

## Endless 451

### Chapter 451: Return to the Mortal World\_2

Bologue advanced in the storm of flames, the high temperature causing his armor to burn slightly red, watching the Silver Knight step into the lair amidst the crimson world.

Bologue quickened his pace, crossing over the flesh egg that enveloped the Delusional.

The shell of the flesh egg was charred into black hardness, covered with numerous fissures under the erosion of Red Mercury. In the deep darkness, Bologue could vaguely hear the greedy and frenzied panting.

Bologue kept his gaze straight, yet his heart twitched slightly. He didn't think it was Teda... at least not the Teda he knew, at most it's just a lingering shadow of Teda in this world.

The current main goal is the Immortal Heart.

Bologue tried to convince himself, thinking Aimou must feel the same, temporarily not pondering over Teda, awaiting for everything to settle afterwards...

The advancing steps halted, Bologue stood still, his bones seemingly nailed down instantly, freezing his muscles and blood alike.

An indescribable chill descended suddenly, kneading his heart powerfully, accompanied by a lurking exertion, set to thoroughly extinguish Bologue's life.

"Did you... feel it, Aimou?"

A low voice barely squeezed out from Bologue's throat, his eyes wide open, staring straight ahead.

"Yes."

A concise response registered in his mind, even hidden within his own body, Aimou sensed the same feeling.

It wasn't just the two of them; everyone sensed it—a terrifying force descended here, so wicked and frenzied that it stopped all actions, plunging them into brief silence.

After the tranquility, madness erupted.

In the flesh lair, an intense ethereal reaction burst forth, Bologue could barely see flashes of sword light before everything collapsed.

Under the command of the Iron-Cutting Sword, all material in contact with the Secret Sword collapsed; without the blade's slicing, they self-dismantled and shattered.

In an instant, it seemed like a thousand years had passed; the enormous flesh body began to decay, turning pale and rotting, chunks of flesh peeled like wall skins, continuously falling, a rain of decayed blood fell, viscous foul blood mixed with intestines, dangling like festive ribbons, spreading a rotting odor akin to a toxic fog.

Doom—

A war drum resounded from the decaying flesh, resembling someone's revived heartbeat.

The drumbeats intensified, causing the hearts of everyone hearing them to tremble accordingly.

Bologue clutched his chest, painfully half-kneeling, gasping heavily, striving to suppress the lethal heartbeat... He felt his heart was about to explode.

The scarlet flesh beneath him lost all color, as if the vibrant life force was devoured by some greedier monster.

Then Bologue saw, accompanied by a metallic clang, the Silver Knight's figure was knocked back fiercely, smashing into the cliffside.

Bologue's heart sank; few could repel the Silver Knight on this battlefield, even though the current Silver Knight was merely a Defender's Domination Object.

His green eyes abruptly froze, Bologue didn't have time to check the Silver Knight's status; his gaze was firmly captured by the scene ahead, even forgetting to breathe, holding his breath.

Bologue wasn't the only one who noticed the occurrence; behind him, the flesh egg cracked, the Delusional poked his head out, watching the figure emerge from decay.

The Delusional felt he was witnessing the Angel's arrival; she was as he remembered, unchanged despite the years, the familiar figure overlapped, molten tears flowed beneath his fractured mask.

"Alice..."

The Delusional reached out, issuing a vague murmur.

From the decayed flesh lair, the familiar figure walked barefoot out of the filth, skin like sheep fat retaining traces of blood, chest covered by scarlet flesh, a forcefully beating heart embedded upon it.

Alice's gaze was vacant as she viewed the world, devoid of any emotion.

"Alice, she..."

A shocked voice echoed in Bologue's mind, Aimou gazed at this face mirroring his own, emotions momentarily tangled.

The Delusional finally achieved his mad fantasy; he implanted the Immortal Heart into Alice's corpse, using the forbidden vitality to resurrect her back to the world.

Alice revived; now the most familiar stranger stood sincerely before Aimou.

"She could be anything... but never Alice."

Bologue interrupted Aimou's erratic thoughts, his voice stern.

"Dead means dead, leaving nothing behind. The only trace left in this world is the Philosopher's Stone on you."

Bologue concentrated intensely, under extreme tension, Bologue even felt a sense of nausea.

He wasn't usually like this, even facing the Silver Knight wouldn't invoke such a reaction, but now merely watching the figure emerging from filth, Bologue felt as if he was observing something evil amassed around the world.

His soul was pulled along the gaze until extracted from the husk, leaving only pale gray dust.

No one can alter what has already transpired, not even the Devil.

Chapter 452: Returning to the Mortal World\_3

So Alice is dead, and now the one who has come back to life absolutely cannot be Alice. She is merely some... monster wearing Alice's skin.

A thunderous roar interrupted Bologue's thoughts, as the Silver Knight leapt up from the rubble of the cliff once more, striking toward Alice. Now the Immortal Heart has completely fused with her, to seize the Immortal Heart means to slaughter Alice.

Before the Iron-Cutting Sword could fall, Alice raised her hand, and massive tentacles rolled up, directly snatching the Silver Knight at the waist.

This was not enough to stop the Silver Knight, as sword light flickered and no matter how large the body, under the swing of the Secret Sword, it would merely collapse.

But this time, after the Silver Knight broke free, he realized something was wrong.

The Silver Knight's movements gradually slowed, as if blockage had filled his joints, making them dry and sluggish.

On the ever-smooth and silver armor, at this moment appeared numerous fine threads of blood, surprisingly resisting the Silver Knight's Ether pressure, stubbornly taking root and growing in the crevices of the armor.

The Silver Knight could hear the constant and countless sounds of gnawing. These fleshies were devouring his armor bit by bit, continuously infiltrating.

At present, the true body of the Third Seat was not on this battlefield. He was within the Fog Abyss Fortress, personally protecting the Shadow King.

Now the Silver Knight in action was itself an Alchemy Armament, serving as a Domination Object for remote operations. It could completely transmit the Defender's power, but could not attach the effects of Secret Energy.

Thus, the Third Seat also brought his sword, using this deadly Iron-Cutting Sword for combat.

According to the Third Seat's calculations, these forces were enough to crush Teda, but unexpected events followed one another, until now when Alice, capable of breaking through armor defenses, appeared.

Alice completely fused with the power of the Immortal Heart, the corrupted flesh greedily devouring all matter and energy, which is precisely the power of Calamity.

Bologue had seen the scenes within the Abandoned Land, where Calamity hungrily consumed all essence, and in the end, it was not merely normal eating, but consuming everything endowed with "energy."

Once Ether was completely consumed, it began devouring those mortal materials, and through Calamity's digestion, it violently seized the "Cold Iron Soul" belonging to matter, turning it into countless particles.

Now Calamity's power manifested fully on Alice, the flesh attached to the Silver Knight's body was devouring the Silver Knight's own Ether, achieving the effect of breaking through Rectangular Soul Critical in an unusual manner.

The Silver Knight's intrinsic flow of Ether was disrupted, as if a water cup had been damaged with several small holes, with his power continually leaking out.

This was good news for Bologue, as the Silver Knight was weakened, yet even weakened, it was still not a presence he could confront.

Bologue struggled to suppress the unease in his heart. A direct confrontation in this battle held no chance of winning. He needed to act when Alice and the Silver Knight were both badly injured.

Alice absorbed all the essence of the Wolf Spider, with the flesh beneath her feet dying in decay, her power little by little reaching its peak, the terrifying Ether reaction resonating continuously.

Gently raising her hand, Alice seemed to be calling for something, soon the roars rang from deep within the Great Rift's Sea of Mist, ascending from the Abandoned Land, as the slumbering Calamity sensed the call of the Immortal Heart, attempting to break free.

"She has become Calamity?" Aimou asked in disbelief.

Bologue was equally puzzled by the current situation, he replied, "I don't know."

The battlefield was filled with various unknowns. Fortunately, the Silver Knight would advance for Bologue, conducting all the trial and error.

The Silver Knight had no option but to proceed, his target was also that precious heart.

Ether surged on the surface of the armor, and though the Silver Knight couldn't eradicate this Calamity power, he could nevertheless momentarily suppress it, causing the flesh to briefly go dormant, slowing the pace of consumption.

The Silver Knight gazed at Alice, her body a pure white, like bathed in dawn light, exuding a dazzling halo.

Alice was like a descending angel, yet everyone knew this was merely a false facade, the angel did not come from the Celestial Kingdom behind the clouds, but from the depths of a crimson, fiery Hell.

