

## Endless 581

Chapter 581: Now

Palmer wore a bitter expression, utilizing all his brain cells to start pondering these unresolved mysteries.

What troubled him wasn't this scheme, but Church himself, and upon further reflection, his former partner was indeed exceedingly mysterious.

Palmer often chatted with Church about his family, shared tales of his childhood, his hobbies, and experiences, while Church would listen patiently, occasionally engaging in conversation with Palmer.

In retrospect, Palmer noticed an oddity: in his interactions with Church, it had always been a one-sided exchange of thoughts from Palmer, with Church seldom expressing his own ideas, let alone talking about his past.

Though the two were once inseparable partners, when it came to Church's past and his previous experiences, Palmer couldn't say a single thing about it.

This stark contrast, which he realized late, left Palmer deeply unsettled, making him question whether he ever truly understood Church.

He never really understood Church.

This thought flickered through Palmer's mind, and come to think of it, Palmer didn't even know Church's real appearance.

The faceless man.

Even without considering Church's messy affairs, the fact that the Order Bureau trusted this mission to Church and handed Chekov's Gun over to him was enough to confirm Church's reliability in their eyes.

Vasilina said, "Instead of overthinking, why don't you just ask him directly?"

"That's true," Palmer's eyes lit up, "Where's Church? Where is he?"

"Church left yesterday; among us, Church was the least injured, or rather, he wasn't injured at all. He just needed some time to replenish Ether after the huge drain from using Chekov's Gun.

After replenishing, he was the first to return to the Order Bureau to report on the mission."

Church was there for work, Palmer was there for a vacation; work was work, life was life.

Palmer felt deflated, but quickly regained his spirits.

Palmer held a mysterious trust in Church, much like he did in Bologue. The two were once partners, and Palmer believed in Church's decisions. If Church chose to conceal something, he must have his reasons. Rather than pressing him, it was better to wait until Church was willing to share.

Who knows if that day will ever come.

Palmer let out a lament, "Vacation, my vacation..."

Back in reality, Palmer was utterly disoriented. Who would've thought his family visit would turn out like this.

"Look on the bright side; you can stay home a bit longer now."

Vasilina rubbed Palmer's head affectionately, like she was tending to a little dog with a lame leg.

That's indeed true; Palmer's annual leave was just a week, but these injuries wouldn't heal in a week.

Palmer didn't know whether to be happy or troubled.

Seeing Palmer's good spirits, Vasilina leaned down and kissed Palmer on the forehead.

"For now, just rest up."

Vasilina said this and was about to leave, but this time, Palmer suddenly reached out and grabbed Vasilina.

Vasilina turned back in surprise; usually, Palmer treated her like a plague, eager to shoo her away. What had changed today, for him to willingly keep her?

Palmer was also startled for a second. Realizing he was holding Vasilina, panic flickered across his face, but he quickly regained his composure and didn't let go.

"Do you have any plans?"

"No, why?"

Vasilina looked at Palmer with a smile, the dim shadow obscuring her face, and Palmer couldn't see her expression.

Palmer asked, "Could you stay with me for a bit?"

"Is this a request?"

Vasilina held Palmer's hand and sat back on the bed.

Palmer hesitated for a moment, feeling a slight blush. Fortunately, the dim shadows masked his face as well, and Palmer guessed Vasilina couldn't see it.

"I suppose...it is."

Palmer forced the words out of his throat.

In the dim light, Palmer lay honestly on the bed, while Vasilina sat at the bedside. The room was exceptionally quiet, with only the ticking of the clock and their even breaths remaining.

Suddenly, Palmer spoke, "I'm sorry, Vasilina."

"Sorry for what?"

"Many things... like how long it took me to come back, always avoiding you and such."

Palmer felt like his brain was cramping, and lots of strange words came out uncontrollably.

"And then?"

Vasilina held Palmer's hands, their skin intimately pressed together, warm emotions brewed between them.

"I've been thinking about things, like why I have such reactions, why... I resist you."

Palmer gradually stopped thinking. He was now like a translator, speaking out the words inscribed in his mind without any embellishment.

"I'm someone who's really afraid of separation. Whenever I think about the things I care about, I'm terrified at the thought that they will eventually leave me."

