

# I! CLEANER!

## Chapter 21 21: 0017 It's really time to stew \_1

"You damn well deserve a beating!"

Using all his strength, Leon clamped the Black Goat's mouth shut, stuffing its cheeky words back down its throat, then looked up at the still-smiling red-haired woman with a slightly awkward scratch on his head and said, "Um... Director, my sister was quite scared yesterday and is still in the hospital. If it's not too much trouble, could I take a day off this afternoon?"

"Yeah, go ahead! You just finished such a dangerous clean-up mission, you definitely deserve a break."

Smiling, she granted Leon his leave. After he left with the struggling goat head, the slight smile on the red-haired woman's face faded. She clasped her hands together and leaned back in her chair, thoughtfully staring at the old ceiling.

\*Something felt off...\*

\*She had clearly suppressed Leon's memories before, making him temporarily forget the Purification Bureau's work content, so why did he know to seek help from the Bureau after the badge warning?\*

\*Furthermore, she deliberately released a bit of her charm earlier, and by the looks of it, Leon was indeed affected. But why did he act so normal, as if he hadn't lost any memories at all this time?\*

Thinking of this, the red-haired woman raised an eyebrow slightly, recalling a small detail she had overlooked before.

Yesterday afternoon, when this kid came running over, wanting to join the Bureau with his "anomaly," he didn't immediately reveal his ability but hesitated slightly before saying it was Compulsory Intelligence Acquisition...

"Haha, interesting."

Her lips curled slightly as she reached for the quill pen from the inkwell, then opened the drawer to take out Leon's file. Finding the section titled [Intelligence Acquisition], she penned a small question mark next to it.

\*Cautious little guy... What secret are you hiding in your heart?\*

...

[Encountered an incomprehensible special existence, heterochromatic badge "Materialist Soul (Crimson)" activated, your cognitive boundaries expanded, and you gained some information about the existence.]

[Name: Love Without Memory (Forgetfulness, Whisper)]

[Appearance: Non-corporeal]

[Ability: When someone has feelings of fondness, love, or admiration for the host, this anomalous object's host acquires the ability to temporarily mask a small segment of recent memory from that person.]

[Cost: Among parental love, child's love, and partner's love, one will be forever unattainable. If someone develops such deep affection for the host, they will immediately lose all memories of that love.]

[File: This anomalous object is held by Olivia, the head of the sixth branch at the Purification Bureau. She has no parents, partner, or children, making it impossible to determine which deep love she lacks.

Additionally, the last recorded use of this anomalous object was during the Red Moon Fall event in 1794. Olivia, disguised as a singer, utilized mass public broadcasting to garner immense affection from the Moonfolk, thereby masking the memories of over seventy thousand people and successfully thwarting their summoning plans.]

[Evaluation: Incredibly powerful ability, but the cost is quite steep.]

[Contamination Value: 7]

[Through your own observation and deduction, you gathered substantial intelligence about "Love Without Memory," activating the heterochromatic badge "Materialist Soul (Crimson)."]

Understanding the effectiveness rules of "Love Without Memory" significantly increased your resistance to this anomalous object, allowing you to deflect its typical influence.]

...

\*So that's how it is...\*

Seeing the new anomalous object intelligence pop up when the red-haired woman grabbed his right hand, Leon, standing at the Director's office door, nodded in sudden realization.

\*No wonder I forgot about the Bureau's work contents. Turns out those memories were temporarily blocked.\*

\*According to the "rules" explained by the Black Goat, the more "truth" you know, the more likely anomalies will find you. The Director temporarily blocked those memories to prevent me from encountering danger before I am capable of self-preservation.\*

\*Yet my level of "attraction" was not that high, thus the influence was minimal. Plus, later, when the badge heated up a warning, I received a disguised "reminder" from the Uncontrollable Afflicted, breaking the barrier and regaining my memories.\*

\*But they could have just told me about this, right? Why...\*

"Leon?"

A soft call interrupted Leon's thoughts. He looked up to see a high-heeled beauty in a beige skirt at the other end of the corridor smiling warmly at him, causing his eyes to squint from the shine.

Unlike the charming yet perilous red-haired Director, the tall woman's allure was almost non-threatening. Her slender frame was not lacking in feminine fullness.

