

[The white knight arc] [2] [Odd couple] [9598]

"Yes, yes, I am coming," Wemer was in middle of a shower when he heard phoning ringing sound. He actually ignored the phone and was going to let it die. But it kept ringing on and on. In the end, he rushed into a bath robe and picked up the phone.

"Hello?"

Wemer was a scientist. To be more exact, he was a lab researcher. It was a boring job, but it was well paid. Since he also had to support his younger sister, he needed the money. After the call, Wemer rushed into his rather ragged casual clothes and left his apartment in a hurry. Where he ended up was a bar, he sat next to someone who was already having a drink at a table.

"Chief, what's up at this hour?"

The person Wemer called chief ordered a drink for him. "I don't know what you did but the authority contacted me an hour ago."

"The authority...?" Wemer was confused. "I didn't do anything."

"They didn't sound like you were a trouble maker. Nonetheless...," he placed a business card on the table. "You should call this guy here. He was the one who called me. They wouldn't tell me further."

Wemer stared at the business card. "I see..."

He went back to his apartment. He put the business card by his bed side table and picked up a phone.

"Hello," A man answered the phone.

Wemer cleared his throat. "Hello, my name is Wemer. I was told to call you?"

"Oh, yes." Wemer overheard that he was searching for something. "Can we meet tomorrow morning as soon as possible?"

"I have to go work tomorrow morning...,"

"Forget about your work. You will be quitting your current job. Meet me at the bar you went tonight."

"What?" Wemer raised his voice. "What do you mean? And the bar doesn't open until late evening."

"It will be opened only for you, so just come." and the phone went dead.

Wemer didn't have a good sleep that night. The phone call disturbed him greatly. Furthermore, the person on the phone did not specify exact time. Everything about the whole situation was very suspicious, but there was nothing he could do but just follow the situation.

He got up as usual at six in the morning had a quick shower and then left his apartment.

As the man on the phone said, the bar door was open. He quietly and slowly opened the door. No one but one person was in the bar. He was in a black suit and was standing in a middle of the bar.

"I've been waiting for you," The man in black spoke as Wemer entered the bar.

"Who are you?"

"That you don't need to know." He threw a badge to Wemer.

He caught it and looked at it. It had a complex set of runic shapes.

"What is this?"

"You have been assigned to be a new leader of the Knights."

"The Knights?" Wemer had no idea of what it was.

"It is an elite group that the lord has handpicked," was his only explanation.

"That's it?"

The man in black did mention "The lord" which would mean the leader of Andromeda union. Wemer did not throw the badge away even when he wanted to. Because, if he did throw away, he could be arrested for treason.

The man also placed a briefcase on the floor. It was a black and sturdy looking briefcase.

"Do not forget to equip the badge on your left chest. All you need to know is in the briefcase." And then the man left the bar.

After getting back from the bar, Wemer opened the briefcase and looked what was inside. The briefcase contained files of documents and many disks. After glancing through some of them, he realized the documents were regarding members of what was called "The Knights".

While having some thoughts, his boss from work left a voice mail to Wemer's phone. Apparently, with Wemer's new assignment, he was relieved from his

current job. He was not fired however. He was "withdrawn" from his job with a hefty amount of money. It was apparent that the authority was indeed at its work.

On the next day, he went to the address he found among documents. It was an enormous building called "The Knights association". Two armed guards were standing at entrance. Wemer placed the badge given by the man in black on his left chest and proceeded to the gate. The guards saluted at Wemer as if they knew who he was.

Inside of the building was even more impressive. The interior was very polished, and several janitors were walking around doing their tasks. He also noticed several armed guards patrolling. As he reached a reception desk, a woman greeted him.

"Welcome, Mr. Wemer. We have assigned your quarter for you."

Just out of curiosity, he asked, "Do you know me, ma'am?"

She nodded in response. "We've been told that a new master would come here."

"A new master?"

"I do not know anything further, sir," was what she said when Wemer asked more.

According to the documents he read last night, "The Knights" was an elite group of ESPs and Hyper-humans. The documents explained very little. It did specify that the Knights currently had only three members and five more

members were recommended. And that it was formed to serve Richard Bau, the current head of state.

Wemer was greeted by two people as soon as he took an elevator to the Knights HQ. The Knights association building was eighty seven story building, but the Knights used only three floors. The lobby floor, 20th and 21st floors were used by the Knights and the rest of the building was being used as a research lab. However, on surface, the Knights was using the whole building.

