictable. No one can know what will happen to you next. I’ve experienced more as I’ve grown older, and I can increasingly sense the weakness and helplessness of humanity.”

“...Regarding the historical information revolving around the Hornacis main peak, I recall that the archaeologist, Mr. John Joseph, once published a monograph detailing it. It includes his accounts of his time at the Hornacis main peak. He discovered a few ancient buildings that are more than a thousand years old.”

“What shames every historian and archaeologist is our inability to precisely date the era. We can only make a crude estimate based on the architecture style, the characteristics of the murals, and a few of the texts that we can decipher.”

“It’s quite unbelievable that such a tall mountain peak would have humans living there. Mr. Joseph has ample evidence to prove that those humans developed a civilization that they can call their own. As for the details, it is hard to fully describe them in this letter. I suggest you try borrowing this monograph from the Deweyville Library. Trust me, Sir Deweyville’s donation to this library makes it have more books in its collection than the one built by the city government.”

“The monograph’s title is Research of the Hornacis Main Peak’s Relics. It is published by the Loen Publishing Firm.”

“In addition, there are some papers that discuss something of relevance. They are published in the journals—New Archeology, Archeology Summary. The exact issue and journal volume is...”

...

Klein read every word, and repeated the names of the monograph and paper names silently.

Immediately afterwards, he found some paper and an envelope, as well as a fountain pen before penning his gratitude.

“Melissa, help me send this letter out. This is the money for the stamps.” Klein placed the sealed envelope and more than enough money for the stamps on his sister’s desk.

Melissa took a glance and curled her lips.

“Klein, stamps don’t cost that much.”

“Yes, stamps don’t, but a girl should have some allowance.” Klein replied with a smile. “I believe Selena has mentioned this to you before.”

Noticing that Melissa was about to protest, he quickly added, “It can be used to buy the materials and tools you need.”

“Tools...” Melissa repeated softly again and again before casting her gaze back onto her books. “Alright,” she said as she nodded imperceptibly.

The corners of Klein’s mouth immediately curved upwards as he briskly walked back to the sofa.

“Excellent persuasion skills. You precisely pinpointed Melissa’s weakness.” Benson gave a thumbs up as he said with a suppressed laugh. Klein cleared his throat and said in all seriousness.

“Then how shall I persuade you? Your self-study should emphasize language and ancient literature. Of course, basic mathematics and logic are equally important.”

According to the curriculum of the public schools and grammar schools, as well as the material tested for in college admissions, Klein was very confident about the general direction in which the upcoming ‘civil servant examinations’ would focus on.

Benson touched his hairline and said with a self-deprecating smile, “I feel like a curly-haired baboon in front of those books.”

“But they’re really useful,” Klein said with a determined smile.

At that moment, Melissa put down her fountain pen, stood up, and walked to the sofa.

“Benson, Klein. This Sunday is Selena’s birthday. She and her parents wish to invite all of us to their place for a banquet. Are both of you free?”

“Should be fine for me,” Klein said after some thought.

He could take the opportunity to be acquainted with his sister’s friends. It could prevent him from being utterly clueless whenever something happened to her.

“Me too,” Benson said as he combed his hairs with his fingers. “It looks like we’ll have to think of a birthday present for Miss Selena.”

Klein smiled.

“This should be left to Melissa. She knows Miss Selena better than us. Besides, what we need to do is what a gentleman ought to do—pay for it.”

“This is the first time I’ve heard someone describe laziness in such a pleasant manner,” Benson said as he shook his head and chuckled.

Klein returned with a smile.

“This is the purpose of language and ancient literature.”

“...” Benson never expected Klein to return to the subject at hand; it left him momentary speechless.

...

The next day, Klein wore his cheap formal suit and held his black inlaid silver cane as he climbed up the stairs and arrived at the Blackthorn Security Company’s entrance. His tuxedo had already been sent to the tailors.

Klein was just about to greet Rozanne when he saw Captain Dunn walk out of the partition.

“Good morning Klein. Did you have a good night’s sleep?” Dunn asked with concern.

Klein answered honestly, “Better than I expected. I didn’t even have nightmares. But I still feel heavy and a little disgusted when I recall it.”

“Very good. I feel assured hearing that,” Dunn said with a nodding smile.