Her skin, white with a hint of jade, and her soft, delicate facial features exuded an amiable sweetness that made you want to get closer...

"Thanks for yesterday."

The gentle woman seemed quite familiar with Leon and, after greeting him, walked up lightly with a folder in her arms, standing before him with a smile and asking, "Has the Director finished speaking with you? I'd like to submit another solo mission report. Is it convenient for me to go in now?"

"..."

\*Yesterday's incident, solo mission, familiar with me... Could you be that bandage... ah no! Are you Senior Emma?!\*

The reliable senior with the bird-beak mask and body wrapped in bandages yesterday bore a striking difference in complexion to the gentle-eyed tall beauty before him, leaving Leon momentarily unresponsive. After a moment's pause, he hurriedly made way at the doorway, feeling slightly embarrassed, saying, "Of course! Of course, you can go in! I've finished talking with the Director, sorry for blocking you."

"It's no problem."

After a change in attire, Emma's sky-high beauty smiled bashfully and said, "Hey, in a few days, I have another mission. When I return, could you help me with something?"

Don't worry, I can guarantee that you won't be in any danger at all, just maybe a bit tired..."

"No problem, no problem!"

Upon hearing this, Leon immediately responded seriously, sincerely promising, "You risked such danger yesterday to save my sister, so no matter how tiring or hard, I'll definitely give it my all!"

"Haha, then I thank you in advance!"

With a slight smile and a nod, the woman wrapped in bandages... also known as Emma, pushed open the door and went into the Director's office.

Watching her elegant figure disappear inside, Leon, now processing the situation, couldn't help but feel astonished.

\*My goodness... If it weren't for the identical voice, I wouldn't have dared to recognize her! The difference is just too great! If only...\*

\*If only the bugs in my bed were as beautiful as her, that'd be perfect. Let them bite, I won't even groan... Kid, is that what you're thinking?\*

" ... "

Receiving an exasperated look from Leon, the Black Goat bared its teeth and snickered, "Hehe, I'd advise you to give up on those pervy thoughts. She's got kids who are a few years old already! You're out of luck~ Better give up early!"

(-\_-;)

\*What chance, what desire... I was just a bit taken aback by the drastic contrast between yesterday and now; a bit hesitant to recognize her, alright? Why do you always lean towards that interpretation?\*

\*And seriously, how have you lived this long and not been beaten to death with that foul mouth of yours? Are you just good at making delicious stew or something?\*

## Chapter 22 22: 0018 Don't ask, if you ask, it's an explosion (Part 1)\_1

There was really no way to deal with this chatterbox of a goat. After all, it wouldn't do to actually cook it. Leon, with a look of disdain, had no choice but to carry the incessantly babbling goat head, briskly walk through the somewhat dim corridors of the Purification Bureau, and begin identifying the nameplates on each office.

Harry Morgan (Level Two Crisis Handler)

Emma Alman (First Level Disaster Handler)

Leon Laine (Level Three Accident Handler)... Hmm, so this is it. Speaking of which, my office is right next to Senior Emma's~

Glancing at the familiar name on the nameplate next door, Leon's lips involuntarily curled upward slightly.

Of course, this didn't mean Leon had any thoughts about her. Primarily, having a gentle, beautiful, and quite reliable senior next door when he first joined was a very delightful thing... Hmm? Was something flashing in her office?

From a small window opened on the corridor side, Leon caught sight of an unusual flash inside Emma's office. Curiously, he took a step back toward it just to take a peek, then immediately returned with a blank expression and walked into his own office, face taut.

It was nothing, merely the fact that on Senior Emma's desk lay a giant sickle, over three meters long, covered in brown rust marks, and the light Leon saw was actually sunlight reflected off the blade.

Besides, her office wasn't decorated with tasteful greenery or mature and beautiful clothing dresses, or even cute children's items as he imagined. Instead, it was piled with all kinds of strange and even some terrifying stuff.

Blood-stained bandages, damaged nail hammers, open old coffins, leather-bound ancient books of doubtful material, skeletal specimens of unknown creatures, and even half an

execution platform wedged against the wall, the kind where a huge guillotine is pulled up several meters and then dropped by cutting the binding rope... snap!

