

Endless 111

Chapter 111: Skills

"Gray mist! Industry! And... delicious crispy shrimp cake!"

In the misty morning, beside the somewhat busy street, Dudel's energetic voice rang out, seemingly always full of vitality.

"Hey! Boss, you listen to this too?"

Bologue rummaged through the dusty shelves, listening to Dudel's signature opening line on the radio, and asked the boss.

"Of course, there aren't many music stations in Opus."

The boss stood behind the counter, adjusting the radio to make Dudel's voice clearer.

"You should know, when I was young, I was a guitarist in a band."

He boasted, stepping aside to reveal the guitar placed behind the counter. That guitar was incongruous with the old goods store; everything else was dust-laden, but it was polished bright.

"Looks nice, can I touch it?" Bologue asked.

"No way, it's not for sale, just look." The boss smiled and refused Bologue.

Bologue helplessly looked at the boss, complained a bit, then turned back to rummaging through the miscellaneous items on the shelf, which kicked up dust occasionally.

This is an old goods store named "Charlie's House," named directly after the boss. It's one of the places Bologue frequents the most; his war tables, record player, and old records at home all came from here.

For Bologue, this place is a fascinating junkyard, always full of interesting things to discover, so he visits periodically to not miss anything.

"Boss, have you collected any records recently?"

"Collected a few, but not many. Nowadays everyone is using tapes, which are more convenient and wear-resistant than records." Charlie casually picked up an ornament and started wiping it with a cloth.

"I see..."

Bologue searched for a while but couldn't find anything useful, so he picked some records with worn packaging and placed them on the counter.

"Clearance, huh? You've bought out what little I had left." Charlie glanced at the items Bologue selected and laughed while ringing up the sale.

"No choice, I can only afford such old goods for now. Once I have money, I'll get better stuff."

Bologue sighed, his mind still thinking about the advance payment of wages.

"Remember to come to me then. I have some really good ones here, just a bit worn, but the price is very good, definitely cheaper than buying new." Charlie kept babbling; profits in a used goods store aren't large, and he must hold onto loyal customers like Bologue.

"Alright, alright."

Bologue picked up the bag Charlie packed and responded perfunctorily.

"I'll definitely come to give you money someday."

"See you then! Bologue!"

Charlie waved enthusiastically, watching Bologue leave the old goods store.

Outside on the street, it was a familiar sight; "Charlie's House" was near Bologue's home, one of the reasons he often came here.

In his leisure time, Bologue wandered around Shenbei District, very familiar with the area; "Charlie's House" was discovered during one such walk.

On the street, silent pedestrians walked by, occasionally speaking in languages Bologue couldn't understand, with some unfamiliar faces; most living here were outsiders from afar, making the district vibrant in a sense.

The slightly cold air filled his nose, walls adorned with various advertisements; among the black-and-white sheets, a few colorful ones caught Bologue's attention.

Depicting a person walking at a crossroads, anxious and uncertain about the future, yet reality kept pushing him to make decisions.

"Oh, that's 'Wandering Rat'!"

Bologue immediately recognized the poster on the wall; he had one at home with Kedening's autographed signature.

Realizing this, Bologue suddenly remembered the last act of 'Wandering Rat' was about to be performed. Initially, he planned to watch the performance as promised, but now, becoming a Condenser, Lebius had tasked him with actions against the "Man-eater."

The actions might start soon, leaving Bologue unsure if he'd have time to watch.

Regarding this, Bologue didn't hesitate; his primary goal had always been revenge on the "Man-eater." Performances can always be replayed; it's just a pity missing the premiere.

The rest of the posters were about festival celebrations, where various shops used the festival as a reason to launch activities, a scene of jubilation.

"The Vow Festival is coming up."

Bologue looked at the festival poster and murmured to himself.

It's already October, late autumn and approaching winter, and in just over a month, it will be the Vow Festival.

This festival is exclusive to the city of Opus, where citizens celebrate the end of the Scorched Earth Fury and the establishment of Oubos in Oath City. They designated the day when the Kagader Empire and the Rhine Alliance made their vow together sixty-six years ago as the date of the Vow Festival.

