

Chapter 72: Tracking

The wooden puppet's face was painted in red and yellow like the common clown. The corners of its mouth were upturned high, revealing an abnormally comical smile.

Its lips parted to reveal a dark and deep mouth. Klein, who had locked his gaze with it, felt his hair stand as intense horror leaped out of his heart in an uncontrollable manner.

Everything before his eyes grew dull, as though he was looking at the world through a piece of thick brown glass.

Klein's thoughts slowed down gradually, and he instinctively wanted to ask for help, but his neck seemed to be held tight by a rope. He couldn't make a single sound, and the single word was trapped in silence.

Just then, Dunn noticed his arm exercises becoming sluggish and pushed him heavily.

The brown glass before Klein's eyes shattered in an instant. He blurred out the word "help" which had remained dormant in his throat. It reverberated within the carriage, with sharp panic.

"It's getting stronger," Klein spoke in a very certain tone.

Being next to a strange Sealed Artifact like 2-049 really placed on in terrifying peril if they were not careful. No, it was totally impossible to guard against it. It could only be avoided through other methods!

“It’s normal,” Aiur Harson said steadily, nodding.

Lorotta chuckled.

“It seems to like you? Don’t worry. It is a relatively less dangerous Grade 2 Sealed Artifact.”

In her naturally languid voice, the puppet whose joints clearly reflected a human’s stood up. It began tottering towards its left.

Its action was incomprehensible, just like a steam engine that someone had rusted due to a lack of lubricating oil.

Robot dance... Klein suddenly had the few Chinese words pop into his head. He had a new guess of the danger 2-049 posed.

It assimilates the living things that it seizes control of?

If I am not woken up in time by the others, would I have become a human-sized puppet, a real-life Barbie doll?

Just as thoughts flooded Klein, Aiur Harson was awoken by Dunn. He extended and bent his arms as he pointed in the direction that the puppet was walking slowly towards. He said to Leonard who was driving the carriage, “Over there!”

Leonard couldn’t make the carriage pass through the building, so he had to detour. During the detour, 2-049 constantly adjusted the direction that it was facing. It acted like a compass that pointed towards the Antigonus family.

Upon seeing the scene, Klein, who was constantly “exercising” his arms, nearly burst out laughing under the tension.

I heard that 2-049 was created by the Antigonus family... Is this an act of loyalty or the perfect example of screwing things up?

Leonard drove the carriage according to Aiur Harson’s occasional instructions.

Whenever the strange puppet 2-049 walked to the edge of the carriage, Aiur Harson would pull it back and start it all over again.

Every time that happened, its mouth would open and two people would be under its influence simultaneously.

Klein’s taut feelings gradually began to relax. He realized that Sealed Artifact 2-049 was not as scary anymore. As long as there were more than three people present and they constantly maintained their arm motions, if they made sure to wake their partners in time, 2-049 was merely a puppet with slightly unique characteristics.

The carriage traveled at high speed, and quickly arrived at the harbor, where warehouses were clustered.

After circling a few times, they confirmed that 2-049 intended to enter the innermost grayish-white warehouse. Aiur Harson’s expression turned solemn. He grabbed the puppet carefully and stuffed it back into the black chest.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Under constant ferocious knocking, Aiur woke up again and again with the help of Borgia and Lorotta as he activated the mechanism with great effort. He then injected his spirituality and activated the star and crimson symbols on the chest.

At the reappearance of the formless seal, Aiur Harson let out a long heavy breath.

“Let’s get down,” Dunn Smith said with a low and mild voice. “Leonard, tying the horse here will do.”

Dressed in trench coats, suits, or shirts, the six left the carriage and walked into the innermost warehouse. As they walked, they uniformly stretched and bent their arms.

This added a comical and ridiculous vibe to the rather tense situation.

The Nighthawk Awkward Dance Squad... Klein could only complain inwardly to ease such a feeling.

However, there was no other way around it. According to his observations, 2-049 first affected the upper body. Therefore, to detect it in time to prevent a more dangerous situation from developing, they only had the choice of extending and bending their arms, shake their necks or bodies. However, the latter only made one look like a hooligan.

As for actions like blinking eyes and striking one’s eyebrows, they were either too easily ignored or the action was too big. Neither was a good option.

This awkward dance squad is better than Causeway Bay [1] triad

members... Klein sighed in resignation and followed Captain Dunn Smith and company.

As they approached the warehouse's door, the deeper his anxiety and worry became.

No one knew what kind of effect the notebook had on Ray Bieber!

If something dire happened, Klein did not dare pin his hopes on transmigrating again.

Furthermore, he discovered that he could still be injured and bleed while chopping ingredients for dinner. The speed at which he recovered at was normal too. He wasn't some kind of monster that was impervious to combat or death.