Well, Senior Emma might be a gentle person, but the peculiar nature of the work at the Purification Bureau made it seem like her gentleness could only exist in her personality.

\*He recalled yesterday evening, when he hurried to the special care unit, he even saw fingerprints pressed into the metal corner cabinet with just her strength...\*

\*Reaffirming his judgement never to provoke her, Leon rummaged through his office and successfully found the large luggage trunk just where the Red-haired Director mentioned, almost identical to Senior Emma's.\*

Brass-colored metal crash corners, a wide and sturdy solid wood frame, covered with crocodile-like tough animal skin... Though the appearance was very simple and unadorned, lacking the carvings and metal clasps common in luggage trunks today, just by holding it, one could tell that these solid materials alone made it worth a fortune.

And the only decoration on the exterior of the luggage trunk was the golden emblem imprint on the side of the metal handle padding, which was the symbol of the Virgin Sanitation Bureau—a Dung Beetle Lady pushing a dung ball.

As for the interior of the trunk, it featured multiple nested custom compartments, with an empty space on the far left with two horn-like slots, clearly reserved for the Black Goat. Beside it was a dismantled long-range Nail Gun and six melon-sized silver-white air cylinders.

Seeing this familiar "big sniper," Leon's heart couldn't help but warm slightly, knowing this had to be given by Senior Emma.

\*She really was very considerate to him. Even after completing the investigation yesterday, she didn't go to clean the bloodstains off her body first but rather sat and talked with him, explaining many details about the "cleanup work" and repeatedly reminding him of things he had to be especially careful about.\*

\*And now, on the verge of going out on a mission, she even specifically left her weapon for him... he truly owed her a great favor, and when she needed help, he had to double his efforts. He absolutely had to live up to her care!\*

Filled with gratitude, Leon propped up the luggage trunk, placing the still cursing Black Goat into the goat-head slot, and then closed it heavily.

A miraculous thing happened. In the moment the big trunk was snapped shut, it was as though the noise was abruptly choked off. Whether it was the clamor in his ears or the curses in his head, all vanished without a trace, and the whole world fell silent.

\*Great~ With this thing, he could take the Black Goat out without worrying about it speaking nonsense and scaring Anna.\*

Satisfied, he nodded, reached out for the handle of the trunk, and gave it a firm lift!

Not a budge...

???

Staring at the massive trunk that couldn't even be bothered to sway a little, Leon couldn't help but widen his eyes, grabbing the large handle with both hands and pulling with all his might.

Against Leon's effort, even using all his strength, the massive trunk finally gave a bit of response. But it only barely lifted off the ground before it crashed back down with a loud thud, the huge sound making the dust in the entire office shudder slightly.

"..."

Solid wood frame, crocodile-like skin, metal fittings, with a goat head and a big sniper inside... If this thing doesn't weigh fifty to sixty kilograms, I'd eat this trunk!

Looking at his slightly scrawny arms due to long-term malnutrition, then looking at the trunk lying there like a mountain, seemingly mocking him, "delicate and weak" Leon sighed helplessly, rationally gave up the idea of taking it with him, took his credentials, and angrily pushed the door open, heading toward the cafeteria in the police department.

Eat! I'm going to eat with all my might! Turn myself into a strong man! Then intensify my training! No other option—I have to at least train to the extent that I can lift a trunk on my own!

Otherwise, when Senior Emma needs help, if I can't even lift a trunk and have to shamelessly ask her to carry it for me, can I even continue to live?

...

"Anna... hic... look what I brought you?"

After pushing the door open and entering the special care unit, seeing the delight on the face of the frail girl on the hospital bed looking over, Leon's face involuntarily lit up with a smile.

Lifting the mahogany lunch box in his hand, he gave it a slight shake and, without waiting for Anna to answer, Leon revealed the mystery with a smile,

"It's the silver cod soup you especially loved as a child! I specifically checked; it's cod fish just caught from the outer river this morning, with fresh milk added!"

Silver cod and milk... wouldn't that be expensive?

Hearing Leon's words, Anna hesitated slightly and said,

"Brother, you just started your job yesterday, yet you're helping me transfer rooms and bringing me such expensive fish soup. Isn't that a bit..."

