

Chapter 45: Returning

The Antigonus notebook is in the apartment across the kidnappers!

Although it was very coincidental, Klein believed that his intuition was correct.

He immediately got out of bed and rapidly changed out of the old clothes he usually wore to bed. He picked up a white shirt beside him and draped it on, quickly buttoning from top to bottom.

One, two, three... He suddenly realized that he was “missing” buttons. The left and right sides did not seem to match.

On careful look, Klein realized that he had made a mistake buttoning the first button, causing the shirt to warp.

He shook his head helplessly before taking a deep breath and slowly breathing out, using some of his Cogitation techniques to restore his calm.

After putting on his white shirt and black trousers, he barely managed to wear his underarm holster steadily. He pulled out the revolver he hid under his soft pillow and holstered it.

Without time to tie a bow tie, he draped his formal suit on and with a hat and cane in each hand, he walked to the door. After putting on his halved top hat, Klein gently twisted the door handle and walked into the corridor.

He carefully closed his bedroom's wooden door and sneaked downstairs like a thief. He used a fountain pen and paper in the living room to leave a note, informing his siblings that he had forgotten to mention that he had to be early for work today.

The moment he was out the door, Klein felt a cool breeze and his entire being calmed down.

The street in front of him was dark and silent without any pedestrians. Only the gas lamps illuminated the streets.

Klein took out his pocket watch from his pocket and snapped it open. It was just six in the morning and the crimson moonlight had not completely faded away. However, there was a hue of sunrise over the horizon.

He was just about to seek out an expensive for-hire carriage when he saw a two-horse, four-wheeled trackless carriage approaching him.

“There are public carriages this early in the morning?” Klein was puzzled as he went forward and waved for it to stop.

“Good morning, Sir.” The carriage driver stopped the horses skillfully.

The ticketing officer beside him had his hand to his mouth while yawning.

“To Zouteland Street.” Klein scooped out two pennies from his pocket and four halfpence.

“Four pence,” the ticketing officer replied without any hesitation.

After paying for the ride, Klein got onto the carriage and found it empty. It exuded a clear loneliness amid the dark night.

“You are the first one,” said the carriage driver with a smile.

The two brown horses widened their pace as they proceeded briskly.

“To be honest, I never imagined there to be a public carriage so early in the morning.” Klein sat near the carriage driver and made idle chatter to divert his attention and relax his tense mind.

The carriage driver said in a self-deprecating manner, “From six in the morning to nine at night, but all I earn is one pound a week.”

“Are there no breaks?” inquired Klein in bafflement.

“We take shifts to rest once a week.” The carriage driver’s tone turned heavy.

The ticketing officer beside him added, “We are in charge of plying the streets from six to eleven in the morning. Following that, we have lunch and an afternoon break. Near dinnertime, which is six in the evening, we replace our colleagues... Even if we do not need rest, the two horses will need it.”

“It wasn’t anything like that in the past. There was an accident that should not have happened. Due to fatigue, a carriage driver

lost control of his carriage and it toppled. It resulted in us having shifts... Those bloodsuckers would never become this kind so suddenly otherwise!" The carriage driver scoffed.

Under the illumination of dawn, the carriage drove towards Zouteland Street and picked up seven to eight passengers on the way.

After Klein was less tense, he did not converse further. He closed his eyes and recalled the experiences from yesterday, hoping to notice if he had forgotten anything.

By the time the skies were bright when the sun was fully up, the carriage finally arrived at Zouteland Street.

Klein pressed his hat with his left hand and briskly jumped off the carriage.

He quickly stepped into 36 Zouteland Street and arrived outside Blackthorn Security Company after going up the flight of stairs.

The door was still closed and had yet to open.

Klein took out the ring of keys by his waist and found the corresponding brass key and inserted it into the keyhole and twisted it.

He pushed forward as the door slowly opened. He saw the black-haired, green-eyed Leonard Mitchell sniffing at a recently popular cigarette.

"To be honest, I prefer cigars... You seem to be in a rush?" the

poet-like Nighthawk asked in a relaxed and cozy manner.

“Where’s Captain?” Klein asked instead of answering.

Leonard pointed at the partition.

“He’s in the office. As an advanced Sleepless, he only needs two hours of sleep in the day. I believe it’s a potion those factory owners or bankers would like the most.”

Klein nodded and quickly passed through the partition. He saw that Dunn Smith had opened the door to his office and he was standing at its entrance.

“What’s the matter?” Dressed in his black trench coat, he held a gold-inlaid cane with a solemn and stern expression.

