

DC: The Making of a God

#Chapter 21: A Gift for Emily - Read DC: The Making of a God Chapter 21: A Gift for Emily

Chapter 21: A Gift for Emily

"Charlie, leave the car keys and head back."

"Yes, Boss."

Once he was gone, only Luke and Emily remained.

At that moment, the sunset was painting the western sky. A good-looking young man and woman strolling under the orange-red setting sun should have been a romantic scene, but the girl kept staring at the ground, utterly silent.

"Why so quiet? Who upset you?"

Emily looked up and demanded, "Did you ever consider that if that gun had accidentally fired, Ibn could have died, and you would have become a murderer?"

Luke laughed heartily, taking the pistol and tossing it to her.

"See for yourself."

Emily caught the handle, and her expression instantly became strange.

"It's a fake?"

"Of course it's fake! I'm a law-abiding citizen. How could I use a real gun to force a confession? That's a crime, you know!"

Emily angrily threw the pistol on the ground.

"Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

"If I told you, how could you act? Performance requires complete immersion, right? Don't you think your performance was superb, especially the moment the gun went off..." Luke closed his eyes, savoring the memory.

"The startled expression mixed with a bit of disbelief, your eyes showing pity, anger, and a slight, almost imperceptible confusion."

"Why the confusion? Was it because of me? If I had truly killed someone, what would you, an FBI agent, have done? Arrest me? Or not?"

Emily gave him an expressionless look and turned to walk away.

"Don't go! I haven't finished talking!"

Luke followed behind her, asking with a smile, "What are you going to do next?"

"Do what next?"

"About Adousan, of course! Don't you want to know if he was the one who uploaded the video? The identity of the murdered woman? And what exactly is hidden behind this incident?"

Emily stopped and frowned. "Are you saying..."

Luke smiled, pointed at her, and then at himself.

"Help me, and let me help you."

The girl's frown deepened. "I don't know what you're talking about. I don't need your help."

Luke gently shook his head, seemingly displeased by her evasion. He walked up the stairs to the bridge and looked out at the Statue of Liberty against the sea breeze. The sunset cast a vital glow upon the statue, with the clouds serving as her garment. Distant skyscrapers and the flowing green water nearby, where a few yachts sailed by, their white wakes serving as the most beautiful embellishment.

"It's so beautiful!"

Emily genuinely admired the view.

Luke smiled and spoke in a voice only they could hear.

"As a metahuman, life in the FBI must not be easy, right?"

Emily's expression instantly froze, like the immobile Statue of Liberty.

Luke spoke casually, "No need to be so surprised! It's not a big deal."

Emily stiffly turned around.

"When did you know?"

"I knew the first time we met."

"How is that possible?"

Luke shrugged. "To me, the FBI's internal network is like my own backyard garden. Whenever I get bored, I just wander around in there. I always find new fun."

Emily was silent, then speechless. The young man before her acted completely nonchalant, as if the FBI truly were his backyard. But Emily knew very well that the FBI's internal security system was touted as having the strongest defenses in the world. No one had ever fully retreated after an invasion.

He's lying through his teeth, does he really think I know nothing?

"What's wrong? You don't believe me?"

It doesn't matter, you'll find out later. Speaking of which, there's something I've always been curious about. According to FBI personnel files, you belong to the **Department of Anomalous Affairs Investigation**, while Roger Consius is the head of the Cyber Security Department. How did you end up being his subordinate?"

Emily's eyebrows twitched. The information in that sentence was too revealing, forcing her to be suspicious.

"You... you really didn't hack the FBI, did you?"

The girl was terrified as she asked the question.

"How could I? I was just teasing you; you actually believed it. Am I, Luke Shaw, that kind of person?"

Emily blinked her beautiful large eyes, her head full of questions. The longer she interacted with Luke, the less she understood him. His thoughts were like the clouds in the sky—ever-changing, flying this way and that, sometimes bringing surprises, but mostly leaving people bewildered.

"Luke, as your friend, I have to warn you: hacking the FBI is a serious crime. Under no circumstances should you ever do that."

"Alright, I got it."

Luke dismissed her impatiently. *The FBI's broken system? I could walk in, take a dump, and they wouldn't find me.*

"Let's get back to the previous question. How did you end up working for Roger? That guy is a notorious jerk."

Emily spoke in a low voice, "The FBI has an unwritten rule: any case involving metahumans requires assistance from personnel in the Anomalous Affairs Investigation Department. The purpose is to avoid certain unnecessary troubles."

"So, Roger Consius isn't your direct superior."

Emily nodded, looking troubled.

"Don't ask any more questions. We have confidentiality agreements and can't disclose internal information."

"Fine. Let's change the topic." Luke turned to face her. "What are you planning for your future?"

Emily looked confused. "What do you mean?"

Luke sighed softly. "The Anomalous Affairs Investigation Department is the most unusual department in the FBI. Most members are humans with superpowers, dedicated to dealing with sudden, non-natural events. The missions have a high-risk factor, and the casualty rate is very high. Yet, strangely, the director and deputy director have been ordinary people since the department was founded decades ago. No metahuman has ever been promoted."

He deliberately paused here, then slowly continued as she remained silent.

"I don't know why they do this, but after thinking about it, it comes down to one word: **trust**. That word is deadly. It can trigger a chain reaction of things like discrimination, identity issues, isolation, and more. In severe cases, it can affect your very safety."

"Emily, are you absolutely sure you want to live your life in this environment?"

The girl's face darkened. "I will not be a traitor, and I will not betray the FBI. If you say one more word, don't blame me for getting rough."

"Who asked you to be a traitor? Where did your mind go? I'm just asking if you plan to stay in this line of work."

Emily looked directly into Luke's eyes, her expression serious and solemn.

"Although the FBI has many undesirable aspects, its core purpose is good. It protects many people. I won't leave."

"I knew you'd say that. So, I've decided to give you a gift."

"A gift?"

Luke affirmed it, and his expression immediately became serious. "Uncovering the mastermind behind the murder of the woman, exposing the dark side of Gotham City, and destroying Metropolis's drug trafficking network—all three achievements will belong solely to you, Emily. **You will become the first female superhero in history, the face of the FBI, and a legend in the justice system.** That is the gift I have prepared for you."

Emily's eyes widened in disbelief.

"What exactly are you going to do?"

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 22: Exclusive Gear

After Luke laid out his plan, Emily began to understand his objective, yet she felt a deep sense of impropriety. **Roger Consius** was her superior. To investigate the case without him would be an act of insubordination.

"The gift is right here. If you accept it, we'll go to Gotham City now. If you don't accept it..."

Luke didn't finish his sentence, but his expression said it all.

Emily was a good person. The teaching and example of her military father had instilled a strong sense of justice in her from a young age, which was why she had accepted the FBI's invitation.

After becoming an agent, she had worked diligently, striving to prove herself. Even when subjected to various injustices due to her **metahuman status**, she maintained a positive and determined attitude.

She was a rule-follower. Today, however, Luke was challenging her to break those rules: *disregard your superior, overstep your authority, take all the credit, manipulate the situation, become a hero, and get promoted to director...*

Emily gripped her hair; her mind was reeling.

Luke looked at his wristwatch. When the second hand passed three rotations, he spoke.

"Have you made up your mind?"

Emily took a small breath and, with a trace of hesitation, asked, "**Just the two of us? Will that be enough?**"

Luke smiled like a happy young boy.

"Come with me."

The Black Panther

They walked to an underground parking garage. When Luke flipped on the lights, a jet-black **Lamborghini**

sports car flashed into view. This car was unlike any Emily had ever seen. Its gleaming black exterior seemed wrapped in a dark, composite armor. It shimmered with a subtle, dark light under the lamps, looking like a majestic black panther ready to hunt in the jungle, a stark visual shock.

Even as a woman, Emily felt the car's unique charm. She instinctively reached out and touched the body. A hard sensation met her fingers, yet without the typical coldness of metal.