"Don't worry about it. You don't have to worry about these things. What you need to do now is take care of yourself... come, let me see your leg."

Placing the three-tiered lunch box borrowed from the police department cafeteria on the bedside table, Leon lifted a corner of the blanket, and glanced at the bandaged right thigh of his sister, asking with some heartache,

"Does it hurt? It's all my fault. If I hadn't brought you to this hospital, you wouldn't have..."

"It doesn't hurt! Oh my!"

Not expecting Leon's hand to be so fast, the frail girl's cheeks flushed slightly, quickly grabbing the blanket to cover her thigh again, then clutching his arm and complaining,

"Brother! My skirt was cut open during the bandaging, don't just lift it like that! Also, can you stop taking everything on yourself?"

When you brought me here, you didn't know that the hospital's gas pipes would suddenly explode. It was just an accident, really not your fault!"

## Chapter 23 23: 0019 Don't ask, because it's an explosion (Part 2)\_1

"Hmm... indeed, it really was just an accident."

Watching Wen Yan comforting his sister, whose complexion had clearly improved, Leon felt a slight relief from the burden on his heart and smiled as he concurred.

...

Yes, the uncontrollable Afflicted incident that affected four to five hundred people yesterday turned into an accidental incident after the "main culprit" was shot dead by Leon and Senior Emma submitted the incident report.

According to the red-haired Director, hidden beneath the Purification Bureau Headquarters was an anomalous object of astonishingly high hierarchy.

Once Purification Bureau employees completed their clean-up task and submitted the incident report, the rules of that anomalous object would be triggered, forcibly rewriting most eyewitnesses' related memories. This incident, for instance, was confused with a gas explosion accident.

In the memory of Anna and others, the gas pipeline of the hospital cracked first, causing the first explosion. This explosion happened to shatter the storeroom containing anesthetics, spreading a large amount rapidly through the ventilation ducts, resulting in the collective unconsciousness of hundreds of patients and medical staff.

The subsequent second explosion occurred on the sixth floor, where the director's office was located, and the fourth floor, where the special care ward was. The director of Red Brick Road Hospital was killed immediately, and the special care ward where Anna was also was blown to a mess.

Fortunately, she smelled the gas leak in advance and decisively hung outside the window with two nurses, barely saving her life, though her leg was cut by falling glass from above, and another nurse fell seriously injured with multiple joint injuries.

Just when the third explosion was about to occur, luckily Leon and his colleagues, who came to visit her, arrived in time to shut off the gas valve, preventing a greater disaster, saving the lives of hundreds in the hospital.

...

Yes, that reportedly incredible anomalous object, when "covering up the incident," even considered the mental health of Purification Bureau employees, deliberately leaving Leon

and his colleague's "merits" intact so they wouldn't lose balance from saving people but not getting respect.

Even more bizarre, to facilitate the Purification Bureau's report for bonuses, it even supplemented the victims' memories with the detail of the Bureau investigating Red Brick Road Hospital's overcharging issue after receiving public reports, showing a touch of thoughtful humanity and a slight lack of shame.

After hearing about such preposterous operations, Leon, who understood the difference between "program" and "artificial intelligence," almost instinctively questioned this anomalous object, feeling that something so adaptable obviously had its own intelligence, thinking it should have issues, rather than merely functioning strictly according to rules.

However, Leon received the reply from the red-haired Director that this anomalous object inherently had a brain and was simply a brain itself.

This high-level anomalous object capable of distorting memories was originally an Evil God, hastily arrived without adequate preparation and was captured alive.

After its destruction by the Purification Bureau, it was discovered to have exceptional memory alteration abilities, hence its brain was directly extracted and placed into an anomalous object named the Illusion Can, crafted specifically for wrapping up large-scale events.

However, due to its dangerously formidable ability to alter group memories, if left in the hands of an individual, extremely serious consequences might arise, thus the activation conditions are rigorous, requiring more than half agreement from twelve directors before

use. Normally, it lies buried underground, running autonomously, only for use in extremely dangerous situations.

...

So, what exactly does extremely dangerous mean? Or, more bluntly, if someone wants to target the Purification Bureau, does that count as extremely dangerous?