After chatting about the weather, he raised a matter.

“The Holy Cathedral has replied to my telegram. Aiur, Lorotta, and company are to immediately escort Sealed Artifact 2-049 and

the Antigonus family's notebook back to Backlund. They've also sent an additional Nighthawk yesterday afternoon via steam locomotive to help.”

“I believe that they've already set off by now.”

Already set off by now? Does that mean I'm completely free from the traumatizing Antigonus family's notebook? Klein was taken aback. He found it surreal as though he was dreaming.

This is more relaxing than I imagined...

It's unlikely that there will be any follow up, right?

“May the Goddess bless them and that they will have a smooth journey.” After a few seconds of silence, Klein made a gesture on his chest in the sign of the crimson moon.

Dunn wore his hat and pointed out the door.

“I have to patrol the Raphael Cemetery. Heh, I forgot one thing. The investigations of Leonard and the police department has borne fruit. They found the carriage driver that drove them. We have confirmed their temporary residence in Tingen City, but they are rather cautious. They didn't leave behind any valuable clues.”

“As expected of an ancient secret organization,” Klein echoed wistfully.

Dunn nodded and turned to head to the door.

He stopped three seconds later and turned his head.

“Also, the Holy Cathedral needs another two to three days before they notify us of your application to become an official member. Heh heh, this is dealt with by a different department, separate from the one that deals with the Antigonus family’s notebook. They have different levels of efficiency.”

“I understand,” Klein replied sincerely.

Meanwhile, he helped his captain add inwardly.

Remember to submit the compensation application today!

Watching Dunn leave, Klein heard the brown-haired Rozanne exclaim.

“Goddess! Klein, are you becoming a formal member? You haven’t even joined us for a month!”

Klein smiled.

“After I consumed the Seer potion, it was only a matter of time.”

“That’s reasonable...” Rozanne fell into a daze for a few seconds before suddenly sighing. “I was praying that you finished your mysticism lessons so that you could be added to the roster for watching the armory, but... Goddess, I have to be on duty every two days. I’m not a Sleepless! My skin, my state of mind. Goddess, save me!”

"Shouldn't you be very familiar to such a lifestyle? Before I joined, it has always been you, Bredt, and Old Neil who took turns, right?" Klein asked, puzzled.

Rozanne shook her head with a depressed look.

"No, there were four previously, five even earlier. Unfortunately, Kenley chose to become a Sleepless. Viola did not choose to extend her contract last month and joined the Khoy Noel Machinery Company. She's a gifted girl when it comes to creation. She only lacked the opportunity and money. Five years as a civilian staff allowed her to have enough savings."

Having said this, Rozanne suddenly glanced at Klein and laughed with her mouth covered.

"I've thought of a good solution. Klein, get married as soon as possible. Then, accidentally expose the secret of Beyonders to her. This is considered a very minor leak so there won't be any particularly heavy penalties. After all, who can lie to a person who shares the same bed with you over prolonged periods of time. You can introduce her to us when that happens make her a civilian staff member! What a perfect plan!"

The corners of Klein's mouth twitched.

"Miss Rozanne, you can also quickly find a husband. It should be even easier. I believe you have the adequate means to divulge the secret to him."

Rozanne's eyes widened and her mouth turned agape when she heard him.

“How can I? Marriage is a very serious matter. I have to carefully pick and observe him over a period of time to ensure that he’s alright.”

That's not what you said a second ago... Klein didn’t bother engaging in sophistry with Rozanne. He smiled as he engaged in a little small talk before bidding farewell and heading underground.

At the armory, he saw Old Neil wrestling with the handground coffee. So, he sat down and waited patiently.

“Soon you’ll be an official member, right?” Old Neil asked casually as he filtered the coffee.

“Captain said that another two to three days are needed. It’s still a question of whether the Holy Cathedral will approve of it,” Klein said frankly.

“Hehe.” Old Neil chortled. “The Holy Cathedral won’t deny cases like these, especially when you’re already a Beyonder.”

With that said, he turned his head and faced Klein. He said with a chuckle, “You must be mentally prepared. There’s a ritual every official Nighthawk member has to undergo. They have to complete a mission independently. Of course, Dunn would definitely choose the easiest and simplest ones for a rookie. Besides, you’re a support-type Seer.”