“Welcome, you must be our new leader,” One of them who donned a lab coat offered a handshake.

After shaking their hands, he continued, “My name is Sevn. I am a member of the Knights. This fellow is Inuy, another member of the Knights.”

Inuy was a tall big boned person. He was those kind of big men you’d see from pro- wrestling.

“Nice to meet you, sir,” He said rather very kindly unlike his muscular physique.

Clearing his throat, Wemer said, “I am not sure what is going on, but I became the leader of the Knights on a very short notice, so excuse me if I don’t seem to know what I am doing.”

Sevn laughed pleasantly. “We know what’s going on and understand what you are going through. Let me show you your office and I will explain what happened.”

Inuy went to his office while Sevn took Wemer to his own office which was more like a 5-star hotel deluxe room, minus fancy bathroom.

“This is my office?” Wemer spoke in awe.

“Well, it belonged to the previous leader who has been dismissed recently, now it’s all yours,” Sevn said.

After Wemer sat in his chair and looked at his surroundings, he asked Sevn to tell him what happened.

“The Knights project was proposed by the high council and was approved by the king’s decree,” Sevn said. “That was about six years ago.”

According to Sevn, initially Lord Arnkle was appointed to be the leader of the Knights. However Arnkle used the Knights for wrong proposes and attempted to benefit from it for personal gains.

“It wasn’t easy to take him down from the Knights,” Sevn added.

Eventually, Lord Arnkle was dismissed from the Knights. That was approximately a year ago.

“We’ve been, since then, looking for a new suitable leader.”

Wemer had to ask. “Why me?” Because he was never considered to be an elite in his entire life. He was an ordinary guy who had an ordinary job.

For the past year, Sevn had been acting as a deputy leader of the Knights. His job was to find a new leader. He sought out candidates who had little ambitions, yet who had above average in either ESP or hyper-human abilities. He figured the Knights would be a dead-end career for anyone who’d take over. Thus, he needed someone with little ambitions.

After Sevn’s short explanation, Wemer gave a short laugh. “I guess I should thank you? For giving me this dead-end career.”

Smiling, Sevn responded, “You already had a dead-end career. I simply upgraded it. It’s a privileged job if it makes you feel any better.”

“I am not complaining.”

“Good,” Sevn smiled and added, “For now, we have nothing to do. Your job will be get used to being a master of the Knights and read files of the current members.”

Wemer approached the beautiful antique desk with an exquisite leather chair. Very carefully, he sat in it.

“Never have I seen a real leather chair, oh boy,” He talked to himself.

“Enjoy it. It’s all yours. I will leave you alone to enjoy the moment.”

Over few weeks, Wemer had read up all the files and became a little used to being the master of the Knights.

Wemer had visited Andromeda high council and introduced himself with Sevn. The council accepted Wemer as the leader of the Knights and his first task was given.

It was to recruit more members.

“It was an honor to be inside of the council chamber,” Wemer spoke while Sevn was driving.

“I hear you. Not many actually manage to get in there.”

Wemer was bothered by something. It was Juun’s file.

When he took over the leader position of the Knights, I was given files for each member.

He did read the files over of course. Nothing really caught his eyes until he came across Juun's files. He was married. Actually, he was the only person in the Knights who was married.

The marriage itself was not a surprising issue. But age of Juun's wife was. Juun was one hundred twenty nine years old (129). And his wife was twenty one (21). Juun had a wife who was more than one hundred years younger.

Usually, one hundred years of age difference was not such a big deal. However, such a gap in age tended to happen to mostly middle age group between one hundred years old to four hundred years old. In Juun's case, his wife was just too young.

Still, it wasn't really his business to dig any further. Therefore, he did not bother inquiring Juun regarding his marriage.

However, one day, out of nowhere, Juun told him,

"I would like to invite you to a dinner at my house. Sevn will be there as well."

Sevn was Juun's wife's older brother, so Sevn was a brother-in-law to Juun.

Of course, he could not reject Juun's invitation. He personally wanted to see Juun's wife. He was not going to take my sister however because he was sure that she'd only cause troubles if he did take her to the dinner.

He dressed up with a fine suit or at least he believed so. He paid a lot for this suit. He never really got to wear it often due to the nature of his job. He bought this suit just to attend one party. It was a dark blue formal suit that was supported by dark green fabric underneath. As a “feature” of the suit, its color would change according to amount of lights, dark blue during day time and bluish dark green during night time. It was the most expensive suit he had and the only suit he had for such an occasion.