When hearing the red-haired Director saying this, Leon almost instantly thought of the definition of "dangerous," unraveling a massive mystery—why would the nations in this world allow organizations like the Purification Bureau to exist? Even actively cooperate?

They probably are not willing but must cooperate!

After all, just the Brain of the Evil God capable of altering group memory alone is enough for all intrigued kingdoms to take a step back. And God knows how long the history of the Purification Bureau is, what other peculiar things it might be hiding?

Through this news, having indirectly learned how powerful the Purification Bureau really is, Leon was now quite sure he would be bound to this secretive organization for life.

Standing on the front lines guarding humanity, knowing the truth of the world, possessing abilities far beyond ordinary people... just these are already hard to refuse, not to mention

Purification Bureau's high treatment, excellent welfare, and even official kingdom establishment.

Especially the establishment, heard in the Capital City's dating market now, those with official establishment, regardless of gender, are particularly attractive...

\*Hiss... wait a minute, wasn't I prepared to stay single until death? Why did I suddenly think of dating? Was I triggered by something today? Or, as the Black Goat said, have I reached an age eager to move?\*

...

"Brother? Brother! What's wrong with you?"

Shouting several times without getting a response, Anna, sipping fish soup, couldn't help blinking in perplexity.

Watching her brother, whose expressions alternated between severe and somewhat shy, the frail girl thought a while, placing the milky-white fish soup back on the bedside, then lifted her right hand to cover her pink lips, slightly oily from the soup, and coughed lightly in a low, suppressed voice.

"Hmm?"

Hearing this repressed cough that had kept him constantly worried for more than two years, Leon, almost reflexively, instantly snapped out of his wandering thoughts.

He hurriedly glanced at the girl on the bed, relieved only after seeing Anna just gave a light cough with no further sign, then stretched to pick up the soup bowl on the bedside table, saying somewhat embarrassedly,

"I was just thinking about work and didn't attend to you for a moment... Why did you cough just now? Did it go down the wrong way? Should I feed you instead?"

"No... hmm..."

Watching Leon immediately look over hearing the cough, the frail girl's eyes slightly warmed, shaking her head intending to say she hadn't choked, but seeing the spoon already near her mouth, she reconsidered and didn't refuse.

Supporting herself on Leon's arm, shifting back to lean against the cushion he brought over, the frail girl leaned against the bedhead, drinking the spoonfed fish soup in small sips again.

But for some reason, having drunk most of the bowl by herself earlier, she now occasionally let out gentle coughs, then, when questioned with concern by Leon, smiled faintly, nodded, and waited contently for the next spoon of fish soup...

\*Mom, Dad, are you watching over me?\*

\*If possible, I wish you could make this bowl of soup last a bit longer, so that my brother can stay with me a little while more, though not too much longer, just a few more sips will do...\*

"Knock, knock."

The sound of knuckles tapping glass interrupted the frail girl's prayers.

The two in the ward looked towards the sound, then surprisingly discovered that a girl with red eyes had arrived outside the door at some unknown time.

The baby-faced girl appeared around the same age as them, likely sixteen or seventeen, but donned a mature professional suit and bore a delicate nameplate on her chest.

Judging by her looks, she might have already started working, possibly even for several years, but for some reason, there was an odd incongruity about her, as if unused to wearing such attire.

"I'm from the gas company. I was the one who signed off on the hospital's pipeline inspection. I... am sorry!"

Upon receiving Leon and Anna's permission, the girl, with slight eye rings and teary eyes, cautiously pushed the door open and entered. Without further ado, she bowed deeply at ninety degrees towards Leon, tearfully saying,

"This whole matter is my fault!

If I had been more rigorous during inspection, the pipeline here might not have exploded, nor would it have caused your wife to jump and get injured! Rest assured, I will ensure satisfactory compensation for you!"

## Chapter 24 24: 0020 Huh?!!!\_1

"..."

Pipes? Inspection? Explosion incident? Ah, this...

Seeing the gas company employee in front of him with eyes swollen like peaches and a face full of guilt, Leon didn't know what to say for a moment. He awkwardly scratched the back of his head.