She looked up in surprise. "**Composite armor? A bulletproof car?**"

"At least you know a bit."

"Lamborghini doesn't produce bulletproof cars, do they?" the girl asked, highly uncertain.

"I customized it myself. It's not just bulletproof; it has other features, too."

Luke opened the rear compartment and pulled out a grey armored box. He pressed a button on top, and the box automatically separated into three layers. The bottom layer held two sets of black, form-fitting suits made of an unknown material. The middle contained a handgun, glasses, a mask, and other items. The top layer held several rows of small, unfamiliar gadgets.

Luke picked up the suit on the right and threw it to Emily.

"This one is yours. Change into it quickly."

Emily caught the suit and instinctively looked for a dressing room. When she saw Luke take off his shirt and trousers, standing there in only his boxers, her expression instantly turned awkward.

"Is there another room?"

"Just change here. There are no outsiders." Luke replied casually. Then, as if an idea suddenly struck him, he looked at Emily with a meaningful gaze. "You haven't gone commando, have you?"

"Get lost!"

Emily snapped angrily. She walked to the darker corner, quickly shed her clothes and dress, and slipped the tight suit onto her body as fast as she could.

No matter how fast she was, she couldn't escape Luke's hungry eyes. He gave her a thorough visual inspection, enjoying the feast for his eyes.

"Have you finished looking!"

Emily glared at him, annoyed. "You're still looking!"

Luke pinched his chin, remaining silent, his eyes narrowed as they wandered over various parts of her body. Judging by his focused expression, one might think he was admiring a work of art.

The old saying was right: **a tight suit is the standard uniform for a female hero**. Her figure's curves were truly stunning—a feast for the eyes from every angle. Paired with her purple hair, violet eyes, and beautiful face, she was, in a word, **stunning!**

"Look again and I'm hitting you."

"Alright, alright, I won't look. I won't look anymore."

Luke reluctantly pulled his gaze away and leaned down to organize the small gadgets in the armored box.

The Suit's Secrets

Emily, meanwhile, began to familiarize herself with her new "uniform." The suit was a uniform dark gray, without patterns or markings. Its weight was moderate and acceptable. The material was extremely elastic, clinging to her skin without feeling restrictive.

A gray metal belt was fastened around her waist, equipped with a row of slots, presumably for holding items.

On each shoulder, a black crystalline tube was embedded. Silver wires extended from below the tubes, running down to the finger joints.

In addition to these, there were buttons on the outside of each thumb. Emily tried pressing the button on her left hand.

Zzzt!

The air crackled. Electricity flowed from the end of the wires, wrapping her hand like a glove. The girl was startled, but after a few seconds, when she realized the current wouldn't harm her, her eyes immediately lit up.

"This is..."

"A **320-volt AC electric net**. When it hits a person, it disrupts the internal cells and causes nervous system collapse, leading to spasms, shock, convulsions, and various complications. When you use it to attack, don't hold it on the enemy for more than five seconds. **It will kill them.**"

"Oh!"

Emily answered blankly. She pressed the button—the current disappeared. She pressed it again—the current reappeared. She pressed it again—it disappeared. She kept going back and forth.

Luke watched, speechless. *She's twenty years old, why is she acting like a child?*

"What does the button on the right hand do?"

Having finished testing the left hand, Emily immediately remembered the right.

"It's a **micro-current neuron stimulator**. It stimulates the body to continuously secrete adrenaline, keeping your mind highly focused in dangerous environments."

"Wait!" Luke quickly warned. "This thing consumes a lot of physical energy. **Don't press it casually.**"

Emily nodded, fighting the urge to press the button on her fingertip. Her gaze swept over the armored box. She asked curiously,

"Are the glasses and mask for disguise?"

"The glasses have a **thermal life detection system**. As for the mask..." Luke picked up a white metal sphere. "Poison defense is one aspect, but this is the main thing."

"Inside is highly compressed **ethoxyethane**, commonly known as ether. Press the button, and the metal sphere's casing will automatically shatter in two seconds."

As an FBI agent, Emily was familiar with ether. She pointed to a black circular disc beside it.

"What is this for?"

"A **grenade**. It combines the features of a flashbang and a traditional grenade. The fuse time is three seconds."

"And this?"

Emily pointed to a silver bracelet next to the glasses.

"A **cable launcher**. The metal wire it deploys has extremely high tensile strength and can support a weight of two hundred pounds. It's mainly for jumping off buildings."

The girl wanted to ask more, but Luke raised his hand.

"Don't ask any more questions. **These weapons aren't for you.**"

"..."

Emily was stunned, feeling a huge wave of disappointment. She had already simulated in her mind what weapon to use in what scenario, and now he was saying all the cool gear wasn't for her? That's just cruel!

Luke reached into the bottom of the box and pulled out two gloves that didn't look very refined.

"These are yours."

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 23: Infiltration

Compared to the other items in the box, the two gloves looked like rejects. Their surfaces were pitted, and the design was unattractive. Emily didn't like them at all.

Luke explained, "Don't underestimate them. These were custom-made just for you. Try them out, and you'll see."

Emily reluctantly put on the gloves and, as instructed by Luke, pressed the button in the center of the palm.

Boom!

A ball of **flame** erupted from her right hand, and **frost** condensed around her left hand.

One of ice, one of fire!

Emily was instantly stunned.

Luke said seriously, "Your ability is **Elemental Manipulation**. You can control water, ice, and fire, altering the elements' density and size. You can also affect light propagation to a certain extent. Where there is fire and water, your destructive power is immense, but if the environment lacks these elements, your danger level drops significantly."

"These gloves were created to remedy that. Wearing them, you can maintain powerful combat effectiveness regardless of your surroundings."

Emily frowned. "How do you know so much about my abilities?"

Luke shrugged.

"God told me."

"Liar!"

Emily rolled her eyes, staring at her right hand. The flames condensed, forming a burning fireball. With a flick of her wrist, the fireball shot out and struck the wall on the right.

Boom!

A wave of heat radiated outwards, leaving a scorched mark in the middle of the wall.

The girl opened her left hand. Frost condensed above her palm, forming an ice spear that shimmered with a pale blue light. The blue light flashed, and the ice spear plunged into the wall, completely fixed.

One of ice and one of fire—they perfectly compensated for her elemental deficiencies. They truly were tailor-made for her.

"So, are you satisfied?"

Emily suppressed the joy in her heart, raising her chin with forced restraint.

"Just passable!"

"If you don't think they're suitable, give them back to me."

"No need, I'll take them."

The girl put her hands behind her back and walked gracefully to the armored box, casually asking Luke as he organized the gear,

"Did you design all this equipment yourself?"

"What do you think?"

Luke countered with a question, placing his chosen weapons into the belt slots.

"Oh, one more thing to remind you: your suit is made of special materials. It's fireproof, waterproof, electric-proof, and gas-proof, but **it is not bulletproof**. Remember, you absolutely cannot be hit head-on by live ammunition."

"Got it. When do we leave?"

"Now."

The black Lamborghini roared out of the underground garage like a beast. With bursts of thunderous engine sound, it disappeared into the night.

Inside the Bay Area

Gotham City, Bay Area.

Under the night sky, Gotham was as silent as ever. Even the distant sound of the tide couldn't break the quiet.

The black Lamborghini drove through the darkness, silently approaching Ocean Park like a venomous snake.

According to Ibn's confession, Adousan was in a building west of Ocean Park.

As they neared the location, Luke turned off the headlights, put on his mask and glasses, and got out of the car with Emily.

It was now past 1:00 a.m. The streets were deserted; there wasn't a soul around.

They crept along the roadside grass toward **78 West Ocean Park**, a somewhat dilapidated four-story building, just as Ibn had described.

Emily kept her voice low.

"This should be the place. What's the plan now?"

Luke took an instrument out of his backpack and placed it on the ground.

"What is this?"

