

Endless 108

Chapter 108: Good Brothers

"So it's settled then, let's rest for a few days.

Bologue, continue familiarizing yourself with your Secret Energy, Palmer, you can take a good walk around the Field Operations Department, just don't get lost."

Lebius instructed, with Bologue and Palmer sitting across from him, one face filled with indifference and ferocity, yet with some eagerness; the other face had turned completely pale, head slightly tilted back, pondering life's meaning.

One is an employee with somewhat of a mental problem and will never resign, the other is an employee with some mindset issues, contemplating resigning every day.

"Come on, let me show you around."

Yuriel stood up, signaling Palmer, who naively thought Palmer was unfamiliar with the Field Operations Department.

Palmer opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but the words caught in his throat, his whole demeanor showing an indescribable sense of defeat. He finally nodded and followed Yuriel out.

"Oh, right, there's one more thing; Geoffrey, take Bologue to get a change of clothes and equipment."

Looking at Bologue's conspicuous white hospital gown, Lebius instructed.

"Oh yeah, what about my clothes and equipment?"

Upon hearing Lebius, Bologue suddenly remembered that his clothes and equipment seemed to be missing; no one mentioned these things along the way.

"They were all destroyed; you drained all the surrounding 'Cold Iron Souls,' even your clothes and equipment weren't spared," Geoffrey said.

"What about my Shock Hammer?"

Although the time spent together wasn't long, Bologue had already formed a special affection for that hammer. Few weapons could make Bologue like them so much.

"Also destroyed. Alchemy Armaments are categorized by levels; your Shock Hammer happens to be the cheapest kind, and this thing generally isn't used for combat," Geoffrey said.

"Then what's it for? Demolition?"

Bologue still remembered the thrill of wielding the hammer, the sensation of shattering everything was really satisfying.

"A hammer is a hammer, the Shock Hammer is used by the Sublimation Furnace Core to forge steel. I just thought you'd probably like it, so I got one for you."

Saying this, Geoffrey felt somewhat embarrassed; technically, a greeting gift should be something good, but as Palmer mentioned, getting approval from the Sublimation Furnace Core for something is quite difficult.

"Don't be too upset; you'll have good stuff later... Belli seems really interested in you, doesn't she?"

Geoffrey said with ill intentions, squinting his eyes slightly and looking at Bologue, making Bologue feel uncomfortable all over.

"What are you planning?"

"Bologue, surely you've noticed by now, each action group is essentially like a mini-Order Bureau, each employee has different roles, but regrettably, those people from the Sublimation Furnace Core aren't very pleasant; everyone struggles with those lunatics, leading to many action groups without any coordination with the Sublimation Furnace Core."

Geoffrey stood by Bologue's side, continuously hinting to Bologue through his words.

Bologue briefly recalled the pathological female minister who undoubtedly had issues, the deputy who would occasionally punch and kick the female minister, and a former minister who was involved in taboo research and withdrew.

Currently, Bologue had only encountered three people from the Sublimation Furnace Core, and all three had significant problems.

"No way, don't even think about it, Geoffrey."

Bologue vehemently refused; he didn't dislike Belli, but just the thought of being watched by those eyes... being observed by such people was unsettling.

This feeling was too strange, like something sticky crawling over his body, making all his pores reject it.

"Oh, nothing, Bologue, you'll agree eventually." Geoffrey chuckled, not sure what was on his mind.

"Impossible."

Bologue felt he wasn't the type to give in easily.

"Actually, within the Field Operations Department, few can refuse the Sublimation Furnace Core. Your current resistance is just because you're a newcomer; you'll understand soon enough." Geoffrey's expression was playful.

"Ahem."

Lebius coughed twice, interrupting the absurd conversation.

"Time is precious; you'd better hurry up. Although you won't die, I also hope you can avoid dying as much as possible during the mission."

Lebius demanded.

"I understand, and even if I accidentally die, I'll take out all the witnesses."

Bologue nodded, then left the office together with Geoffrey.

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"New clothes, new equipment, and new Alchemy Armament."

In the activity room, Geoffrey brought over a big box filled with things prepared for Bologue, who immediately started changing clothes in the room.

"This is your uniform; take care to maintain your figure, they are custom-made; if you gain weight, you'll need to remeasure."

Geoffrey opened the box, took out a few pieces of clothing, and handed them to Bologue, speaking while not forgetting to pull on his belt.

The white shirt protruded from his bloated belly; although Geoffrey really wanted to conceal it, it was still too obvious.

"Alright."

Bologue changed into the Order Bureau's uniform, not much different from what he usually wore, still a white shirt, tie, and jacket combo, only with some added lines and seams in certain corners.

It looked both clean and crisp, allowing for a wide range of motion without restricting his actions, combining elegance and sharpness; nonetheless, there was the familiar Concealer trench coat.

Initially, Bologue thought this was some precious item, contemplating whether to remove the coat before combat, but later learned that any mass-produced Alchemy Armament was quite cheap, including this trench coat.

In addition to these two items, there's also a black work uniform, covered in straps and pockets, looking like it can hold quite a few weapons.

"Looks just like an employee from a regular company," Bologue commented.

