

Endless 381

Chapter 381: Fork in the Road

Bologue sat blankly on the edge of his bed, taking a few minutes to fully awaken his sluggish consciousness. Looking at the clock on the wall, he realized it was still very early, just dawn.

He stood up slowly, washed up briefly, and adjusted his attire in front of the mirror.

Even though it was morning, the Undying Club remained oppressively dark. To maintain the closure of the Void Realm, they blocked out all light. Serey quite liked this. As a Night Race who had avoided sunlight for hundreds of years, he just wanted to keep hiding.

Getting up today without seeing Wei'Er, Bologue didn't ponder too much on where she went. These undead were each more mysterious and elusive than the next; Bologue had gotten used to their ghostly comings and goings.

Leaving his room, he heard deafening snores coming from the next room. Palmer was still in a deep sleep; Bologue ignored him and headed straight to the bar downstairs.

To Bologue's surprise, the bar was tidy today. It seemed Serey hadn't indulged in a drinking spree last night; the tables and chairs were neatly arranged to one side, and the floor was spotless.

He didn't see Bode or Wei'Er, but when Bologue's gaze swept to the counter behind the bar, he was stunned.

Usually, Serey would stand behind the bar, drunkenly handing him breakfast and chit-chatting, but this time it wasn't Serey standing there. It was someone Bologue never expected.

Sai Zong, still dressed in his dog costume, was standing behind the bar mixing drinks. In Bologue's memory, this was the first time Sai Zong stood up; had this guy finally found being a dog for decades meaningless and wanted to play some other role?

The eyes beneath the dog mask noticed Bologue's arrival, and he patted the counter, signaling Bologue to come over.

Bologue didn't refuse and sat cautiously at the bar. He remembered how Serey described Sai Zong, saying this guy's mind was definitely problematic. Nonetheless, he was the most senior undead within the Undying Club that Bologue knew.

Sai Zong hummed a tune, fiddling with the glasses for quite a while. The silence within the Undying Club was terrifying, as if only the two of them were left.

Sai Zong finished mixing the drink, placed the glass on the bar, but didn't pass it to Bologue. Instead, he downed it in one gulp himself.

"Ah..."

Sai Zong let out a satisfied sound while Bologue felt increasingly perplexed, unable to grasp what Sai Zong was intending.

"Good morning, Mr. Bologue Lazarus."

Perhaps having not spoken for too long, Sai Zong's voice sounded twisted and hoarse, like a child learning to talk.

"Sai Zong?"

Bologue whispered his name, as a strong sense of unease grew within him.

Such scenes happen often in horror films. When the normal world becomes bizarre, people experience a terrifying sense of safety being disrupted, just like Bologue's first encounter with Sai Zong—a human pretending to be a dog, as if cursed.

As time went by, Bologue got used to all of it, considering this abnormality as normal. But now with the abnormal being corrected, the distortion caused made Bologue fall back into the doubt of his safety being compromised.

The deep gaze beneath the dog mask fixed on Bologue. He dipped the drink in the glass and left a water stain on the countertop.

"Look, this is the trajectory of fate."

Sai Zong said, as the trajectory of the water stain forked, becoming two parallel paths moving forward.

"Now we've arrived at the crossroads of destiny."

Again the trajectory forked, like a towering tree growing, splitting layer by layer, becoming countless paths moving forward in parallel. They all branched from this moment, diverging into endless futures.

As destiny's forks multiplied, the long-looming unease in Bologue's heart also soared until it completely ruptured.

"Trust your instinct and make the right choice."

Bologue abruptly stood up, loudly questioning, "What on earth are you talking about!"

"What was I talking about? I said nothing."

Serey slowly raised his head, looked wearied at Bologue, puzzled about what kind of madness he was having.

Cold sweat soaked the back of Bologue's shirt as he stared dumbly at Serey in front of him, his gaze trembling as it scanned the surroundings.

The bar was a mess, tables and chairs overturned, bottles rolling around, and there were even some high-heeled shoes as if it had just gone through a wild party.

Bode, as usual, was mopping the floor, tidying up the bar's things, ready for the next day when they would be disrupted again.

"Serey, you..." Bologue muttered.

"What do you mean, you? Hurry up and eat, then get to work already."

Having possibly partied too hard last night, Serey now had a splitting headache and didn't want to bother responding to Bologue.

Bologue looked at the bar before him as usual, with breakfast laid out in front of him, accompanied by a glass of orange juice.

"Where's Sai Zong?"

Bologue was sure it hadn't just been a hallucination; something must have happened.

"Sai Zong?" Serey didn't understand why Bologue mentioned the bothersome dog, "Isn't he here? Then he probably went out for a stroll. What's up?"

"No... nothing."

The beautiful morning was utterly ruined by Sai Zong, Bologue had no mood for breakfast at all. He clutched his forehead, his confused consciousness mingling with fleeting pain. Without saying a word, he directly left the Undying Club.

"Damn it! My lovingly prepared breakfast, won't you even take a bite!"

Seeing Bologue leave directly, Serey cursed from behind, but Bologue didn't look back.

Sai Zong's words kept echoing in his mind, hinting at something, yet that guy refused to speak plainly.

Instinct?

Bologue picked up his pace, then started jogging, breaking into a full sprint.

The man's figure dashed through the streets, like an office worker about to be late. But it was still early, even the sky was just beginning to brighten, hard to imagine what sort of unscrupulous company would demand clocking in at this hour.

Few pedestrians or vehicles were on the streets, he blatantly ignored the red light's warning, like a raging wolf breaking into the city.

The scene gradually pulled back, then covered with a snowflake pattern. Inside a dim little room, the Tyrant nestled comfortably on the sofa, watching Bologue's run on the screen, laughing loudly.

The door swung open, another person walked in. He glanced at the bald, burly man on the sofa, knowing this was one of the Tyrant's vessels in the real world.

The newcomer held a box of beer in one hand and cradled several sealed bottles of wine in the other. If Serey were here, he would recognize these as his prized collection, hidden under the bed to keep them from Palmer.

"Move over a bit."

The newcomer sat down, edging the Tyrant over, then settled back comfortably.

"What's that smell on you?"

The Tyrant covered his nose, looking at the other disdainfully.

"The scent a dog should have," Sai Zong replied.

The Tyrant couldn't understand, "Is being a dog really that interesting?"

"Not interesting, but it passes the time nicely," Sai Zong bit open a beer, "Following only the most basic instincts, with nothing on my mind, naturally less worry."

Sai Zong bit open another beer and handed it to the Tyrant.

"Have you started liking alcohol?" The Tyrant took the beer bottle, recalling, "I recall you enjoying killing more, every time we talked, you were always killing, never stopping."

"You know the people in the Undying Club are real drunks. Over time, it's hard not to pick up a few bad habits."

The Tyrant seemed to have heard some kind of joke and burst into uncontrollable laughter, "Compared to your soaring lust for slaughter, drinking's a pretty good habit."

"How long has it been since you last stained your hands?" the Tyrant further inquired.

"It's been a while," Sai Zong didn't hide it, "The perk of focusing on being a dog is this; my mind has become very calm."

"You know it's an illusion, you can't suppress your instinct forever," the Tyrant said.

"So, do you want to see my instincts in action?" Sai Zong side-eyed him.

The Tyrant fell silent, then shook his head with a smile.

"So what is this, are you picking your debtor?" Sai Zong looked at the TV screen.

"A new round of conflicts is about to begin, we are all gathering strength."

The Tyrant's words halted, then turned severe, "You shouldn't have contacted Bologue."

"But you interrupted my cultivation, I wreaked a little havoc in your plans, we're even," Sai Zong drank by himself, "You gave the Fantasy Species to that girl? Was it worth it?"

"It was hers to begin with, isn't she so uniquely special?"

"What about Bologue then?"

Sai Zong cared about the Tyrant's attitude, "Bologue is already the Debtor, why are you paying him so much attention?"

"He's merely a supporting character... Moreover, aren't you curious who's taken Bologue's soul?"

The Tyrant pressed the remote control, the camera zoomed in, Bologue's visage was clearly visible.

"You..."

"Shh, don't speak, just quietly watch."

The Tyrant stared intensely at the screen displaying Bologue, vaguely seeing the cyan light spots spilling from his body, murmuring in a barely audible voice.

"I found you."

Chapter 382: Extreme Desire

Entering the Order Bureau, passing through the Courtyard of Twisting Paths, arriving at the Pillar Courtyard, taking the elevator all the way forward, until the gate opens, the blazing Sublimation Furnace Core is finally revealed before the eyes.

Along the way, Bologue didn't encounter any anomalies, which made sense, as even if there were any anomalies, they certainly wouldn't happen within the Cultivation Room. This place was the stronghold of the Order Bureau, the safest place in all of Opus.

The restless heart gradually calmed down, and Bologue told himself he was just too tense, overthinking it, everything was completely normal.

He arrived too early, far from the designated working hours, and there weren't many people in the Sublimation Furnace Core, only one familiar figure still busy working.

Having interacted for a long time, Bologue had learned how to recognize the other person through the heavy protective clothing. Everyone had their own characteristics, some behavioral languages, like written notes, similar, yet there were recognizable differences.

"Good morning, Balder."

Bologue called out in greeting, Balder was pushing a trolley full of various alchemical armaments, Bologue glanced at them and recognized several items he had encountered before in battle, namely the Fire-Calling Staff.

"You look a bit rough, did you have a nightmare?"

Balder sized up Bologue, whose tense mood led him to run all the way here, sweat covering his forehead.

"Sort of, but I'm much better now."

Bologue wiped off the sweat with his sleeve; no need to care so much at this moment, "Nothing unusual happened here, right?"

"Anomaly? No, the Cultivation Room has a complete security mechanism, as long as we're inside, it will protect us."

Balder looked up at this silent and magnificent building.

"That's good..."

Bologue breathed a sigh of relief, thinking he should get used to the frequent hallucinations caused by the close connection with the Devil.

"Where's Aimou?" Bologue asked afterward.

"It's not working hours yet, she should be coming with Belli." Balder said.

Hearing this, Bologue felt more at ease, rubbed his eyes, took a deep breath, and turned to look at the items on the trolley.