Except for one person, who still immersed in his own fantasies, driven insane.

"Alice... Alice!"

The Delusional stretched out his hands, staggering forward, repeatedly blinking, squeezing large, blood-stained tears beneath the mask.

Even now he couldn't dare believe what was before him, the Delusional succeeded, Alice was truly and tangibly alive, standing right before him.

Bologue watched from the side, as did the Silver Knight. Facing the resurrected Alice, they both kept their distance, wary of potential danger.

Only the frenzied Delusional ignored Alice's threat entirely, reaching out with arms like a parent eager to embrace their child, inching closer to Alice.

He had worked so long for this, surrendering everything to madness...

The Delusional sacrificed so much, on this day everything had finally come to fruition.

With the battles and flesh consumption exhausting him, the Delusional's body had been left a wreck, yet even still he dragged his blood-soaked body closer to Alice.

Alice's gaze was empty, whether she saw the Delusional or not was unclear, letting him come to her.

"Alice..."

The Delusional's voice was hoarse, unable to produce any other sound.

He slowly knelt down, then held Alice's body, pushing the stained mask against Alice with force, savoring the warmth and reality, the Delusional seemed to finally find peace, a satisfied whimper rising in his throat.

Alice gave no response, throughout maintaining silence, merely gazing at the Delusional with icy, hollow eyes.

The Delusional raised his hand, tearing away the mask on his face, worn for so long, it seemed to have fused with flesh.

During the tearing process, thick strands of blood stretched, face flesh ruptured revealing the decaying visage nearing death.

"It's me, Alice."

Teda called hopefully, only then did Alice finally react, slightly tilting her head to look at Teda.

She extended toward Teda, appearing to caress his cheek, and Teda completely immersed in satisfaction, with his remaining rationality dwindling bit by bit.

Teda opened his arms awaiting Alice's embrace... then she strangled his neck.

Alice gazed at Teda, with pressure from her wrist, suffocation halted Teda, he tried to struggle, but his body mustered no strength.



Teda gazed uncomprehendingly at Alice, whom in turn revealed a wicked smile under his watch, her mouth cracking open, fine traces of blood spreading from her lips.

In an instant Alice's head split like blooming bloody petals, splitting into several segments, each laden with sharp teeth, snake-like tongues swaying within, stretching into the deep dark within the throat.

Teda heard it, the call resonating from the depths of the Abyss.

"Father..."

Chapter 453: Sadness Falls

"No... Why?"

Scalding tears mixed with filthy blood covered Teda's face. He looked at the monster before him in bewilderment, knowing full well that a few seconds ago, she was his familiar daughter.

"Father... Teda..."

Alice had not spoken for too long, her voice was hoarse and distorted. Her disintegrated head was like a flower, with tendrils reaching out, gently licking Teda's face, seeking his tears and blood.

Teda had no strength to resist; he was choked by Alice, gradually being dragged closer. The disintegrated petals wrapped around his head from all sides.

Sharp fangs protruded from the pliant flesh, a foul blood stench surged up from the deep darkness beneath the throat. Just the scent alone made Teda imagine a mountain of corpses and a sea of blood.

The world had completely become a crimson hell, endless corpses piled together, viscous filth slowly flowing; everyone was sinking and wailing within it. There was no concept of time or death here, only eternal suffering...

Now, Teda was only a step away from that hell; the deep throat was like a doorway, ready to transport him to that insane world.

A viscous, putrid liquid dripped onto his face, and Teda's hollow gaze flashed a hint of struggle. He gained a moment of clarity and murmured,

"You're not Alice..."

The petals swiftly closed, poised to devour Teda. But their movement halted, the tendrils encircling Teda's neck unfurled.

A faint light once again illuminated Teda's face. The petals reassembled, transforming back into that familiar face.

Bloodstains lingered on Alice's face; she didn't look at Teda. Instead, she turned her head towards the nearby silver armor.

When Alice embraced Teda, the Silver Knight swung his sword forward, the cold blade sliced through one side of Alice's body and protruded from the other, thoroughly piercing her slender frame.

The Silver Knight slowly twisted the hilt, the Secret Sword further tearing through Alice's body, its own power continuously spreading, issuing the command to sever this pale body.

The wailing lament echoed from Alice's throat; the wound from the blade gradually expanded, as if countless tiny blades were cutting through the internal flesh.

Logically, when the Secret Sword hit Alice, her body should be torn into countless pieces. But this time was different; the Iron-Cutting Sword's severing remained in an eerie balance with Alice's self-healing.

Alice couldn't completely heal her wound, and the Silver Knight couldn't wholly slay her with this single strike.

Letting go, Alice discarded Teda to the side, holding the cold Secret Sword with one hand. Her palm cycled through cutting and healing, while the other hand slowly raised, fingers joining together to form a hand blade.

As the hand blade fell, the Silver Knight yanked out the Secret Sword, and although Alice's body was so tiny, the withdrawal of the Secret Sword caused a great gush of blood to erupt.

The Silver Knight seemed to open a floodgate; aside from blood, the wound also spewed bone fragments and intestines, splattering the ground. Amidst the viscous filth, interspersed shards of tissue, many worm-like things wriggled vigorously.

The event happened quickly; the Silver Knight withdrew the Secret Sword, then turned to evade Alice's hand blade. Her movement was agile yet weak, but due to the Calamity's caution, the Silver Knight intended not to let any of Alice's strikes hit.

In dodging, the Silver Knight shifted behind Alice, raising the Secret Sword high again, like an executioner standing behind a sinner, the cold edge aimed at Alice's smooth neck.

The Secret Sword met the flesh, without the slightest resistance, cutting through like butter. Under Teda's gaze, Alice's head was effortlessly severed, like a broken sculpture, it slowly rolled down, tilting to halt before Teda.

"Ai..."

Teda couldn't say a word; his gaze trembled at the spectacle, only to see the severed head hadn't died. Conversely, it retained considerable vitality.

Alice smiled at Teda, blood overflowed from her mouth and nose, but the smile on her face remained.

The Silver Knight prepared to pierce Alice's heart, intending to extract the Immortal Heart from her body. But before the Secret Sword could strike, the Silver Knight's silhouette was completely frozen, as if encased inside a concrete pillar, unable to move.

He heard it, a dense, low sound, fine red fuzz oozed from the armor's gaps, like growing seaweed.

They accumulated within the crevices, and every movement by the Silver Knight became immensely arduous. Flesh proliferated outward, coiling over the armor; the flaming red glow within the armor dimmed, accompanied by the armor's erosion. The link between the Third Seat and the Silver Knight was continuously diminishing.

The Silver Knight tried to swing the sword, but his arm barely moved; no matter how deadly the Iron-Cutting Sword was, without swinging, it was meaningless.

Ether's output once more escalated a tier, the Silver Knight squandered power, hoping to crush that flesh, gaining freedom for his limbs. But this freedom was also fleeting, soon the flesh would again surge upward.

The sword flashed, the Silver Knight had to act swiftly; the cold Secret Sword stabbed again, and as the wind carried a sharp Flying Knife, Palmer obstructed the Silver Knight at this critical moment.

#### Chapter 454: Sadness Falls\_2

Palmer didn't think he could pose any threat to the Silver Knight, but as long as he could slightly hinder him, it was enough.

The flying knife scraped against the armor, sparking, as a hook shot through the air, embedding into Alice's body. The hook rope tightened, pulling Alice down, avoiding the Silver Knight's slash, with Bologue holding the other end.

"Bastard!"

The Silver Knight roared angrily, rarely had anyone dared provoke him like this, even Lebius approached battle with him with utmost caution.

But Bologue was different, he was the Undead, and death, which terrifies ordinary people, was merely routine for Bologue.

The Silver Knight's identity, tier, and strength—none of it mattered to Bologue. Let alone the Defender, with the power of the Undead, Bologue was daring enough to challenge even the Seeker of Glory.

"I can discern priorities clearly enough."

While speaking, Bologue gripped an iron spear, hurling it toward the Silver Knight.

From beginning to end, the madness induced by Teda was considered an internal matter of the Order Bureau. But with the participation of the King's Shield Guard, the nature of affairs changed. Bologue thought it necessary to eliminate the Silver Knight before dealing with Teda.

The Secret Sword effortlessly deflected the iron spear. The Silver Knight was about to pursue Alice when the fallen Alice slowly stood up. The headless corpse tenderly stroked the severed head, then positioned it in its arms, and its empty gaze gradually gained color.

"Father... it's me, it's Alice..."