Palmer thought of Church. After Church was injured and lost an eye, Palmer chose to part ways, and later he worked alone.

Palmer didn't want a new partner anymore.

Having a new partner meant Palmer would have a life-and-death brother, and one day, brutal death would separate them.

Fortunately, Bologue wouldn't die.

Vasilina said, "That sounds like a vicious circle."

"Yeah, the more I care about something, the more I fear separation and feel terrified of the coming farewell in the future.

So I strive to keep a distance from everything. As long as I don't care, there will be no separation, and I won't be troubled by it."

Palmer really liked everyone at the Undying Club. During the days of singing and dancing, his heart felt no burden. They wouldn't leave him. Instead, he might leave them first, becoming an unnoticeable glass in a cupboard.

"Because you care about me, you fear me."

Vasilina lay on her side, pressing her body against Palmer's stomach, propping her hand under her head, scrutinizing this frantic and confused soul.

"Does this sound a bit strange, like the childish fantasy of a kid," Palmer blamed himself, "Sometimes, I feel disgusted with myself for these odd thoughts... feeling like I'm a disgusting guy."

Vasilina didn't speak. She lay on Palmer's chest, listening to the heartbeat.

Palmer cautiously asked, "Are you angry?"

"No, on the contrary, I'm very happy," Vasilina said, "It shows you care about me a lot, so much that you avoided me for so long."

Palmer felt Vasilina was being sarcastic; she was almost exploding with anger.

Apologetic for this inner flaw, Palmer yet jokingly thought to himself, how come she changed from a girlfriend to a fiancée so suddenly.

This rapid change left Palmer at a loss, not knowing how to handle it.

In matters like this, Palmer was a novice.

"All this time, you hoped that distance and time could wash away your care for me and cool down your overheated heart.

Only when you no longer care about me would you be at ease facing me."

Vasilina concluded, "So... you don't love me anymore, right? Palmer, only then would you dare to confess your heart to me."

"No!"

Palmer sat up abruptly, and then the excessive movement caused intense stabbing pain, making him grimace.

Vasilina snuggled into Palmer's embrace, her hand stroking his chest. She looked up, meeting Palmer's gaze. From her eyes, Palmer understood that based on his next words, she would either kiss him or give him a powerful defibrillation.

"Alright..."

Suddenly, Palmer deflated, beginning his confession.

"Initially, I really believed that time and distance would free me. To hasten this relief, I soaked myself in the Undying Club every day, getting drunk to oblivion with those boozy friends... you could say, except on workdays, my mind was never clear.

Before seeing you, I really thought I had succeeded, that I wouldn't be troubled by this anymore, but upon seeing you, I realized..."

Palmer took a deep breath, sighing.

"All that drinking was in vain."

"Even though we hadn't seen each other for so long, at the moment I saw you, an indescribable emotion surged violently in my mind. The intense emotion broke through all obstacles. My rational mind told me I wasn't ready, that I should keep my distance, but my instincts kept screaming.

It sounds conflicted, on one hand, I'm afraid of the farewell after establishing a close relationship, on the other hand, I deeply desire the intimacy between us."

Palmer, drained of all energy, fell back again. He looked at the blurred ceiling, talking to himself.

"My heart still has flaws, feeling immense fear for the future of separation, but now another thing worth fearing has appeared, and that is losing the present with you."

"So, I think I love you, Vasilina."

After a brief silence, Palmer added, "To hell with the future."

Chapter 582: Conspiracy

This was an extremely tidy room, with the floor, walls, and ceiling all covered in a layer of pristine white; the bright and glaring light filled the interior, leaving no place for shadows to hide.

Derby and Zephirin were clad in tight restraint suits, with circles of iron chains binding them. A faint glow moved along the chains, sealing the Ether within them. In their current restrained state, they were no different from lambs awaiting slaughter.

Zephirin had already fallen unconscious, his head drooping, cheeks drenched in sweat, eyes overflowing with a trace of blood, making it look as if his red eyeballs had melted.

Ivan removed his hand from Zephirin's head, shaking his own in frustration, before turning his gaze to Derby.

Noticing Ivan's gaze, Derby recalled the ordeal Zephirin had just endured. Fear caused Derby to struggle continuously, but no matter how forcefully he fought, he remained firmly bound in place, unable to move.