Juun's home was at New Creg's. Therefore, he had to take a shuttle. It did not take long to reach Juun's house. Sevn was there, standing outside. He greeted Wemer and stared up and down on him with dubious eyes.

"You have no sense of fashion," he commented.

Wemer had a good look at Juun's house. It was a surprisingly nice house. It was a futuristic two story house with a large front yard. It seemed to have top security as well. The house spotted numerous security cameras.

“This house must have cost a fortune,” Wemer remarked. “I live in an apartment.”

Ignoring Wemer’s comment, Sevn told him, “Shall we go in?”

“Yes, of course.”

The interior was even more impressive. It even featured real wooden door and walls.

“Wooden floor! Wooden walls!” Wemer was in awe. “I haven’t seen real wooden anything for decades!” He got on four and inspected the wooden floor. “This is real wood! Sevn! This is real wood!”

Shrugging and sighing, Sevn kicked him gently. “Behave yourself, will you, sir?”

Suddenly realizing the purpose of the visit with Sevn’s gentle kick in his butt, he stood up at once and settled his suit. “My apologies.”

“Serin, we are here,” Sevn said out loud.

"Welcome, you must be Wemer." A young woman whose height was almost the same as Wemer greeted them.

Wemer had a quick glance at her. She looked very young obviously. She was wearing a red sweater with deep blue long skirt. She wasn’t exactly beautiful but rather cute perhaps her youth. She had black short curl hair and brown eyes.

"Nice to meet you, I am Wemer."

"Where is Juun? I don't sense him," Sevn said.

"He should be back soon." She cleaned her wet hands with an apron. "Please come on in."

Serin went right back to the kitchen, and Sevn followed. Wemer was left alone. He wondered around the house and found few pictures of Juun and Serin hanging on a wall. They were on a wall to a second floor.

His eyebrows quivered a bit as he went through the pictures. Serin was wearing a school uniform.

“They were dating when she was only a student? Is that even legal?”

"Any questions?" It was Sevn. He was a distance from Wemer. Without waiting for Wemer's reply, he continued, "Everyone was doubtful about their marriage."

"How long have they been married?"

"Seven years and half."

Wemer was astonished. "Are you saying your sister married Juun when she was only fourteen?"

"Amusing, isn't it?" Sevn shrugged but with a smile on his face.

"Didn't you go against the marriage?"

"Actually, believe or not, I sort of could not object. Serin was the one who insisted the marriage. Juun was willing to wait until she graduated. And ..."

"I am home."

It was Juun's voice.

"Hi, the dinner's ready." And it was Serin's voice.

"Are Sevn and Wemer here yet?"

"They are here."

"Let's go," Sevn whispered to him. As they walked down the stairs, they saw Serin taking Juun's coat.

"Hello, Juun. I am surprised that you invited me for dinner," Wemer said.

"Why not," Juun smiled, adding, "You are our new boss. Nothing's wrong with getting to know each other since we will be working together."

Juun's words stuck me. He was right. From this dinner, he would get to know more about Juun and Sevn and possibly establish a personal relationship with them. As a team, bonding was necessary.

"Come to the living room. Dinner's ready there," Juun said.

On the dinner table, there were four large and wide dishes. White rice were mixed with various stuff. Wemer played with his spoon into the rice to see what were in there.

"It's a food I invented when I was living alone." Juun noticed Wemer and told him, "Various stuff are in there. Little vegetable, pieces of squids, and warm juice of carbohydrate: they are all mixed together."

"Did you say carbohydrate?"

Juun nodded. "You can make those by mixing powdered rice with boiling water. The water becomes slightly dark brown and sticky. When combined with other organic material, it will taste sweet very weakly."

"It sounds like a chef. Is there anything you can't do?" Laughing, Wemer joking asked.

However, seeing Sevn and Serin twisting their heads trying to come up with an answer to Wemer's innocent question, the answer was there; there wasn't anything Juun couldn't do apparently.

"Well," Juun scratched his head, trying to be modest. "This is the only food I know. When I was living alone, I needed to save time and yet gain as much nutrition as possible. After days of trying, I came up with that. And I taught this dish to my wife."

It was delicious. There was no doubt about it. And it was nutritious. As they ate their dinner, topics were needed and Sevn came up with one.