Alice kept calling, with each sound accompanied by blood pouring from the head, as if Alice's body was linked to another space filled with a sea of blood.

Teda was completely stunned, his pupils trembled, and his long-suppressed emotions fully collapsed.

He wanted to extend his hand to embrace Alice, but even in his madness, Teda realized this person in front of him could never be his daughter.

It might be anything, but it was certainly not Alice.

Yet, even so, Teda numbly raised his hands, something he couldn't control.

What if it's not Alice? This was the last trace of Alice left in the world. It's not his daughter, but it's the closest existence to Alice.

Teda moved forward little by little, only to find himself unable to move. It wasn't the flesh binding him, but a silver hand that grabbed him from behind.

Bologue pulled hard, yanking Teda over with difficulty, and cursed angrily.

"Though I'd like to beat you up, clearly this isn't the right time!"

Teda fell heavily beside Bologue, serpents coiled around his body, their soft liquid form solidifying, firmly locking Teda in place.

"Bologue, what are you doing!" Teda shouted in a fit of emotion.

"I'm saving your life!"

Bologue didn't want to argue with Teda; the serpents covered Teda's mouth, silencing him.

"Aimou... do you have anything to say?"

At this moment, Bologue asked Aimou's opinion. After going through many hardships, they thought Aimou could make a decision with Teda, but the events spiraled beyond their control.

Besides dealing with the Silver Knight and thwarting the King's Shield Guard's conspiracy, Bologue couldn't figure out the rest. For someone whose mind only filled with battle, such complex entanglements were too headache-inducing.

A residual glow of Canyin surfaced on Bologue's body, noticed by Teda, understanding its significance.

Complicated emotions flickered on Teda's face: anger, resentment, confusion... but no remorse.

The lunatic was still immersed in his self-created illusion; Bologue somewhat understood Teda, as it was the only thing left of his broken mind and spirit.

"Aimou, is that you? The Philosopher's Stone... it's the lack of the Philosopher's Stone!"

Teda was already seriously injured, but he still mustered his remaining strength to break free from the serpents, continuously muttering his insane ramblings.

Bologue looked at this state of Teda with a sorrowful gaze, feeling nothing inside, only numbness.

"What a pity, Teda."

Witnessing Teda's sorry state, any semblance of respect Bologue had vanished. He yanked Teda up, his voice filled with fury.

"Can't you be more clear-headed?"

Bologue berated Teda, "Look at what you've done!"

Teda had no response to Bologue's reprimands, his murky eyes were empty, continually repeating Alice's name.

"He's gone mad, dragged into a frenzied hell by the Devil's whispers."

Aimou's voice resonated in the mind, observing Teda with an equally sorrowful gaze, aware that the Teda before them was merely a vacant shell, his wise soul long corrupted.

From a mental perspective, Teda was already dead, and what stood before them was merely a lingering remnant.

Bologue didn't respond, he had never really liked Teda, but remembering their interactions and the help Teda provided...

Bologue's emotions were complex, turning into a sigh of helplessness.

The serpents again coiled around Teda's body, solidifying into sharp thorns, binding him tightly.

During this, Aimou remained silent, ignoring everything, seeking some semblance of peace within.

"Are you sad?" Bologue asked softly.

"No, I'm not sad, I just feel sorry for him."

Aimou answered calmly, seemingly having escaped the prison of her own heart. Even with Teda right before her, she remained untouched in the depths of her soul.

Aimou's heart was calm; aside from resolving the chaotic time axis matter, she had no other thoughts.

She considered this her mess to fix, and as for what Aimou had always pursued...

Aimou felt the Ether surrounding her, recalling the car that had knocked Kronin away, unable to suppress a smile.

Aimou felt she had obtained what she wanted.

Bologue nodded slightly, glancing forward, realizing that Teda was merely a delirious old man, seriously injured and not much of a threat. Even if they were to judge him, they had to take him back to the Order Bureau first.

Regardless, the knowledge in Teda's mind was extremely valuable, and it was uncertain if the Crow's Nest could retrieve it.

In the decaying and corrupting massive flesh, the three forces were once again at a standoff.



Bologue and Aimou remained fully alert, with Palmer biding his time in the distance as the Silver Knight tore through entangling flesh; his strength was waning, leaving little time to fight.

The headless body embraced Alice's head, subtle tremors rippling through, as numerous eyes opened beside Alice's pupils, gazing in all directions, encompassing all sight.

She seemed to know everyone's thoughts, emitting ridiculing tones from her throat, the sound filled with desecration, merely listening could unsettle one's mind.

Bologue's breath became heavy; his connection with the Devil ran deep, Alice's laughter thundered like storms in his ears.

The feeling was dreadful, instantly conjuring blurred illusions before his eyes, filled with ghastly horrifying scenes.

Fortunately, this visual impact had little effect on Bologue; he had once tread into true hell... that scorched and bloody battlefield, afterward Bologue feared no more.

The Silver Knight was poised to attack, but then he also heard Alice's enchanting voice, the essence of the Third Seat was not present, but the sound still affected the being within the Fog Abyss Fortress.

The Third Seat did not see those terrifying images but witnessed a dimly lit room; from the hazy curtain appeared a woman's silhouette, showcasing her body's seductive curves, then she approached, reaching out to unveil the curtain.

"Submit, or die?"

Chapter 455: Red Tide

The woman inquired of herself, as a pungent scent of blood assaulted her senses.

In memory, that was the first time the Third Seat met the lady, and in that instant, he understood the filth hidden beneath her delicate facade.

A resilient will resisted Alice's assault, and a low growl emanated from beneath the armor. The Silver Knight encouraged himself with a roar, breaking through the illusory hallucination.

The past fears at this moment transformed into endless rage in the Silver Knight's heart, forceful pressure from the joints crushed the obstructive flesh thoroughly, even at the cost of damaging himself.

Sharpened wails convened simultaneously, Alice's body disintegrated like a blossoming flower, the surface peeling layer by layer, like fish gills, with crimson fuzz seeping through the gaps in the flesh.

In an instant, a crimson web spread around, everything it touched covered in a vast crimson net, followed by continuous sounds of corrosive acid. The web's surface was not only filled with sharp spikes but also oozed transparent corrosive liquid.

Like a roaring Red Tide.

Bologue charged toward the center of the Red Tide, Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid formed in front of him, transforming into a massive shield wall capable of protecting his body, yet even so, the moment of contact with the Red Tide filled his ears with a piercing corrosive sound.

Deep dents appeared on the hard and broad shield, and the interiors of these dents kept eroding incessantly.

This wasn't just corrosion. Bologue could clearly perceive the shield's ether being greedily plundered, the "Cold Iron Soul" being devoured, the material robbed of its soul and ether turned into flying clouds of dust.

"This is the Authority of Gluttony!"

Lebius's voice echoed in Bologue's mind. Hearing the leader's voice in such a time brought an unexpected sense of security to Bologue, but regrettably, this security did not last long.

Bologue could only hear Lebius's voice without seeing his figure, even his ether response was vague, he should still be battling the enemy, unable to extricate himself.

"An insatiable hunger, uncontrollable lust for gluttony, it will savagely plunder and consume all souls."

Bologue roughly understood what Lebius meant, even if he didn't comprehend, he experienced it firsthand.

The Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid was gradually turning into grayish-white dust, and he could only inject a large amount of ether, causing it to constantly regenerate itself to resist Alice's consumption.

Soon the flesh pierced through the armor, landing on Bologue's body, unbearable scorching pain surged through him, making Bologue feel as if his body was being gnawed by countless maggots, a dense cluster of pain stacked together, nearly knocking him unconscious.

It now seemed that Devils possessed two types of powers, one being the protection for their followers, the other the authority they themselves wielded, with protection and authority varying according to the Original Sin the Devil represented.

The authority possessed by the Gorgon Queen was this gluttonous plunder of souls, amidst extreme pain and torment, Bologue suddenly felt a slight sense of disorientation.

Material, upon losing its soul, transformed into rising dust, stirring Bologue's memories and reminding him of the scenes during his implantation ceremony.

This irresistible consumption was so similar to his own Summoning Hand, so close to the power of Overlord Xilin...

Bologue didn't continue to ponder further, sensing that matters weren't that simple, after all, no matter how powerful Overlord Xilin was, he was ultimately human, whereas the Crimson Queen was one of the Devils reigning over shadows.

Deprived of armor protection, Bologue continued forward relying on his flesh, his flesh being scraped away and swiftly healing afterward, achieving a balance of life and death at that moment.

