

Chapter 106: Artist Klein

After eight in the evening, in the Moretti family's dining room.

As he looked at the shallow soup left in the bowl, Benson raised his hand to cover his mouth to give a satisfied burp.

"Although that was our third time eating it, I still find it delicious. The sourness and sweetness of the tomato and the chewy texture of the oxtail blends into a perfect and unique flavor. Klein, I'm sorry that the Blackthorn Security Company caused Tingen City to lose such an outstanding chef."

Melissa leaned backwards in her chair and nodded in agreement silently.

"This is because you have yet to try real cooking." Klein smiled humbly. "If we have a chance in the future, let's head to Bonaparte Restaurant on Howes Street for some authentic Intis cuisine, and also to Coastline Restaurant in the Golden Indus borough for some southern delicacies."

These were restaurants that were always covered in the newspapers, where the average cost per person was around a pound and a half.

"I like your cooking more," Melissa answered without hesitation.

Benson chuckled and changed the topic.

"But I ultimately feel that there's something lacking from the

tomato oxtail soup. Perhaps, it shouldn't be eaten with bread?"

Klein nodded in agreement.

"It's best complemented with rice."

"Rice..." Melissa muttered with an expression of yearning.

Tingen, which was located north, wasn't considered a big city. Besides a few particular restaurants, it was difficult to have any chance of eating rice.

To Benson and Melissa, this kind of food only existed in the descriptions of newspapers and textbooks.

Looking at his sister's expression, Klein laughed.

"Wait till we save another six month's salary, and we will find a chance to go on vacation in Desi Bay and try the delicacies there."

Desi Bay was located in the far south of the Loen Kingdom, and a third of it belonged to Feynapotter Kingdom. It had plenty of sunlight and beautiful scenery, and the paella there was very famous.

Before Melissa could share her opinion on saving money, Klein said, "In another three months, I should get another raise. By then, we could totally fulfill our desire to travel as well as save money for necessities."

“Why?” Benson and Melissa’s attention was redirected as expected.

Klein coughed lightly and smiled while explaining, “Due to my professionalism, the police department which always collaborates with our company intends to hire me as their part-time history consultant. They would pay me extra, at least two pounds a week. If you see me in a police uniform in the future and showing the corresponding police documentation, please don’t be shocked.

“Of course, as you know, the work efficiency in governmental departments is as slow as a ninety-year-old lady’s footsteps. They still have to go through a lengthy procedure, and they’re required to do a thorough inspection of me. Hence, on my off days for the next two months, I’ll be heading to Khoy University quite often to see my mentor and the teaching staff I know to learn more.”

Seeing the shocked look in his brother and sister’s eyes, he paused and said with a strange expression, “Just like Emperor Roselle said, ‘One is never too old to learn.’”

Benson maintained a few seconds of silence before saying in a half self-deprecating and half emotional manner, “Is it too late for me to sign up for university? Knowledge really is wealth.”

And also power... Klein added silently.

“Benson, you need Klein’s grammar books and his classic literature textbooks,” Melissa said out of the blue, stealing the words from Klein’s mouth.

Benson’s expression seemed to change. He gritted his teeth and said, “Klein, pass me those books tonight.

“Even if all they do is put me to sleep, I am determined to read them for an hour, no—an hour and a half a day.

“I swear in the name of the Goddess! If I can’t do it, I will be a curly-haired baboon!”

A smile immediately plastered across Klein’s face.

“No problem.”

...

The next morning, Klein hung his coat and hat on the clothes rack in the break room. Then he followed Rozanne’s instructions and walked to the basement to the duty room outside Chanis Gate.

Captain Dunn and members Frye, Seeka, Royale, Leonard, and Kenley were all there.

As his gray eyes glanced past the newly promoted Nighthawk, Dunn smiled and said, “We have a routine meeting every Thursday to summarize past missions and discuss various challenges.”

I am a man who has endured the test of many regular meetings as well... Klein lampooned. He found a seat and joked, “Do I need to introduce myself?”

Dunn smiled and turned to look at Kenley.

“Briefly tell us about the investigation of Sirius Arapis.”

Kenley was also a Nighthawk who had been promoted from a member of the civilian staff. He wasn't very tall, his brown hair was quite thick, his body size was average, his muscles were very toned, and he looked like someone who was smart and capable.

He thought and said, “With Old Neil's help, we found Sirius's secret hideout. There were many books and items at the scene. From them, we can be certain that Sirius was one of the underground members of the secret organization, the Aurora Order. He was also a Secrets Suppliant.

“There's sufficient evidence to show that he and Hanass Vincent sold the Antigonus family notebook to Welch. Those who don't remember Welch can ask Klein about him.

“We found valuable items, including three Sequence potion formulas, which are Sequence 9 Seer, Sequence 9 Apprentice, and Sequence 8 Clown...

“The subsequent task is to use Sirius's social circle and the letters we found to locate other outer circle members of the Aurora Order. The focus of our search will be directed at the heretic who has infiltrated the police department.

“Also, people who were in contact with Hanass need to be reinvestigated.”

Dunn nodded lightly and looked towards Klein.