Everyone is preparing for the festival's arrival, even in the desolate and remote Shenbei District, the street lamps are adorned with fluttering ribbons.

Bologue gazed at all of this with a somewhat hollow expression.

He remembered that he was released from prison around this time a year ago. After spending the Vow Festival at Adelle's home, he left, came to Shenbei District, and started living alone.

It was a warm festival, a memorable occasion for Bologue. Perhaps missing those times, Bologue unexpectedly anticipated this year's Vow Festival like a child, even though he wasn't sure what it would be like.

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Returning home, Bologue casually picked a new record from his collection. Although it was considered new, the record itself had already passed through many hands and was old. Bologue had little expectation for its sound quality.

The needle dropped, and as the song gradually started playing, Bologue comfortably nestled into his sofa, casually picking up a folding knife and unfolding it.

Gripping the cold handle of the knife, a greenish glow spread across the back of Bologue's hand—the trajectory surpassing the limits of the flesh and extending onto the folding knife.

The metal twisted, reshaped, with the green glow momentarily burning like flames, as if placing the folding knife into a furnace of nothingness; it collapsed into a warhammer in Bologue's hand.

But the transformation wasn't over. Driven by Bologue's will, the warhammer continued to change, turning into a slender sharp sword.

Cracks appeared on the slender blade. Bologue tightened his expression, directing his full concentration into manipulating the Ether for this precise transformation.

Sweat slipped down his forehead after several minutes of alteration. Bologue released the Secret Energy, breathing heavily and feeling a wave of fatigue.

Slowly raising his hand, the slender sword had now become a rough chain, swaying in Bologue's hand.

"Still not enough."

Bologue sighed.

Whenever he had some free time lately, he would practice his Secret Energy. After numerous attempts, Bologue gained a deeper understanding of Ether consumption and Secret Energy operation.

Shaping the folding knife into a rough warhammer consumed very little Ether and allowed for quick moulding. But once his creations became complex, it greatly increased Bologue's consumption, whether of Ether or energy.

The good thing was that this could be trained. As Bologue grew more familiar with Secret Energy, his operation became increasingly precise. Initially, he could only shape a small segment of the chain; now, he could fully mold the slightly complex object.

But it wasn't enough—he still remembered Balder's "Illusion Creation." Unlike his rough chain and blade, Balder's weapons were exquisitely crafted, adorned with patterns, indicating that Balder's mastery of Secret Energy was indeed superior to Bologue's.

Palmer was the same, although that guy...

Bologue was reluctant to think about it further. Ideally, aside from work, he didn't want to remember that he had such a partner.

Palmer could manipulate airflow, which sounded like a rather weak Secret Energy. However, under Palmer's precise control, he could simultaneously utilize airflow to maneuver numerous Flying Knives and accurately pierce Eugene's body.

Thinking about these things made Bologue feel some pressure, but he also comforted himself by acknowledging he was just a novice, a new Conder, gradually improving with training.

"But this power is truly deceptive."

Bologue stood up, whipping the chain in his hand. In mid-swing, the chain burst with green light and transformed into a sharp Long Sword. Bologue then stepped forward and rotated his body; when he swung again, the sword had become a Hand Axe.

With the Summoning Hand's assistance, as long as there was steel around him, Bologue could shape different weapons. One moment it's a folding knife; the next, it becomes a Long Spear being thrown.

In addition, Bologue also noticed another use of the Summoning Hand.

Standing before his bedroom door, Bologue closed the door and slowly extended his hand, pressing it against the wooden panel.

A flash of green light streaked across as the wood twisted and fractured before Bologue.

This is how Bologue realized another use; he could easily summon any door, wall, or even an enemy's Armor. As long as he touched it, he could summon it and cause it to shape and shatter.

Just as Geoffrey said, Bologue no longer needed the Shock Hammer. Going forward, he could easily break through any barrier, whether it be several meters thick iron doors or solid rock, as long as it's solid material, it would crumble under formidable power.

"I really am a genius."

Bologue remarked confidently, recovering from his self-satisfaction to find a broken, dilapidated door swaying precariously.

Stunned for two seconds, Bologue hastily pressed his hand, trying to restore everything.