Relying on the Undying Body, Bologue briefly stood amidst the Red Tide, while on the other side, the Silver Knight was in a dire state.

The Authority of Gluttony plundered the soul within the armor, leaving the once graceful armor marred with rust, the surrounding Ethereal Radiance dimmed, as the edge of the armor brimmed with rust, as if the current of time swept over it, taking away millennia.

Even so, the Iron-Cutting Sword in the Silver Knight's hand remained incredibly sharp, as if unaffected, cutting through even the illusory forces.

"For... the true King!"

The Silver Knight roared, ether surged to its peak in an instant.

Amidst successive battles and damage, the Silver Knight's ether intensity had long fallen from Defender to Negative Power User, yet now he surged back to heights.

The pure ether converged, coalescing into tangible flames. The blazing ether flames scorched the flesh, breaking through various restraints.

At this moment, the Silver Knight's eyes contained nothing else, only Alice at the core of the Red Tide. Alice had lost her human form, resembling a grotesque creature covered in cracks, with the only confirmation of her former human identity being the head cradled in her hands.

The head twisted over, and Bologue could only maintain a fleeting foothold within the Red Tide, while the Silver Knight could pose a real threat while standing firm.

Driven by instinct, Alice unleashed a roar at the Silver Knight, with the melody inducing maddening illusions in the listeners. This was not a Secret Energy like Hood's but a power inherent to these aberrant beings.

Bewitching minds, manipulating fate.

Alice looked expectantly at the Silver Knight, savoring his cries of failure, but the Silver Knight remained unmoved.

Far away in the Fog Abyss Fortress, the Third Seat stood as always beside the Shadow King. Through his connection with the Silver Knight, he could fully project his senses over, achieving the purpose of remote warfare.

The Third Seat kept his eyes tightly shut, with a faint light seeping through the gaps of his eyelids, while blood trickled steadily from his ears.

At this moment, the Third Seat could hear no sounds.

The Silver Knight stepped forward, raised his sword high, and the Red Tide swept over, eroding his mottled armor. Soon, the extraordinary metal was stripped of its soul and ether, returning to mortality and collapsing into a cloud of dust.

The outer armor rusted and peeled away, layer by layer, exposing the complex mechanical interior of the Silver Knight. Scarlet flesh filled the exposed areas, the left arm started trembling, then was completely twisted off. Before the severed limb hit the ground, it disintegrated into dust.

Yet, the Silver Knight stubbornly stood before Alice, raising the Iron-Cutting Sword with one hand, bringing down judgment upon it.

The sword light flashed, freezing the voracious Red Tide. A thin red line emerged from the deformed body, and as if on a broken mirror, the red line split into more red lines, covering the body densely before shattering.

The red lines severed completely, Alice's body shattered into countless pieces of flesh, with a large amount of blood seeping out, repeatedly washing over the decaying wolf spider carcasses beneath.

Bologue grabbed a longsword and thrust it down with all his might to stabilize his body amidst the torrent of blood. At that moment, Bologue's body was a bloody mess, his skin pierced by the Red Tide, exposing raw, bloody muscle tissues clearly.

He raised his head, his face smeared with filthy blood, one eye turned into a black, bloody hole, and half his mouth missing flesh, with blood-streaked gums exposed to the air like a ghoul unearthed from a grave.

Bologue paid no heed to his injuries, struggling to stand and step forward. He could see the confronting figures, the broken Silver Knight frozen in his final sword-swinging pose, and before him, the grotesque monster had vanished, leaving only an entanglement of white bones.

It was like a human being torn apart alive, then reassembled, with twisted limbs entangled.

Beneath the mass of flesh were a curved spine, intestines hanging among ribs, hands cradling the fair-faced head, with the Immortal Heart beating steadily behind the rib cage, thick blood vessels creeping slowly on the bones.

The Silver Knight had successfully grievously wounded Alice; if it weren't for the Immortal Heart, his sword strike would have been enough to kill Alice completely.

The Iron-Cutting Sword embraced not only severance and breakdown, but when such commands applied to a living body, they equated to death.

Now was the moment to seize the fruits of victory. The Silver Knight, driving his battered shell, tried to seize that heart.

Bologue gritted his teeth, dragging his body forward. He couldn't keep up with the Silver Knight's actions anymore, as his left leg had been gnawed down to bare bone. After only a few steps, he fell heavily, even though Bologue had an Undying Body, he needed time to recover, and this brief moment was enough for the Silver Knight to achieve his goal.

"Leave it to me!"

Aimou's voice resounded, but this time not in his mind, instead coming from beside his ear.

With a flash of golden light, Aimou released from the Shared Chord Body attachment, separating from Bologue's body. She then stepped forth, rushing towards the Immortal Heart.

Aimou alone was evidently insufficient, therefore she raised her hand high. The wind howled in response as she firmly grasped an incoming dagger.

"Charge!"

Palmer's cheering voice echoed from afar as Aimou sprang forcefully, her figure leaping high and plunging the dagger toward the Immortal Heart.

#### Chapter 456: Desperate Decision

The battle for the Immortal Heart reached its final stage. The Silver Knight noticed the leaping Aimou, realizing that her arrival was truly untimely for him now.

The fierce Red Tide had destroyed most of the Silver Knight's armor, along with one of his arms turning to dust. Now he was left with just one hand holding the sword, either to swing the sword in counterattack or to abandon it and seize the Immortal Heart.

Obviously, the Silver Knight chose the former. The battle situation remained complex and unpredictable. Lowering the Secret Sword would only hand control of the battlefield to others.

"A Condenser, huh?"

The Silver Knight murmured, clearly sensing Aimou's Ether intensity. He felt no pity for this unexpected visitor.

His state was dire now. The damage to his Alchemy Armor was severe. After the explosion of the attack just now, the Silver Knight's own Ether intensity had dropped to the level of a Negative Power User. If Lebius were to assault him now, he really had no means of countering, but dealing with a Condenser like Aimou was different.

The Secret Sword swung up, preparing to cut Aimou into dismembered limbs. But suddenly, Aimou's falling figure paused for a few seconds, then abruptly retreated in mid-air, causing the Silver Knight's prepared slash to miss.

Behind Aimou, a slender silver-white hook connected her, the end of which was the bloody and battered Bologue.

The Arm of Adaptation had been completely destroyed in the Red Tide, but fortunately, a length of the hook remained, allowing Bologue to pull Aimou.

Now the Silver Knight's agility was greatly diminished. After swinging and missing, the gap before his next attack was long. As Aimou retreated, she threw the dagger she was holding.

The dagger wasn't thrown at the Silver Knight but at Alice's remains. The Silver Knight didn't pay much attention to the dagger. He knew that to harm Alice, he needed his own powerful Ether and the Iron-Cutting Sword that had undergone Triple Transformation.

A mere dagger wasn't enough to inflict damage on the Immortal Heart.

Thinking this, the Silver Knight sprinted as the Ether brilliance emanated from the dagger like space distortion. The metal began to bend and warp before it disappeared into thin air, replaced by the bloody Bologue.

Bologue dragged his broken body, with Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid swirling around him like ribbons, pouring into the wounds in his flesh.

Lebius could use Spirit Wolf to force his body to perform beyond physiological limits. Now, Bologue mimicked this behavior, using the Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid to fill in the deficiencies of his muscles and joints.

The silver-white thread extended backward, grabbing the Phantom Dagger that had been switched to the rear. This Alchemy Armament was extremely convenient and deceitful, but to ensure multiple



recoveries, Bologue needed to be within his own Secret Energy's influence range for each spatial substitution.

The thread swung the Phantom Dagger, with a sharp whistling sound swirling between Bologue and the Silver Knight.

Seeing Bologue's sudden appearance, the Silver Knight didn't need to think much to understand what had happened. Gold had died at Bologue's hands.

He raised the Secret Sword with one hand but did not attack recklessly. Though the Silver Knight possessed Ether intensity capable of overwhelming Bologue, he himself was nearing destruction.

The Silver Knight resisted the erosion of the Red Tide, but within the gaps of his armor, a large amount of flesh remained, devouring his structure unchecked.

Other effective combat forces were being held off by Lebius and Geoffrey, and the monster tide they provoked was intercepted by the Violence Suppression Action Group upon arrival. If time dragged on, given the nature of the incident, the Ninth Group Atheist might also arrive.

The Silver Knight had little time remaining, and the worst part was the enemy he now faced.

Bologue, who had usurped the Power of Dominator. As a loyal servant of Overlord Xilin, the Silver Knight knew well the extent of Bologue's power, even if he was currently just a First Stage Condenser.