"Juun, why don't you tell the boss about your marriage. He was awfully curious about it."

"Ah, no, you don't need to tell me," Wemer insisted.

"It's fine. We've been asked such a question hundreds of times past seven years," Juun said.

"I am surprised it hasn't exceeded a thousand times," And Serin incited.

"So," Juun cleared his throat. "It started like this: one day Sevn called me. I wasn't a member of the Knights back then. I was an agent and I think Sevn was still an agent at that time as well, right?"

Nodding, Sevn replied, "Yes, I was on verge of becoming one though."

"Alright, he was driving me somewhere and told me that he had to stop by somewhere which turned out to be a school."

Covering his face, Sevn jokingly said out loudly to intervene. "Perhaps, the biggest mistake of my life."

And Serin began talking, "One day, I was looking through a window in my classroom. Lunch break was near and I found out that I forgot my cash card, so I called my brother to give me some cash. He arrived promptly and I saw this handsome man in the front seat."

And then Sevn continued on her behalf.

"When I was taking my sister home, she began to ask me about the guy persistently. I wasn't going to tell her, but I gave up at one point. I told her that his name was Juun and he worked at the same place as I did. And then she, out of nowhere, began to ask me if I could call him for her. I asked why. And she replied that she just wanted to see his face."

He paused and, this time, covering his face with both of his hands, he growled, "My second biggest mistake of my life."

Serin took over the conversation afterwards. To Wemer, it felt like a play, a perfect play.

"Well, I didn't get to see his face well from that distance before, so I had to look at him one more time to be sure."

"Be sure of what?!" Sevn raised his voice. "What did you have to be sure??"

"Quit acting like my dad, brother!" Serin also raised her voice.

"I just wonder what you were thinking back there! I mean, what the hell were you thinking?!"

"Stay out of my life!" Serin continued. "Anyway, my brother gave up and finally called him for me, so we met."

Sevn was actually fuming and a moment of silence passed.

"That's it?" Wemer asked. He felt that the climax of the story was omitted.

"Well..., pretty much..., " Sevn was clearly reluctant to continue but he did nevertheless as Serin continued to glare at him. "When she met the guy, she said..."

"Will you marry me?" said Juun.

Wemer was speechless.

Sevn shrugged. "And, for some reason, Juun said yes. When the news reached my parents, they panicked and were absolutely livid obviously. They were against the marriage at all cost. I was against also. But somehow, I ended up being on Juun and Serin's side and attempted to convince them in the end."

This time, Sevn looked up hopelessly with his shoulder down, "My third biggest mistake of my life."

The dinner was fun, Wemer felt. They talked a lot after listening to their story. While honestly he was worried about Juun's marriage, it seemed they got along fine even after seven years of marriage. It turned out that Juun was making a lot of money, and that simple fact was a key to getting Serin's parents to approve their marriage.

After a long chit chat, Sevn volunteered to take Wemer to Heaven of Order. He had no reason to refuse.

While in Sevn's personal shuttle, he suddenly asked Wemer, "What do you think about Juun?"

Without thinking too much, Wemer unintentionally answered casually. "He is a bit weird, but he looks like a fine guy."

Although Wemer did not directly see, he felt that he saw Sevn's grin.

"Juun is a smart guy, perhaps too smart for his own good. He is probably one of few people who have a completely stabilized mind."

"What do you mean?"

"Juun is immune to ESP's psychotic attacks."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am sure."

It was not scientifically proven, but it was said that, when one's mind was perfectly in one piece, ESP's mind attacks would have no effect. That also meant that, if such a person did exist, it would mean the person had a perfectly stabilized mind.

Sevn continued while Wemer was having his own thought. "And he is a grandmaster at swordsmanship. I often wonder how he managed to have perfectly stabilized mind as well as such swordsmanship. I often think Juun is just too good for my sister..."

"This is interesting," Wemer said, "I thought you were fuming back there because you felt your sister was too good for Juun, but why do I get a feeling that it's the other way around?"

"Because it is. Juun is too good for my sister. That is my logical conclusion. My heart says otherwise."

A moment of silence passed and Wemer asked, "Do they have children yet?"

"They agreed on not having a child."

"I see."

It was not uncommon for couples not to have children, so that wasn't surprising.

"There are billions of people in this world. I suppose there are billion kinds of love as well."

- Fin