

## Chapter 207: Guardian

Dunn sighed.

“I did want to send you away back then since I was going to do something that involves the secrets of the Church and the Nighthawks. But Kenley’s death left my mind in chaos. At that moment, all I could think of was a clumsy excuse, thus, giving you the opportunity to witness what I was doing.”

“What secret is that?” Klein pressed, now being more at ease.

He had almost forgotten about the threat of the evil god’s son, or the existence of a legendary creature outside.

Dunn weighed his words and said, “There might be a law in mysticism. Heh, even though I haven’t read many books, I’m still aware of what a law means.

“This law is called ‘Law of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility.’

“The characteristics of a Beyonder is never destroyed or reduced. It’s only passed from one carrier to the next.”

Klein’s eyes opened wide. He suddenly came to a realization and asked thoughtfully, “For example, the Sealed Artifacts, mysterious objects, or a potion’s main ingredients that are left behind by Beyonders who have lost control?”

“Correct.” Dunn nodded solemnly. “This isn’t only the case for

Beyonders who lose control; it's also the same for normal Beyonders after they die."

"The same..." Klein mulled over Dunn's description, now having a faint idea of what the Captain was doing.

He suddenly recalled when the suited clown died. He recalled the blue, thumb-sized blood sphere that was suspended beside the corpse of the suited clown. Frye's explanation had been that there would always be strange transformations after a Beyonder died.

Dunn continued with his deep gray eyes, "But what's different about Beyonders who lose control is that a Beyonder who dies normally won't leave behind ingredients or objects. Th-they're equivalent to a potion, a potion that corresponds to their Sequences, except that they're lacking a certain amount of supplementary ingredients."

*Equivalent to potions... Equivalent to potions!* Klein squinted as a flash of inspiration went through his mind. The endless darkness in his mind was illuminated in that instant.

He suddenly understood many things, figuring out why the Beyonder pathways wouldn't be broken, even if the creatures used as main ingredients were going extinct.

Apart from using substitutes, one could also simply use the remains of Beyonders!

*That should also be the reason why they only handed out complete potions at the higher Sequences! Another reason is to prevent the formula from being revealed to people adept at divination or mediumship rituals... Many guesses went through Klein's mind.*

Dunn looked at the recreation room and explained in a deep voice, “A few years ago... Well... I can’t exactly remember just exactly how many years it was, but I wasn’t the Captain of the Nighthawks back then. I unexpectedly realized this problem, and after interacting with Daly, who had just become a Beyonder, I immediately sent a report to the Holy Cathedral. The Holy Cathedral told me to keep it a secret and gave me two choices. Heh heh, that’s also the reason why it’s me, and not Daly, who’s explaining this to you. Whoever exposes this is responsible for it.

“The first choice was to pretend to know nothing, just like a large number of Nighthawk Captains and Deacons, and allow the Holy Cathedral to continue dealing with the remains of Beyonders who died through normal means. The second was for them to give me a unique, simple ritual and the corresponding techniques. It would allow me to temporarily consume the items produced by the unique characteristics within a limited period of time. Well, this is only suitable for Sequences of the same pathway at my level or lower.

“This would augment my Beyonder characteristics, and I would also become more powerful. In terms of abilities regarding dreams, my powers now are not too different from a Sequence 6’s. That’s also the reason why I dared to deal with Madam Sharon.”

“So that’s why... To think that something like this exists...” Klein slowly exhaled.

He finally understood why he couldn’t come up with a logical explanation despite his best efforts. That was because he didn’t have all the relevant information and was unable to fill in the blanks.

*Yes, this does match the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Indestructibility... Would consuming these characteristics cause a qualitative change in the Captain by constantly accumulating*

*them?* Klein allowed his mind to wander.

After glancing at him, Dunn let out a bitter smile.

“I chose the second option, but not because I wanted to become more powerful. If I wanted to become more powerful, quickly digesting a potion and receiving an advancement is the best and most direct way.”

“Yes,” Klein agreed sincerely. “Consolidating the characteristics of the potions of the same Sequence will increase the risk of losing control at the same time as it improves your abilities, right?”

Dunn shook his head solemnly. “No, these are the remains of normal Beyonders and not Beyonders who have lost control. Well, after I came to know of the acting method, I realized that it would increase the difficulty of digesting the potion.”

“Then why do you still continue?” Klein asked in shock.

Dunn placed his hand into his pocket, intending to take out his pipe, only to find that he had left it in his office.

He shook his head and let out a self-deprecating smile.

“I just said that becoming more powerful isn’t the reason why I consume their remains.”

Having said that, he paused, his eyes wandering to the blue flicker of the gas lamp opposite where he was standing.

"They were all my partners... We've gone through many things together. We've dealt with monsters in the darkness and insane heretics together. Some of them have saved me, and I've saved quite a number of them. We walked together in the silent night. We fought together in battles that aren't visible to the general public. We faced danger together. We had each other's backs.