The Silver Knight had to swing this sword cautiously. If he missed, he would face Bologue's storm-like counterattack.

In the past, his own Alchemy Armor was enough to fend off Bologue's attacks, but now his once-proud armor was in tatters, and this operation was gradually slipping from the Silver Knight's control.

What made the Silver Knight even more uneasy was that Bologue was also an Undead. Even if this sword struck and killed Bologue, it would only render Bologue temporarily powerless. Before long, this guy would revive again and stubbornly charge at him.

"Surprised?"

Bologue shouted excitedly. As he advanced, the Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid filled the missing parts of his body, assisting Bologue like prosthetic limbs.

The thread pulled on the Phantom Dagger, whipping against the Silver Knight like a whip and quickly twining around several times. Then the Phantom Dagger pierced into his shoulder armor from behind.

Bologue prepared to activate the Phantom Dagger once again to switch his position, but now the ghastly sword light was already approaching.

"If your tier were a bit higher, you might pose a threat to me, but as you are now, you're still too weak."

A cold and ruthless voice sounded. The spatial substitution between Bologue and the Phantom Dagger required a certain casting time. In regular combat, this time consumption was very brief, but it was different for the Silver Knight.

In his view, this brief casting time was so long, long enough for the Silver Knight to launch an attack within it.

## Chapter 457: Desperate Choice\_2

In an instant, both of their perceptions of time dulled, each second becoming interminably long. The cold Secret Sword swung towards Bologue, with Bologue hanging in mid-air, having no space to evade. He could only fully unleash Ether, conducting spatial transmutation, meanwhile dispersing Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid, causing it to nail into the flesh below, passively moving himself.

Bologue began to shift mid-air, simultaneously his body blurred and twisted. Half of his body sunk into Curved Path Shuttling, and the Iron-Cutting Sword descended upon his head.

Both parties' spirits were fully concentrated, and then time sped forward like a film pressed fast-forward.

Sword lights criss-crossed, steel clashed fiercely.

Ultimately, Bologue was merely a Condenser, even though the Silver Knight had fallen to such a state, he was still an existence Bologue could not easily oppose.

The Secret Sword drew out a vague trajectory. Bologue didn't even see how that Secret Sword hit him, only felt a cold sensation in his chest, and a few seconds later, sharp pain followed.

"Don't think it's going to end this easily!"

Even at such a time, Bologue stubbornly spoke harsh words.

Bologue felt like a thug knocked down on the street, already covered in blood yet still arrogant, but Bologue was different from those thugs, for he not only spoke harsh words but also took real action.

Before the Secret Sword pierced the body, the snakes nailed into the ground flesh slipped off and rolled up. As Bologue spun, they transformed into countless waving Whip Blades.

At the last moment, Bologue abandoned evasion and chose to counterattack. Taking advantage of the Silver Knight's weakness, Bologue would do everything possible to inflict damage.

Bologue didn't think he could defeat the Silver Knight, but he believed Lebius and Geoffrey could do it. Now he just needed to pave the way for them.

Whip Blades entangled the Silver Knight, the sharp tips repeatedly cutting through Armor, as flesh corroded the Silver Knight. Once indestructible Armor could now be easily marked.

The Blade withdrew from Bologue's chest, then severed the Whip Blades. Bologue fell heavily, blood choking his throat, causing him to cough painfully.

That one strike from the Silver Knight didn't kill Bologue, yet that cold metal still issued a command of destruction to Bologue's body, crushing organs and bones into a mass of foul blood.

Bologue lay on the ground motionless, feeling that his spine might be snapped, losing control of his whole body. He could only tilt his head, watching the Silver Knight's next move.

"You're even more troublesome than I imagined."

The Silver Knight's voice was low, stepping heavily, with each move shedding rusty metal debris like dust.

Bologue couldn't utter a word, but his eyes still held a taunting expression, beginning to enjoy this Undead identity, feeling amazing being unable to be killed, like a ghost hidden in shadows, causing endless torment.

"I... am so hungry..."

A cold female voice interrupted the confrontation between Bologue and the Silver Knight. On the side, Alice's body was slowly collapsing, from the grotesque fusion of flesh and foul blood, an arm stretched out, grabbing Alice's hair with one hand and lifting her face high.

Bologue and the Silver Knight tensed up, in the chaos of battle, the most unsettling point was this: When you thought you eliminated a foe, another enemy would emerge from the shadows, leaving you alone and constantly on alert.

The Silver Knight's full-force strike heavily injured Alice. From within the grotesque mass of flesh, numerous scarlet blood vessels extended, spreading outward like vines.

Starting from rooting into the pale flesh below, the massive Wolf Spider, to nurture Alice's birth, had been consumed of its essence. Now, for self-healing, Alice further ravaged it.

Large pieces of flesh turned into gray-white hardness, then became soft, shattered, turning into clouds of dust.

Bologue lay on the ground, with blood vessels soon reaching him, brutally piercing his body, drawing out his blood and life.

Excessive pain almost made Bologue faint, clearly knowing even if not unconscious now, death was not far away.

Severely injured, Bologue's Rectangular Soul Critical was breached, blood vessels pulling from his body the little remaining Ether, supplying it to Alice. Bologue's face quickly paled, skin turning withered and shriveled.

The Silver Knight suffered similarly, the numerous rust spots on his silver-white Armor constantly accelerated his collapse until the ornate faceplate fragmented into numerous holes, resembling a dead man's icy visage.

"Bologue!"

Aimou exclaimed in shock, attempting to rescue Bologue, but he signaled her away.

Bologue was captured by the hunger of gluttony. He might hibernate for a long time but would awake again. If Aimou were captured and stripped of all Ether, only cold death awaited her.

Aimou understood Bologue's intent, halting her rescue steps, watching from afar as Bologue was gradually buried by blood vessels, leaving only half his face exposed.

The Silver Knight had no reaction left, under the armor, the glow dimmed and faded, seemingly returning to cold mortal steel, blood vessels entwined his body, Armor burdened to the breaking point, kneeling powerlessly.

The conflict between them ultimately allowed Alice to gain the upper hand, greedily consuming, with Aimou constantly retreating, avoiding the approaching blood vessels.

From afar, Palmer also extended aid; unsuitable for close combat, he threw out all Flying Knives, the howling wind slicing many blood vessels mid-air, blood splattering everywhere.

Just as Aimou would retreat to a safe distance, she noticed another figure on the battlefield.

Teda lay on the ground, watching blood vessels entwining, his eyes without terror, only void. His remaining reason collapsed completely when Alice transformed grotesquely.

Aimou halted her retreat, watching Teda gradually engulfed, her heart surging with indescribable emotion.

Teda had completely abandoned thinking, along with his life.

He was once a wise Scholar, yet entwined in desire and pain, contemplation became endless punishment for this decrepit figure.

Facing the encroaching blood vessels, sensing the ebbing of his life, Teda possessed no fear, instead felt a relieving joy.

Teda could finally escape chaotic thoughts, welcoming eternal serenity.

He thought so, closing his eyes, but in the next moment he was forcefully dragged up, pulled free from the crimson vines.

"You irresponsible bastard! Do you intend to die like this!"

Teda heard a familiar voice, seeing a familiar face, she shouted at him angrily, rescuing him from layers of blood vessels.

Aimou's strength amazed, she threw Teda high, tossing him to a safe zone.

Teda landed hard, his muddled mind seemingly cleared by the fall, slowly getting up, wanting to say something, seeing forward, his mind instantly blank.

Aimou kept her final throwing stance, blood vessels like swarms of venomous snakes, completely entwined her body, binding her tightly.

She reached out seemingly pleading for aid, yet now no one could rescue her, Aimou was engulfed powerlessly, letting blood vessels corrode and penetrate flesh, plundering her precious Ether.

Until the scarlet branches delved into the chest cavity, touching the Constant Motion Core fused with the Fantasy Species, and within the Core the most precious, purest transformation of Ether, the Philosopher's Stone.

In the land of death, a sinister figure silently approached, shadow-following-shadow.

#### Chapter 458: The Bizarre Invitation

The situation on the battlefield changes in an instant; one moment, the Silver Knight gravely injures Alice, and the next, Alice's counterattack engulfs everyone.

Bologue is wrapped in layers of flesh and blood, with sharp, acute pain spreading from all directions. He can clearly feel the writhing of tentacles within his body as they crawl along the seams of his flesh, clinging to his bones, gnawing away at the bone and simultaneously corroding his marrow.

