

## Chapter 136: The Stumped Klein

*This can't be right... How could Mr. Azik be the first in the so-called line of barons, Baron Lamud? This is a figure who lived fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago! No way, how can I be sure that the person in the portrait is the first Baron Lamud? Klein looked at the oil painting, his mind buzzing in confusion. It was like everyone around him had become monsters or a dream where the entire world was filled with gods.*

He looked up and stared at the blond middle-aged man. He extended his hand to grab his revolver from his underarm holster and said in a deep voice, “This is not an antique. If you don’t clarify the situation, I will arrest you and charge you with fraud!”

He didn’t care if prosecution fell under the police department. His only goal was to threaten the man to get information!

At the same time, Klein clicked his left molars twice to activate his Spirit Vision. Then, he looked at his target’s emotional color changes.

The blond man jumped in fright and said in a panicked, muffled voice, “No, I’m not sure if it’s an antique either. No, I heard that it’s an antique, but I don’t know much about such things. I really have no idea. I don’t even know many words, yea—words.”

His eyes darted around anxiously, seemingly about to cry for help.

Just then, he saw Klein adjust his revolver’s cylinder and hammer. He looked as though he was going to shoot a suspect

that resisted.

He suddenly stood straight and stopped looking around.

“Where did you get the oil painting?” Klein asked heavily.

The blond man’s lips quivered as he said with a fawning smile, “Officer, this is what my grandfather found in the ancient castle, more than forty years ago. An outer wall and the room on the second floor collapsed, revealing these items, items that people couldn’t find in the past. One of them was the oil painting. No, no, no, not this oil painting. The original oil painting was torn and couldn’t be preserved. So, my grandfather found someone to make a copy of the painting. Mm, the one you saw just now, I didn’t lie to you. An oil painting from forty years ago could really be considered as an antique...”

“Are you sure that this is the portrait of the first Baron Lamud?” Klein stroked the trigger and made sure the man’s gaze didn’t move an inch.

The blond man chuckled and said, “I’m not sure, but I’m guessing so.”

“Reason?” Klein nearly laughed at the man’s shamelessness.

“Because there wasn’t any labels on the oil painting,” the blond man replied seriously for once. “Just like I’m called the Scoundrel Gray, my father is called the Curly-Haired Gray, and only my grandfather was the real Gray.”

Klein exhaled silently and asked, “Where’s your grandfather?”

"In the cemetery, he's been buried there for almost two decades. Next to him is my father who was buried three years back," the blond man answered honestly.

After Klein asked a few questions from different angles, he adjusted the cylinder in front of the blond man and put it back into his underarm holster.

He put away his police identification and turned around in his black trench coat before walking towards the motel with his hands stuffed into his pockets. He walked quietly along the street underneath the dim light that was shining out from the houses that lined both sides of the street.

*I can't confirm if the portrait is that of the first Baron Lamud... I wonder if the town has the exact historical records of the ancient castle...*

*Regardless, the man in the portrait must be a person from the past, at least a thousand years ago...*

*Besides the hair, he looks almost identical to Mr. Azik. Is this what we call reincarnation?*

*Back when Mr. Azik gave up his position in other universities in Backlund and came to Tingen, perhaps it was driven by instinct...*

*Hmm, there's another possibility. Such as, the man in the portrait is Mr. Azik and Mr. Azik is him!*

Having thought of this, Klein felt a jolt. He nearly stumbled on the steps ahead.

He paced back and forth around a damaged gas street lamp and tried to incorporate his knowledge from the world of information overload. According to his earlier guesses, he made a further inference.

*Mr. Azik might have become immortal due to some reasons, such as being a vampire. Could that be why he's survived for so long?*

*That's not right. When has there ever been a bronze-skinned vampire...*

*Plus, when I shook hands with Mr. Azik, I could clearly feel his body temperature and the fresh blood that flows within him.*

*Although he dislikes the heat of the South, he isn't afraid of the sun. He once competed in a rowing competition with other teachers under the hot sun...*

*Hmm, there's another possibility. Mr. Azik's Sequence potion or some other factors bestowed him with a long life, and the price for it is memory loss! Man, taking into consideration his various dreams, can I presume that he loses his memory as part of a cycle? Every few decades, he forgets his past and gains new life. Then, his dreams are the lives that he has lived before... Heh heh, I think I've read something like that before in a novel...*

*I can't just rely on divination to verify this. I have to look for the traces of the lives that Mr. Azik lived, traces of him not having a childhood, but starting directly as an adult!*

Klein started leaning towards his latter guess. However, he temporarily couldn't eliminate the possibility of reincarnation.

