

Endless 182

Chapter 182: Man-eater's Night

Amid the violent shaking, the interior of the carriage seemed to have ignited an explosion, with several welders working overtime in the storm, metal frames twisting and shattering, iron scraps mixed with sparks surging.

Sandbox's figure leapt high from the shattered carriage, making a few nimble turns, landing steadily on the roof, holding the Secret Sword in his hands before him, a deep glow emanating from his body.

The Alchemy Matrix glowing on him was far more intricate than Bologue's, which further proved his identity as a Prayer Believer.

But even though his tier was higher than Bologue's by one level, Sandbox felt no ease at all. On the contrary, he felt unprecedented pressure.

From Bologue's decisive attack, he could vaguely deduce that Bologue seemed to have found a way to locate him.

Ethereal Perception?

This Ethereal Skill enhances the Condenser's sensitivity to Ether, differing from the usual state of detecting Ether fluctuations, Ethereal Perception can detect even more subtle and complex Ether fluctuations.

It's said that some Condensers who master this Ethereal Skill can even preemptively detect the signs before their opponent mobilizes Ether and counteract it, in their eyes, Ether is not the void but visible, like airflow.

The thing that most unnerved Sandbox was that Ethereal Perception happens to counter Ethereal Concealment, or perhaps the two mutually counteract each other.

If Sandbox's mastery of Ethereal Concealment is deeper than his opponent's Ethereal Perception, then Bologue cannot detect Sandbox's Ether fluctuations, and vice versa.

Like a game of cat and mouse.

In reality, Bologue did not possess such power, he could find Sandbox entirely dependent on the Tyrant's Blessing. In this storm, Sandbox was practically dazzling in Bologue's eyes.

Bologue crouched on the damaged roof, the jagged Armor looking like the skeleton of some monster in the dim light, the Giant Sword in his hand was somewhat overly heavy, so he simply slung it over his shoulder. Beneath the cold iron, a pair of blue eyes gazed at Sandbox.

"Sandbox Devitt..."

Sandbox whispered, he could be certain that during the recent attack, Bologue had clearly uttered his name.

The situation had become too complicated, he had always been active as a "Ghoul" in Opus, Sandbox could affirm that his movements were extremely secretive, even those most closely associated with him, the Man-eater, only knew he was a member of the King's Secret Sword.

The previously missing Long Sword Squad? Sandbox considered this even less likely, he had been out of contact with the squad for less than an hour, in that brief time, could the Order Bureau have extracted his information? Not to mention the Long Sword Squad didn't even know his retreat route.

This train was moving secretly, there were no passengers, only armed soldiers, and heaps of Philosopher's Stone and Liquid Spirit Potions.

Countless thoughts intertwined and Sandbox quickly abandoned pondering over them, under such circumstances these matters became secondary.

The operation spiraled out of control, and the train halted in this cursed place. Bologue's axe didn't destroy the train head, only severed the coupler. Now the train head has long disappeared in the rain and fog, these tattered carriages stranded like giant whales on the stone bridge.

Sandbox had to admit, the operation failed, he had schemed for so long, evidently leaving Opus, yet this damn cavalry descended from the sky and smashed everything to pieces.

He couldn't fathom where things went wrong, but in reality, Sandbox had done everything perfectly, if only the Devil hadn't intervened tonight.

"Don't think about escaping, even if you make it back alive, you'd probably wish you were dead."

A cold voice came from the roof, lightning streaking across, casting a dreadful shadow.

Bologue glanced at the freight boxes behind him, only now realizing he had caught a big fish, perhaps intercepting several years' worth of the King's Secret Sword savings here.

Beneath them, the stone bridge stood silently above the deep ravine, as an expert Bologue wouldn't miss any opportunity.

Bologue calculated the height, in one of his plans, he intended to use Secret Energy-Summoning Hand to destroy the stone bridge, dropping those fully loaded souls into the gorge.

However, everything was proceeding smoothly now, and Bologue had successfully pinned Sandbox here; the only thing left was to determine life and death.

"Do you think you can block me?"

Sandbox spoke coldly; instead of thinking about the punishment for the failed operation, he was more concerned about the present event, nobody knew when the Order Bureau's reinforcements would arrive; he had to leave before then.

"You can try."

Bologue struck a pose, from his posture and language one could tell, he definitely wouldn't let Sandbox go easily.

Sandbox tightened his grip on the Secret Sword, beginning to notice the tenacity of his enemy before him.

No more words were needed, Bologue's crouched legs suddenly released, causing the carriage beneath him to shake violently. The Giant Sword exuded a chilling coldness, slicing through the torrential rain and wind.

The fierce assault plowed through the water on the ground; Sandbox's agility was even better than Bologue anticipated. But it's to be expected; the opponent is a Prayer Believer one tier higher than himself; everything remains within expectations.