It's a sensation beyond description, as if he's being dissected alive. The tentacles then entwine around Bologue's heart, sucking the blood with every heartbeat.

This terrible experience ranks among the top five of Bologue's misfortunes, yet none of these is enough to shake his spirit. Soon, through the layers of gaps, he vaguely sees.

"Aimou..."

A dull moan of pain comes from his throat, as Bologue watches Aimou save Teda, then is herself surrounded by flesh and blood.

Bologue musters his remaining strength, trying to reach out, but it's a futile gesture. Darkness swiftly covers Bologue's vision, sealing him into a scarlet hell.

Aimou lacks the sharp senses of humans, but now Aimou feels a drowning sensation, just like a human.

She feels as if she's being dragged into a scarlet viscous sea of blood, attempting to resist, but the flesh easily penetrates her body, leaving her with little strength to fight back.

This is the weakness of a First Stage Condenser; apart from its Extraordinary Power, the essence of a First Stager is no different from a mortal.

The reason Bologue can battle so fiercely is largely due to his Undying Body, and Aimou as well, using her resilient and powerful Alchemy Body to close much of the gap with her enemies.

But what Aimou is facing now is not a conventional enemy, but a potential, awakening Calamity.

Alice is not the main body of the Calamity, just the incarnation of its heart, yet, even a part of the incarnation shows enough terrifying power.

Ravenous consumption swallows all essence; in the blink of an eye, Aimou's arm, like the Silver Knight's armor, is eroded into an ashen hue, then collapses into fine dust.

The Touch of Death reaches the Constant Motion Core, covering that tough and tight metal shell. Aimou feels this unsettling sensation for the first time, a fear as if her heart is being tightly gripped by a cold hand.

Great fear bursts in her heart, the continuity of her free will is gravely threatened, silently screaming.

Aimou feels she's going to die, literally, with her consciousness extinguished, leaving no chance of revival.

In this moment, Aimou thinks about many things, past memories flashing by.



Aimou has read many books that record the various reactions of humans before death—some cry in terror, some repent their sins, some are cold and cruel, some poetic... Aimou feels her reaction is different from them all.

Extreme fear vanishes in an instant, Aimou's mood is calm, as if she is embracing not death, but an unreachable beautiful dream.

Aimou still has many regrets, but at this moment, she feels those regrets are not important now; she just needs to accept this end calmly.

A turbulent heart achieves absolute peace.

But the anticipated death does not arrive.

The scarlet entity stops extending, and the scattered dust freezes in mid-air.

Aimou witnesses this scene of hell that engulfs everything, and also sees Teda's bewildered and dazed gaze in the distance. She tries to move, but remains tightly trapped.

Is this death?

Such a thought rises in Aimou's mind. She is just an Alchemy Puppet, not truly human, so she can't think of an answer for this ultimate destination of death.

Now Aimou feels peaceful, she calmly accepts all this, and then a mutation occurs.

The rigid body regains its senses, and Aimou gradually regains control over her body, struggling with all her might in this stagnant world, inch by inch crawling out of the scarlet entity.

Standing on the accumulated flesh and blood, Aimou realizes just how corroded she has become; the entire outer casing of her right leg has been completely eaten away, revealing the internal structure, and her right foot has completely disappeared, turned to dust and scattered.

A large hole has been corroded in her abdomen, the internal machinery has turned to dust, only the metal spine remains upright, but there are many tiny holes on its surface as well. If time continues to pass, the fracture of the metal spine is just a matter of time.

The corrosion on her hands varies, and Aimou did not expect such a resilient alchemical alloy to be unable to resist Alice's devouring.

After all, alchemical alloy can only physically resist attacks and cannot immune to an attack directly targeting the "Cold Iron Soul."

Continuing to examine upwards, Aimou finds her chest has also shattered, under the metallic shell, revealing the dark chest cavity, along with the faintly glowing Constant Motion Core. On the surface of that Alchemy Heart float many red fluff and radiant roots.

Aimou guesses that this phenomenon of time stasis might be triggered by the Fantasy Species, Alice's erosion triggered the Time Reversal.

So... she will still die.

Aimou's own ether retains less than one-tenth after Alice's plunder, and once the Fantasy Species activates, it will inevitably consume her Philosopher's Stone.

Everything will start over, but Aimou will die.

Aimou fell silent, she looked behind her to see Bologue engulfed by flesh and blood, with only one hand and half a face exposed, and she could see his furious eyes, as if screaming something.

Seeing Bologue like this, Aimou felt a strange sense of satisfaction, an individual's will being cared for and recognized, which was an incredibly scarce feeling for Aimou.

"I read a similar scene in a book, where some people experience certain things and cease to fear death."

Aimou's voice was relaxed, as if speaking to Bologue, even if he couldn't hear anything now, Aimou felt saying it meant it was said.

"Because they know, even when cold death arrives, somewhere in their heart, a bit of warmth continues to comfort their spirit."

Aimou felt she had received such comfort, unafraid of what was to come.

She felt at ease, with only tranquil peace in her heart, Aimou enjoyed this feeling, untroubled by worries, free from joy and sorrow.

The only slight regret was that Aimou ultimately didn't want to sacrifice Alice's Philosopher's Stone.

From the very beginning, Aimou knew she was only borrowing the will born from this Philosopher's Stone, everything she had now was borrowed from a deceased person.

Enjoying this brief moment was already the greatest blessing for Aimou, and she couldn't bring herself to usurp the last spirit of the deceased.

Aimou pondered, as her hand slowly reached into her chest, grabbing the heart entangled by flesh and blood.

The last defense of the Constant Motion Core had not yet been breached, and Alice's Philosopher's Stone remained in a safe state.

"Why are you doing this?"

A deep voice sounded, Aimou looked around warily, then she found the source of the voice.

At the core where flesh devoured everything, the head held aloft by a single hand was looking at Aimou, with a face similar to hers, smooth white skin with youthful vitality, a pleasant smile slowly revealing.

"Why do you want to save him? Wouldn't it be better to let him die?" asked the suspended head.

Aimou did not respond, she looked straight at Alice, somewhat unable to understand what was happening.

Aimou thought this was an anomaly triggered by the Fantasy Species about to perform Time Reversal, so she prepared to remove the Constant Motion Core to protect the Philosopher's Stone from depletion.

But within this Time Reversal exclusive to her, Alice spoke, no longer a monster but an aware being able to communicate.

"This... isn't Time Reversal?"

Aimou soon realized this issue, gazing at Alice with some terror, unspeakable secrets surfacing in her mind, delivering a heavy blow.

"You are not Alice."

Alice was already dead, her body became a vessel for the Immortal Heart, transformed into the current monster, and her soul inside Aimou's chest continued Aimou's existence.

The entity was definitely not Alice, just some monster relying on Alice's shell, an evil, frantic will.

"Does it matter who I am?"

Alice laughed, and her dangling arm pulled her back into the darkness, the next moment the flesh around Aimou started to squirm, then familiar faces emerged from the flesh. Alice traversed through the flesh, appearing easily in every corner.

Aimou tried to retreat, but she found her body losing control again, standing stiffly in place, allowing Alice to approach, uttering those blasphemous words.

"Who I am doesn't matter, Aimou."

Alice smiled at Aimou, and a pale, slender arm stretched out from the flesh at her feet, extending to caress Aimou's face gently.

The cold touch penetrated deep into her consciousness, Aimou's gaze entirely captivated by Alice, unable to even blink or shift her eyes.

"You only need to know one thing, Aimou."

As Alice spoke, her head separated from the flesh, another arm lifted it up, placing it in front of Aimou.

The lips moved up and down, Aimou could see the sharp teeth within, sticky clots of blood, and even surpass the limits of her body to smell the pungent scent.

"I am the only one extending a helping hand to you."

Alice smiled, promising Aimou a beautiful future, reaching out to twist fate, awaiting Aimou's response.

It was time to make a choice.

Chapter 459: Settling Accounts

All things freeze, time stops.

This grand performance has been paused by a lunatic presence; in the rift of time and space, Aimou faces that evil will alone.

"Alice" never revealed her identity, but now Aimou already knows who she is—the specter that has always accompanied her, delivering the Fantasy Species to her, a sinister entity.

Devil.

Aimou suddenly felt a massive sorrow. If she had opened her heart to Bologue, if she hadn't agreed to the Devil's bargain, if she hadn't used the Fantasy Species...

None of this should have happened.

Aimou muttered, "This is a conspiracy... from your conspiracy."

Alice maintained that eerie smile, in this eternal realm everything was stagnant, they had ample time to discuss the content of the deal.

