

## Chapter 152: Nice Attempt

The gray fog filled the air in its eternally unchanging manner as the illusory crimson stars hung around him at varying distances. Klein sat inside the lofty palace that looked like the home of a giant as he looked at the familiar sight before him.

After a few seconds, he looked away and made a yellowish-brown goatskin appear before him. Then, he lifted a pen to write his amended incantation for the summoning ritual.

“Light a candle to represent myself.

“Use a spiritual wall to create a holy environment.

“Drip a drop of Full Moon Essence Oil in the flame, Chamomile Pure Dew, Slumber Flower Powder, and other ingredients. (Note: There’s no need to be too particular in this step because it’s summoning oneself).

“Recite the incantation below.

“I! (In ancient Hermes, Jotun, Dragonese, or Elfish. It must be a deep shout)

“I summon in my name (Hermes),

“The Fool that doesn’t belong to this era, the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck.”

...

After scrutinizing it three times, Klein wrote a divination statement at the bottom:

“There will be danger if the ritual above is carried out outside of this world.”

*Phew.* He let out a breath, put down the pen, took out the silver chain in his sleeve, and held it with his left hand.

The topaz pendant hung above the goatskin steadily, only a slight distance above the divination statement. He reined in his thoughts and entered a Cogitation state.

“There will be danger if the ritual above is carried out outside of this world.”

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...

After reciting the statement seven times, Klein opened his eyes which were almost all black and looked at the topaz pendant which was spinning counterclockwise.

That meant a negative outcome: there would be no danger!

“I can give it a try then.” Klein made the items before him disappear. He then extended his spirituality to wrap around

himself and simulated the sensation of falling.

When he returned to his bedroom, due to the fact that he had sealed the entire room with a spiritual wall, Klein immediately cleared his desk and put out a mint-scented candle right in the middle.

He pressed slightly on the candle wick, rubbing it with spirituality to cause friction and ignite the candle.

Under the flickering dim light, Klein dripped the corresponding essential oils, extracts, and herb powder onto the flame.

A soothing fragrance suddenly filled the air, and the room alternated between brightness and darkness.

Taking two steps back, Klein looked at the candle that represented himself and shouted in Jotun, “I!”

Then, he switched to Hermes, “I summon in my name:

“The Fool that doesn’t belong to this era, the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; the King of Yellow and Black who yields good luck.”

Just as he finished speaking, he sensed the wavering candlelight suddenly dance vigorously and produce a vortex with the surrounding fragrance. It absorbed his spirituality at an insane rate.

“Slumber flower, a herb that belongs to the red moon, please bestow your powers to my incantation...” Klein endured the

discomfort brought about from having his spirituality drained as he finished reciting the incantation.

Then, he saw the candlelight stop wavering. It was tainted with a gray luster, which extended to about the size of a palm.

"I didn't summon anything... Oh right, perhaps I'll need to respond to it above the gray fog? It's really quite troublesome to summon myself..." Klein muttered, pinching his aching forehead.

He calmed himself down, then took four steps counterclockwise before arriving above the gray fog again. He saw that there was a rippling light above the seat of honor at the ancient table.

It stemmed from the strange symbol at the back of the corresponding chair. The strange symbol that was made up of a Pupil-less Eye, a symbol representing concealment, and Contorted Lines that represented change.

All Klein did was extend his hand to reach for it when he immediately heard, "I! I summon in my name, The Fool that doesn't belong to this era, the mysterious ruler above the gray fog; the King of Yellow and Black who wields good luck." Then, he saw surging spirituality combined with a rippling light that formed into an illusory yet shapeless door.

The door shook as though it wanted to be opened. Klein immediately felt inspired and strongly willed for it to be pushed open.

Almost instantly, the boundless fog and lofty palace was drawn forward. There were a few barely noticeable ripples.

The ripples surged towards the illusory yet shapeless door.

But, no matter how much Klein pushed it, the door couldn't be pushed open. Every movement resulted in dead silence.

"The Door of Summoning has yet to take shape?" Klein reined in his will and creased his eyebrows when he analyzed the reason why he had failed.

He had casually named the door "the Door of Summoning."

"Hmm, I'm lacking spirituality, so I can't form a complete Door of Summoning. When I advance to Sequence 8 Clown and pass through the initial dangerous stage, I can give it another try. Maybe it won't be a problem by then..." Klein nodded lightly and roughly understood what had happened.

This experiment gave him a confidence boost, he felt heartened as this was the first time that he received some sort of response from the mysterious space above the gray fog\*—\*other than the incident where he divined about Eternal Blazing Sun!

*There will come a day when I'll understand all the secrets here!* Klein excitedly declared in his heart. He then made a rapid descent into the boundless fog after he wrapped himself up with spirituality.

...

Klein quickly blew out the candle after he returned to his bedroom. He ended the ritual and cleaned up his study desk before he removed the spiritual wall.

A gust of wind suddenly blew as he yawned. He collapsed into the bed, covered himself with a blanket and quickly fell asleep.