"A **signal jammer**, with a 300-meter range, operating for one hour."

The girl sighed in appreciation. "You came well prepared."

Luke just smiled and said nothing.

Some say: *Life is precious, love is dearer, but for freedom, both can be cast aside.*

In Luke's opinion, this was absolute nonsense. Only those who had truly died know how precious life is. No one who has experienced the years of living like a puppet, with sealed senses and imprisoned in a dark abyss, ever wants to experience it a second time.

Luke cherished his current life. Therefore, no matter the task, he always ensured everything was foolproof.

A dark gun barrel extended from the grass.

Pfft!

The guard at the door tilted his head back and collapsed to the ground.

Emily dragged the guard into the bushes. A frost flower emerged from her fingertip and was pressed onto the guard's forehead.

The deep-seated cold brought the guard back to consciousness. When he felt the sharp blade pressed against his neck, his face instantly became ugly.

"I'm with the Razor Gang! How dare you mess with me! Are you looking for death?"

"Let me go now, or else..."

Pchhh!

The dagger's tip pierced the flesh. Luke twisted the blade and said with a faint smile,

"Or else what?"

The guard clenched his jaw, struggling to sit up, but the weakness in his limbs left him helpless. He lay on the ground in despair, his voice hoarse.

"Wha... what do you want?"

"I ask, you answer. If you dare to get a single word wrong, the next stab will go into your neck."

"Is Adousan in this building?"

The guard frantically shook his head. "N-no, he's not."

"Lies!"

A cold glint flashed. Blood spilled out, flowing down his neck. The guard's eyes widened, his pupils contracting to pinpoints. Endless fear flashed in his eyes.

He had been slashed!

Luke casually played with the dagger and said flatly,

"I've cut the arteries in your neck. Without treatment, you'll be in shock from blood loss in, at most, half an hour."

"That's a very painful way to die."

"I'll ask again: where is Adousan?"

The guard stammered, "He... he's in the building."

"Which floor, which room?"

"Third floor, the **easternmost bedroom**."

Luke and Emily exchanged a look—Ibn hadn't lied. Emily followed up,

"Are you involved in drug trafficking?"

The guard turned his head away, his eyes evasive.

Luke raised the dagger. "Answer her question!"

"N-no, they are the ones who do it. I'm just a lookout. I've never trafficked drugs. Please, save me. I don't want to die."

"Don't worry, you won't die."

Luke knocked the guard unconscious, quickly bandaged his wound, and then, with Emily, climbed over the perimeter wall using some scattered debris. They checked their surroundings. Once they confirmed the coast was clear, they quickly approached the main door.

The door was unlocked. Pushing it open led directly to the living room. There were no guards and no alarm systems.

Luke activated the life detector on his goggles. Five heat signatures appeared: four were very close, in the same room, and the fifth was further away.

The two split up. Luke pushed open one door and slid the pre-prepared white metal sphere through the gap.

Two seconds later, the metal sphere fractured, and a large plume of gas spread through the room. The sleeping occupants fell into a deeper slumber.

On the other side, Emily had dealt with another person.

The two met up and headed up the central staircase to the second floor. Just then, a low growl echoed through the hallway. An Argentine Dogo dog rushed up, only to be kicked back by the quick-moving Luke.

Emily raised her handgun.

Pfft! Pfft!

Blood bloomed, and the dog collapsed to the ground, motionless.

This incident shattered the silence of the staircase. A drug dealer opened a door. Just as he saw the dead Dogo dog and was about to shout, Emily shot him in the head.

Luke looked at her, mildly surprised.

Emily was expressionless. "The first day I joined the Anomalous Affairs Investigation Department, my captain told me: **When executing dangerous missions, your first priority is to protect yourself. The best way to protect yourself is to eliminate the enemy.**"

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 24: May Your Mama Bless You

That single shot radically changed Luke's view of Emily.

Since she had started killing, there was no need to hide their actions anymore.

A black circular disc rolled onto the floor.

Boom!

A high-pitched sound wave spread out, causing two drug dealers to clutch their ears and howl in pain.

Emily raised her hand and unleashed a basketball-sized **fireball** down the corridor. Just before reaching the dealers, it exploded. Deep red flames engulfed their bodies, and the walls cracked from the heat.

At the same time, loud shouts mixed with incomprehensible Arabic dialects came from upstairs.

Luke and Emily exchanged a glance. They abandoned the second floor and rushed directly to the third.

From the easternmost bedroom on the third floor, a pajama-clad Adousan kicked the door open.

"Damn Batman, die!"

Dakka-dakka-dakka-dakka!!

The distinct sound of a Tommy gun—a "Chicago typewriter"—reverberated through the hallway. Fifty rounds of ammunition poured out like a rainstorm. One unfortunate man rushing out of the room, failing to keep up with his boss's rhythm, was instantly cut into a sieve.

Luke and Emily ducked behind the staircase. Emily commented strangely,

"He thinks we're **Batman!**"

Luke, while counting the gunshots, replied,

"Then let's be Batman for once."

After the count hit thirty shots, Luke pulled a metal sphere from behind his back and hurled it forward.

The sphere landed, its surface flickering with a pale blue electrical discharge, then exploded with a piercing sound. An overwhelming torrent of **plasma** surged out, filling the entire view like a blue tsunami.

The current ripped through the air, forming large negative charges. These charges then served as new diffusion points, bypassing the doorway and penetrating the walls, destroying everything in their path.

Three drug dealers hiding behind the walls were utterly unlucky. The current washed over their bodies again and again. Every cell in their bodies trembled uncontrollably.

Emily's eyes widened in disbelief.

"A plasma grenade?"

"I prefer to call it an **Electro-Pulse Grenade**."

Even after the explosion, the current hadn't dissipated. Blue electron streams hovered in the air, creating a magical spectacle.

Adousan was terrified by the sight. He quickly slammed the door shut. While reloading, he pulled out his phone and dialed three numbers, all of which showed a connection failure.

Damn it!

He cursed furiously. After replacing the magazine, he frantically sprayed bullets at the door without a second thought.

The *dakka-dakka-dakka-dakka* sound echoed through the corridor, wilder than before. Bullets ricocheted everywhere, pinning the duo down.

The longer they waited, the worse it would be for the attackers. Emily knew this clearly and whispered,

"We could circle around from the roof?"

The moment she spoke, the sound of shattering glass came from ahead. Adousan had smashed the window, leapt from the third floor, rolled twice upon landing, and was limping toward the garage.

"Oh no, he's escaping!"

Emily was alarmed, but Luke remained calm, as if he had anticipated this. He unhurriedly took out two Electro-Pulse Grenades, tossing one upstairs and one downstairs. Then, he grabbed Emily and jumped out the window.

Boom!

The explosive sound came from behind them, the blue electrical light serving as the perfect backdrop.

Luke hooked his left arm around the girl's slender waist, pulled out his dagger, and stabbed it into the wall. Using the friction between the blade and the concrete, they descended slowly.

Just as they landed, the garage door burst open, and a grey Toyota SUV roared out.

Adousan flipped them the middle finger and sped away with a wild laugh.

Luke chuckled, "I like this guy!"

Hearing that, the tense Emily was instantly speechless.

"It's no time for jokes! He's getting away!"

"Relax, he won't get far."

One-Shot Kill

The grey SUV sped down the Bay Avenue. Inside, Adousan steered with his left hand while pulling out his phone with his right to call his boss.

"I'm being hit."

"It's not that damn Batman, it's two guys I haven't seen before. They have very advanced weapons."

As he was speaking, a black Lamborghini appeared in his rearview mirror. Through the car window, he could vaguely make out two figures in tight suits.

"Those bastards! They're catching up! I'm on Bay Avenue. Send people now!"

Adousan hung up and slammed the gas pedal.

The two cars raced one after the other, moving at over **180 miles per hour** on the sparsely populated road.