Scenes from Aimou's past experiences floated before her eyes, at this moment Aimou realized what kind of trap she had walked into.

The Devil granted Aimou the Fantasy Species, giving Aimou a sliver of hope, but the ensuing events completely obliterated Aimou's hope.

When a person loses all hope, what kind of choices will she make?

For that pitiful and humble wish, reaching out recklessly, whether it's thorns or a Sharp Sword, anything she could grasp would be held tightly.

Just like Teda.

With all hope lost, Teda desperately chose that crazy path, knowing what kind of end awaited him, but urged by that insane thought, Teda had no choice.

Aimou was no different.

Now Aimou found herself in a desperate situation; the Fantasy Species was about to consume her Philosopher's Stone, and the blood and flesh twisted around her would do the same. Once time resumes its flow, Aimou would step toward death.

"What a pitiful guy... his desire is strong, but unfortunately, he holds no value for me,"

Alice approached Teda instead of continuing to press Aimou and watched Teda's complex expression.

Teda was thrown into a safe area by Aimou; from his perspective, he watched Aimou being entwined by flesh, walking towards death.

Horror, sorrow, anger... various emotions emerged on the decrepit face, Alice gently asked, "He looks very sad."

"Do you think he's sad about what? The extinction of the self?"

Aimou glanced at Alice and Teda, and Teda's condition was terrible, with successive heavy injuries and corrosion; Teda was covered in blood, much of his skin had disappeared, and his abdomen was a bloody blur with intestines exposed.

Teda was still alive, relying solely on his Tier as a Negative Power User. Years of contact with Ether had gradually Etherealized Teda's body, thus freeing him from mortal constraints.

But even so, with such injuries, Teda's life had entered a countdown.

"No... do you think he still cares about such things? If he feared death, he wouldn't be so stubborn."

Looking at Teda in such a miserable state, Aimou felt pity.

"If that's the case, why save him? You can see, he's aware his wish can't be fulfilled; what he does now is merely seeking death," Alice said.

Aimou's voice paused, "I can't do it..."

"Can't do what?"

"Can't watch him die. Whether he ever loved me or not, I always loved him; he is my father, even if only I think so."

Aimou's voice grew increasingly despondent until she couldn't help but laugh herself. Remembering her decisiveness when she left, Aimou thought she had broken free from the shackles of emotion, but when death truly descended, her heart softened.

"Is it worth it?"

"What's there to be worthy or unworthy? I don't care what he thinks; it's enough if I feel satisfied."  
Aimou shook her head.

"What about him? It's clear he saved you; don't you want to keep going with him?"

Alice vanished and then appeared beside Bologue, staring at Bologue's angry expression.

Aimou looked at Bologue with sadness, hesitated for a while, and frankly said, "Of course I do, not just him; this world is full of surprises; if possible, I sincerely wish to explore it all."

"But now you're about to die."

Alice spoke coldly, appearing again beside Aimou.



"I know what you want to do; I have entered a dead end. Either I submit to death, or I kiss your hand, right?" Aimou said.

Listening to Aimou's words, Alice let out a series of disturbing laughs, watching Aimou trapped in desperation as her own greedy desires continued to surge.

Aimou continued to ask, "Who are you really?"

"That question is meaningless."

"No... I mean, which one of the Devils are you?"

Aimou's tone gradually became firmer, gazing at the eerie Alice, and thoughts churned in her mind until an answer emerged in her consciousness.

Indeed, long ago, when Aimou first saw the illusion of Alice, she had that strange feeling, as if she were being targeted by some unknown presence.

As time passes, this feeling becomes stronger and stronger, until Aimou can even see the shape of the other in that deep darkness.

"Wandering in the Great Rift, greedily enjoying the tributes of people..."

Aimou clenched her fist, her voice icy.

"Tyrant."

Alice's smile froze, and then her expression became more twisted and maniacal, her head splitting into horrific petals, while slender tendrils wildly danced in the air.

She laughed hysterically, and after several seconds, gradually calmed down, reforming her face into Alice's visage.

"I like smart children, but sometimes being too smart isn't a good thing."

The clear female voice disappeared, and this time, from Alice's throat came only a deep male voice, as if some evil will had briefly taken over Alice's body, using it as a conduit to communicate with Aimou.

"What do you really want, Tyrant?" Aimou inquired.

"Aimou, you are unique, extraordinary, of immense value... I crave your soul."

The Tyrant made no attempt at concealment, admitting to Aimou, "I am willing to pay a good price for it."

"A good price?" Aimou smiled, eyes full of disdain.

"Don't you believe me? Devils never lie," the Tyrant's voice brimmed with pride, "I can grant all your wishes!

Wealth piled to the heavens, the power to command kingdoms, the ability to destroy all things, I can satisfy you!"

The Tyrant painted the picture of a beautiful future for Aimou, making all sorts of promises.

"Even freeing you from this cold metal shell, reversing your fate, becoming truly human!

I can do all this, as long as you are willing to give me everything."

Another arm extended from the flesh and blood, slowly hovering in front of Aimou, the blood-stained pale back of the hand reaching closer to her.

"So... what is your choice?"

The Tyrant spoke no more, waiting quietly for Aimou's decision.

In the eyes of the Tyrant, Aimou had already reached a dead end. Refusing him would only lead to her death, a completely meaningless death.

"I seem to have no reason to refuse."

Aimou spoke coldly, as soon as time resumed, she would head to her end, but if she gave up her own soul, she would welcome a new life.

"After all, this isn't my soul... it's just Alice's soul."

Aimou muttered as if convincing herself, while the Tyrant wore a sinister smile, everything was going according to the Tyrant's plan, Aimou couldn't escape her own desires, since it was so intense.

The Tyrant expected Aimou would experience complex emotional turmoil, but her actual behavior was quite calm; she only thought for a moment before making her decision.

Aimou took hold of the pale hand, tightening her grip.

"I'm thinking about something."

Aimou suddenly paused, muttering to herself.

"I am merely an Alchemy Puppet; the soul I possess is merely borrowed from another, but I think... but I feel, that what defines a soul is not this, just like you devils often say, everyone possesses some kind of value.

So I think, when I make certain choices, when I become a certain type of person, I should also possess a certain spiritual kind of soul... a noble soul."

Aimou grasped the pale hand firmly, exerting strength until she snapped the bones in the hand, crushing it into a mass of filthy blood.

The Tyrant's smile froze.

Aimou lifted her head, eyes flashing with anger, she saw Bologue in the distance, equally enraged, and growled.

"I have made a mistake once, I can't disappoint him again."

Aimou fiercely tore off the extended arm, then swung her fist back, landing a direct punch on the Tyrant's face... it should have been Alice's face, but given the situation, it didn't matter anymore.

Pain struck, and the Tyrant did not react for a moment; it had been many years since anyone had defied him, let alone attacked him.

Aimou rejected the deal, the static time began to loosen; she could hear the roaring of gears, the dissolution of her self-awareness.

"How dare you!"

The Tyrant wanted to reprimand further, but Aimou was completely indifferent; she reached into her chest, grasped the Constant Motion Core, and to the Tyrant's disbelief, Aimou ripped out her own heart.

Aimou held the Constant Motion Core in her hand, her consciousness started to fade, and the frozen time began to thaw and flow again.

Like a film missing a scene, Bologue saw Aimou encased in flesh, but in the next moment, she broke free from the constraints of flesh, standing straight.

Bologue witnessed Aimou pulling out her Constant Motion Core and throwing it towards the stunned Teda.

"I'm giving your daughter back to you."

Aimou shouted with her last ounce of strength.

"We're even!"

The Constant Motion Core rolled unsteadily to Teda's feet, and from afar, Aimou lost all her light, transforming into a cold statue, like a lifeless object.

#### Chapter 460: Devotion

The stagnant time broke, the myriad flows, bringing a mournful tide of roar.

The Tyrant's will dissipated, the muddled will once again occupied Alice's body, her arm raised high her head, then a mass of flesh and blood gathered on her arm, transforming it into a bloated, pale python.

The surface of the flesh lacked skin coverage, the muscle tissues exposed without concealment, the slightest breeze brought bouts of agony, followed by piercing screams.

Sharp ribs protruded from the snake's belly, viscous liquids seeped and dripped, intestines dangled like festival ribbons within.

Alice paid little attention to Aimou, to her, Aimou, without the Constant Motion Core, was now just a regular metal sculpture, the only thing special was the extraordinary properties of the Alchemy Metal.