"What are you doing?"

"Identifying these alchemy weapons. You should know about these, they're circulating within the Wandering Forks, crafted by the Dreamer...", Balder paused, "created by the teacher."

"I've been researching these things lately."

"What's there to research?" Bologue reached out to fiddle with them, not understanding their significance in being studied.

"There's indeed not much to research," these are inferior alchemy weapons and ought to be collectively destroyed, "but I still feel that there's more to it."

"What do you mean?"

"According to the Field Operations Department's report, these alchemy armaments were crafted by the teacher, but as his student, I don't think it's the teacher's work."

Mid-sentence, Balder brought up something else, "You've heard of the term 'traces', right? Just like different handwriting, an alchemist also has their unique traces when constructing an alchemy matrix."

"The traces within these alchemy armaments don't match with the teacher's traces. It could be understood that the teacher deliberately used an alternate method to construct the alchemy matrix to hide his identity... like changing from writing with the right hand to the left hand.

Traces can change, but the teacher's construction thought process won't. Even when producing inferior armaments, he always pursued stability."

Balder picked up the Fire-Calling Staff to illustrate, "For instance, this alchemy armament, if the teacher crafted it, even if it was a degraded armament, when it goes out of control, it should just stop functioning normally. But in reality, it causes a violent explosion, extremely unstable."

"From the thought process, this doesn't seem like something the teacher would do."

Balder was deeply puzzled.

This statement struck a chord within Bologue; he suddenly recalled Serey's reminder. Bologue didn't want to think in that dire direction, nor did he want to suspect his friends, but the layers of unease forced him to make such a decision.

"Then what do you think is going on?" Bologue asked.

Balder shook his head and replied, "You won't like this answer."

"You think there's another Delusional person, don't you?"

Bologue knew what Balder intended to say, the silver serpent crawled out of the sleeve, immediately fracturing into large drops of condensed water, landing onto the trolley.

"Perhaps from the beginning, the Dreamer wasn't just one person."

Bologue's voice turned cold, "This Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid is Aimou's creation; how long do you need to conduct the comparison."

This decisive action from Bologue surprised Balder, knowing Belli and Bologue's stance towards Aimou, he initially planned to secretly investigate while Aimou was in the Sublimation Furnace Core.

"It's just a comparison. It can be done very quickly."

Balder said and was about to push the trolley, but the next moment, the extending group of serpents firmly grabbed the trolley, lifting it up.

"You lead the way."

Bologue controlled the serpents, the silver liquid seeping from his back, flowing as if a humanoid shell hid another silver monster beneath.

"Is this what experts are like? Like hunters, never letting go once they smell traces."

Balder broke into a jog, with Bologue carrying the items for him, their movement speed had increased considerably.

"I'm just trying to avoid mistakes as much as possible." Bologue's tone was completely cold.

Balder said, "Opus, I thought you would protect Aimou, just like Belli did, so I haven't told anyone about this affair."

"You should have told me," Bologue murmured.

"At least it's not too late now," Balder said. "Belli understands Aimou's importance. Without her guidance, Aimou cannot leave the Cultivation Room, rest assured about that."

Bologue took a deep breath and replied calmly.

"I hope so."

The two soon arrived at the lab for comparison. Balder took out some Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid, placed it in a container, and set the Fire-Calling Staff beside it.

While Balder was busy, Bologue stood anxiously to the side, berating himself, "Why didn't I think of this?"

Bologue felt it was his responsibility.

"From the beginning, in our understanding, Aimou's interests conflicted with the teacher's. The teacher needed Alice's Philosopher's Stone, and giving it to Aimou would undoubtedly cause irreversible damage... namely death."

The Ether's glow flickered as Balder spoke and began his operations. Unlike Belli, his Secret Energy wasn't from the Secret Initiation School, so for operating the Alchemy Matrix, he needed instruments, which undoubtedly slowed him down.

"With this, we all feel that Aimou is one of us, not aligned with the teacher.

But now, maybe they are together; Aimou has been assisting Teda, even under the Delusional identity."

Balder's words accelerated the growth of doubt.

All of Aimou's suspicious actions replayed before Bologue's eyes, including the insinuating words from last night.

He couldn't understand why he made such a mistake.

Balder noticed Bologue's conflicted expression and consoled, "It's okay, everyone experiences something that blinds their eyes."

"Like the teacher, driven by the desire to revive Alice, completely ignoring the ominous risks, which is the same case for you.

It's the same for Belli too; you both focused too much on the immediate, ignoring other things."

"You're saying I was deceived by Aimou?" Bologue asked.

"Not exactly deceived," Balder surprisingly laughed at this moment, "Bologue, have you ever had a girlfriend?"

Balder's question left Bologue speechless. Thinking back on his short yet long life, besides a relatively smooth childhood, the rest was all about fighting or heading towards fighting.

"You mean?"

Bologue wasn't foolish; he understood Balder's implication. Thinking about that result left Bologue's mind blank for a second.

"That's right, Bologue, congratulations, after all these years, your blood is still hot, your heart beats strongly, it's a good thing, at least showing your mindset is youthful!"

Balder, amidst his busy work, didn't forget to give Bologue a thumbs up, "You didn't do anything wrong, she probably didn't deceive you... perhaps you were just overwhelmed by emotions. Even experts can't avoid this, as you are a human of flesh and blood, not a cold machine."

"But that's where the trouble lies, what will you do next?" Balder mumbled to himself.

The Ether's glow flickered continuously; Bologue couldn't understand Balder's operation and could only wait on the side.

The machine beside started printing, producing two pages. Balder stacked them together under a strong light.

"What's the result?" Bologue asked.

Balder didn't speak but raised the pages high; Bologue approached to see the intricate arrays inscribed, most of them overlapping one by one.

The result was obvious.

Bologue's heart turned cold, murmuring, "Why did she do this? Does she not know Teda's intention?"

When the hypothesis turned into reality, the momentary impact left Bologue somewhat dazed.

"Maybe this is exactly what Aimou wants?" Balder tossed the pages into the shredder, watching them turn into shreds.

"What she wants?"

"Life is indeed precious, but there are always things that make you risk everything," Balder continued, "Everyone has an intense desire for something; as long as this wish can be fulfilled, even dying doesn't matter, just like the relationship between alchemists and Secret Sources."

Throughout, Balder was the witness acting as an observer; he saw cold, serious experts also smile and a neurotic minister actually have a gentle side.

"You are the person who knows Aimou best, you should be able to guess."

Balder leaned against the side, contemplating how to wrap it up: leave it to Bologue to deal with everything or broadcast first to arrest Aimou.

Fortunately, everything was handled promptly, curbing the disaster before it erupted.

Bologue slowly lowered his head, remembering the earliest times spent with Aimou, comprehending what Aimou wanted.

In this context, her wish seemed really small.

The sudden sound of the door opening interrupted Bologue's thoughts; at the doorway, Belli appeared in sleepwear, panting heavily, looking at him in horror.

Without speaking, Bologue understood the worst had happened.

Belli shouted.

"Aimou is missing!"

Chapter 383: The Child

Aimou disappeared at this critical moment.

Balder panicked and suddenly stood up, questioning, "How is it possible? Without your permission, the Cultivation Room wouldn't let Aimou go!"

He dared to investigate leisurely because Aimou was bound by the Cultivation Room, she had nowhere to escape, and Balder only needed to wait for the results calmly.

But now Aimou is missing, right in front of their eyes, silently.

"Didn't the Cultivation Room respond?" Balder didn't understand.

"No," Belli shook her head, "But I've already reported the issue to the Decision Room."

"Do you think the Cultivation Room can be easily interfered with?" Bologue calmly asked.

"No... it can't, unless it's Defender level power, otherwise ordinary power cannot affect the Cultivation Room." Belli replied.

Bologue asked again, "And what about the Devil?"

The Devil emerged, making the atmosphere even heavier. Even if they were unwilling to admit it, they all vaguely sensed that sinister will lurking in the shadows.

"The Devil cannot directly interfere with the world." Belli said.

"But they can indirectly interfere, through tempting enticements, some erroneous decision, or even... a small favor."

Bologue felt deeply about the Devil's power; these bastards seemed omnipotent within the rules, whether it was granting strength or pointing directions, they could even conjure a chilled bottle of orange juice from thin air.

Like a Curse, Bologue suddenly realized, no matter how he tried to avoid it, everything still came to this point.

"Did you see Aimou last night?" Bologue continued to ask.

"Yes, she seemed peculiar, suddenly gave me a hug..."

Belli's voice gradually faded, as Bologue recalled his conversation with Aimou last night. He thought it was just a normal farewell, but upon further reflection, all his questions were deferred by Aimou using a promise for the next day.

"No one can force her out of the Cultivation Room," Bologue murmured, "This isn't a sudden accident, but a long-concealed plan."

"What exactly is Aimou up to? Doesn't she know what the teacher intends to do?"

Belli couldn't understand; she had tried every way to protect this young apprentice, yet the biggest breach appeared within Aimou herself.

"Of course she knows what Teda intends to do, and from the beginning, she was in league with Teda," Bologue said, "Aimou is also one of the Delusional."

Belli was stunned in place, evidently unable to comprehend everything Bologue said.

"From the start, we misunderstood Aimou's intentions. She is Teda's creation, Teda's product, from the very beginning Aimou's desire was to get Teda's recognition."

Bologue had discussed these things with Teda before.

"Like a dog, it obeys your commands, it doesn't mean the dog is clever, it just knows that by doing so, you will pet it, Aimou is the same. Aimou might not like Alchemy at all, it was just a means to get Teda's recognition."

For instance, assisting Teda in reviving Alice..."

"For this damned recognition, a bit of distorted paternal love, doing such things?" Belli slumped in the chair, looking up, "This sounds too stupid."

"It's indeed foolish, but also quite reasonable, theoretically she's only three years old," Bologue stated earnestly, "In her short life, most of her time was spent with Teda."

Aimou is actually just a child... an precocious and cunning child."

Bologue slowed down his speech, recalling Teda's conflicting emotions towards Aimou, refusing to see her as his daughter, yet unable to help himself from pouring emotions into her.