Ivan scrutinized Derby, understanding from the report documents that Derby was a Negative Power User, which meant dealing with him would be much more troublesome than dealing with Zephirin.

Fortunately, Ivan was not dealing with such a Negative Power User for the first time. He deftly picked up the awl and pierced it through the holes in the restraint suit.

Piercing pain emanated from within, and Derby trembled in agony. But this was not the end; there were many holes in the restraint suit, and Ivan leisurely pushed one awl after another into Derby's body.

These awls were not ordinary, mundane objects, but an Alchemy Armament. Under their grinding grip, Derby's Rectangular Soul Critical began to collapse, becoming riddled with holes.

Ivan instructed, "Open your mouth."

Derby hesitated, but recalling Zephirin's ordeal, he reluctantly opened his mouth and bit down on the towel Ivan handed to him.



Then Ivan picked up a razor, meticulously cleaning the hair on Derby's forehead, pressing his palm against his forehead.

The Alchemy Matrix emerged from Ivan's arm, and with the Secret Energy seeped from the Void Spirit School, Derby's consciousness was invaded.

"Mmm! Mmm!"

Derby convulsed violently as if electrocuted, his eyes turning white, and blood seeped onto the white towel.

The mental anguish far surpassed the physical torment. A piercing buzzing sound endlessly echoed through Derby's mind, as if someone was squeezing his skull with a drill, boring through flesh, penetrating bone, and stirring the soft brain tissues into a bloody mess.

Thousands of nerves wailed in agony, physiological instincts forcing Derby to lose consciousness, but before his awareness fully extinguished, the pre-injected potion took effect, reinforcing Derby's rational mind and keeping him awake.

The intrusion did not last long. Ivan lifted his hand, the aura dispersed, and he withdrew the Secret Energy.

Exploring others' consciousness was also quite exhausting for Ivan, similar to asking someone to finish a book within minutes and capture key information from it.

Derby, like a dead man, collapsed entirely, blood slowly soaking the towel, dripping at the end. In similar past cases, the towel had clogged the prisoner's mouth, causing vomit to block the airway, leading to their suffocation.

Suffocation couldn't kill the Night Race, but Ivan habitually pried open his mouth, extracted the towel, and turned to leave the room. Once outside, Ivan removed his gloves and took a deep breath.

Just like usual, he returned to his office to document the fragmented intelligence gleaned from invading their consciousnesses.

Before Ivan could write a few lines, the desk phone buzzed. When he picked up the receiver, a familiar voice spoke.

"How is the situation?"

"Average," Ivan replied, tapping a pen on the desk, "Their memories were encrypted, and I only managed to collect some fragmented information."

Looking at the neat handwriting on the paper, Ivan continued, "I'm trying to integrate them together."

"Alright," the voice on the other end paused, "Serey came this morning."

Ivan clenched his pen, tension showing on his face, "What happened?"

"Nothing much," Fuen said, "just a simple catch-up, and some... information regarding this matter."

"We've now confirmed that the alterations in the 'Dawn Oath' were made by Serey to hide someone, and as long as we identify that person, we might find a lead."

"But that was a hundred years ago."

"There are quite a few survivors from a hundred years ago."

Ivan took a deep breath, "Alright, I'll report this to the Decision Room, anything else?"

Glancing at the itinerary, Ivan's schedule for the next few days was completely packed.

"Actually, regarding this matter, I have another hypothesis."

"Let's hear it."

Fuen said, "Don't you think the Night Race's invasion this time is too reckless? Be it Ralph's betrayal or the Night Race's targeted attack, they are facing the Fortress of the Morning Wind."

Inside the Fortress of the Morning Wind is the traitorous Ralph, outside is Derby, commanding numerous alchemy creatures in suicidal attacks through Blood Boiling, then there's Zephirin infiltrating the Void Realm defenses using Soul-Breaking Poison, and all those Night Race participants...

Their plan is perfect, but no matter how perfect the plan is, it seems incredibly reckless and ridiculous in the face of this insurmountable difficulty.

"Initially, I couldn't understand these things, but after Serey found me, I suddenly realized."

Fuen spoke of this terrible possibility.