A bartender who had just finished her night shift looked up. Two streaks of black light appeared in her vision, followed by the roar of the engines. Just a second later, the black lights vanished, but the roar lingered in her ears.

Inside the car, Emily gripped the handle tightly. As the speedometer neared 230, her heart was in her throat.

"Don't go any faster! It's too fast! I can't take it!"

Luke turned his head. Seeing the pale color in the girl's cheeks from the high speed, he nodded.

"As you wish. I won't play with him anymore."

He then pressed the button on his right. A soft, synthesized voice came through the speakers.

Activating auto-pilot mode...

Auto-pilot mode activated!

Loading forward weapon...

The hood split down the middle, revealing a weapon that looked like a rocket launcher.

Weapon loading complete!

Luke pulled off the steering wheel, put on his sunglasses, and took a massive game controller from the glove box, fitting it over the steering column.

Emily: "..."

Is he playing a first-person shooter?

Luke used the game controller to aim the weapon. When a voice from the speaker announced, *Target locked*, Luke couldn't help but curve his lips, murmuring a phrase only he could hear,

"May your mama bless you."

He pressed the 'A' button!

A **blue electrical current**, thick as an arm, shot from the muzzle. It struck the rear of the SUV and passed through the vehicle with an unstoppable force, vanishing into the night sky.

The beam of light was like a sword thrown by a god, piercing the entire world.

Emily was dumbfounded. A tramp rummaging through a trash can was dumbfounded. Two yawning cats were dumbfounded.

What in the world was that?

With just one hit, the SUV's drive system was destroyed. The out-of-control vehicle careened off the road, slammed into a guardrail, flipped over a dozen times, and crushed countless rocks before finally coming to a rest in the grass.

Emily stammered,

"He's not dead, is he?"

Luke pulled out the controller, put it back in the glove box, and said casually,

"Who knows?"

"Luke!"

Emily turned, glaring angrily at the young man beside her.

"We came here to **capture** him, not to kill him! You... you... how could you do that?"

Luke spread his hands, looking helpless. "You're the one who said the speed was too much. I had no choice but to go for a **one-shot kill**."

Emily: "..."

You bad person! I don't want to talk to you!

The girl flung open her door and quickly ran toward the SUV. To prevent any fire, she deployed a thick layer of ice in front of her.

The SUV was a gruesome wreck. The back door was missing, two tires were gone, the body was crushed inward, the frame juttied outward, and black smoke was rising from the engine and fuel tank area.

Emily quickly raised her left hand and sprayed a freezing mist, cooling the car until the frame was coated in a layer of ice before stopping.

Luke pulled the Lamborghini alongside and, after inspecting the wreckage, let out a sigh.

"Looks like he won't make it."

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 25: It's So Damn Corrupt

The saying, "The good die young, but the wicked live a thousand years," proved to have some scientific basis.

Just when the two assumed Adousan was dead, a low cough echoed from inside the car.

Emily quickly ripped open the car door, dragging him out to check on him.

"How is he?"

"He's still breathing."

Luke tutted, shaking his head. "To survive a dozen rolls like that—he's got nine lives."

"Don't you start!"

Recalling that cannon shot, the girl's anger flared up. "We're here to **capture** him, not kill him! Why did you need to use a 'super weapon'? If you'd killed him, how would we investigate anything next?"

"...I need to clarify. That wasn't a super weapon. It was an overload device that launches a **negative ion energy stream**. Also, did you go to college?"

Emily reacted like a rooster whose vital spot had been pricked.

"What are you implying!"

"My apologies, I didn't mean anything by it. Actually, I didn't go to college either..." He paused, then added, "...I didn't even graduate middle school."

Luke shrugged. "In principle, negative ions are beneficial to carbon-based life but have a substantial effect on metal. The purpose of that shot was to destroy the **car's drive system**, not to harm Adousan himself. If he died because of this, the responsibility should fall on Toyota's safety performance, not me. Understand?"

"Sophistry!"

Emily snorted, signaling that she reluctantly accepted his explanation.

Working together, they dragged the unconscious Adousan into the Lamborghini. Luke pulled a shot of adrenaline from the trunk and injected it into him.

With that, it would be difficult for him to die.

By now, it was 2:30 a.m. Even the nightingales had stopped calling.

Just as Luke was driving away, three police cars suddenly appeared at the intersection in the distance.

The Ambush

Newly promoted Sergeant **Jim Gordon** called Commissioner Gillian B. Loeb.

"Mr. Loeb, the person has been found. I need one final confirmation. Are you absolutely certain the person in the vehicle is an internationally wanted criminal?"

A hoarse voice, laced with undisguised anger, came from the phone.

"Do not question my orders. Remember, once you catch them, send them directly to the **West Side Precinct**."

As soon as he finished speaking, the line went dead.

Jim Gordon put away his phone, a hint of gloom crossing his eyes. The officer next to him glanced at his captain and quietly muttered,

"The West Side Precinct again? How many times is this now?"

Jim didn't answer, staring out the window.

"We're practically the mob's personal toilet paper. They use us to wipe their asses whenever they feel like it and then flush us down the sewer, without even paying us a reward."

Officer **Ramirez**, a female officer, sneered, "That's because you haven't seen the Commissioner's grand villa. Go once, and you'll know where the money goes."

"Enough!"

Jim cut his subordinates off. He pulled a cigarette from his pocket and lit it, taking a deep drag.

"Snap out of it. If it truly is a wanted criminal, prepare for a fight. If not..." He paused, adding, "Try not to hurt anyone."

The three police cars spread out, driving side-by-side to block the road. More police vehicles sped up from behind, creating a complete blockade on the already narrow street.

At the same time, an armored vehicle with a **Black Hawk** insignia stopped on the nearby lawn. The door opened, and over a dozen heavily armed SWAT officers rushed out, spreading out in a fan shape, surrounding them from all directions.

Emily's face was pale.

"They seem to be targeting us?"

Luke tapped his fingers on the steering wheel, his face betraying no emotion.

"How did the police know our location?"

"That's what I'd like to know. One second we catch Adousan in a drug den, and the next, the police show up. The drug dealers couldn't have called the police, right?"

"How is that possible? Why would drug dealers call the police for help?"

The girl's tone matched her dramatic expression. Luke smiled but said nothing. He had always believed he had a clear understanding of Gotham's dark side, but at this moment, he suddenly realized how naive his former perception was.

Gotham City is so damn corrupt.

Jim Gordon picked up the megaphone.

"People inside the vehicle, listen up. We are the Gotham City Police Department. We require your cooperation in an ongoing investigation. Please exit the vehicle with your hands on your heads. Do not resist."

While he spoke, the vehicles behind slowly moved forward. Several fully armored SWAT officers hid in the grass, their **AR-15 automatic rifles** aimed at the black Lamborghini. If the occupants made any move, they would pull the trigger without hesitation.

The situation instantly became tense.

The Corrupt Request

Emily, being an FBI agent, quickly noticed the police movements. As the circle tightened, her anxiety rose. She could shoot drug dealers without hesitation because they deserved it, but the police were different.

She truly did not want a conflict with them unless absolutely necessary.

"What should we do?"

"First, talk. Then, consider action."

Luke opened a vocal channel and stated clearly, word for word,

"**Adousan**, an Arab-American, the boss of the **East Side Razor Gang**, and a super-criminal who controls the underground drug trade in Gotham City and Metropolis. I just captured him, and now the police show up. I'm very curious: who tipped you off? The drug dealers?"

Adousan, Razor Gang!

Hearing those names, the faces of the surrounding police officers instantly changed.

Jim Gordon frowned and said sternly,

"Sir, please step out of the car and submit to a search. We will guarantee your safety."

"Adousan's car is on the grass not far from here. It's a Toyota SUV, license plate **056XKRW**. You can check it out."

Ramirez stepped forward.

"I just received a text message. It really is Adousan's car. The body is severely damaged, and no one was found inside. He must have been taken away."