If he were Aimou, how would he think?

"Machines too have feelings, you don't understand why your parents don't love you, clearly it's their mistake, yet you think this mistake stems from yourself, looking for ways to please them to gain attention and love, much like... like an obedient dog."

Bologue said this and fell silent.

Raising her fist, Belli pounded the table, "I know the teacher well, he already opposed the Order Bureau head-on, going to extremes, under such circumstances, Aimou won't get what she wants."

"What if Aimou finds out that even so, she can't make Teda notice her?" Bologue asked softly, and the image of the Devil flashed in his mind.

Bologue answered himself, "Become a precocious, cunning and rebellious child."

Taking deep breaths repeatedly, Belli regained calm, the previous panic was gone, she returned to being composed, crossed her legs, and issued orders.

"Balder, go notify the Field Operations Department, report the latest situation to them, and inform them to establish the Heart Core Net."

Belli decisively made one decision after another, now she indeed resembled somewhat of a department head, even though she was now dressed in pajamas.

"Bologue, come with me."

Belli didn't explain, leading Bologue swiftly to her office.

"Have you come up with some strategy?"

This sounded somewhat unbelievable, but Belli gave Bologue the feeling she was holding all the cards.

Belli sneered, "I'm the teacher's best apprentice."

As she spoke, she opened the office cabinet and took out a strange device, a roughly crafted glove with a dial on the back of the hand, somewhat resembling a compass structure.

"Junior sister is still too inexperienced, good thing I'm a bit more skilled."

Belli placed the glove on Bologue's left hand, and as Bologue injected Ether into it, the needle began to turn. After a brief shake, it stabilized, pointing in a certain direction.

"Did you implant a tracker in your junior sister?"

The moment the needle turned, Bologue understood what it was. He could hardly believe it; at such a critical moment, Belli, who seemed the most unreliable, was the most dependable.

"You always have to avoid accidents, don't you?" Belli continued rifling through the cabinet, "I only did it because I was afraid the teacher would sneak into the Cultivation Room and cause a conflict, but I never expected things to turn out like this."

"Nevertheless, it did work."

A bunch of keys was tossed to Bologue next, with labels and nameplates on them.

"These are the keys to the warehouse. There's a batch of Alchemy Armament meant for the Tenth Group there. You can take whatever you need, arm yourself, and then immediately go after Aimou."

Bologue could hardly believe how generous Belli was. She didn't notice the change in his gaze as she was too tense, her head almost about to explode.

"Wait! Bologue!"

Belli suddenly shouted, making Bologue stop.

"Damn it, I handed all my defensive equipment over to Aimou. If she resists you, it will be incredibly troublesome for you to handle." Belli almost wanted to punch herself.

"Don't hold back, Bologue. Use all your strength to deal with her. Don't worry about whether Aimou will die or not. I specifically installed an emergency protection measure for her. If she encounters a fatal injury, her Constant Motion Core will seal along with her Mind Projection."

"You really are good to your junior sister!" Bologue couldn't help but ask, "How many upgrades exactly did you do on her?"

"If she learned any fighting techniques, just with her alloy limbs, she could crush a street full of Demons." Even speaking of this, Belli had a hint of pride in her voice.

All the past events converged, causing Belli to place excessive emotional investment in Aimou. To avoid that terrible future, Belli did everything she could.

But all those enhancements turned into obstacles!

"There's nothing more to tell you. The ritual might start soon, go act now!" Belli urged.

Bologue gripped the keys, turned around, and rushed out of the office. He hadn't gone far before he saw Belli chase after him, shouting at Bologue.

"Bring her back!"

There was no need for a response now, just action. Bologue sped up, and to save time, he even used Ethereal Amplification.

In just a few minutes, Bologue reached the warehouse, an area Belli had taken him to once before, so the route was still somewhat familiar. He opened the warehouse door, and the heavy crates were lined up together.

The boxes contained Alchemy Armament that Bologue had only seen on lists before. He knew that mastering unfamiliar Alchemy Armament took time, and he didn't have much of it, plus multiple Alchemy Armaments would increase Ether consumption.

Bologue selected quite a few consumable Alchemy Armaments, like various Alchemy Warheads, which only required minimal Ether activation to produce powerful destruction.

In his previous clash with Gray, it was these kinds of consumable Alchemy Armaments that kept Bologue unable to lift his head.

In no time, Bologue armed himself to the teeth, and with just the Alchemy Warheads, he took more than a handful, roughly estimating equal to half his year's salary.

With Whistle in place, ready to connect to the Heart Core Net, Bologue dashed to the parking lot outside the Order Bureau.

Bologue wasn't sure where Aimou was precisely, it could be the Great Rift, or it could be the outskirts, he couldn't afford to gamble, so he found the car issued by Geoffrey, with a bright blue coating.

Sitting in the driver's seat, Bologue started the car, and the engine let out a pleasing cheer.

Thanking himself for waking up early enough, the streets of Opus weren't crowded yet, the road was unexpectedly spacious, enough for him to race.

Flooring the accelerator, the car flew out of the parking lot like a sapphire arrow, hitting the streets viciously.

Bologue followed the needle's direction, speeding down the street, when suddenly a wave of unease swept over him.

He looked up towards the direction from which the wave came, which was precisely where the needle was pointing.

"Aimou..."

Bologue watched helplessly as a blazing white storm rose up violently.

Pure white light roared through the streets like a flood, engulfing everything, even the sapphire arrow vanished instantly into the pure light.

A brilliant and serene white covered the path of destiny, splitting it in two. After running parallel for a distance, one path dimmed and vanished, while the other continued extending and branching.

As the pure white light gradually dissipated, a familiar voice rang beside his ears.

"What did you say? I didn't say anything."

Serey slowly raised his head, looking at Bologue with a weary expression, confused about what had gotten into him.

Chapter 384: Going Against the Current

The dazzling white halo still lingered in his vision like receding tides, as Bologue stared straight at Serey, his fists clenched involuntarily, and his breathing became strained and heavy.

Bologue felt like an overloaded machine, with countless thoughts moving forward simultaneously, branching, annihilating, weaving new trajectories, continuing onward.

"Are you okay?"

Serey looked at Bologue in confusion, and Bologue responded with the same puzzled gaze.

This was the second time Bologue had seen Serey, but from Serey's perspective, it was the first time they had met today.

Serey didn't remember the reversal.

Bologue nervously looked towards Bode, who was mopping the floor, and Bode seemed as if everything had happened...

Only he remembered what had happened before.

"Good morning, Serey," Bologue downed the orange juice in one gulp and dashed out of the Undying Club, "Goodbye, Serey!"

Serey was stunned for two seconds, her voice echoing from afar.

"Damn it! Aren't you going to have even a bite of my lovingly prepared breakfast?"

Bologue sprinted through the streets, his pace swift, his gaze catching his swinging arms, reading the time on his wristwatch.

At this moment, the sky was just beginning to lighten, the city not yet awakened, Balder should be researching those Alchemy Equipment, and Belli should just be getting up, then she would find Aimou missing...

Clutching his head, Bologue felt a headache, then a few scarlet drops trickled down; he had a nosebleed.

He wiped the blood with his cuff, and the dark skyscrapers in the distance were now within reach.

Bologue's mind flashed back to the last scene, fully armed, driving the new car issued by Geoffrey, recklessly charging through the early morning streets, following the pointer, and soon he saw...

The ascending dazzling white light, expanding outward like a storm, engulfing everything around it, and even Bologue was not spared.

After the intense light, Bologue returned here, in the damned Undying Club, eating Serey's lovingly prepared breakfast.

Images began to overlap and flicker, not long ago, in a seemingly hallucinated scene, Sai Zong was speaking to him about those mysterious hints.

The fork in the road of destiny.

What on earth was going on?

Countless questions swirled endlessly in Bologue's mind, but he wasn't one to be trapped by thoughts; he preferred to act while contemplating everything.

Now it was evident that time had returned to the moment he set out, with everything reverting, overlapped, echoing with bouts of laughter.

Before he reached the Order Bureau, Bologue had sorted out his thoughts.

He was not the one determining the Time Reversal but a victim affected by it; from his passive reversal, he could perceive this point, and as for the instigator of this anomaly, Bologue had already guessed who it was.

Excluding all sorts of possible coincidences, the only option left was Aimou; perhaps it wasn't only her, maybe she and Teda did all this together.

If Aimou had the ability to evade the Cultivation Room's gaze, she already had the chance to escape earlier, so why choose to leave at this moment?

Was it because Teda had already prepared the resurrection ritual, thus summoning her in some way?

Yes, in the last reversal, Belli had implanted a tracker in Aimou, so did Teda also set up some device in the Constant Motion Core that was linked to Aimou?

"Aimou, you're quite the master of disguise," Bologue sighed inwardly.

Entering the Order Bureau, barging into the Sublimation Furnace Core, Bologue sprinted all the way, effortlessly hijacking a staff member.

This unfortunate guy seemed to have just gotten up too, still holding coffee, and Bologue charged over aggressively; before he could dodge, the Silver Hand had tightly wound around him.

"Which room does Belli live in?"

The man was dumbfounded; having worked for so long, he'd never seen anyone dare to commit such acts within the Cultivation Room, yet curiously, this guy had actually penetrated deep into the Sublimation Furnace Core.

Bologue's voice was deafening, making him tremble in fear; hearing that someone was looking for trouble with Belli, he muttered to himself.

"Minister, you've been causing trouble for so many years; finally, you're getting your comeuppance, haha."

But after laughing it off, he thought, although his minister's character might be bad, she was still his minister, and ever since Belli took office, their employee benefits had been steadily improving as well.

Previously, those in the Field Operations Department came to apply for equipment, each acting like a lord, pestering endlessly; since Belli's strong intervention, their status had also risen along with it.

"No way! I would never betray the minister!" he shouted.

"Huh?"

Bologue turned his head, looking at the unlucky person hoisted up behind him. What was this guy thinking? But seeing his appearance of sacrifice, Bologue vaguely understood.

"Field Operations Department, Rupert's Tail Special Operations Group, Bologue Lazarus! I'm on an important mission! Please cooperate!" Bologue forced himself to endure his inner anxiety and communicated with this unlucky person.