The giant sword plunged into the ground like a tombstone. Bologue gripped the hilt tightly, crouching on the slanted, rough blade. A blue light streaked across, and then the metal spear and axe shot out from the giant sword, transforming into silver snakes chasing Sandbox.

The secret sword flickered, cutting down the spears and axes. Unlike Kedening, who was a mediocre swordsmanship practitioner, Sandbox's swordsmanship was superb, not to mention he wielded a secret sword, which ordinary metal simply couldn't withstand.

As he created a safe distance, the blurry figures in the rain mist leapt toward Bologue, silently and stealthily.

Bologue didn't notice any of this until the ghostly figures swung their sharp blades, leaving scars on his armor. That's when Bologue realized these troublesome entities had returned.

Didn't he notice?

Sandbox noticed them too. His surprise attack had actually succeeded, indicating that Bologue's ether perception couldn't detect his ether concealment.

For a moment, Sandbox's odds of victory greatly increased. As the ether concealment continued, the initial activation phenomenon on his body gradually dimmed until there was no more radiance, making him appear like an ordinary person.

Bologue was entangled by the ghostly figures. Four of them emerged from the rain mist, having been ambushed on one side all along.

Fortunately, Bologue was covered with iron armor, and under the influence of secret energy, he could adjust his armor at any time. Many times, when the ghostly figures thought their sharp swords would pierce the armor, the armor at the stabbing point would suddenly thicken by several centimeters, blocking the blades.

The giant sword swung, sending one ghostly figure after another flying. This weapon was too massive and heavy. Bologue's swings appeared awkward and slow, but whenever the ghostly figures thought they saw an opportunity, the slow giant sword would suddenly accelerate, smashing into their resilient bodies.

As Sandbox analyzed Bologue, Bologue was also observing Sandbox. As a prayer believer, Sandbox was indeed stronger than Bologue, but not to the point of being utterly unbeatable.

From the dark tide of ghouls, it seemed to be the effect of his secret energy, but to influence such a large target group, the ether consumption must be immense, along with the domination objects.

The more domination objects there are, the more ether they consume, and the more precise control is required from the overlord.

It's like a puppet master controlling one puppet versus ten simultaneously.

The tide of ghouls only received vague commands, while the ghostly figures were meticulously controlled. Bologue calculated the approaching ghostly figures; it seemed that Sandbox could only precisely control four ghostly figures at once.

Is this his limit? Or a disguise to lull one into complacency, while the fifth ghostly figure lies hidden in the corner.

Or perhaps, Sandbox might have a few spare ghostly figures stored in the compartment, ready to replace any that are defeated.

Both were killing with fervor, but their reason was not consumed by rage.

After a night of pursuit, despite Bologue's control, his ether levels were nearly depleted at this moment, and it was unclear how much longer he could sustain them.

His physical strength was also severely drained. He wasn't made of iron, and his body was nearing its flesh-and-blood limits, with fatigue overwhelming him.

Most importantly, with ether exhaustion, Bologue wasn't sure how many times his "blessing" could be activated or how long it would take to do so.

Everything was an unknown.

The ghostly figures charged again, these slender, pitch-black figures carried sharp blades on their limbs. Like beings without bones, they could easily perform motions beyond typical human capability.

Countless scratches covered the armor. To save ether, Bologue did not repair the damaged armor this time but instead seized the opportunity to cut down a ghostly figure with one sword.

The anticipated repulsion did not occur. The moment the giant sword hit the ghostly figure, the rough blade "melted," with the metal breaking into countless thorns, binding the ghostly figure layer by layer.

Bologue captured a ghostly figure and drew a sharp armor-piercing sword from the gigantic sword body.

Bologue knew well that secret energy was cunning and mysterious. It was not limited by "broad and blunt" or "narrow and sharp," but by the condenser's own thoughts.

Besides reading "Soul Science" and "Ethereal Theory," Bologue had also studied numerous illustrated books on cold weapons, which was why he could easily summon different cold weapons.

Like Balder's Secret Energy-Furnace of Cast Iron, the prerequisite for shaping an item is to understand it sufficiently.

This armor-piercing sword was narrow and slender, with a triangular cross-section on the surface, resembling an enlarged awl. It was not designed for slashing capabilities, but it could easily pierce through armor.

A blue glow shimmered on the armor-piercing sword as it was driven by ether amplification, resembling a released long spear.

The alchemical material on the ghostly figure's surface struggled to resist this focused stab. The wrist holding the armor-piercing sword felt a moment of obstruction before the resistance quickly vanished as the sharp tip pierced through the ghostly figure's head.

Steel writhed within the ghostly figure, turning into a slaying sword. Bologue forcefully pulled, slicing open the ghostly figure's head from within.

The smell of decayed, stale blood filled the air. Inside the shattered head, Bologue saw the ghoul's decaying, hideous face.