"Perhaps the Regent King's goal is not the Clarks family or the 'Dawn Oath.'

To the Regent King, compared to the hatred towards the Clarks family, what they find truly intolerable should be Serey's betrayal."

Fuen felt this situation deeply; on that night, he hated Ralph's treachery more than the Night Race.

"The Regent King must know something, like the identity of the person Serey has hidden away. He is using this to launch an attack on us, with the aim of drawing out Serey."

A crisp sound rang from Ivan's hand; the pen he held was broken, ink spilling from the cracks like black blood.

Ivan murmured, "Since the Dawn War, Serey has been hiding in the Undying Club; as long as he belongs to the Undying Club even for a day, no one can harm him; similarly, he cannot interfere with this world, existing only as an absolute observer."

"The Regent King's true purpose is to send a signal to Serey; he knows who that person is, and he's trying to drag Serey into the water. If Serey wants to continue protecting that person, he is bound to leave the Undying Club,...then he can be killed."

In the receiver, Fuen's voice was oppressive and deep.

Ivan sighed, "For someone?"

To go so mad for a person sounds both romantic and foolish.

"Who knows? Don't be fooled by Serey's appearance, he is actually incredibly mysterious," Fuen speculated. "Perhaps 'that person' is just a codename for something else?"

Ivan asked, "Have you spoken to Serey about this?"

"No, I don't think I've ever truly understood Serey, just like I've never understood what's truly in the Eternal Sun Island.

But I know, Serey is a proud and ruthless figure, as evident from his choice to destroy the Eternal Night Empire for that person. If I told him these things, he would likely immediately leave the Undying Club and go head-to-head with the Regent King."

Fuen's voice paused, "This is no longer an era from a hundred years ago; even if Serey looks young, he's actually an old fellow, full of power, but burdened by the cumbersome Alchemy Matrix he carries.

For Serey, the world now is fraught with dangers, no matter how proud the Night Race Lord is, all he holds is a crude and blunt sword."

The Alchemy Matrix is engraved into the soul, once implanted, it can never be altered; for someone like Serey, who has a far longer life than Ralph, the Alchemy Matrix Serey implanted can almost be described as 'primitive.'

"Retired people should remain retired. I persuaded him, this matter will be handled by the Order Bureau."

Fuen went on to remark, "Sometimes I also find it strange, Serey is truly a scoundrel, yet he indeed is my friend."

Ivan said, "I will focus on monitoring the Undying Club's movements."

"Alright, thank you."

Fuen hung up the phone, his words filled with deep puzzled thoughts.

No one knows what Serey is truly thinking, just like no one knows what really happened during the Dawn War.

Ivan paused, his gaze fixed on the paper on the table, with ink soaking through it, Ivan let out a long sigh, crumpled the paper into a ball, tossed it into the trash, and rose to wash his hands.

As he opened the door, a mysterious figure was standing at the entrance; Ivan immediately became alert. Just as he was about to launch an attack, that sense of unfamiliarity gradually faded and a sense of recognition flowed back.

As if picking up a forgotten memory, Ivan looked at the visitor with sudden realization and then could hardly bear to gaze, as if sympathizing with them.

After taking several seconds, Ivan recalled the identity of the person, but the strange feeling still affected him. He tentatively spoke the name from his memory.

"Church?"

The familiar yet unfamiliar face said, "Hello, Leader, it's me."

"Church Burton."

#### Chapter 583: The Nameless Person

Since Church joined the Order Bureau, he's been under Ivan's charge. The two are very familiar with each other, but now Ivan looks at Church like he's facing a stranger. Church isn't surprised by this, reacting with an extreme indifference as if it's something he's used to.

The silence stretched between them for a while until Ivan fully regained his composure, like friends who haven't seen each other for a long time — the first glance doesn't bring recognition or memories of the past, but given time, those forgotten memories return.

Ivan said, "It seems this mission is very dangerous."

"Yes, after all, we're facing a Defender," Church calmly replied, "Chekov's Gun can indeed erase the 'process' of being hit, but before suffering any fatal injury, I'll certainly face Ralph's desperate counterattack... I am neither an Undead nor an Alchemy Puppet, nor a member of the Clarks. Without that, I'd definitely die."