Silver Hand raised the emblem of the Special Operations Group; the unlucky person's mind went blank for a few seconds.

It's over.

It's completely over this time, Minister! The issue has been exposed! Someone from the Field Operations Department is here to investigate!

"I'll tell! I'll tell everything! It's all the Minister's doing, I had no choice!" he cried, "I'm just an accountant! She told me to do false accounting, I had to do it, she embezzled the public funds, I knew nothing about it!"

Afraid that Bologue wouldn't let him go, the accountant shouted again, "I have a safe in my room with all the evidence against the Minister!"

Thinking of this, the accountant felt fortunate for his cleverness; otherwise, following the Minister would surely lead to a tragic end.

"What are you talking about!"

Now it was Bologue's turn to be stunned, having brought an unlucky person over, he felt like he had unwittingly stumbled into a major scandal.

"Uh? You aren't here to arrest the Minister?" the accountant asked.

"I just wanted to ask for directions!"

The two fell silent for a few seconds simultaneously.

"Go straight, turn right, the Minister's room is at the end of the corridor. With the Special Operations Group emblem, the Cultivation Room shouldn't stop you."

The accountant's voice suddenly steadied.

Due to its special nature, the Field Operations Department has permissions a level higher than ordinary staff. Bologue's second-level permissions enable him to access most places within the Cultivation Room.

"So, those words earlier..."

The accountant wanted to say more, but Bologue threw him aside, and his figure gradually disappeared into the corridor, with his words echoing nearby.

"After this is over, I'll contact you."

Hearing this, the accountant's face turned pale, and he pondered whether he could escape by resigning today.

"Go straight... turn right..."

Bologue followed the accountant's directions, quickly moving in the employee quarters. With Ethereal Amplification, he was fast as a shadow.

Never expected, by mistake, he had grabbed dirt on Belli, and this intelligence might be very useful.

Bologue timed his actions; in the last time reversal, after reaching the Sublimation Furnace Core, first was the conversation with Balder, comparing traces, wasting lots of time, then Belli's appearance.

Accumulating experience from the last time reversal, Bologue could save time spent on conversing with Balder, and during this period, Belli might still be sleeping.

Bologue seized precious time; if he was fast enough, he might find Aimou before this time reversal.

Without slowing down at all, Bologue slammed against the door. In the past, he could even break through iron doors, but under the Cultivation Room's protection, it didn't budge, though the loud noise still woke someone sleeping inside.

She slowly climbed out of bed, walked out of the bedroom, and angrily pushed the door open, then saw an even angrier Bologue.

"Good... Good morning."

Belli froze, someone who absolutely shouldn't be here suddenly appeared right here.

"Aimou is missing."

Time was tight, Bologue tried to speak concisely, "We're trapped in time reversal, now it's the second reversal. Give me your office's pass, I need to get the tracker."

Belli, perhaps not fully awake, or maybe shocked by Bologue's words, immediately realized, the implantation of the tracker was something only she knew, yet now Bologue knew.

"Did I tell you about the tracker in the last reversal?" Belli asked.

"Yes, it looks like a glove, with a pointer indicating Aimou's direction." Bologue immediately replied.

Belli said no more, swiftly returning to the bedroom, after some clanking, she hurriedly handed Bologue the pass and a string of warehouse keys.

"If I gave you the tracker in the last reversal, then you should know what this is."

Belli heavily placed the keys in Bologue's hand, staring into his eyes, continued, "There are things I should've said in the last reversal."

"I understand."

Facing Belli's gaze, Bologue promised firmly.

Chapter 385: Road Rage

Second time reversal.

Bologue didn't go to the warehouse to get the Alchemy Armament. First, it was too time-consuming, and second, Bologue still didn't know Aimou's whereabouts. He decided that in this time reversal, his primary goal was to find Aimou.

Once the target location was confirmed, in subsequent time reversals, Bologue could save more time on the road, eliminating the need to search back and forth. Another thing was that Bologue didn't know what kind of battles he would encounter next.

He regarded this time reversal as a trial-and-error, and only after confirming Aimou's location and the specific threat would he arm himself.

The azure car shot out into the street, and in the early morning, there weren't many vehicles on the road. Bologue floored the accelerator, racing forward.

Glancing at his wristwatch, he realized he gained a lot of time, and then followed the directions of the tracker, the car speeding through intersections, advancing along the straight road.

He encountered several red lights, yet Bologue unhesitatingly accelerated through. Some cars barely missed him; the feelings of the other drivers were unknown, but Bologue could hear horns blaring constantly, as if cursing at him.

Bologue was racing against time, and also against Opus's morning rush hour. He had to be faster, otherwise, the citizens waking up, traveling, and the crowded streets would tightly restrict Bologue.

Faster, even faster!

He gripped the steering wheel, his gaze shifting back and forth between the road conditions and his watch.

Following the pointer's guidance, Bologue gradually approached the destination. Murky fog rose, like a pillar of mist holding up the sky, standing behind the concrete and steel.

The Great Rift.

Bologue had anticipated this. According to the Sixth Group's tracking, Teda disappeared with the Alchemy Workshop, so Aimou should have found Teda by now. They might be wandering in the junction, or perhaps in a narrow crevice.

This was a good start. Bologue fully utilized each time reversal without any waste, and this is what an expert should look like.

"Make way!"

Bologue rolled down the car window, yelling and honking, like a rampant bandit.

He charged out of the street and drove onto the rugged road, reaching the outskirts of the Great Rift.

Dust flew up, the car bumped continuously, and the brand new car turned old in an instant. With Bologue's extreme driving, it collided with other vehicles several times, and the once-sleek surface was now covered with mottled scratches.

If Geoffrey saw this, he'd surely have a heart attack. Likewise, Palmer would too; he'd drag Bologue out from the driver's seat and punch and kick him.

Strictly speaking, this car was allocated to Palmer. Previously, Palmer had pestered Geoffrey, saying a dignified field staff riding a motorcycle on duty was too shabby and needed something cooler.

Geoffrey refused, saying there was no need for a car in the Great Rift where they were on duty.

After the raid at the venue, due to their excellent performance and subsequent dire situation, Geoffrey thought it over and decided to get them a new car.

The screeching sound continued, and the early workers saw this roaring metal beast. Its driver must have road rage, as it lurched to a stop at the Great Rift's edge, accompanied by a dull thud, and black smoke rose from under the hood.

Bologue casually pushed open the car door, ignoring the sparks igniting, and without a glance, briskly walked towards the Great Rift.

Anyway, after the next time reversal, the car would be reset, so he had no reason to care about those things.

He checked the pointer and then his watch again, realizing some issues, like this time reversal being postponed.

On the way here, Bologue accidentally knocked down a streetlight because he noticed the last reversal's node was drawing nearer, creating a much tense feeling.

But when the clock hand passed that node, the anticipated time reversal didn't occur; the reset node was postponed.

"Was it your doing, Aimou?" Bologue muttered to himself.

This time reversal was most likely caused by Aimou and Teda, and they would be the determiners of the time reversal, being the ones who postponed the reset node.

"Is it related to resurrecting Alice?"

Bologue already realized Aimou's true wish. He did consider Aimou as a human just like him, but Bologue hadn't noticed another point.

Aimou was just a child. A child's world is simple, and wanting to gain her father's love and recognition, she might inevitably do some foolish things.

Like cooperating with Teda to resurrect Alice, which sounded a bit far-fetched, choosing self-destruction for a bit of affection.

But Bologue found it not impossible. He had seen too many similar fools, who, for some inexplicable reasons, offered their souls and took the wrong path.

One thing Bologue was certain of was that this incident definitely involved the Devil, as these unscrupulous merchants would never miss a suitable target client like Aimou.

The nearby workers watched as this furious madman Bologue seemed to be deep in thought, and then suddenly stepped back a few paces, accelerating, running.

"Wait!"

A passionate worker tried to stop Bologue, but he couldn't keep up with Bologue's speed at all.

With a running start, Bologue leapt up like a cannonball, diving directly into the dense fog within the Great Rift, leaving the workers staring at the spot where Bologue disappeared.

"Is this... is this suicide?" someone wondered.

"I've seen suicides many times, but it's the first time seeing such a furious one... what a nice car."

Another person looked at the battered car forlornly; despite Bologue's violent driving, it was clear the car was new.

"It's nothing, after all, this is Opus, and everyone's under a lot of pressure."

One of them, with a worldly demeanor, showed no concern for Bologue's suicide.

The others agreed, nodding their heads.

Yes, these days, everyone is under a lot of pressure.

What they didn't notice was Bologue's figure plummeting rapidly in the fog, followed by the grappling hook flinging out and embedding into the rock face.

Bologue swung in mid-air a few times, landing steadily like a falcon on the aerial corridor.

The aerial corridor trembled a few times, then stabilized. Bologue lifted his head, the Face of Horror was already on his face, his breathing becoming deep and oppressive, like a bloodthirsty beast.

"Is it even lower?"

Bologue took a few steps, observing as he followed the guidance of the pointer, looking below into the layers of the Sea of Mist.

A faint wave of anxiety washed over him, and Bologue immediately flipped out from the aerial corridor, continuing to fall and again tethering himself to the edge of the rock face.

As he descended, the wave of sensation grew stronger, until a distinct Ether reaction came from deep within the Sea of Mist.

Bologue could be certain that was the location where Aimou was, even the pointer indicated this.

Letting go, Bologue plummeted straight down, piercing through the dense fog, where he saw dazzling light, followed by Ether surging, stirring up a storm.

The residue left after burning danced like ashes in the wind, colliding against the crimson flesh, while the grotesque flesh continuously expanded, almost covering the entire cliff face.

The intersecting corridors were also enveloped in flesh, and amid the dripping blood, it resembled the skeleton of some monster, protruding one by one from the rock face.

The grappling hook caught onto the upper corridor, and Bologue hung in mid-air, observing the frenzied battlefield from afar.

The wave of anxiety now turned into a heart resonance, squeezing Bologue's blood, a sensation too familiar to him.

"Immortal Heart."

Thus, Bologue could ascertain that the Immortal Heart was within.