In the hazy dream that followed, Klein woke up abruptly and realized that he was sitting in the living room of his home and was holding the Tingen City Honest Paper.

*...Don't tell me Captain is here again?* He was stunned at first as he looked outside the oriel window, finding humor in his exasperation.

With a creak, the door opened. Dunn walked in slowly, wearing his black trench coat that went beyond his knees and held a cane and pipe.

He was still wearing his black top hat, and underneath it were his profound gray eyes.

Dunn came to the living room and sat on the single seat sofa. He leisurely crossed his right leg over his left.

He put aside his cane, took off his hat, and leaned backwards. He sat there quietly and looked at Klein as though he was thinking.

*Captain, what are you trying to do today...* Klein was dumbfounded.

In order to not expose that he knew that it was a dream, he pretended to not be affected by it and continued to read the newspaper.

One minute, two minutes, five minutes. He lifted his head to

look at Dunn who sat opposite him. He found out that the Captain was still sitting there quietly and was looking at him in deep thought.

Five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen minutes. Klein flipped through the newspaper back and forth multiple times, looking at Dunn from the corner of his eyes, and noticed that the man was still looking at him quietly in deep thought.

*Captain, you're making me very uncomfortable...* Klein couldn't sit in peace. He folded the newspaper and put it aside. He nodded and smiled at Dunn. Then, he went to the kitchen to get a piece of cloth and started wiping the dining table and coffee table.

*Captain, look, my dream is so simple, so ordinary, so boring. There's nothing worth observing. Hurry up and leave! Why don't you pretend to be a ghost and I'll pretend to be frightened, then you can complete your achievement as a Nightmare!* He prayed in silence and lifted his head, but all he saw was Dunn's deep gray eyes that were still in deep thought.

Under such a quiet and constant gaze, Klein wiped all the furniture and cleaned his room. He was so exhausted in his dream.

What wore him out the most was Dunn Smith, who was watching him quietly in deep thought.

Klein had no idea how much time had passed while he made himself busy until he finally saw his Captain uncross his legs and stand up. Then, he took his cane, put on his hat, and walked through the door.

Klein held his breath and watched Dunn leave his house.

He couldn't help but lift his right hand to wave goodbye.

*Phew...* When everything returned to normal, Klein let out a breath of relief.

*That really was such a nightmare!* He thought to himself, too preoccupied for tears.

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Backlund, West Backlund, Philip's Department Store.

Philip's was one of the top-end department stores in the Loen Kingdom. It only opened to nobles and wealthy people who were qualified to be members.

There was always luxurious carriages parked outside with different emblems printed on them. Not only was it a safe place for shopping, it also became a popular social venue due to the strict restriction on members.

Audrey brought her maid servant, Annie, and her golden retriever, Susie. Under the ushering of an eagerly attentive attendant, she got off the carriage and walked through the entrance.

Along the way, she saw daughters of viscounts, countesses, or maidens with parents of high social status.

She maintained her elegance and greeted them all gracefully. She communicated with different nobles on different topics. For instance, when she faced a particular countess, she would

compliment the fittings of the countess's dress and when she greeted a particular baroness, she would praise the outstanding performance of the baroness's husband in the House of Lords.

Audrey hadn't been good at that previously; she was too stubborn and too arrogant. But now, she didn't even need to put in much effort to respond perfectly.

In a Spectator's eyes, most of the emotions and thoughts of the female nobles were written on their faces.

Arriving at the second floor, Audrey turned into a shop that sold ready-made dresses.

The attendant in the shop was a petite maiden. She wore a black and white dress and had shoulder-length blond hair. She was the Arbiter, Xio Derecha.

Audrey gave Susie a look without changing her facial expression. The dog understood what her owner meant immediately and ran to another counter.

Maidservant Annie went after Susie to try to drag her back.

*Well done!* Audrey complimented inwardly and walked next to Xio Derecha, pretending to look at the variety of dresses.

"...Why did you arrange to meet me here for?" Xio inquired with a whisper while she loudly introduced the dresses.

Her voice was tender, just like a child's.

“Where’s the original attendant?” Audrey asked in reply instead of answering her.

Xio looked around and said, “I convinced her. She was happy to rest for the morning.”

Audrey looked at the different styled dresses while she took out a piece of neatly folded paper from her lamb leather handbag and secretly passed it to Xio.

“Vice Admiral Hurricane, Qilangos, has snuck into Backlund. This is his portrait. I hope you can find him for me. Oh, and don’t alert him.”

Xio received the piece of paper and unfolded it to take a quick glance. She saw that it was a lifelike portrait of a man in his thirties that had a unique broad chin.

*I was once constantly praised by my art teacher...* Audrey stole a glance at Xio and lifted her head.

She added, “The Kingdom offers a reward of ten thousand pounds for Qilangos. If he were to be arrested, even the person that only provided clues would definitely be awarded with a few hundred pounds.”

Just as she finished her sentence, she saw Xio’s eyes beam with joy, as she had expected.