If it really had been a gas pipeline explosion that injured Anna's leg and almost killed her, he felt he could rip the heart out of the person responsible.

But the problem was that it wasn't the company's fault. The explosion was a figment of that Evil God's imagination, and the hospital incident was orchestrated by the director. It wasn't due to faulty gas pipes.

As for the young girl in front of him, she hadn't done anything wrong at work. It was pure bad Luck that she got involved, dragged into the mess by the Anomalous Object from the Purification Bureau...

"Well... you seem genuinely sorry. How about... you just cover the medical expenses, and let's call it even?"

Leon felt a slight twinge of guilt. He initially thought of letting it go but felt that not pursuing anything when his sister nearly got hurt in a "gas explosion" seemed too fake, so he made a more moderate demand.

Either way, with Purification Bureau credentials, the family medical expenses would be reimbursed. Anna's lung condition didn't require private payment, and in the "gas explosion" incident, she only injured her leg, which would cost at most a couple of Silver Wheels. It wouldn't put much financial pressure on the counterpart...

To his surprise, the doll-faced girl quickly looked up, full of disbelief, and said:

"That's all there is to it?"

Turning to glance at his sister, seeing her cheeks slightly flushed and seemingly lost in thought, Leon turned back, apologetically nodding to the tearful girl in front of him.

"Yes, that's enough."

"..."

Just that amount of compensation? Are there really such people?

Hearing Leon's affirmative answer, the girl in the professional skirt was stunned, her eyes swollen into slits filled with disbelief.

...

Most people affected by the incident were knocked out by evaporating anesthetic and then inhaled excessive anesthetic gas. Some hadn't even woken up yet, but these people were relatively easy to compensate. You only needed to cover lost wages and soupage expenses.

The most severe case was the hospital director, but that person didn't seem like a good person. Many bad deeds were reported about him. If he didn't die, he might end up on the gallows anyway, so there was no need to compensate him.

Then there were a few people who jumped out of the fourth-floor window. The older nurse wasn't injured, just scared, while the young nurse, whose joints were severely injured, along with her fiancé, viciously gouged their own company for compensation.

But her fiancé spoke of buying something, hurriedly left with the money, and she felt like that man was going to take the money and run, so she specifically warned her about it, only to be yelled at for over an hour... \*Ugh...\*

\*Thinking of this, the doll-faced girl sniffed hard, teary-eyed, looking at the kind Leon in front of her, feeling that you really couldn't compare humans to each other.\*

This last girl, although not as injured as the nurse, also had her thigh cut by shattered glass. If she hadn't reacted quickly, she might have ended up like the director on the sixth floor.

Before coming over, she had hesitated for quite a while, ready for a scolding or even a beating, but they turned out to be so kind-hearted, only asking for medical expenses. They were such good people!

"Well... I'll compensate you more!"

Looking at Leon's somewhat shabby coat and then at this "modest" hospital room that cost less than two Silver Wheels a night, the doll-faced girl's heart couldn't bear it.

The couple in front of her were obviously not well-off, but when faced with an opportunity to cash in, they only asked for basic medical expenses. She couldn't let such good people suffer!

After clenching her small fists, the doll-faced girl raised her head, face full of emotion, trying to persuade Leon:

"You two are so young, I'm sure you haven't saved much. Now your wife is injured, and you have to take time off to care for her, which will definitely interfere with work.

If I compensate you more, you can use the money to hire a caregiver for your wife, ensuring she gets better care and avoiding... "

"Wait, did you get something wrong?"

Leon, whose mind was flooded with thoughts of the explosion incident, interrupted, somewhat speechless:

"We're not a couple, we're siblings!"

"Ah? Really? I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

Upon hearing Leon's correction, the doll-faced girl's face reddened as she apologized repeatedly with a bow:

"The compensation list I got only had names. I saw your surname in the hospital visit registration and thought you two were... Ah! I'm sorry! Deeply sorry!!!"

"It's alright..."

Anna ran her fingers through her lightly golden hair, glanced at Leon's deep black hair, and seemed in a good mood. She smiled slightly, gently comforting:

"My brother and I have different hair colors and don't look very much alike. It's really easy to mistake. As for the compensation, I wasn't hurt much. Just go with what my brother said..."