As encountered at the venue, the entire cliff face also got engulfed and assimilated by flesh; vaguely, a few figures could still be seen traversing within, and Bologue did not think they were Aimou and Teda.

Bologue pondered on what to do next, but suddenly a blazing sun rose in this abyssal place.

The light did not erupt from within the flesh, but from another corner of the Great Rift; at this moment, Bologue glanced at the tracking device on the back of his hand, the pointer also began to shift, not pointing toward the flesh.

Aimou is not here?

Bologue had no time to think, the blazing white light dispelled the fog, crushed through layer upon layer of rock, shattering corridors one by one, under the annihilating force, time too would halt, reverse.

Blue pupils stared directly at the radiant light, until it completely engulfed Bologue.

The track extending forward dimmed, vanished; before its complete demise, it branched into new paths again.

After a brief disorientation, Bologue regained control of his bodily sensations, consciousness gradually awakening, he blinked forcefully, familiar scenes came into view.

"What did you say..."

"Shut up."

Bologue interrupted Serey's gibberish, already heard too many times... although it seemed to Serey this was his first time speaking.

An iron taste flooded his mouth, Bologue touched his nose, blood dripped down, staining the corner of his clothes.

The second time reversal ended.

The third time reversal began.

Chapter 386: The Same Choice

The third time reversal.

The sound of commotion faintly drifted in from outside the door. Belli rubbed her eyes, glanced at the time, and wondered who on earth was making noise so early in the morning.

Annoyed as she was, Belli didn't plan to get up and stop it. The past few days had exhausted her, and now she was dead tired, keen on seizing every moment of precious sleep.

She buried her head under the covers, hoping it would reduce the noise interference. However, the noise didn't diminish in the slightest, but instead grew louder and nearer, until Belli couldn't take it anymore and sprang up from her bed.

Every sector had a dormitory area for subordinate employees, which meant all the residents here were staff of the Sublimation Furnace Core. Belli got up with a fierce look, ready to see which daredevil was disturbing the minister's sound sleep.

As Belli stepped out of the bedroom, a deafening roar echoed, followed by a series of violent knocks on the door, as if the Death God itself were pounding to claim a soul.

When she opened the door, Belli was ready to burst into rage but saw Bologue standing there with a somber expression, emanating a chilling aura that immediately extinguished her anger.

Bologue's complexion wasn't looking good, with bloodshot eyes, a red-tipped nose, and fresh traces of blood around it.

Though it was early morning, Bologue had the exhaustion of someone returning from a great battle.

"We're caught in a time reversal. From my perception, this is the third time reversal, likely triggered by Aimou and Teda..."

Bologue quickly summarized the information he knew, then stood at the door waiting for Belli's response.

Belli seemed a bit stunned. After rubbing her eyes repeatedly, she gazed at Bologue in horror, then without saying anything, dashed back into the bedroom to search for keys.

Bologue exhaled in relief with a hint of appreciation. Even after countless reversals, Belli would still make the same decision.

"Since this is already the third time reversal, I will..." Belli started to say, but was interrupted by Bologue.

"Let's not waste words; after all, everything that needed saying was covered in the last time reversal, right?"

Bologue repeated Belli's words with a grim smile. Belli was momentarily at a loss, then smiled as well, but her smile soon froze.

No words were necessary anymore.

This was already Bologue's third time down this route. With the experience from the second time reversal, he could save much time on the way. He only needed to further determine Aimou's location once inside the Great Rift.

Additionally, from the last time reversal, it became evident that the reset node for the time reversal had been delayed, allowing Bologue more time for action.

Belli gave Bologue a gentle push, and without looking back, Bologue left. Watching his disappearing figure, Belli felt conflicted. Bologue felt the same; even though it was their third meeting, he couldn't help but admire Belli's decisive choice.

From Belli's perspective, Bologue seemed like a madman by suddenly pounding her door and ranting about time reversals.

During the second time reversal, Bologue was ready to threaten Belli using fake accounts and embezzlement, or even drag her to the office without much talk.

But to Bologue's surprise, Belli showed absolute trust in him.

She not only trusted him but also had unwavering trust in herself, in every version of Belli in each time reversal.

Belli understood and believed in herself, anticipating all possibilities. Like a consensus, innumerable Bellis across timelines would make the same choice.

Trust Bologue and provide assistance.

Things already spoken countless times in countless time reversals now needed only action.

Though Bologue had already provided answers, Belli impulsively pushed open Aimou's door and stared at the empty room.

Her mood dropped a bit, and who knew what Belli was thinking. Fortunately, she didn't stew for long, soon realizing another thing.

"Does that mean, Bologue, that you can retain memories during the time reversal?" Belli murmured to herself.

Bologue's hurried demeanor revealed that the time span of the reversal was very brief, forcing him to race against time. During this brief period, only someone like Bologue, who could retain memories, could act freely, while she would completely forget everything after the next time reversal, repeating the original path.

No... this cannot happen.

With trembling eyes, Belli bit her nails hard. She couldn't just wait idly; she had to do something within this limited time.

Once the third time reversal ends, everything except Bologue will be reset to the beginning.

Belli believed the Belli of the fourth time reversal would still firmly assist Bologue, yet leaving Bologue alone to shoulder this was undoubtedly a huge burden for him.

"Think, Belli. What else can you do?"

Belli quickly searched through all relevant information in her mind, and amongst thousands of fragmented pieces, one almost forgotten figure emerged.

Yes, them.

Belli remembered those almost forgotten individuals.

So close, yet so far away.

She believed that this group would not be affected by the time reversal. After all, they were so mysterious. To many staff who knew about them, they seemed like the Devil, capable of anything.

It's time to seek their help.

But... will they offer a hand?

Belli felt a headache approaching. She knew she had erred, investing emotions in Aimou that she shouldn't have. But Belli didn't mind; she felt there was nothing wrong with it all.

So she would provide Aimou with so much equipment out of private emotions, assist Bologue, and even hand over the Alchemy Armament of the Tenth Group to Bologue.

But once the event escalated in their eyes, Belli didn't dare to speculate on their intentions. What kind of judgment would they make?

After all, they had no personal feelings for Aimou, who in their eyes was just a research project needing special attention.

Compared to the massive presence of the Order Bureau, everything happening now seemed so trivial and insignificant.

No need to hesitate, solve the immediate issue first, as for them... Belli would find a way later, after all, she's still a minister, right?

After making the decision, Belli almost lunged towards the phone, grabbing the receiver and pressing the digits.

After a brief beeping, Belli spoke rapidly.

"Belli Yiyeta requests a direct connection to the Decision Room."

No sound came from the receiver, but the surrounding environment began to warp and distort, with the solid walls and floor becoming soft, and sharp edges turning smooth and pliant.

Belli sensed eyes on her, unseen figures surrounding her, whispering.

"Identity confirmation, Sublimation Furnace Core Minister, Belli Yiyeta."

A cold, neutral voice sounded from the receiver.

After an irritating wait, a despairing voice came through.

"The Decision Room refuses direct connection."

Belli was silent for a few seconds, then she punched the wall fiercely, her knuckles covered in blood.

"Damn it! Those bastards in the Decision Room!" Belli couldn't help swearing.

Belli always felt the most inhumane system in the Order Bureau was the connection with the Decision Room. As the head of the Order Bureau, these guys always remained so mysterious, lofty, hidden in darkness.

Staff could only wait for a call from the Decision Room, unable to actively contact it. Even a minister like Belli could only have an application channel. If the Decision Room didn't want to see her, she would be rejected like now.

"Damn it, I know someone is listening to this! Listen up, a purposefully unknown time axis disorder event is happening now!"

Belli shouted unwillingly into the receiver.

"Field Staff Bologue Lazarus is handling this. He seems unaffected by Time Reversal and can retain memory. I request the Unshakable beings to assist him in action!"

The other end of the receiver still ticked at a fixed frequency, but soon, the neutral voice spoke again.

"Directive repetition."

"What?"

Belli couldn't understand, had the Decision Room malfunctioned? That would be deadly! Thinking of this, she surprisingly laughed, but the smile was particularly bitter.

"Directive repetition."

The Unshakable beings are activated.

The program is awakening."

Successive reports sounded, leaving Belli stupefied on the spot.

Directive repetition, someone had already requested the activation of the Unshakable beings. Could someone other than Bologue know the cause of the event?

No... it's not that.

Belli suddenly realized what was going on, her whole body losing strength as she collapsed to the ground.

"Oh my God, Belli, you are really stupid."

Belli covered her face, laughing uncontrollably, the laughter becoming increasingly arrogant, shaking on the ground endlessly.

No matter how many times the Time Reversal happens, Belli Yiyeta can make the same decision, firm and unshakable.

She praised herself loudly.

"Well done, Belli!"

...

Second Time Reversal.

Belli watched Bologue disappear from her sight, then sat down on the bed, nervously biting her nails, thinking about what she could do.

But in this Time Reversal like a curse, people like her would only have their memories reset repeatedly. Only those who surpassed the curse could intervene in changes in the future.

Her gaze wandered repeatedly until it landed on the desk phone in the corner, silently sitting there, its red lacquer finish glaring like blood.

Belli was startled awake, remembering those people far away yet close at hand. She rushed over, pressed the digits, grabbed the receiver, and after a brief beep, shouted into the phone.

"Help! Director! Something big has happened!"

Chapter 387: Extraordinary Disaster

Second Time Reversal.

The dome rises high, soft light streaming down from the top like a blazing sun in the sky.

Few within the Order Bureau can come here, but everyone who does, upon seeing this structure, experiences an illusion, mistaking it for a grand cathedral.

On the dome, countless sculptures stand, gathered like descending angels, surrounding and cascading down the walls on all sides to the ground.

But a closer look reveals these sculptures are not angels; they appear to be ordinary humans, each with different faces and poses, varying ages and genders, more akin to a commemorative group of sculptures.

What is even stranger is that these sculptures are inverted on the dome, heads pointing to the earth, numerous as a sea of sand, occupying the entire dome, seemingly extending until they spread across the sky.

Beneath the dome is a bottomless deep well, on the ground outside of it are pneumatic tubes, like steel veins running parallel, finally descending along the well's wall into the darkness below.