“As you heard just now, we've obtained the Clown potion

formula, but are unable to determine if it's real. We have to wait for the Holy Cathedral to give us feedback.

“In the mission relating to the Aurora Order, you have made a crucial contribution. Plus, given that you shot a member of the Secret Order, it won't be long until you accrue enough contributions to be promoted. But, I have to remind you that not everyone is like Daly. You have to suppress your desire and wait for three years. In order to avoid losing control, you can't allow your mindset to be affected by our discovery of the Clown potion formula.”

Captain, you don't understand how magical it is to 'act'... I have already confirmed the authenticity of the Clown potion formula using divination above the gray fog last night... Klein nodded obediently.

“I will keep my emotions in check.”

Then Seeka Tron, the quiet Midnight Poet with white hair and black eyes, said, “We still haven't found any clues regarding Instigator Tris. I suspect that he has already fled from Tingen.”

...

After they were done exchanging their new information, Klein left the duty room and found Old Neil to continue his mysticism lessons. In the afternoon, he went over to his combat teacher, Gawain, to do basic strength, endurance, and overall coordination training.

...

With the sun still up and bright at five.

Klein took off his training costume, took a quick shower, and changed into his original clothing. He then took the public carriage to Besik Street.

He hadn't forgotten about the red chimney that he had seen in his dream divination, nor did he forget about the man that he suspected to be a member of the Psychology Alchemists who had bought supplementary ingredients for the Spectator potion in the underground market. These things would be inconvenient to investigate in his role as a Nighthawk.

"Number 27. Henry's Private Detective Company... Yup, it's here." Klein found a private detective company according to the newspaper's descriptions. It was said to be trustworthy.

He put on a mask, lowered his top hat, and flipped up his collar. He walked up the stairs and came to the company on the second floor.

Knock! Knock! Knock! He knocked on the door that was half-closed.

"Please come in," said a voice that seemed to be affected by phlegm.

Klein lifted his cane and pushed the door to enter. He saw the detective company using an almost open layout. There were four employees sitting at their respective seats partitioned into small cubicles.

"Hi, I'm Detective Henry. How may I help you?" a man in a white

shirt and black vest greeted him.

He held a smoking pipe in his hand, and he had a prominent jawline, blade-like eyebrows, and dark blue eyes that sized up his client.

Klein used the collar of his trench coat to block half of his face as he spoke.

“I have two matters to entrust to you. How are your rates?”

“That depends on the difficulty of the task.” Detective Henry retracted his gaze and pointed towards the sofa in the guest area. “Let’s talk over there.”

Klein followed him to the semi-partitioned area and sat on the single-seat sofa. He didn’t take off his coat, nor did he take off his hat and mask.

He purposely made his voice hoarse and said, “First, I need you to help me find a house with a chimney that looks like this, as well as information on who the owner and current tenant are.”

As he spoke, he took out a neatly folded paper. When he opened it, there was a chimney with its color noted down and its surrounding scenery.

This was the drawing that Klein completed by using the uniqueness of the area above the gray fog and the method of praying to himself.

“What a great drawing...” Detective Henry complimented

subconsciously. He then knitted his eyebrows and said, "This is not complicated but very tedious. It would require a long time and a large amount of manpower."

"I understand." Klein nodded lightly.

Detective Henry pondered for a moment and said, "Seven pounds. The price for this job would be seven pounds. In addition, you have to give me at least two weeks."

"Alright. Second, help me find this gentleman and find out his identity. The only thing I know is that he occasionally appears at the Evil Dragon Bar near the harbor borough. And he must not detect any men you send. He is very sensitive and he has terrifying observational skills." Klein took out the second portrait.

He intended to get in touch with a member of the Psychology Alchemists to see if he could find any valuable information and materials. For example, perhaps a formula that could be exchanged with Justice?

"Three pounds, such a mission would cost about three or four pounds. Your outstanding drawing skills will help my assistant and I save time," Detective Henry replied skillfully.

"Ten pounds in total?" Klein found the price upsetting.

Detective Henry took a puff on his pipe and said, "Yes, and you need to put a deposit of two pounds. When there's progress, you'll need to pay another three to five pounds. The rest of the payment can be made when the mission is completed."

“Then I shall come next week to check on your progress.” Klein didn’t haggle over the price to prevent the observant detective from remembering any of his characteristics.

After they signed a standard contract, he took out two one-pound notes and passed them to the detective. He only had one pound and seventeen soli left from his savings.

As Detective Henry watched the man wearing a gauze mask and a black trench coat with its collar raised leave in a hurry, he had a suspicious look in his eyes as he smoked his pipe.

Why is he looking for a house that has that kind of chimney?

He must be an artist, or at least a professional sketch artist of some sort...

...

In the afternoon, in Viscount Glaint’s luxurious mansion.

Audrey, with her maidservant in tow, followed etiquette and passed her hand to the host. She looked at him giving her hand a quick peck.

“Your beauty accentuates my salon,” Glaint first gave a compliment as usual. Then, he lowered his voice and said, “That lady is already here. She’s a Beyonder and also an author.”