Oh! Right!"

At this point, Anna seemed to remember something. She propped herself up on the bed, speaking earnestly:

"Where's Aunt Hannah? Although she wasn't hurt, she was terrified yesterday and hasn't come to the hospital today. Have you compensated her?"

"Are you referring to the older nurse?"

The doll-faced girl thought for a moment, then said apologetically:

"We've already compensated her, and it was very generous!

Even though she wasn't physically harmed, she was really frightened by yesterday's explosion, and she might even... she might even have some mental distress..."

"What?"

Hearing that the older nurse who had taken care of her had issues, Anna immediately grew anxious. She struggled to sit up, clinging to Leon's arm, with a face full of worry as she asked:

"How is that possible? When we separated last night, she was still fine, wasn't she?"

"Well... I'm not really sure..."

Recalling the situation of another unfortunate victim, the doll-faced girl lowered her head with guilt, whispering tearfully:

"Her husband told us that she was just a bit uneasy last night, but her condition was stable. However, when she woke up this morning, she suddenly started speaking nonsense.

She insisted that there was no explosion, claimed the hospital floor would eat people, that many patients were devoured by it. But then, she talked about a mysterious woman covered in bandages who saved her by taking her out of the window... She must've truly been horrified by yesterday's events..."

Hearing this, the sympathetic Leon couldn't help but be taken aback.

\*Wait a second, there was no explosion, the hospital floor eats people, and a woman covered in bandages...\*

What?!!!

## Chapter 25 25: 0021 Bureau Chief's Weakness\_1

"Are you saying that the older nurse is very likely also a natural carrier of 'abnormal' traits?"

After hearing Leon's report, the red-haired woman raised an eyebrow thoughtfully and said,

"No wonder... I remember Emma's report also mentioned that a nurse could resist the director's control. Originally, I thought she was just kind-hearted and upright, able to maintain her own stance and not be swayed by power, thus avoiding the influence of authority-type Anomalous Objects. But now, it seems that she might carry an 'abnormality' herself, enabling her to avoid manipulation... Leon, you did very well!"

After giving Leon an appreciative glance, the Red-haired Director said with a smile,

"Even though you just finished a hard cleanup mission, you still insisted on actively applying for fieldwork, diligently revisiting the victims and, from the tiniest clues, keenly discovered new traces of an Anomalous Object. It must have been tough for you!"

Ah? That's not right!

Upon hearing the red-haired woman's conclusion, Leon was slightly taken aback and then quickly reminded her,

"Thank you, Director, but I actually took the afternoon off today to visit my sister. This information wasn't gathered from field visits, but rather—"

"Half a day's pay will be deducted for the leave. One active fieldwork session allows you to apply for a two Gold Wheel subsidy."

"..."

"Rather, on my way to the fieldwork, I actively communicated with a compensation agent from the gas company and successfully analyzed the situation using the methods taught by you and Senior Emma."

"Mm, that's why I value you highly. You indeed suit the Purification Bureau well."

After looking at the sensible Leon with satisfaction, the Red-haired Director said with a laugh,

"Go back and, according to what you said, submit a fieldwork result later, but there's no need to write about the parts involving Emma and me. Cheating funds is one thing, but merits are another. What's yours is yours, and no matter how other bureaus operate, we in the Virgo Bureau don't play like that. Besides, obtaining valuable information during your rest time deserves a special fieldwork subsidy."

"Well... Thank you, Director... I'll go back and submit the report!"

"Mm-hmm, go on then!"

...

Leon really didn't know how to evaluate his own Director, who could openly talk about cheating funds but still had inexplicably "upright" conduct. However, despite some questionable methods, a leader who both fought for his subordinates' benefits and didn't like taking credit for their achievements should be well-liked in the bureau, right? No wonder Senior Emma always spoke of her with such respect... Wait!

Suddenly recalling something, Leon, who was about to leave, froze again and hesitantly said,

"Um... Director, can I go on fieldwork again tomorrow?"

"..."

Upon hearing this, the red-haired woman was slightly stunned, then instinctively narrowed her sly, foxy eyes and said with a teasing smile,

"What? Short on cash? Trying to cheat funds again?"