To the hungry Alice, the expensive metal can't draw her attention, her eyes only left on the blood-stained Constant Motion Core before Teda.

"Have you thought of such an ending?"

A man's voice faintly echoed in the void, conversing with another.

"No, I've thought of many endings, but I never thought she would choose to sacrifice herself." Another voice replied.

In a dim room, the Tyrant and Sai Zong sat on the sofa, watching the final performance.

Sai Zong took up a bottle and drank it down in one go, casually tossing the bottle into the darkness behind, the sound of glass shattering echoed.

As if mocking the Tyrant's failure, Sai Zong's voice carried laughter, "The feeling of being defied isn't pleasant, is it?"

Among the chaotic Devils of the world, the ruler of crossroads, the Tyrant who overstepped power, the greedy Mammon...

Few refused Mammon's good will, let alone refused and humiliated him, yet Aimou accomplished it.

The Tyrant fell silent for a while, his body began to tremble, a sound of efforts to restrain came from his throat.

The anger expected didn't appear, instead came an incomprehensible delight, the Tyrant couldn't control himself anymore, he burst into laughter, his voice trembling and distorting from extreme excitement.

"It's too perfect."

The Tyrant, like a shy girl, covered his face, his knuckles turned white, his nails deeply pierced into his face, large drops of blood oozed out.

"How splendid, Sai Zong."

The Tyrant pounced on the television, hugged it, his eyes stuck to the speckled screen.

"Few can break their destiny..."

His voice fragmented and deep, carrying a morbid madness, "But she did it, she broke the ending I wrote for her..."

The Tyrant suddenly fell silent, his expression turned horrified, belatedly shouting.

"No, this shouldn't be your ending, such a soul of unparalleled value, how can it fade away like this?"

The Tyrant reached out, touched the screen of the television, an unusual force surged, breaking the boundary between void and reality, for an instant the Tyrant's fingers actually penetrated the screen, nearly touching the battlefield in the picture.

An unexpected look flashed in Sai Zong's eyes, he hadn't expected Aimou's soul had such temptation to the Tyrant, that it could let the Tyrant willingly break the rules, directly interfering with reality.

But all this was futile, rules may have loopholes exploited, but never could they be broken. Before the Tyrant's hand penetrated the screen, cold chains extended from the void, constraining the Tyrant's body, sealing him in place.

The Tyrant let out an angry growl, tried to break these chains that bound him, but no matter how he released his power, under the constraints of these chains, even the mysterious eerie Devil was frail like an ordinary person.

Sai Zong observed the Tyrant's struggle, waited until he was utterly exhausted, then tossed a bottle of wine toward the Tyrant.

"You can't defy rules, that's why you need a Deputy," Sai Zong said helplessly, "Unfortunately, the Deputy you favored isn't very obedient."

The Tyrant didn't respond to Sai Zong's words, just stared intently at the scene on the screen, his pupils began to contract, within the pupils blossomed new pupils, repeating this, soon both pupils contracted into spirals, resembling deep caverns.

Devils can't change the past, but they can change the future, countless futures flashed before the Tyrant, he tried to find the most perfect answer.

The enraged emotions gradually calmed down, the Tyrant slowly released the television, sat back on the sofa.

Sai Zong glanced at the Tyrant, "Can't find that perfect future?"

The Tyrant settled down, didn't do further interference, Sai Zong thought he gave up, but the Tyrant shook his head.

"No... it doesn't need my intervention at all."

The suppressed laughter sounded again, the Tyrant excitedly patted Sai Zong on the shoulder.

"That's why I love humans so much!" The Tyrant felt wonderful now, savoring the sweet value, "Humans are pathetic and detestable, various twisted and filthy combinations, but in this reviled dirt, can birth that noble Canyin soul."

"It's too perfect."

The Tyrant had already seen that future, the only and destined future.

Since the secret war, the Tyrant hadn't been so joyful, he snapped his fingers, dim light projected down from the darkness behind, illuminating an old record player.



"Please play a solemn melody."

The Tyrant murmured softly, then reached out of the darkness, placing a black record on the turntable, lowering the needle. Amidst a faint huskiness, a majestic tune rose in the dark.

The Tyrant picked up the wine bottle and clinked glasses softly with Sai Zong.

"Celebrate this noble sacrifice."

Sai Zong savored the words in a low voice, while on the screen, Aimou's cold body gradually turned into ash-white. Her death stirred a brewing storm on the battlefield.

In a trance, Sai Zong also seemed to see that sunlit future. He nodded in agreement.

"Celebrate this noble sacrifice."

...

With Aimou's fall, the battlefield plunged into a momentary silence. Amidst the entangling flesh, Bologue's mind went blank, his eyes fixated only on the fallen figure, the whispers of chaos vanished from his ears, leaving pure tranquility behind.

Extreme anger faded instantly, and Bologue found a serene peace within. Nothing remained, no angry roars, not even a sound escaped him.

Bologue was always like this; he preferred to turn thoughts into actions rather than words.

Flesh gnawed at Bologue's body, snapping his bones, piercing through his insides. By all rights, Bologue should have perished, fallen into slumber, yet at this moment, he was moving once more.

Blue specks of light burned fiercely, the long-held Soul Shards ignited to exhaustion. Bologue chose not to tread towards death; instead, death resisted Bologue.

Calamitous flesh almost fused with Bologue, yet amid the powerful twists, sounds of tearing and pulling echoed as Bologue slowly stood from the constraints, despite having been consumed by more than half.

From shoulder to abdomen, this part of flesh completely vanished, revealing naked bones still adhering with blood-red fluff, growing wildly.

"No...it shouldn't be like this..."

An eerie voice echoed through Bologue's throat, the remaining Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid gathered in Bologue's sole hand, crystallizing into a slender blade.

Bologue broke free from the constraints, having lost the ability to move. Under Alice's consumption, he was left with almost no Ether, unable to proliferate the Deceitful Snake Scale Liquid, and this was a battlefield of flesh; Bologue could not summon the flesh beneath him.

But this would not stop Bologue. He bit the handle of the blade, landing a single hand on the ground, charging towards Alice like a wild beast out of control, aided by his broken lower body.

The distance between the two was not far. When Alice noticed Bologue, she saw only a menacing figure rushing at her, the slender blade descending, determined to slay this hateful monstrosity.

From the grotesque mass extended several bloody bone spikes, Bologue plunged into a thicket of thorns, his body pierced and hung high.

Bologue simultaneously flung the blade from his hand; the chilling edge struck Alice's skull, carving a bloody gash on her exquisite, sinister face.

"You... are not tasty."

Alice's half-face was covered with foul blood, yet beneath the damaged wound lay not the familiar human structure, but wriggling blood-red maggots, countless and still moving.

Bologue was hoisted like a trophy, then Alice turned her head, eyes on the Constant Motion Core rolling before Teda.

Alice sniffed it; unimaginable delicacies lay hidden within that Constant Motion Core, containing the invaluable Golden Soul.

Several pale arms stretched from the grotesque mass; like a bizarre centipede, it crawled across the ground, advancing towards the Constant Motion Core. Just as Alice was about to obtain the core, a desiccated hand seized it.

Alice raised her head, looking up, seeing Teda cradling the Constant Motion Core in both hands, his gaze hollow.

"Father, can you give it to me?"

Alice spoke with the familiar tone of Teda, the sound light and elegant, just like the voice in memory.

Teda looked at Alice, then at the Constant Motion Core in his hands.

Crimson fluff thrived on the metal's outer shell, nibbling, yearning to bite through the metal, devouring the Philosopher's Stone within. According to prior design, the Constant Motion Core should have already been eroded, but after Belli's reinforcement, the sturdy metal held against the gnaws briefly.

Teda saw those milky, translucent buds too, also covering the metal's surface; they were the shrinking Fantasy Species, after Aimou extracted the Philosopher's Stone, ending individual consciousness, these Fantasy Species approached decay, with only a tiny glimmer of light sustaining them.

"Father, you won't refuse me, right?"

Alice dragged the grotesque monstrous shell, arriving silently before Teda, extending a hand in demand.

Teda stared blankly, slowly realizing a faint sense of reason in his hollow eyes, then shattering the delusion entirely.

The battlefield of frenzied flesh, Bologue entangled, pierced on bone spikes, eerie monstrous Alice, his own withering self, and the Constant Motion Core in hand...

A sluggish awareness suddenly awakened, Teda found himself in this hopeless hell, filled only with unbearable sorrow and chilling cold.

"What have I done..."

Teda muttered.