This place is not silent; instead, monotonous mechanical sounds constantly echo, countless figures bound to the walls under the dome's shadow.

They are not humans, merely humanoid in appearance, with their heads entirely missing from the mouth up, replaced by an elliptical metal shell, extending wires connecting to the darkness above.

These peculiar entities faithfully execute their duties, working mechanically without rest.

Some act as operators, setting down red receivers, tapping typewriters with mechanical fingers as replacements for their broken human fingers, quickly producing a freshly inked paper.

Rolling up the paper, inserting it into a capsule, placing the capsule into a pneumatic tube, it speeds away under pressure, transported into the well's darkness.

In the dimly lit perimeter, countless tubes intertwine, with huge gears turning slowly, meshing together, the complex machinery in constant motion, seemingly enveloping the building's exterior.

After a brief wait, a neutral, cold voice echoes from below the well.

"Identity confirmed, Belli Yiyeta."

"Application approved."

"Unshakable activated."

"Program awakening."

The voice continues, but it has no effect on the surroundings, as the strange entities keep working, connecting calls, printing documents, integrating them, sending them down the pneumatic tubes as if nothing happened.

But at a certain moment, the sound of chimes halts the busy labors for a second, as if they are waiting for something.

"Time axis disorder event detected."

The voice emanates from the depths of the well.

"Prepare for impact."

Outside, in Oubos, a brilliant white light bursts from the Great Rift, sweeping through streets and buildings, engulfing everyone.

In an instant, it reaches the Lina District, then engulfs the towering Cultivation Room, the pure light seemingly liquefies, roaring into the Cultivation Room.

The power resetting the time axis covers the Curved Path Courtyard, permeates the Deep Nest Courtyard, then the Pillar Courtyard, echoing through various departments.

But as it attempts to reach this place, like rapids meeting a rock, the surging tide is easily split in two.

The external influence continues, until it completely envelops Oubos; at its expansion limit, the light suddenly collapses, reversing to its detonation point.

As it collapses, time flows backward, things twisting rapidly until returning to their origin.

The second time reversal ends.

The third time reversal begins.

Silence lasts for a few seconds, then the neutral voice speaks again.

"Impact ended."

"Inverted Hall self-check begins."

They remain silent, lifting their heads slightly, as if listening for further announcements.

"Self-check complete, independent time axis normal."

Hearing the confirmation, they resume their work as if the recent incident was merely the aftershock of an earthquake, unworthy of note, mechanical fingers tapping incessantly, the only sound in the quiet hall is the repetitive and monotonous noise.

In the absolute darkness beneath the well, several voices converse.

"Program awakened."

"Search the Unshakable list."

The dust-covered list is unearthed, ancient eyes scanning line after line of names.

"Setting search interval... within time axis disorder event range..."

Another voice murmurs.

"Estimate event threat level... estimation complete, begin searching for suitable candidates."

"Search mission concluded, instructions issued."

...

The man stood in front of the coffee machine, making himself a steaming cup of coffee. Such tasks were usually done by his assistant, but he always woke up too early. At the time of his first cup in the morning, his assistant would often still be asleep.

This was something unavoidable. One can't simply expect an assistant to get up early because of one's own habits, the man understood this well.

Blowing on the hot coffee, the man was preparing to enjoy a sip and start the busy day ahead, but just then, the light behind him started flashing.

Suspiciously, the man turned his head, and then the flashing lights began to accelerate. With each flash, the environment around him started to change rapidly.

Initially, he was by the corner with the coffee machine, a single flash landed him in a hallway, followed by an office, a hall, a Sublimation Furnace Core, Crow's Nest...

It wasn't the surroundings that were changing, but his position was shifting with each flash, until the final flash left him in absolute darkness, without the slightest trace of light.

The man showed no sign of panic; his expression remained calm, and he even smoothly took a sip of coffee.

"Urgent Matter 09."

The voice reached his ears, causing no surprise to the man. He was well aware of the Order Bureau's operational mechanisms, knowing those mysterious entities hidden within the Decision Room rarely contact employees directly, but their occasional contacts always signify crucial matters.

They either say nothing or declare disaster.

For this, the man always harbored some peculiar feelings about the Decision Room.

"Number 09, is it?"

The man quickly recalled the event it corresponded to — the time axis disorder incident.

The Order Bureau stands as the largest Extraordinary Organization of the Rhine Alliance, having faced countless dangers since its inception. Many of these dangerous incidents are too unique for conventional solutions.

For example, the Eternal Rotting Land incited by the Crimson Rot Sect, or the Decline Plague sparked by the Order of Truth.

The Order Bureau categorizes and assigns numbers to these unique events, preparing appropriate countermeasures to deploy when necessary.

Just like the time reversal event encountered now.

The man considered himself energetic, capable of working from dawn till dusk and not feeling fatigued the next day. Yet, as a sort of psychological comfort, he couldn't help but drink a few more sips of coffee, striving to maintain his best state.

These urgent matters are the official terms within the Order Bureau; field staff like the man prefer to name them by another term.

Extraordinary Disasters.

Recalling his last time handling such an Extraordinary Disaster, the usually composed man felt his arms subtly trembling, as if yesterday's disaster was still vividly before him.

"Why am I the only one here?"

He looked around and realized he was the only one reporting in. Was he expected to handle it alone?

With no response, the man felt no complaints; the Decision Room was like this — even face-to-face, they seldom address your queries, resembling machines that incessantly issue commands, unquestionable.

Similarly, the man understood that directives from the Decision Room were always absolutely correct; if they activated only him, it indicated he alone was enough for this Extraordinary Disaster.

The man didn't feel relaxed; pressure still lingered in his mind, as dealing with an Extraordinary Disaster, carelessness could lead everything toward a disastrous outcome.

Suddenly, his hand felt as if it was burning, intense pain arose, yet he stably held onto the cup, seeing a brand appear on the back of his hand, depicting the Staff Sword symbolizing authority and power.

"Temporary Permission Granted."

Before the words were finished, another prickling pain emerged, flames encircled the Staff Sword brand as a barrier, blocking everything, refusing any interference.

"Unshakable Permission Granted."

The man gazed at the familiar branded mark on his hand, feeling numerous emotions. He didn't expect to face the time axis disorder incident again; indeed, unlike other Extraordinary Disasters, this one was exceedingly rare, only such unique incidents required an Unshakable.

"Immovable Armor Transport in Progress."

The neutral, cold voice suddenly twisted, akin to a monster slaying the voice's owner, severing his speaking throat.

After the sticky, peculiar noise, a familiar raspy voice echoed.

"Lebius Lovisa."

Lebius felt a chill in his heart, knowing who was speaking to him. His spirit tensed involuntarily.

The voice whispered beside his ear.

"I saw shadows of the Devil and King's Shield Guard..."

Lebius remained silent for a long time, then turned over his hand, the Staff Sword brand came into view.

"I understand," he replied.

Before the words faded, the darkness collapsed. After numerous flashes, when the surroundings became clear, Lebius found himself back at the coffee corner.

Everything just seemed an illusion, yet the brand on his hand was unmistakably clear.

Chapter 388: Temporal Axis Disorder

Putting down the coffee cup, Lebius stared at the mark on the back of his hand for a long time, finally couldn't help but sigh deeply.

Facing this unforeseen Extraordinary Disaster early in the morning, even Lebius felt a sense of exhaustion, but there was no choice, this was the work of the Field Operations Department.

Every day is unknown, one second he's drinking coffee, studying the upcoming work, the next he's swept into the storm of disaster.

This happens too often.

The trembling vibrations came, and Lebius looked towards the side door, a bluish light instantly covered the door panel, and then the doorknob turned, the visitor pushed open a piece of darkness.

The visitor was human, an adult male in a blue uniform, his cheeks hidden under the brim of his hat, picked up a pitch-black briefcase, and silently placed it at the doorway.

From start to finish, the visitor didn't speak, and Lebius didn't even make eye contact with him. After placing the box, the visitor turned and left, stepping once again into the dark door.

But when he turned, Lebius saw the emblem printed on the back of the uniform.

A wide-open door, within it, a swirling vortex.

As the door closed, the flickering bluish light on it disappeared, and Lebius picked up the black box, supporting himself with a cane as he returned to his office.

Lebius moved quickly, having experienced a time axis disorder incident before and being one of the main participants in the event; ever since, he has been listed among the Unshakable.

Every Unshakable has experienced a time axis disorder incident and played a leading role in it.

In simple terms, they are experts in dealing with time axis disorder incidents.

Compared to other Extraordinary Disasters, time axis disorder seems not so fatal, but time is such a bizarre and unpredictable concept, let alone the Extraordinary Disasters triggered by it.

The true horror of time axis disorder is in its ability to make a certain event repeat continuously within a period, until it becomes what the initiator desires.

For example, the time axis disorder that attempted to destroy the Order Bureau, which Lebius had experienced.

The first round of attack fails; then time reverses to begin the second round of attack. With the experience gained from the first round, the second round of attack becomes even more terrifying, repeating until the goal is achieved and time reversal ends.

Another lethal point is that the time axis disorder event may have already occurred, and happened many times, yet apart from the fixed initiator, the vast majority of people cannot retain their memories in this jumbled timeline.

It's like cheating.

Lebius was very aware of this, so he quickened his pace; no one knew whether the reset point of time reversal was the next second or the next minute. The sooner he donned the Immovable Armor, the more greatly his security increased.

Opening the black case, inside were only two items: a file related to the mission, the ink on it still fresh, a gentle wipe could smudge it away.

The other item was an iron box. Lebius opened it, inside rolled a grayish-white, mercury-like liquid. Without a moment's hesitation, he reached out and touched the liquid.

The moment of contact, the liquid crawled along Lebius's palm, spreading up his arm and over his entire body, then easily seeped into his body.

The process was quick, but also brought unbearable pain. Lebius endured without changing his expression until the Immovable Armor fully covered him; subsequently, the grayish-white glow flickered and dimmed.

Lebius took a deep breath; in his senses, something appeared out of thin air, like a flowing stream slowly approaching, trying to penetrate his body, but the surface of his body radiated a grayish-white shield, easily parting and brushing past this stream-like force.