As they walked, Dunn suddenly lowered his non-moving hand and made a pressing gesture to beckon everyone to stop ten meters away from the warehouse's door.

"Klein, divine if there is any danger in the warehouse. It'd be better if you could tell the level of danger," Dunn said as he turned his head to Klein.

His gray eyes looked deep as usual; there was no fear.

Klein gave an unnoticeable nod and stopped the hand exercise. He extended his right hand to his left cuff and removed the silver chain that had a hanging piece of topaz.

As he was still moving his arms, Dunn realized his sluggish actions in time and woke him up with a nudge.

Klein held the silver chain with his left hand and allowed the topaz to hang down naturally. Simultaneously, he moved his right arm, but with a much smaller range of motion.

When the topaz stabilized, he half closed his eyes, outlined the spherical light, and entered Cogitation. He then mumbled, “There’s danger in the warehouse.”

“There’s danger in the warehouse.”

...

After seven times, he opened his eyes and saw the hanging topaz slowly going in clockwise circles.

It turned faster and faster, and in the end, Klein felt like it was pulling his left hand.

“There’s danger, great danger,” Klein replied honestly.

Clockwise meant affirmation to the chanted statement, while counter-clockwise meant denial.

To other Beyonders, even a Mystery Pryer, using spirit dowsing could only determine if there was danger, but it was unable to obtain information regarding the level of danger.

However, Klein discovered that when he used spirit dowsing, the pendulum would spin at different speeds, revealing the degree of the answer.

Although it was not very accurate and extremely vague, it allowed one to have a rough assessment of the actual situation.

As expected of a Seer potion... Klein was rather happy with the outcome.

Just as he was about to put away the topaz pendulum, Leonard Mitchell, who had maintained his silence, suddenly spoke.

“Divine if there is danger around us also.”

Dunn nodded in agreement. “Yes, I am worried that the Secret Order will not give up and that it has placed Ray Bieber’s house under constant surveillance. They could have followed us here and could cause trouble at a critical moment.”

Klein took a deep breath and entered a calm, ethereal state once again.

When the silver chain turned stable once again, he recited in his heart, “There is danger surrounding us.”

...

“There is danger surrounding us.”

...

After repeating the statement, Klein opened his eyes and looked at the silver chain.

In his dark brown eyes, the topaz pendulum first moved counterclockwise with difficulty. Then, it suddenly paused and started moving clockwise.

"There is danger surrounding us." Klein felt a tug on his heartstrings as he spoke carefully.

Furthermore, someone had tried to intercept his divination, but had lost to him in the invisible fight!

Just as he spoke, an orange-yellow fireball the size of a fist flew towards them.

It came crashing towards the middle of the group with its blazing speed.

Dunn Smith, who had already drawn his long-barreled revolver before Klein did his divination, immediately raised his hand, aimed, and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

The fireball didn't seem to be affected by the gunshot but continued its original trajectory, as though it was forcing everyone to scatter from dodging.

Klein originally thought nothing of the troublemaker who was following them. After all, there were six Beyonders present. They were not even short of Sequence 8 and Sequence 7 experts. It was a lineup that was practically unstoppable in a small city like Tingen.

But when the fireball smashed down, he came to a sudden realization.

To them, the most dangerous enemy was not the tracker nor the troublemaker, it wasn't even Ray Bieber who was in the warehouse in an unknown state, but the Sealed Artifact 2-049!

Once they dispersed and the battle began, they wouldn't be able to wake each other in time. Then, they would turn into real-life puppets one after another!

As these chaotic thoughts bombarded him, Klein was pulled by Leonard aside to dodge the fireball.

Without the time to feel anguish for his clothing, he saw the Nighthawks split off into two groups while dodging. It was done very orderly.

Poof!

The orange-yellow fireball landed on the ground but didn't stir one bit of dust. It disappeared as though nothing had happened.

An illusion? Just as this thought came to him, Klein saw Aiur Harson lift the black chest and threw it least ten meters away.

“Stay away from it! Watch it!” Aiur shouted.

Before he finished his shout, Leonard and Borgia had separately approached it. They stood at least seven meters from the chest to prevent anyone from approaching.

As for Dunn and Lorotta, they each held guns. They stood beside Aiur Harson who had drawn a thin silver sword. They took up a formation resembling a crescent as they rushed towards the origins of the fireball, while taking note of the peripheral regions.

Upon seeing this scene, Klein, who needed to do the arm exercises without his cane, immediately heaved a sigh of relief. He realized he had overlooked an important matter.

2-049 had a limited range of influence. As long as they were at a sufficient distance from it, they did not need to worry about the danger.

Klein rolled over and stood up. He stuffed his topaz pendulum into his pocket with one hand while he reached into his holster for his revolver with the other.

1. A location in Hong Kong.