He reined in his chaotic thoughts and considered carefully whether he should inform Captain Dunn about it.

*If Mr. Azik was a Beyonder that lived for a thousand years, his ability would be much stronger than I imagined...*

*He advised me out of kindness. However, it would be hard to say if he will remain kind when I find clues about his past.*

*But Mr. Azik has been nice to me all this time. To involve the Nighthawks would result in a non-trivial possibility of harming him...*

*Sigh. It looks like I must divine this matter in the world above the gray fog. This is the most proper choice for a Seer!*

Klein made the decision and returned to the hotel quickly.

Since Dunn and Frye had yet to return, he seized the opportunity to get another room at the cost of one soli.

After he entered the room, Klein made a spirituality wall with the assistance of Holy Night Powder. Then, he took four steps counterclockwise, went through the mad ravings, and arrived above the gray fog.

The lofty palace stood tall and silent while the ancient, mottled bronze table and twenty-two high chairs remained the same.

Klein took the seat of honor and made a brown goatskin and black fountain pen appear before him.

He picked up the pen and wrote seriously: “I should tell Dunn Smith about Mr. Azik.”

Then, he took the topaz pendant from his left sleeve and did a spirit pendulum divination.

The spirit pendulum divination resulted in the pendulum spinning counterclockwise, which meant that he shouldn’t tell him!

Putting down the topaz pendant, Klein thought about it and decided to make an attempt with dream divination, just to be sure.

Thus, he changed his divination statement to: “The result of hiding matters related to Mr. Azik from the Nighthawks.”

Klein held the goatskin, recited the statement seven times silently, and leaned backwards to enter a deep sleep.

He saw himself in the illusory, blurry, and distant world. He saw that he was struggling while drowning in a sea of blood.

Then, there was a hand that extended and pulled him up from the blood sea. The owner of the hand was Azik with bronze skin and a small mole near his ear.

The image shattered and reorganized. Klein saw that he was in a dark and gloomy mausoleum. The surrounding coffins opened one after another.

Azik stood next to him, looking forward, as though he was

looking for something.

Just then, Klein exited the dream in an instant and saw the illusory, gray, and boundless fog.

*The symbolic meaning of the earlier dream is that, if I were to hide the related matters about Mr. Azik, I would receive his assistance when I'm in danger in the future. Heh, the danger might have come about because I helped to keep the secret... What does the last scene mean? I will discover some mausoleum with Mr. Azik? Yes, perhaps the mausoleum has other symbolic meanings...* Klein clasped his hands together and supported his chin while he interpreted the contents of the dream divination.

Combining it with the earlier result of the pendulum divination, he decided to not report his inference to the Captain, but merely bring up that a townsfolk had taken out a portrait of the first Baron Lamud, and that the portrait looked like a history teacher in Khoy University. Klein couldn't be sure that Dunn wouldn't hear about it elsewhere, so he had to at least mention it.

Of course, Dunn was unfamiliar with Azik and didn't know of his recount and strange dreams, so he would find it difficult to connect them. Klein even suspected that the Captain wouldn't quite remember what Azik looked like.

Then, he stopped thinking further and planned to leave the world above the gray fog. Just then, he noticed the crimson star that had been silent all this time was twinkling with faint light again.

Klein extended his spirituality with interest and saw the young man that spoke Jotun again. He saw him kneeling before a pure crystal ball.

The young man was still wearing the black tights that were different from the clothing of countries in the Northern Continent. His facial features were blurry and distorted, but Klein could faintly see his brownish-yellow hair.

He knelt there and prayed with an unusual pain in his tone.

Klein leaned sideways to hear. He relied on his beginner-level Jotun and barely understood what the young man was saying.

“O Magnificent Deity, please cast your eyes on this land that you have forsaken.

“O Magnificent Deity, please allow us, the People of the Dark, be freed from the curse of our destiny.

“I am willing to dedicate my life to you, using my blood to please you.”

...

*A land that was forsaken... People of the Dark... Magnificent Deity...* Klein murmured the few key words and suddenly thought of a place that The Hanged Man had mentioned once.

*The Forsaken Land of God!*

*It appeared in Roselle’s diary too! He even sent out a fleet to search for it, but it was fruitless... Klein squinted his eyes and wondered if he had guessed correctly.*

He tapped on the edge of the long bronze table with his fingers. After three taps, he came to a decision. He extended his right hand and touched the illusory crimson star.

The cloud of crimson immediately exploded, and the light flowed in like water.