The Immovable Armor was not a physical armor but a conceptual armor on a mythical level.

In the time reversal, all materials would be reset, and conventional physical armor would also be affected, while the Immovable Armor directly acted on the soul level.

Its effect was as its name implied, making the protected unshakable, allowing Lebius to retain memory in each time reversal.

"Is it the King's Secret Sword? Logically, they shouldn't have the ability to launch time offensives anymore..."

Lebius wondered, reaching for the document nearby.

When a time axis disorder event occurs, the Decision Room first selects the field staff within the range of the time axis disorder, followed by those with experience handling the disaster.

Through various screenings, Lebius was selected.

He opened the file and quickly read through it.

As the command core of the Order Bureau, the Decision Room itself possesses an "immovable" attribute, unaffected by the time axis disorder, something the King's Secret Sword didn't expect, which is why their time offensives in the later stages of the secret war failed.

The Decision Room observes everyone, from past to future, eternally standing amidst countless reversals.

Since the first time reversal affected the Order Bureau, the Decision Room had already detected and begun recording, during the second reversal, Belli reported the situation, and now Lebius was in the third time reversal.

"Bologue Lazarus... Why am I not surprised at all?"

Looking at the name of his team member on the document, Lebius smiled and shook his head.

Putting down the document, Lebius pondered the current situation; Bologue did not possess the immovable power, yet he retained his memory in the time reversal, and he clearly knew what was happening, so Lebius had to meet him first.

But given Bologue's way of acting, he was probably on his way to kill someone by now, going after him would be a waste of time, so their meeting had to be postponed to the fourth time reversal.

Lebius squinted, then picked up the phone and dialed a number.

"I need the action records of the Sixth Group and the Ninth Group, as well as their current locations..."

The pneumatic tube rang out in sequence, and before Lebius finished speaking, the document had already been delivered to his office, as if there was a time difference between the outside world and the Decision Room, with the latter always a little ahead.

Lebius opened the document; this matter involved the Devil and the King's Shield Guard, hoping to turn the tide with just himself seemed dim; he needed to gather all available forces...

Having a vague framework, Lebius reclined his chair, relaxing for a rare moment, rubbing the mark on the back of his hand.

Soon, a blinding white light burst from the Great Rift, engulfing everything around, until it spread into the Cultivation Room and swallowed Lebius's figure.

The third time reversal ended.

The fourth time reversal began.

Chapter 389: Unshakable

The third time reversal.

During the second time reversal, Bologue had already determined Aimou's general location. In this third time reversal, he saved more time on finding the way. After leaving the Order Bureau, he got into the car and galloped directly towards the Great Rift.

Under Bologue's frenzied speeding, the tires screeched against the ground, waking the residents who opened their windows to curse at Bologue. But before any swear words could escape, they were swallowed back by the powerful honking sound.

"Make way! Make way!"

Bologue slammed the steering wheel horn forcibly. He could already see the heavy mist of the Great Rift, but he showed no signs of slowing down.

With a swift kick, he knocked the car door open, finding it too much in the way. A flash of blue light passed, and the car door, crazily swinging in the wind, came off entirely, allowing the fierce wind to pour into the car and invigorate Bologue with its chilling cold.

With the pedal floored and one hand holding the steering wheel, Bologue leaned to the side, then stuck half his body out, reaching to touch the ground.

At high speed, the ground felt like a rapidly spinning sandpaper for Bologue; his fingers were ground open the moment they touched it. But soon, a trail of blue light quickly covered the surrounding earth.

The vehicle's speed was so fast that the pace of Bologue's summoning couldn't catch up with his own movement for a moment. But as more ether was infused, Bologue focused intensely, gradually overtaking it.

The ground rose.

An upward slope shot up, continuously lifting the car higher.

"I've always wanted to try this!"

Bologue exclaimed excitedly. Previously, he had always wanted to try it on Palmer's motorcycle but was sternly refused by Palmer, who said such flashy maneuvers would definitely result in vehicle destruction.

For Bologue, destruction was not a problem; the problem was that the motorcycle belonged to Palmer.

This guy was shouting "Leica, Leica" while clutching the front wheel...

The raised slope broke, sending the car soaring like off a ramp, crashing straight into the layers of mist and pulverizing them.

The early risers were wandering the outer edge of the Great Rift, preparing to head to the mine. Amidst their endless chatter, the sky suddenly darkened. Raising their heads, a roaring steel beast leaped over them, crashing directly into the Great Rift...

A few people thought they were seeing things, rubbing their eyes. Although the car disappeared, the roar of the engine still echoed in their ears.

And so did Bologue's hellish cheer.

"This..." The workers were dumbfounded.

"What's the big deal?" Another person appeared calm.

"This is Opus; everyone's under a lot of pressure." Another chimed in confidently.

"Yeah, yeah."

The others agreed.

With the view rapidly changing, passing through countless layers of mist, Bologue felt like he was soaring with wings or a cannonball shot out of a barrel. But if he kept speeding, he would crash straight into the Abandoned Land.

Bologue did consider returning to the Abandoned Land. King Solomon's Holy City still held many secrets for him to explore, but now was not the time for investigation. He had another matter to attend to.

The maddening pressure came from deep within the Sea of Mist. Bologue guessed it must be the expanding Immortal Heart. Did Teda still fail to control the Immortal Heart? How could this ghastly thing grow out of control?

But that wasn't Bologue's target. Bologue's target was Aimou.

A glance at the gauge confirmed, as seen in the second time reversal, Aimou was not in that flesh-and-blood area. She had separated from Teda. This was good news; he wouldn't have to face the Negative Power User directly.

"Aimou, didn't you want to help Teda fulfill his wish? Why did you part ways?"

Bologue was certain that something else must have happened during his repeated reversals, something that turned the situation around.

Finding Aimou would give Bologue all the answers, as long as he could find her...

Swinging out a hook line, Bologue leapt out of the car, leaving it to crash through a walkway and explode into a burning fireball, plummeting into the depths of the Sea of Mist.

A series of intense ether reactions came from the direction of the rampant flesh growth, indicating there was possibly a fierce battle there. If the Order Bureau wasn't foolish, they would probably have noticed the anomaly here.

But since time kept reversing, even if the Order Bureau had noticed, they might not have deployed a task force yet; everything would reset to the start point.

Did he need to handle this himself too?

After a wave of headache, Bologue decided to stick to his original plan, tackling things one at a time, starting with finding Aimou.

Landing on the corridor of the cliff, Bologue sprinted following the gauge wildly, but after running only a few steps, everything started to shake.

The rumbling vibrations continue, resembling an earthquake, and the Great Rift also trembles along. Bologue looks toward the direction of the Immortal Heart and sees, through layers of mist, faintly discernible crimson giant tentacles, rampaging like massive pythons behind the mist, as if terrifying monsters growing from the cliff walls.

"Oh my God..."

Bologue shakes his head in shock; he truly can't handle this and decides to leave it to the fourth group to worry about.

Today is indeed a terrible day, chaotic from the moment he woke up. First, there was the Time Reversal, followed by the loss of control over this flesh and blood... If this damned thing falls down, will it awaken the Calamity?

Too many things happened simultaneously, and Bologue was just a powerless fish or shrimp struggling in the Time Reversal wave.

The crimson tentacles twitched, and the buildings on the cliff began to collapse under their fierce strikes, sending tons of stone blocks crashing down, destroying the buildings along the way below.

Amidst the debris were several unlucky figures, screaming as they were buried by the falling stones, with dust flying everywhere, intertwining with the dense mist, turning into a hazy veil that concealed all prying eyes.

Scenes resembling the apocalypse were perfectly engraved within the gray-white television set, with two frenzied figures laughing on the couch.

"I love disaster films; in such irresistible disasters, the value of humanity gets further exploited!" the Tyrant clapped his hands excitedly, "Under immense pressure, the despicable have nowhere to hide, while the noble shine brightly!"

Sai Zong drank his wine, "I also love disaster films, but I prefer the sight of corpses strewn everywhere."

The Tyrant scoffed, "You're so vulgar, only liking such crude appearances. Am I the only one who cares about the spirit people exhibit under disaster?"

Sai Zong sneered, "Don't you care about your territory? They'll soon dismantle the Wandering Intersection."

On the television screen, the battling sides continuously involve the surroundings as if an ascending storm is ravaging everything it touches.

"This world lacks nothing more than people who are desperate, driven by desire, and hard to satisfy... They're as numerous as sands in the sea. As long as such people exist, no matter how many times the Wandering Intersection is destroyed, it will rise again."

Just as he didn't care about the Gray Trade Association's survival, the Tyrant was also indifferent to the Wandering Intersection and even praised it.

"If destroying the Wandering Intersection once can bring such a grand performance, I'm willing to let this place be destroyed countless times."

The Tyrant spoke morbidly and then glanced at Sai Zong beside him, whose lack of reaction made him feel a bit disappointed.

"Could you give some reaction? This makes it seem like I'm amusing myself."

"Reaction?" Sai Zong emitted a hoarse laugh, "Didn't you notice I'm trying hard to restrain myself?"

Upon closer observation, it can be seen that Sai Zong's hand is shaking, with suppressed breaths coming from his throat. He trembles with excitement, feeling unparalleled joy from death and the destruction of life.

Focusing on another character's life makes Sai Zong adept at suppressing his true self. Without these centuries of accomplishments, he might have already joined this revelry and killed every life he encountered.

But... this is still not enough, not enough to vent his desires.

Sai Zong might delve into the Abandoned Land and awaken that hateful Calamity. That monster might fulfill his desires. But after killing that monster, who can satisfy his emptiness?

He pondered as his peripheral vision fell on the Tyrant beside him, who was well aware of his thoughts and refused, "You know, I'm a businessman, preferring equitable transactions over violence."

Sai Zong's throat emitted a sharp sound resembling metal scraping against each other, like a mixture of laughter and chewing steel.

After a few minutes, Sai Zong's mood finally calmed once more, and he gulped liquor to maintain his dwindling sanity.

"He should be watching all of this, right?" Sai Zong said.