Ivan softly asked, "Lowered your presence to even deceive Ralph, huh?"

Church said, "This Secret Energy is quite useful, until I voluntarily expose myself, even a Defender can't sense my presence."

"Perfect assassin's Secret Energy, but the cost is also high, unless absolutely necessary..."

"Unless absolutely necessary, I won't go into Deep Stealth, I understand, chief."

Church responded, having heard these words many times before, yet Ivan repeatedly brings it up; perhaps Ivan forgets he's said it, so every time Ivan and Church say this, it feels like the "first time" to Ivan.

Church added, "But this time it's necessary, Ralph has always been a Defender."

If not for Deep Stealth, Church wasn't confident in completing the deadly assassination.

Ivan asked, "Did others notice anything unusual about you?"

"No, most of their perception of me is based on erroneous information, thus avoiding the subsequent side effects of Secret Energy."

Ivan studied Church up and down; even if his memory tells him Church is his most capable team member, his biological instinct still finds Church quite unfamiliar.

Those who understand Church's "real information" are more likely to find their perception of him weakened in the aftermath of the Secret Energy initiation, forgetting Church entirely as the Depth of Stealth increases.

"Is there anything else?"

Church handed over the report to Ivan, waiting for his next instructions.

"Nothing, you can rest for now," Ivan tried to quickly dispel that sense of unfamiliarity, jokingly saying, "Actually, back then, you totally could have competed with Palmer for the Best Rookie Award."

Church smiled and denied, "I'm not suited to being noticed by too many people."

A true assassin should always remain in darkness, whether a name, a face, or even one's own existence.

"Hmm... Alright, then you rest first."

Ivan bid farewell to Church, watching his departing figure, feeling a kind of indescribable emotion deep inside.

Ivan spoke to the back, "Don't forget who you are."

"Church Burton."

Church repeated his name, like a heavy iron anchor, firmly binding his will to the chaotic sea.

Ivan slowly nodded, Church turned, disappearing at the corridor's corner.

Church's presence in the Order Bureau was very low, so low that even in Crow's Nest, unless brought up intentionally, few people would notice there was such a person in Crow's Nest.

To many, Church was too mysterious — even his former partner Palmer knew very little about him.

Ivan was considered one of the few who knew Church's true identity.

Because of this, Ivan had always worried about Church, fearing he would lose himself in that Deep Stealth, even stripping away his own existence.

Arriving at the dormitory area, pushing open the door, Church returned to his room, which was extremely neat and simple, with almost no personal items revealing the room owner's information.

This looked like a hotel room, and the person living here could be anyone.

Church could also be anyone.



Throwing his coat to the side, Church revealed a casual shirt underneath, taking it off, the shirt began to wriggle strangely, possessing something akin to life force, twisting on the bed, then transformed into a black close-fitting garment, and calmed down.

This inconspicuous black garment was an Alchemy Armament known as "Chameleon," with a simple effect of switching into different styles of clothing, matching Church's many faces — one moment he's a uniformed soldier, the next he can become a girl in a long dress.

Stripping naked, Church went to the bathroom to turn on the hot water, warm light cascading down from above, bathing every inch of Church's skin, giving a cozy sensation.

Church took a deep breath, almost exhaling all air from his lungs, leaning against the wall and slowly sitting down, relaxing his muscles completely, like a stuffed teddy bear thrown into a corner.

Only in this narrow bathroom, unobserved, could Church fully relax, embracing true freedom.

Waiting for the hot water to fill the bathtub, Church stood before the mirror, glancing at the face reflected, still appearing commonplace.

As steam rose, gathering into countless tiny droplets on the mirror surface, blurring Church's visage, Church reached out and wiped away the moisture, revealing another face in the mirror.

Palmer's face appeared as Church smiled, and the mirrored Palmer also smiled. He wiped the mirror again, this time revealing Bologue's face, Church's gaze unfocused and distracted, the mirrored Bologue turned solemn and cold.

This childish game didn't last long before Church reverted to that ordinary face, preferring this appearance, going unnoticed, able to be anyone in the crowd.

Now Church didn't need to continue disguising, he could temporarily be himself.