Another officer chimed in, "Could it be **Batman**?"

Ramirez scoffed, "What else? Given Commissioner Loeb's personality, why would he mobilize detectives and SWAT at 2:30 a.m. unless the situation was urgent... **to rescue a drug lord!**"

The statement was harsh. The usually steady Jim Gordon frowned, glaring at her sternly.

"Do not jump to conclusions before the facts are established."

"But what if it's true, Captain?"

Ramirez did not back down. "If Adousan really is in that car, and we detain these people and send them to the West Side Precinct, you all know what the result will be."

Everyone fell silent. No one sent to the West Side Precinct had ever come out.

"Captain!"

Ramirez said seriously, "We can't do this. It's too shameful."

The officers exchanged glances, remaining silent. The situation—being police officers forced to risk their lives to rescue a notorious drug lord—felt like something out of a cynical novel.

Jim Gordon waved his hand irritably.

"Hank, take her aside. I don't want to hear her speak."

Ramirez tried to speak again but was dragged away by Hank and another officer.

Just then, his phone rang. It was the Commissioner.

"Jim, tell me the car is surrounded. Why haven't you issued the command to attack?"

"The situation has changed slightly. I..."

"I don't care about the changes! I'm only telling you one thing: **the car and the people inside must be detained. That is an order.**"

Jim opened his mouth, then whispered, "I understand."

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 26: Cucumbers in the Trunk?

If one were to ask what the most miserable professions are in the DC universe, being an honest cop in Gotham City would be one of the answers.

It is extremely difficult to be a good cop in Gotham. You only need to look at how well Arkham Asylum is doing to understand how depraved the city is.

Gangs, drugs, smuggling, and black market deals permeate every neighborhood. In the secluded sewers, the bodies of strangers are often found. Filth and corruption are rooted in the very fabric of the city and have become one with it. No one seems capable of separating them.

Then, **Batman** emerged. He fought crime with powerful force, becoming a beacon of hope for the city.

Even though he wore a black cowl, maintained a mysterious presence, and his methods were sometimes brutal, he couldn't stop the public's enthusiasm. Many Gotham residents viewed Batman as a savior, believing only he could pull Gotham out of the swamp of crime.

The police, however, were the exception. Few police officers liked Batman. Work was one thing, but reputation was more important.

The more news there was about Batman, the worse the police's reputation became. They were slowly labeled as inept failures by the public. Especially online, if you opened the ShowMe website and clicked on any Batman thread, criticisms about the Gotham police were always in the top few lines: *incompetent scum*, *useless*, *good-for-nothings*, and so on.

Hearing bad things constantly naturally put them in a bad mood, yet their sense of justice forced them to give a thumbs-up to Batman, because he did the things they wanted to do but dared not, such as capturing **Adousan**.

"Captain, do we really have to engage?"

Jim Gordon gripped his phone tightly, clearly struggling.

Ramirez broke free from her partner's grasp and stepped forward.

"We can meet with him?"

Jim looked surprised. "What do you mean?"

Ramirez spoke with a meaningful edge. "The Commissioner's order was for us to detain the car and the wanted criminal inside. He provided the location but not the individual's personal information. That means the driver of the Lamborghini may or may not be the wanted criminal. The key lies in how we handle this."

Jim instantly grasped the point, and the other officers realized it too. They had been so preoccupied with thinking about Batman that they forgot such an important detail.

The Commissioner only said to catch an international wanted criminal, but he didn't give a name!

There are so many international wanted criminals; how are they supposed to know which one? What if they arrest the wrong person? Who would take responsibility?

This realization instantly energized Jim. He racked his brain for the right words to talk their way out of the situation.

Hank frowned. "But Adousan is in that car! The Commissioner will never forgive us if he finds out we let Adousan go."

Ramirez coughed.

"Did you tell him Adousan is in the car?"

Hank froze, then immediately gave her a thumbs-up, full of admiration.

Ramirez continued, "Police work has to follow rules. We can't just take his word for it. He says Adousan is in the car, and we believe him? We need to meet and talk."

"Captain, we should send someone up to negotiate and check out the situation inside the car. If it really is Adousan..."

There was no need to finish the sentence. Although they weren't big fans of Batman, if they had to choose between letting Batman go and rescuing a drug lord, they would choose the former every time.

Jim took a few drags on his cigarette, stomped the butt out, and declared,
"I'll go."

"No, you can't go!"

Ramirez also shook her head.

"You are the commander. Let me go."

Jim shook his head. "You can't handle the liability. It has to be me."

"I still think it's inappropriate. What if it's not Batman in the car..."

Jim took off his holster and placed his phone on the car hood.

"Whether it's Batman or not, I have to go. Being a cop always involves risk." He then spoke into the speakerphone loudly. "I am **Jim Gordon**

, Sergeant of the Gotham City Police Department. I am not carrying any weapons or communication devices. Sir, I want to talk to you. Please do not shoot."

Jim Gordon raised his hands high and slowly walked toward the Lamborghini.

A Highly Cautionary Talk

Watching the approaching figure, Emily instinctively gripped her handgun. She didn't trust the police, especially those in Gotham City.

Luke waved his hand, signaling her to relax. He watched the figure approaching, a strange expression crossing his face.

Jim Gordon!

Batman's old partner, the future Police Commissioner. He recalled Gordon had a highly intelligent daughter, though he wondered if she was in high school yet.

Since it was Jim Gordon, there was room for negotiation.

Luke rolled down the car window just enough to expose a gap for his half-hand and tossed out the handcuffs he had prepared for Adousan.

"Put these on. Don't try anything, or you'll regret it."

Jim Gordon didn't hesitate. He picked up the handcuffs and secured them on his wrists. The moment the clasp locked, countless electric currents surged from the surface. The current climbed up his arm, completely paralyzing it.

Jim was horrified and instinctively struggled.

Luke spoke up, "The current is just temporarily paralyzing your hands. It won't kill you. You can approach now."

Jim Gordon took a sharp breath, realizing how cautious the person was to think of such a method. After the electric shock, his hands were painfully numb. He couldn't lift them, much less fight back.

With complex emotions, Jim walked up to the car window. He tried to peer inside to check the situation but finally lowered his head in frustration. The person was too careful, using a **one-way mirror**.

"Sir, could you please roll down the window?"

"No need. For your own safety, it's better if we don't meet face-to-face."

Jim frowned slightly. "Sir, I don't understand your implication."

Emily was also completely confused. It sounded like the two of them had met before.

Luke offered no further explanation, getting straight to the point.

"Sergeant Gordon, don't beat around the bush. What is the purpose of your visit? If it's for Adousan, I can open the rear trunk so you can take a look. If it's for me, I advise you not to hold on to unrealistic ideas."

Jim's heart thumped. "May... may I look?"

"Of course."

Luke pressed a button, and the trunk automatically popped open. Jim didn't hesitate, walking over and carefully examining the person inside.

That pale, bloodless face, despite being covered in oil and dirt, Jim recognized immediately.

Adousan Iba Correndo Shard Rahman!

Arab-American, the current boss of the Razor Gang, and one of Gotham City's major drug lords.

I never thought I'd see the day!

An unspeakable sense of satisfaction surged through him, which he quickly suppressed. Just as he was about to take a closer look, the trunk door closed.

"Sergeant Gordon, anything else you'd like to say?"

Jim was silent, seemingly weighing the pros and cons. After about ten seconds, he suddenly raised his voice and shouted loudly,

"Sir, I must seriously warn you not to stuff so many cucumbers into the trunk! They will spoil! Also, it's 2:30 in the morning. Go home early if you have nothing to do; don't loiter on the roadside!"

With that, he turned and walked away.

Emily was baffled. "What happened? Cucumbers? Are there cucumbers in the trunk?"

Luke gripped the steering wheel, watching the police cars start to move and separate on the road. He muttered to himself,

"An interesting guy!"