"Of course, that guy never misses any interesting story," the Tyrant nodded, "Want to invite him?"

"I don't like him."

Sai Zong looked at the television and soon said again, "It's a pity I thought the Immortal Heart was truly out of control."

The crimson flesh danced wildly, and this terrifying scene might fool others but could not deceive Sai Zong.

"I have traded with the Order Bureau, the Calamity in the Abandoned Land cannot wake for now," the Tyrant smiled.

Sai Zong knew the Tyrant's words were meant to remind himself, but awakening the Calamity was just a thought.

After all, no one wants to see that light again.

At the end of that underground, in a sunlit hotel, a man sits in the audience, with his legs crossed over the seat in front, holding popcorn in one hand and a drink in the other, cheering constantly for the man on the screen.

"Unshakable one! Go, Lebius!"

He watches Lebius don the Unshakable and joins the Time Reversal.

Despite being such a horrifying Extraordinary Disaster, for these frenzied beings, it's a rare festival. Devils bet on the lives of mortals, watching their futile and foolish attempts to defy fate.

Chapter 390: Getting Used to It

Scarlet flesh hurled boulders, under the violent tremor, cliffs collapsed one after another, along with the buildings attached to them sinking into the Abandoned Land.

Fortunately for Bologue, he was far away from this madness of flesh, but under the shroud of mist, the scene beyond became even more bizarre.

Ether's gleam forged into thunder, dazzling arcs of electricity flashed continuously.

"What a terrible day."

Bologue muttered in his heart, but after saying this, he realized he had spoken similar words many times before.

Thinking of this, he couldn't help but sigh; this is indeed a terrible world, such damned days keep setting new lows.

A whistling sound came from the mist, followed by a boulder crashing not far in front of Bologue, directly severing the forward corridor, then the whole cliff trembled violently, along with the corridor under his feet, shaking and collapsing.

Swirling dust mixed with debris and steel engulfed Bologue in a flash, but seconds later, a fierce ether reaction burst forth.

A narrow rock projection blocked the falling debris from above, followed by more rocks erupting one after another, in the shadows of the rocks, Bologue summoned the stones he touched, making them pave a path for him.

In the chaotic situation, the rocks beneath twisted to one side, forming a continuously extending stone bridge, violently striking the cliff on the other side.

Bologue ran swiftly forward, while as he advanced to the other side, the long bridge behind him kept collapsing, due to being out of the range of the Summoning Hand.

For others, facing such a predicament, most likely they'd be unable to save themselves, but Bologue was different. The versatility of the Summoning Hand, and the extensibility of the Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid, enabled him to navigate such chaos with ease.

Leaping high, he swung out a grappling hook, halfway across, the Silver Hand was released, like a human spider, the end of the Silver Hand solidified into a sharp spearhead, easily piercing into the rock, allowing Bologue to move rapidly along the steep rock wall.

The devastation behind didn't attract Bologue's attention at all, he merely dodged the aftershocks slightly, as this trouble was temporarily irrelevant to him anyway, and he lacked the ability to handle it.

Now Bologue kept his gaze fixed on the dial on the back of his hand, searching for signs of Aimou.

Roaring explosions continued, Bologue glanced back, only to see the rampage of flesh spreading to the crossroads ahead, with many ether reactions rising, forcing the Condensers lurking in the shadows to join the battle.

For them, this was simply an unwarranted disaster, quietly hiding for many years, only to have their rooftops torn off by this flesh monster.

A mad melee was playing out in the Great Rift, while outside the thick mist, the citizens living inside Opus remained completely unaware.

For any anomaly in the Great Rift, the heartily indifferent citizens had long gotten used to it.

Flesh monster? Just a light refraction illusion.

Electric arcs? Merely a phenomenon created by waste gases.

Roars? Probably the mine blasting today.

See, everything is normal, nothing happened.

Before Bologue could continue lamenting this insane scene, a heart-pounding ether reaction came, a certain will summoned all the ether, as a beam of light swept across, scarlet limbs were severed neatly, without blood, just dissolving into ether.

Until this moment, Bologue's expression finally changed; this was not the Immortal Heart losing control but Teda's Illusion Creation.

Bologue immediately realized that Teda was battling someone, not hesitating to conjure such a massive Calamity projection to repel the opponent; worst of all, the enemy not only remained unfazed but put Teda at a disadvantage.

Sixth Group, perhaps?

Bologue recalled that the Sixth Group had been tracking Teda, but quickly dismissed this thought; the Sixth Group comprised of Origin School Condensers, under Ethereal Prohibition and Ethereal Silence, Teda couldn't create such a vast Illusion Creation.

Teda might not even get to deploy ether before being heavily sealed by Yas, losing all ether, becoming a mere mortal at everyone's mercy.

His enemy was someone else.

Bologue thought of another adversary, one long hidden within the Great Rift, unnoticed but possessing enough threatening power.

King's Shield Guard.

This mysterious group splintered from the King's Secret Sword, had joined the battle for the Immortal Heart during the conference combat, and according to subsequent intelligence, the chaos itself was a setup by the Order Bureau for the King's Shield Guard.

Whether Teda, or the Gray Trade Association, in the eyes of the Order Bureau, their importance was far less than the King's Shield Guard.

Bologue didn't understand why this was the case, but he believed the Order Bureau must have its reasons.

It's done, within mere minutes, the terrible day's new lows were lowered yet again, with the more troublesome King's Shield Guard also emerging.

Bologue glanced at the Sea of Mist below, he could already vaguely sense the ether reaction from below, likely Aimou.

Facing so many doubts, Bologue must find her to clarify.

The Silver Hand swiftly retracted into the sleeves, and Bologue's figure paused in mid-air for a few seconds before plunging straight into the Sea of Mist like a free fall.

Keeping his mind taut, he carefully sensed everything around him, missing not even the slightest anomaly until Bologue detected a faint movement.

The Ether surged.

Silver serpents danced wildly out from the sleeves, splitting from one into two, then two into four, as Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid proliferated extensively, even Bologue's figure expanded a bit in the blink of an eye.

The serpents flooded in all directions, piercing through layers of mist, accurately anchoring into the rocks, Bologue found a point of leverage, while other serpents that missed their target also changed their direction towards the leverage point, pulling Bologue onto the rocks.

His vision cleared up, standing on a relatively flat ground, with the cliff above extending into the mist, the booming of Ether's roar continuously echoed.

In front of Bologue, the same waves appeared, followed by a thunderous explosion.

Before Bologue could observe his surroundings, a powerful Ethereal Shock came rushing in, the airwave carrying dust violently blasted figures in its path.

Bologue flung dozens of Silver Hands, deeply stabbing like rivets into the earth, then splitting again into roots, gripping firmly into the ground.

Even so, the moment the airwave hit Bologue, his whole body lifted into the air, with several connections of the Silver Hand breaking, let alone the numerous stones hitting him like cannonballs, leaving Bologue bloodied and mangled.

The sweeping airwave was accompanied by several wailing voices, emitting an ethereal glow from their bodies, they were all Condensers.

Unlike Bologue, they lacked the ability to resist the airwave. Some slammed hard against the rocks and passed out, while others were directly thrown into the Great Rift, falling into the Abandoned Land.

After the hurricane passed, Bologue crashed to the ground, dizzy from the blowing, staggering as he stood up.

The airwave's impact had also cleared a path through the surrounding mist, broadening his view, showing collapsed ruins, a scarred land as if an intense battle had just been waged here.

Looking further ahead, at the end of the smoke and dust, Bologue saw a figure of radiant light, appearing exhausted, raising her right hand, with the brilliant bracelet gradually dimming.

Their gazes immediately locked onto each other.

"Aimou..."

Bologue murmured, holding the serpents in his hand, transforming them into a sharp blade.

After three times of time reversal, Bologue finally found Aimou, but she seemed somewhat different from the figure he was familiar with.

She held a Fire-Calling Staff in her left hand, with its tip still burning faintly, Aimou appeared to have undergone several battles, with the outer coating on her body peeling away, revealing the metallic luster beneath.

The most noticeable was her chest, where the Constant Motion Core used to be, a semi-transparent tumor had formed, its edges extending tiny sprouts infiltrating Aimou's body, becoming one with her.

In that semi-transparent tumor, blazing starlight was being nurtured, a light Bologue was familiar with; it was such a glow he had seen each time during time reversal.

Was it truly Aimou who triggered the time reversal?

Aimou also noticed Bologue, her expression showing some surprise, as if Bologue was not supposed to be here, but soon her gaze returned to firmness.

The silence between them didn't last long, as an abrupt ether reaction shattered the standoff.

Aimou quickly turned, raising her right hand again, a milky white barrier constructed purely of Ether encapsulated her, then the ruins to one side collapsed, and a sword blade swiftly slashed towards Aimou, crashing against the Ethereal Barrier.

Sparks of electric arc flared between the blade and the barrier, the assailant pressed hard on the hilt, making dense cracks spread over the blade, yet at the same time, the sword's tip was gradually penetrating the barrier's isolation.

Aimou struggled to lift her hand, the Ethereal Barrier shattered with a bang, which also repulsed the opponent, as she swung her Fire-Calling Staff, and in an instant, blazing flames engulfed the foe.

In the flames, a blurry figure emerged, a man raising his palm high, as if an invisible wall stood before him, splitting the sea of flames.

"How long can you hold on?" the man taunted.

A hint of a smile suddenly appeared on Aimou's tense face, she said nothing, the flames extinguished, and she turned to escape.

The man saw this and slashed his sword directly, Aimou's actions undoubtedly exposed her body, as if she was walking to her death.

But as the blade was about to fall upon Aimou, another surge of ether erupted, the ground suddenly bulged, and a massive Stone Spear shot up, launching him high into the air.

Before the man could comprehend what was happening, a silver chain already entwined around his ankle.

The chain tensed, and Bologue fiercely swung it, with the whistling wind, the man soared like a kite with a broken string, crashing heavily into the ruins on one side, and that was not the end.

Bologue stepped forward, swung a fist, smashed the ground.

A blue light trail swept through, causing the entire ruins to collapse, and then thousands of crisscrossing Stone Halberds shredded every reachable material into dust.