"I really can't bear to part with them. I remember the lad, Hitte. He broke into tears the first time we went on a dangerous mission. I remember Adelaide, heh—he was Rozanne's father. He once blocked an evil curse for me with his arm. I remember the lady, Dwayne, and her warm temperament which was like the dawn. She would always silently record the things we encountered. I remember Kenley being someone who knew how to do many things like play the seven-string guitar, sing, tell stories, even though he wasn't tall. He was more like a poet than Leonard... I miss them very much.

"I hoped to continue fighting with them, to continue dealing with the monsters in the darkness, to deal with the crazy heretics, to protect Tingen City with them. Thus, I chose to consume their remains."

Dunn's gray eyes seemed to flicker. His reliable and dependable persona broke down considerably at that moment.

His lips arched upward slightly as he continued, "They're still with me in my dreams. Adelaide loves to read, and he often reads at the solarium. He often tells me to discipline Rozanne and get her to mature faster, to the point that Rozanne complains about me becoming more and more like her father and has become scared of me. Hitte is a person who cannot sit still and has to hunt in the forest every day. Dwayne always stands by the window of her bedroom and watches us chat. Kenley, who recently joined, created his own seven-string guitar and sings while strumming it... I really miss them."

“Captain...” Klein subconsciously muttered. His eyes became blurred and watery. He couldn’t help but rub his eyes and curse in his heart. *Fuck. Captain, you’re making me cry...*

*But I finally understand the reason for the Captain’s slow progress despite using the “acting method”...* Klein let out a silent sigh.

“Unfortunately, Old Neil died after losing control. Otherwise, he would’ve brought along much joy to us.” Dunn retracted his gaze. He lowered his head and massaged the bridge of his nose.

A few seconds later, he lifted his head and let out a bitter smile.

“This is a selfish decision.

“I don’t know what the true wishes of Adelaide, Kenley, and the rest were, and, thus, selfishly made a decision for them.

“I truly am a selfish person.”

“No...” Klein shook his head.

...

On the sofa in the receptionist area, Leonard watched Megose pull out clumps of her hair as his expression became more and more rigid.

Megose seemed increasingly restless as she constantly picked up the glass for a mouthful of water. She looked at Leonard with a contorted expression.

“I don’t know why, but I suddenly feel a little unwell.”

Leonard Mitchell was about to reply when he suddenly saw Megose reach for her face. She clawed out a piece of flesh—a long piece of flesh—a piece of flesh stained with blood.

“My face is a little itchy.” Megose smiled, a little embarrassed. The edge of her lips spread to where her cheekbones were, revealing a row of white teeth and bright red gums.

FUCK! Leonard cursed out silently. He felt that the situation was worsening way too quickly.

His lips quivering, Leonard turned to listen as his expression immediately turned steely green.

He forced a smile and apologized to Megose, who was clawing out pieces of her flesh.

“I need to use the bathroom.”

“Al... right...” Megose’s tone became ethereal.

She rubbed her belly and said, “My... child... is a little restless...”

Leonard didn’t reply. He hastened his footsteps and approached the partition.

After entering the corridor, Leonard stared deeply at the box of ash in Dunn Smith’s hands and exhaled in exasperation.

Following that, his expression turned firm.

“Captain, I’m afraid that it’s too late. We have to deal with Megose and her baby immediately. Otherwise, the whole of Tingen will suffer terrible losses. This isn’t something that can be avoided just by evacuating the citizens around us. I know that you’ve already sent such a telegram.”

Dunn knitted his eyebrows and asked, unusually stern, “Are you sure that the situation has worsened to such an extent?”

“Yes. In no more than three minutes, Megose will undergo a mutation, and her child will descend upon us,” Leonard said with a certain tone.

At the same time, he glanced at the thick, large blood vessel wrapped around Klein’s hand and said, “Sealed Artifact 2-105? Let me use it. I can better utilize its abilities.”

“Alright.” Klein didn’t hesitate to hand the Blood Vessel Thief over to Leonard.

That was something he intended to do so from the beginning.

At that moment, Dunn tugged at his collar and patted down his trench coat. He spoke with a determined tone, “I’ll head out with Saint Selena’s ashes first. Come out after ten seconds; remember, come out only after you finish counting to ten. Then, regardless of my condition, direct your strongest attacks at Megose and her baby without wasting any time.”

With that said, he turned around and walked towards the partition with the urn of ashes.

“Captain...” Klein let out a shout, his lips dry.

“Captain!” Leonard also shouted.

Dunn stopped and looked back. He had a gentle expression as he said with his mellow voice, “Don’t worry about me. I’m not alone. Adelaide, Dwayne, Hitte, and Kenley are all fighting alongside me, no matter what kind of danger I face.”

He paused for a moment before speaking, his gray eyes gentle.

“There’s no need to be too nervous as well. We’re guarding Tingon City.”

His lips arched upwards, forming his usual smile.

After saying those words, he didn’t stay any longer. He stepped through the partition, his black trench coat following behind him.

“Captain!” Klein and Leonard shouted at the same time, their tears falling uncontrollably, but Dunn didn’t slow down.

*We are a bunch of miserable wretches that are constantly fighting against danger and madness, but even more so, we are guardians.*