"Yes, an employee from a regular company," Geoffrey said with a smile, "It's no longer an era where we wield swords to fight for the lord, our clothing aesthetics must advance with the times."

"Of course, the most important thing is to be low-key and concealed, after all, we are operating in a magnificent city, not some remote and dark forest. The more ordinary we look, the better our disguise suits us."

Geoffrey continued talking about those secret societies.

"Initially, the uniforms of the Order Bureau were not like this; they were sleeveless coats with the rear ends drooping down like swallowtails, covered with a big cape reaching over the elbows all the way to the abdomen, outlined with patterns in gold thread..."

Listening to Geoffrey's description, Bologue could imagine that elegant and mysterious scene, like a phantom beneath the night sky, in the darkness adorned with noble gold.

"Sounds like... nobles," Bologue said.

"Exactly, nobles. Do you think those ancient secret societies differ much from today's great families? The only difference is that one controls power and wealth, while the other, in addition to controlling power and wealth, also commands extraordinary power," Geoffrey explained.

"Such attire is rarely used today, only employed during some important ceremonies, while stubborn secret societies still preserve these traditions."

Listening to Geoffrey, Bologue became somewhat curious about the traditional garb of these Condensers.

"Your folding knife and flying knives are also in here," Geoffrey rummaged through the box, "There's no way to give you a new Shock Hammer for now, after all, you wouldn't want to return to the Sublimation Furnace Core, right?"

Bologue quickly nodded.

"But you're a Condenser now, lack no means of attack, Shock Hammer deserves to be phased out," Geoffrey muttered as he pulled out another oddly-shaped item.

It resembled an arm guard, made entirely of black metal, with large pieces of armor beneath which lay mechanical structures, ropes coiled around gaps, faint glows and patterns flickering across its dull surface.

"This is the standard 'Arm of Adaptation' for the Field Operations Department, as you can see, it's an alchemy armament, but it has no peculiar effects by itself, mainly forged for adapting to different modifications."

Geoffrey rolled up his sleeve and donned the arm guard, which clung tightly to his skin.

"This thing is entirely driven by Ether, so its size is compressed quite small; depending on usage tendencies, various modifications can be made, like this."

Ether was injected within, accompanied by Geoffrey forcefully swinging his hand, generating a rattling sound of twisting metal beneath the arm guard, followed by the hook shooting out, with the rope swiftly uncoiling.

"A more compact and concealed hook, and it can be triggered multiple times with Ether."

Geoffrey swung his arm, the hook loosened and rapidly coiled back inward, like a darting venomous snake returning swiftly into the arm guard.

"Mostly we operate in cities packed with skyscrapers, nothing suits short-distance rapid movement better than this," Geoffrey said as he removed the arm guard and tossed it to Bologue, "Since you were not a Condenser before and couldn't freely manipulate Ether, I never gave this to you, now you can discard the Hook Gun."

Bologue donned the arm guard on his left hand, and with the flow of Ether, he experienced a strange sensation as if the guard had become part of his own body.

Soon he noticed several grooves on the arm guard, dragged by some mechanical linkage, as he picked up a folding knife, its handle perfectly fit within.

The folding knife snugly attached to the arm guard, as Bologue forcefully swung his left arm to hear crisp metallic clicks, the knife flipped out from under the guard, its blade extending segment by segment, transforming into a sharp arm blade.

"Yes, that's it, you can add whatever weapons you need, as long as it's within the arm guard's capacity but beware, adding too much would make the guard bulky and very noticeable."

Geoffrey explained, using Yas as an example.

"Like Yas's 'Violence Suppression Action Group', where each member has different weapons attached to their arm guards, ranging from anesthetic needles, axes, to one guy who installed a mounted machine gun."

Bologue tried to imagine that scene, his expression turned peculiar.

"I prefer keeping just the hook function, as it allows easy concealment."

Geoffrey placed a coat on Bologue, threading it through the loose sleeves, completely hiding the intricate arm guard, which went unnoticed until Bologue fired the hook.

"Indeed, quite convenient."

Bologue tidied himself up, returning to looking respectable and formal.

"I'll head home first, see you at the combat room tomorrow."

Bologue waved goodbye to Geoffrey, speaking as he pushed open the lounge door.

Palmer and Yuriel walked up, Yuriel with a smile, whereas Palmer retained his disheveled demeanor, having actually been taken by Yuriel for a stroll around the Field Operations Department.

In some aspects, Yuriel is surprisingly meticulous.

"Yo! Bologue, ready to go?"

Seeing Bologue, Palmer perked up slightly.

"Yes, what's up."

Bologue responded.

"Ah, just perfect! I need to leave too, how about I give you a ride?" Palmer suddenly acted attentive.

Bologue pondered for a few seconds, considering it a good opportunity for them to better understand each other.

Of course, the main reason was that Bologue's home was too far, he was really unwilling to squeeze into a tram.

Just as he responded to Palmer, Palmer stepped up like a good brother, draping an arm over Bologue's shoulder.

"No need to be formal, we are indeed partners!"

Palmer kept emphasizing.

"In the future, fighting as sworn brothers!"