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 27: The White Reaper

Under **Jim Gordon's** arrangement, the Lamborghini passed through the blockade without hindrance and vanished down the distant street.

This scene was witnessed by **Victor Zsasz** not far away. As one of Falcone's three major hitmen, Victor hated Batman to the core; it was Batman who had left an indelible mark on his chest.

"Boss, you guessed right. Those cops are useless. They let Batman go without firing a single shot."

Victor punched the wall, staring intently at Jim Gordon in the gray jacket. After a moment, he pulled back his gaze and said, word for word,

"The police are useless, but we're not. Remember... tonight is Batman's death day. If he doesn't die, **we die!**"

Everyone present shivered, an inexplicable chill rising among them.

Victor looked around and continued,

"Mr. Falcone just called. The reward for taking down Batman is **ten million U.S. dollars.**"

The atmosphere immediately became thick. These carefully selected thugs all looked hideous, their eyes blazing like addicts high on drugs—which they actually were.

To eliminate the terrifying shadow left by Batman, Victor had distributed freshly produced **nerve stimulants** to his men before they came.

Once they started fighting, the drugs would turn them into fearless lunatics.

The Ambush

The Lamborghini drove quietly down the deserted street. Inside, **Emily** stared straight ahead, sometimes frowning, sometimes relaxing, her mind focused entirely on the scene that had just unfolded.

As an FBI agent, she knew Gotham City's situation well. It was the worst and most chaotic place for public safety in the entire U.S. Corruption was rampant, from councilors and the mayor down to beat cops and clerks—it was rotten to the core.

Finding an honest cop here was like chasing a pipe dream.

Jim Gordon's appearance, however, gave her a new perspective.

Luke chuckled. "What are you thinking about? You haven't said a word."

"That police officer just now!"

Emily turned, speaking intently. "Why did he let us go?"

"Because he is **Jim Gordon!**"

"You know him?"

"No."

"Then how did you know he would let us go?"

"Because he is **Jim Gordon!**"

The identical answer, even the delivery, hadn't changed. Emily grumbled in annoyance, "Stop patronizing me."

Luke shrugged. He couldn't exactly say: *That's how the comic book is written. Jim Gordon is one of Gotham City's few remaining good cops, Batman's old partner, and has a super-intelligent, beautiful daughter.*

Just as he was thinking, a rapid *drip-drip* sounded in his ear.

"Warning! Warning! Dangerous attack detected. Activating automatic defense system."

A micro-turret appeared on the car roof. A blue electric light shot from the muzzle, striking a rocket-propelled grenade six meters from the car.

Boom!

A violent explosion erupted from behind, shaking the entire car.

Luke's expression shifted. He gripped the steering wheel, trying hard to maintain control.

At the same time, a large truck appeared at the intersection ahead. A dozen men with submachine guns leaped out of the back, spraying the Lamborghini with wild gunfire. They charged forward, shouting war cries as they fired.

Bullets rained down on the car, sparking fiercely but bouncing off. The **armored Lamborghini** stood firm under the hail of bullets, like an armored tank.

"Who are they? Why are they attacking us?" Emily shouted.

"Who else but a gang."

The ambush happened too quickly. Luke didn't have time to analyze the situation. Seeing the thugs getting closer, he quickly spun the car around and drove back the way they came.

After only a few dozen meters, a row of headlights suddenly appeared ahead. Several black Mercedes-Benz cars were parked side-by-side in the middle of the road. Next to each car were thugs holding rocket launchers. At the very front was **Victor Zsasz**, who was now wearing a neat suit with a white flower pinned to his chest, as if in tribute to someone.

With a roar of savage delight, the ground suddenly shook.

The thugs with rocket launchers leaned back. The rockets blasted out of their tubes, whistling toward the Lamborghini.

Time seemed to freeze. Citizens awakened by the gunfire in the surrounding buildings covered their mouths, their eyes wide with horror.

The next second, time resumed.

A blue electric light shot out, and the foremost rocket instantly exploded. Two more electric lights flew out, hitting two more rockets. The last rocket surged through the flames, narrowly missing the car body in Emily's desperate gaze before crashing into the building beside them.

Boom!

The explosion came from the left, almost flipping the Lamborghini.

"Damn it! My car!"

Luke cursed. Before he finished speaking, familiar red dots appeared on the screen.

Two electric lights flew out, followed by a deafening roar that pierced the eardrums.

Firelight consumed the entire view. The Lamborghini, which hadn't even landed properly, was lifted into the air again. The car shook violently, as if it would disintegrate in the explosion any second.

The relentless attacks completely enraged Luke. He floored the accelerator, charging forward recklessly.

Seeing the car's hood about to plunge into the flames, Emily couldn't help but scream.

"Close your eyes."

"What!"

The girl stared at him blankly.

Luke turned his head.

"I said, close your eyes!"

The cold tone was just like his indifferent eyes. Emily shivered inexplicably, quickly lowering her head and squeezing her eyes shut.

Two seconds later, the electronic voice rang out.

"Activating Annihilation Mode."

Annihilation Mode? What is Annihilation Mode?

Emily felt uneasy. Just as she was about to ask, a white light flashed across her dark vision, like lightning splitting the sky.

The street fell into a sudden silence. The citizens peering out of their windows watched in disbelief at the white bolt of lightning, **thicker than a human calf**.

The lightning struck the Mercedes-Benz cars, creating an electric field that crisscrossed with countless dense arcs. Victor Zsasz didn't even have time to open his mouth before his vision went dark.

His body convulsed violently under the electric current. Charred marks even appeared on his skin.

With just **one strike**, nine thugs, including Victor, were taken down. This sight stunned not only the citizens but also the drug-fueled lunatics behind them, who instantly sobered up. They looked at each other, hesitating, but none backed down.

Luke spun the car around, aiming the blue-glowing cannon on the hood directly at them.

"Target locked. Commence attack?"

Luke took a deep breath and said coldly,

"Leave none alive!"

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 28: That's Not a Car

Shortly after the ambush, **Jim Gordon** arrived, accompanied by detectives and the SWAT officers who hadn't yet left the area.

The street, strewn with rubble and dirt, looked like it had been through a war. The ground was heavily pitted, and the surrounding buildings had significant collapse damage—the scars left by the explosions.

The truck and the Mercedes-Benz cars blocking both ends of the road were reduced to scrap metal, some still burning. As for the still bodies lying on the ground...

After examining the bodies, everyone fell silent for a few seconds before beginning to cordon off the scene, search for the wounded, and confiscate residents' phones and cameras to minimize media impact.

After calling Commissioner Loeb, Jim squatted by the roadside, chain-smoking. The ground was soon littered with cigarette butts.

From the sound of the call, Jim inferred that the Commissioner was in a terrible mood, harboring a subtle fear. Jim knew the reason for that fear. The old Batman, though brutal, never killed. Tonight was different; **he killed**.

Once you start killing, it's hard to stop the second time. Jim had experienced this profoundly and had taken a long time to break free from the idea of using killing to end crime.

If Batman disregarded the law and began executing criminals with vigilantism, the high and mighty figures in power would naturally become terrified.

There is nothing more frightening than death!

Ramirez and Hank quickly approached.

"Captain, the reporters are clamoring to see you. They're demanding an explanation for this incident."

"Shit!"

Jim suddenly flared up. "I've got nothing to explain! Tell them to go find Loeb! Let that fat bastard explain it to them."

"Captain, keep your voice down."

Jim violently shook his arm, looking extremely agitated. Ramirez and Hank exchanged glances, shaking their heads simultaneously.

The incident was massive. There were dozens of casualties, not to mention the shops destroyed by rockets and the citizens injured by accident—these were just the immediate problems. The greater trouble was yet to come.

The black Lamborghini was personally inspected by a Gotham Police Sergeant, who found no issues and then ordered its release. Yet, this horrific act of violence followed. If an investigation ensued, **Jim Gordon** would be held responsible.