"No, no, no, this time it's a real field task, or you can consider it a leave if you prefer."

Quickly shaking his head, Leon explained earnestly,

"Yesterday, I read Senior Emma's archival material on the Red Brick Road Hospital incident. It seemed too coincidental that those patients appeared, like they were purposely 'created' to enhance the Uncontrollable Afflicted's power. After all, the Red Brick Road Hospital typically only has about a hundred beds. If not for issues simultaneously occurring at both the hydraulic company and the Department of Road Administration, there wouldn't have been so many patients for that director to absorb all at once. So, I was thinking the bureau might want to investigate these two places to see if there's some mastermind behind the chaos or if the hydraulic company and the Department of Road Administration have inherent problems..."

"And also, while leveraging your position as Purification Bureau staff, unearth evidence of negligence from the hydraulic company and the Department of Road Administration to help the patients still lying in the hospital get some compensation... Am I right?"

The red-haired woman opened her charming foxy eyes, gazed softly at the startled Leon, and said with a sweet, narrow-eyed smile,

"Haha, it seems the old goat wasn't wrong after all. You're indeed the type with a strong sense of morality. When encountering something you disapprove of, you can't help but want to intervene. Hmm... Don't be nervous, although your proposal contains a tiny bit of 'self-interest,' I actually don't mind. After all, naive and kind youngsters are always quite endearing~"

After giving Leon an enigmatic and peculiar evaluation, the red-haired woman lazily stretched, showing off her graceful curves, then comfortably reclined on the soft backrest, smiling as she said,

"If you want to go, then go. It'll still be considered your field task this time, but make sure not to repeat it."

"Thank you, Director!"

"You're welcome, but..."

Leaning her hand on her cheek, she looked at Leon with interest, the red-haired woman whispered playfully,

"You're only going to thank me verbally? How about some practical action?"

"Uh..."

Feeling a bit bewildered by the sudden "bribe request," Leon looked at the piles of empty bottles behind the red-haired woman's desk and cautiously suggested,

"Well... how about after work today, I treat you to a few drinks?"

Hmm? Booze?

Upon hearing Leon's words, the red-haired woman's eyes brightened slightly, and she instinctively sat up straight.

Oh my, I actually meant by practical action, the bureau is recently short on manpower. I wanted you to voluntarily work overtime. After investigating the hydraulic company and the Department of Road Administration, go check on that middle-aged nurse named Hannah to see her real deal. But if you insist on treating me to drinks... hmm... Since there's a newcomer in the department, as a leader, perhaps I should mingle and build camaraderie with him?

Secretly reaching for her wallet around her waist and feeling that it was empty, the Red-haired Director adjusted her posture, cleared her throat forcefully, and said with a gentle smile and crossed hands,

"In principle, I shouldn't be accepting your invitation, but since you've just started here, let's treat it as a welcome party for you, and to celebrate you joining the Purification Bureau."

"Ah, okay!"

Leon nodded and then suggested,

"How about I invite Senior Emma and those who just came back too..."

"Ahem... There's no need for them to come."

After quickly calculating Leon's salary on the sly, the red-haired woman stopped him with a righteously solemn expression,

"Emma needs to rush home to take care of her child, and as for those two who just returned, I'll be arranging... I mean, they'll soon have new tasks and need to depart before sunset today, so I'll drink alone tonight!"

"..."

You'll drink alone... What? Aren't you even pretending a little? Couldn't you at least say you're holding a welcome party for me alone?

Watching the red-haired woman, who seemed to suddenly lose her mind, speak without care, with the original rational and meticulous aura completely vanished, Leon suddenly found himself speechless. He remembered the Black Goat's evaluation of their boss.

"Let me tell you, that woman might be calm and cunning, and her strength is terrifying, but once she gets tipsy, she's just a pure drunk. Her brain keeps churning alcohol like no one's business. Unless there's no booze involved, everything goes smoothly, she can arm wrestle with any opponent. But once the booze is at play, no matter how unreliable she is going to get, she becomes as unreliable as possible, her quality dives to the lowest it can go. Be careful; don't let her latch onto you!"

"..."

Oh no... Seems like I dug myself a big pit!