“The feeling of déjà vu came to me. It should be the notebook. The Antigonus family’s notebook.” Klein tried hard to make his answer clear and logical.

“Where was that?” Dunn Smith’s expression did not have any obvious changes.

However, Klein’s intuition told him that a clear and invisible stir had happened in him. This was possibly a flash of his spirit or a change in his emotions.

“It’s at the place Leonard and I saved the hostage yesterday. Opposite the kidnappers’ room. I didn’t notice it back then until I had a dream and received a revelation,” Klein did not conceal anything.

"From the looks of it, I missed out on making huge contributions." Leonard, who had walked to the partition, chuckled.

Dunn nodded slightly as he instructed with a solemn expression, "Get Kenley to replace Old Neil's watch of the armory. Let Old Neil and Frye come with us."

Leonard stopped acting frivolous as he immediately informed Kenley and Frye who were in the Nighthawks' recreation room. One of them was a Sleepless and the other was a Corpse Collector.

Five minutes later, the two-wheeled carriage that came under the jurisdiction of the Nighthawks began driving down the sparse streets in the morning.

Leonard wore a feather hat, a shirt and a vest. He stood in as the carriage driver, lashing out a whip from time to time, sending out a crisp crack.

Inside the carriage, Klein and Old Neil sat on one side. Facing them were Dunn Smith and Frye.

The Corpse Collector's skin was so white it looked like it either had not been under the sun in a very long while or he had a severe blood deficiency. He looked to be in his thirties with black hair and blue eyes. He had a high nose bridge and his lips were very thin. He had a cold and dark demeanor and had a faint smell from often touching corpses.

"Repeat the situation again in detail." Dunn adjusted the collar of his black trench coat.

Klein stroked the hanging topaz in his sleeve as he began from their mission commissioning until the dream. By the side, Old Neil chuckled.

“Your fate seems to be entwined with that Antigonus family’s notebook. I never expected you to meet it in such a manner.”

That’s right. Isn’t this too much of a coincidence!? Thankfully, Leonard just mentioned that there was no indication of hidden factions of mysterious powers at play from the preliminary investigations of Elliott’s kidnapping. It was solely a crime motivated by money. Otherwise, I would really suspect if someone had deliberately arranged for this to happen... Klein found the situation rather curious.

It was too coincidental!

Dunn did not express his ideas as he was in deep thought. Likewise, Corpse Collector Frye maintained his silence in his black trench coat.

Only when the carriage stopped at the building mentioned by Klein was the silence broken.

“Let’s go up. Klein, you and Old Neil walk behind. Be careful, very careful.” Dunn got off the carriage and pulled out a strange revolver with a clearly long and thick barrel. He stuffed it into his right pocket.

“Alright.” Klein did not dare take point.

After Leonard found someone to watch the carriage, the five Beyonders walked orderly into the building. With very light

footsteps, they arrived at the third floor.

“Is this the place?” Leonard pointed at the apartment opposite the kidnappers.

Klein tapped his glabella twice and activated his Spirit Vision.

In this state, his spiritual perception was enhanced again. He found the door familiar as if he had once entered it before.

“Yes.” He nodded in affirmation.

Old Neil also activated his spiritual perception and after observing carefully, he said, “There’s no one inside, nor are there any spiritual glows of magic.”

Corpse Collector Frye added with his hoarse voice, “There aren’t any evil spirits.”

He could see many spiritual bodies, including evil spirits and restless wraiths, even without activating his Spirit Vision.

Leonard took a step forward and, like yesterday, punched the door’s lock.

This time not only did the surrounding wood shatter, even the door lock flew and fell noisily to the ground.

Klein seemed to feel an invisible seal instantly vanish. Immediately following that, he caught a whiff of an intense stench.

"Corpse, a rotting corpse," Frye described coldly.

He did not appear to suffer from nausea.

Dunn reached out his black-gloved right hand and pushed open the door slowly. The first thing that they saw was a chimney. For early July, there was an abnormal heat emanating the room.

In front of the chimney was a rocking chair. Sitting on it was an old woman dressed in black and white. Her head hung low.

Her body was abnormally large. Her skin was blackish-green and swollen. It felt like she would explode from a simple prod, spewing a foul rotting stench from within. As maggots and other parasites squirmed between her flesh, blood, and rotting juices, or clothes and wrinkles, they appeared like points of light in Spirit Vision. They seemed to cling close to an extinguished darkness.

Pa! Pa!

The old woman's eyeballs dropped to the floor and rolled a few times, leaving behind a yellowish-brown streak.

Klein felt disgusted and being unable to tolerate the putrid stench any longer, he bent over and puked.