After chain-smoking three more cigarettes, Jim managed to calm down.

"What are the casualties?"

Hank quickly replied, "Seven citizens were injured, mostly scrapes. They've been treated. As for the armed men..." He paused, looking up at both of them. **"Twenty-eight armed men, all dead... including Victor Zsasz."**

Victor Zsasz!

Jim's face changed drastically. "Which Victor Zsasz?"

"We've matched him. It's **Falcone Family's Victor Zsasz**. Here are the photos."

Jim took the photos, examined them closely, and confirmed his identity. His feelings immediately became complicated.

Victor Zsasz was one of Falcone's three major hitmen, cunning and cruel, known for using explosives to kill his targets. He was reportedly caught by Batman some time ago and delivered, along with the evidence, to the East Side Precinct. However, Falcone managed to use various means to bail him out shortly after.

Hank continued, "Preliminary analysis suggests that Victor Zsasz was the ambush planner. He first used the truck and Mercedes-Benz cars to block the north and south ends of the road, then bombarded the black Lamborghini with submachine guns and rocket launchers."

"According to eyewitness testimony, the black Lamborghini has **bulletproof armor** on its exterior, perfectly defending against submachine gun fire. Even the rocket-propelled grenades didn't affect it."

Ramirez was incredulous.

"Rocket-propelled grenades were useless! How is that possible?"

"Not useless, but ineffective. The black Lamborghini appears to have the ability to **intercept rockets**, shooting blue beams to blow them up before they hit the car. The thugs fired a total of seven rockets, and six were neutralized this way."

Ramirez: "?"

She felt like she was watching a sci-fi blockbuster. A missile interception system? Is that a feature a car should have?

"The shocking part is still to come," Hank shrugged, lowering his voice. "Multiple witnesses confirmed that the black Lamborghini possesses an extremely powerful **electrical weapon** that can launch a giant bolt of lightning, striking all targets within dozens of meters. Victor Zsasz, his twenty-seven subordinates, the Mercedes cars, and the truck were all destroyed by **two blasts of lightning**."

"Two blasts!"

Ramirez's eyes widened. She was completely stunned. "Are you kidding me?"

"I didn't believe it either, but that's the fact. Someone filmed a video. I'll get it to you later."

With that, Hank sighed, looking toward Jim.

"Captain, we all owe you thanks. You saved our lives."

Jim opened his mouth wordlessly, still reeling from the shock. A thought suddenly surged through his confused mind: *What if he hadn't allowed them to pass and had followed the Commissioner's orders to attack?*

A sudden chill ran down his spine.

If he had done that, it wouldn't be thugs lying on the ground, but police officers and SWAT personnel.

Bulletproof armor, missile interception, super lightning...

That wasn't a car! It was a fully armed monster.

What kind of maniac installs this stuff on a car? Who does he think he is, 007?

"Captain, what do we do next?"

Jim glanced at the bodies covered by white sheets on the roadside and said in a weary voice,

"Just **deal with it.**"

Falcone's Fear

The news of Victor's death quickly reached the largest mansion in the East End.

This was the ancestral home of the **Falcone Family**, the most powerful place in Gotham City.

Despite being a crime boss, Victor's death did not elicit the expected rage from **Falcone**. He stood by the window, calmly smoking a cigar. Yet, his butler, who served him daily, smelled something unusual.

A month ago, that cowl-wearing Batman freak had broken into the boss's private bedroom, beaten him senseless, stripped him down to his underwear, and hog-tied him.

Since then, the boss has hated Batman to the bone, mobilizing all his resources to kill him. But Batman was too mysterious, and no one could track his movements.

As the matter dragged on, unpleasant rumors began to circulate privately. Many gang members believed the boss had been scared witless by Batman, becoming an old relic who only knew how to hide at home.

To combat this, the boss personally executed a few disobedient men to re-establish his authority.

The effect was good, but only temporary. The root of the problem was Batman. Until he was dead, Falcone would never be able to hold his head high.

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 29: Falcone

Rome wasn't built in a day, and Falcone's criminal empire wasn't established overnight. It endured many hardships unknown to outsiders. These experiences taught Falcone two essential things: **law and politics**.

Law is the rule, and politics is power.

Possess the rule and the power, and you will be fearless.

Understanding this, **Falcone** began using his illicit earnings to buy off every police chief, chief judge, and prosecutor. As for the stubborn individuals, he used his gun to silence them. After years of operation, nearly half of the judiciary fell under his control.

Next, he set his sights on the political arena. For Falcone, who commanded numerous subordinates, the democratic voting system was a machine riddled with loopholes that offered too many ways to manipulate. As several top-ranking candidates withdrew for unknown reasons, and after a few rounds of voting, the previously obscure **Martin Jessie** successfully won the election as the new Mayor of Gotham City. Few people knew that just a few months prior, Martin Jessie was a recently fired bank teller.

With the law and politics as his shield, Falcone had no rivals. In just one year, he swallowed up dozens of gangs, both large and small, in Gotham City. His ruthless expansion mirrored the Roman Empire of old. Gradually, people began to refer to him as "The Roman," a title he proudly accepted. In his view, he was the **Caesar of Gotham City**.

Unfortunately, all the good times came to an abrupt halt the moment **Batman** appeared.

Falcone realized for the first time that law and politics were not omnipotent. Everything he possessed seemed as fragile as a paper tiger in the face of Batman.

Batman was nameless, ghostly, and elusive.

No one knew who he was, and no one knew which skyscraper he would appear on tomorrow night.

The power and guns in Falcone's hand could only deal with flesh and blood creatures with names and identities; they couldn't deal with a specter lurking in the night.

After several failed ambushes, Falcone had to accept the damage to his reputation. At the same time, he calmed down and began to wonder: *Why did things turn out this way?*

Seeing his boss remain silent for a long time, the butler couldn't help but offer comfort.

"Sir, I don't think you need to worry about Batman too much. He is only one man. Sooner or later, he will slip up. As long as we seize the opportunity, we can certainly take care of him."

Batman?

Hearing the name, Falcone subconsciously frowned. "What Batman?"

"Just the incident a moment ago! They..."

Falcone chuckled twice.

"Who told you that was Batman?"

The butler was stunned and puzzled. "But when you spoke to Victor earlier, didn't you say Batman was in that car?"

"I said that, so you automatically assume the person in the car is Batman?"

The butler was completely confused. He didn't understand his boss's words at all. Could it be that the person who captured Adousan wasn't Batman?

Falcone smiled faintly. "Fine, let's just say it was Batman!"

Butler: "..."

Are you messing with me, Sir?

Falcone extinguished his cigar on the windowsill and said coldly,

"Brant, tell me, why do so many police officers in Gotham City tacitly approve of Batman's actions?"

The butler hesitated for a long time before replying, "Perhaps the money you give them isn't enough?"

"The truth!"

The butler looked up and squeaked in a voice barely above a whisper, "Perhaps it's because Batman is helping them maintain order."

Falcone shook his head helplessly.

"That's close, but you missed the most important point: **He doesn't kill.**"

"Brant, have you ever killed anyone?"

The butler shook his head repeatedly.

"It's better that you haven't," Falcone said, settling into his armchair. "The feeling of killing is unpleasant, especially the first time. An unrestrained sense of fear emerges—fear from the police, fear from the law, fear from society as a whole. But different people react differently to fear. Weak people become nervous, hysterical, and think about running away. Strong people are different. They savor the feeling, finding a strange delight in it. When they seek out the source of that pleasure, the second kill is not far behind. And after the second, there are countless more."

"Death is the most terrifying thing in the world. Whether man or animal, when death approaches, it generates the instinct for destruction."

"Batman doesn't kill, so he can only bring dread, not **terror**. Those high-ranking individuals know clearly that even if they are caught for corruption and stripped naked and delivered to the police station door, it won't be a huge problem. Because the police are my men, the prosecutor is my man, and the chief judge is my man. I will rescue them."

"However, once Batman begins to kill through vigilantism, things take a different turn. His elusive presence will become the **Sword of Damocles** hanging over the heads of all criminals. No one will know when that sword will fall and cut off their head."

"Batman *should* kill. Only killing can bring terror to Gotham City. This pervasive terror will torment those who harbor false hope, making them fearful, hysterical, and giving them ideas they shouldn't have: **like taking down Batman.**"

The butler understood and whispered,

"I'll contact the newspapers right away."

"Not just the newspapers—the TV stations and radio stations, too. Tell them: **Batman is a murderer**. Also, call Sidney. I want to see him."

The butler nodded slightly.

"Understood, Sir. I will go now."

When Falcone lifts his foot, the whole of Gotham trembles.

In just half a day, the **Batman killing incident** became the front-page headline of every major newspaper. Everyone debated the issue, and while people held different opinions, seeing the headline still caused a moment of shock.

[WHAT HAPPENS TO GOTHAM CITY WHEN THE BATMAN STARTS KILLING?]

Beneath the bloody headline were photos of the twenty-eight charred bodies.

Simultaneously, police precinct chiefs, city councilors, and party members all stepped forward to condemn Batman's actions. They stood on the moral high ground and thoroughly denounced Batman's past actions, arguing that in a country without the death penalty, murder was a desecration of the Constitution.

They argued that if Batman truly wanted to fight crime, he should step forward and courageously admit his crime. Only then could he be worthy of being the city's vigilante.

As numerous "successful people" voiced their opinions, public sentiment quickly developed into a one-sided trend.

The internet was also affected. On the ShowMe website's Batman special section, the comments insulting Batman multiplied tens of times. Although many were Superman fans with old grudges against Bat-fans, there were plenty of new voices joining the fray.

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!

Chapter 30: Batman's First Time

At 11:00 AM, a newly awakened **Bruce Wayne** sat on the sofa, resting his chin on his hand, staring expressionlessly at the news report covering the "Batman murder" incident.

After a long silence, he finally spoke.

"That wasn't me."

Alfred, tidying the dining table, replied without turning around,

"You've said that twice already."

He paused, glancing at the young man. Seeing the confusion in Bruce's eyes, he decisively picked up the remote and turned off the television.

"Stop looking at it. It has nothing to do with you."

Bruce Wayne said seriously,

"Alfred, someone is impersonating me and killing people. I have to find him."

"Things might not be as simple as you think."

Bruce was startled and looked at him in confusion.

Alfred took out a file he had prepared earlier, saying with a tone of helplessness,

"When you were a child, I often told you to wake up and go to bed early, but I see you've forgotten all of it. These are documents I obtained from the police department. Just read them, and you'll understand."

The file documented the case's process, causes, and consequences in detail. After reading it, Bruce's eyebrows knitted tightly, and he remained silent for a long time.

Alfred placed a cup of coffee with milk next to him and smiled. "Two unknown heroes raided the Razor Gang's lair, captured the drug lord Adousan, and then escaped completely unscathed from Victor Zsasz's ambush."

"Bulletproof armor, missile interception, super lightning..."

The old man smacked his lips and sighed. "It's much more formidable than your Batmobile."

Bruce Wayne frowned, a hint of frustration in his expression.

"Alfred, I don't care about the weapons. I want to know their identities."

"That's impossible. You know better than I do about Gotham's road surveillance equipment; vehicle tracking is simply out of the question. Besides, I believe your primary concern right now shouldn't be them, but how to salvage your reputation. If the citizens and the police decide Batman is a murderer who loves using vigilantism, things will become troublesome."

Bruce sipped his coffee, his deep frown never easing.

He understood clearly that behind such a massive wave of public opinion, someone was surely fueling the fire. That person's objective was easy to guess, but guessing it didn't mean he could solve it. As the situation stood, almost everyone believed the owner of the black Lamborghini was Batman—only Batman had the ability to grab Adousan from his lair, and only he could have escaped Victor's ambush completely unharmed.

It was a stalemate.

After a period of silence, Bruce spoke, "What if I use the power of **Wayne Enterprises** to release the truth? What do you think?"

"Master Wayne, I must remind you: Wayne Enterprises is Wayne Enterprises, and Batman is Batman. The two must never be linked."

Bruce spread his hands. "Then what do you suggest? I can't exactly talk to a newspaper."

Alfred gave him a penetrating look.

"The truth is, you've always had an idea; you just haven't dared to act on it."

Being caught off guard, Bruce instantly felt embarrassed. He drank some coffee.

"ShowMe is definitely a good choice, but the comments on it..."

Alfred sighed. "Sometimes, I doubt if you're truly a young man. You're only twenty-six, yet you live like an old antique."

Bruce awkwardly tried to explain,

"You know the 'Bat-fans' on ShowMe. They are... quite fanatical. They are keen on discussing and imitating Batman's actions... I worry they might be exploited by certain individuals."

"Master Wayne, your worries are superfluous. If you feel uncomfortable, let me handle it."

"You?"

Doubt and scrutiny showed in Bruce's eyes. If he remembered correctly, Alfred was already sixty years old.

Alfred placed the rest of the meal on the table and said indifferently,

"Are you thinking that it looks childish for a sixty-year-old man, who should be drinking tea and looking after his health, to run off to the internet to argue with young people?"

"I absolutely didn't mean that."

Bruce said with a serious expression, even though that was exactly what he was thinking—he would deny it to the death.

Alfred gave him a sharp look, his tone growing flatter.

"This matter is settled. I will take over the daily management of the account."

"...Fine!"

Bruce shrugged. "I hope we get a good result."

The Real Batman Appears

The first Sunday in August, the weather was clear.

Today was a momentous day because, at 1:30 PM, a user named **Batman** appeared on the **ShowMe** official website.

Not Batman001, not Batman002, but the actual **Batman**

—six letters, no more, no less.

To prevent potential copyright issues in the future, Luke had specially flagged the names "Batman," "Superman," "Wonder Woman," and others in the database when he launched the hero section.

ShowMe uses a real-name verification system, and this applies not just to ordinary users but to superheroes as well. If you wanted the username *Batman*, you had to prove you were the Batman.

Most Bat-fans and Superman-fans agreed with Luke's approach. Superheroes are people, too. Who's to say they won't go online or chat? Even if they didn't join now, they might join the ShowMe family in the future, and these exclusive accounts should be reserved for them.

But they never dreamed that on the first Sunday of August, the actual **Batman** would appear.

B, A, T, M, A, N!

No mistake, it was him!

Upon hearing the news, users connected to ShowMe quickly called to confirm the truth of the matter. Everyone else, filled with nervousness and curiosity, clicked into Batman's private space.

The space was filled with resources—images, text, short videos—all brand new and unavailable elsewhere online. They detailed Batman's past activities and provided corresponding evidence. These materials were sufficient to prove that the account owner was the actual Batman.

After seeing this, everyone was shocked, followed by wild excitement.

Especially the Bat-fans who had been relentlessly criticized due to the "murder incident" suddenly found their backbone and became instantly energized.

They flooded Batman's private space. Some offered greetings, some sent blessings, and many more demanded that Batman explain the incident from the previous night.

Alfred did not create any suspense. He immediately posted solid evidence of Batman's **alibi**.

The information revealed that at the time of the incident, Bruce Wayne had just taken down an underground drug processing plant hidden in the East End and delivered several key leaders to the North Side Police Department. The factory workers and the officers on duty could all testify.

As soon as this information was posted, public opinion instantly ignited.

ShowMe was no longer the small platform with just a few thousand users; its total user base exceeded **five million**, with daily active users around 4.5 million. When millions of young people speak up simultaneously, the world has to listen.

Major news outlets quickly reposted Batman's statement.

ShowMe's popularity surged, climbing into the top thirty on search trends in the blink of an eye.

Explore up to **20 chapters** in advance!