Church reached to his neck, feeling a raised edge from the smooth flesh, probing with a fingernail into the edge, gradually peeling it away — a nearly perfect mask came off his face.

"Church, although we're the Iron Whistle, we're also Field Staff, why don't you wear a mask?"

In memory, Palmer cut two holes into a paper delivery bag, wore it as a mask.

Palmer realized later, "Oh, right, anyway you can change your face at will, that's the most perfect mask."

Church was a natural deceiver, but uniquely for his partner, Palmer, Church didn't wish for too many lies to entangle them; if all traces of truth vanished, Church would feel his life was somewhat bleak.

To avoid being affected by Secret Energy, he'd give ambiguous answers, which could be taken as truth or seen as a lie.

"Of course, this is my mask."

In every sense, it's all considered a "mask."

Gathering droplets blurred the mirror again, obscuring Church's true face. Church placed the mask aside. Without Ether's support, the mask lost its facial transformation power, becoming just an ordinary object.

Church thought, if Palmer saw this scene, he'd probably scream in fright, then point at him, accusing him of being insidious and deceitful.

"How much of what you say is actually true?"

Palmer would likely yell this, but it couldn't be helped. Some shady work required shady people to accomplish.

Professional tasks should be handled by professionals; it's always been this way in the world.

With appropriately matching Alchemy Armament, Church could simulate his "Secret Energy," thereby posing as a "faceless man."

Church stepped into the hot water, soaking in warmth, raised his hand, vigorously rubbing his face with real touch to feel his face's existence.

This odd action continued for a long time until his face turned red and sore before Church stopped, leaning back and submerging completely in water, leaving only half his head above.

Outside, a melodious tune floated inside, listening to the majestic orchestration, Church slowly closed his eyes.

Chapter 584: Goodbye

"Wait a minute! Wait a minute! This isn't right!"

Early in the morning, a certain someone's wailing resounded within the Fortress of the Morning Wind, the sound was mournfully lingering, like a donkey pinned to a stake, seconds away from being beheaded by the Butcher.

From the corridor came the clattering sound of wheels, and Bologue appeared at the end of the corridor, pushing a wheelchair with Palmer on it, who was constantly shrieking.

Earlier this morning, Palmer was deep in a wonderful dream, when Bologue suddenly burst in, bringing along a wheelchair.

Judging by Palmer's usual death-like slumber, Bologue shouldn't wake him, actually, that was Bologue's plan too, to stealthily transport Palmer outside so that when he wakes and realizes, it'd be too late.

Yet unexpectedly for Bologue, the moment he opened the door, Palmer instinctively opened his eyes.

Thanks to some bad memories brought by Zefirin, Palmer's alertness during sleep had unknowably increased many times.

Palmer looked at Bologue cautiously, demanding, "What are you up to?"

Bologue didn't reply, he knew Palmer's character; if he knew what was about to happen, the situation would undoubtedly become ugly.

"Here, you come."

Bologue nodded to the side as a gesture and then stepped aside, Vasilina appeared at the doorway, cracking her knuckles.

Vasilina was practically an expert when it came to handling Palmer; her presence alone made Palmer's face change, though Bologue assumed Palmer feared her, Palmer, in fact, recalled what he had said to Vasilina, realizing now it seemed nothing more than drunken blabber.

But Palmer surely hadn't been drinking.

Palmer took a deep breath and admonished himself internally, "Palmer, you've made your choice, adhere to your ideas and don't overthink those future matters."

Hence, Palmer beamed a smile, waving to Vasilina.

"Good..."

The word wasn't fully out of his mouth when Vasilina swiftly stepped up to Palmer and delivered a karate chop to his neck.

Palmer maintained his smiling expression as his head tilted to the side, instantly passing out.

Vasilina, like a robber, turned and signaled to Bologue, who nodded approvingly, working hard to hoist Palmer onto the wheelchair.

In the unsteady rush, Palmer quickly regained consciousness only to find himself tightly bound, secured to the wheelchair, speeding down the hallway.

Initially, Palmer couldn't comprehend the situation but upon noticing it was Bologue pushing the wheelchair, along with the numerous bags and packs Bologue carried, Palmer realized it didn't bode well.

As Aimou finished packing and joined up with the two, Palmer struggled to nearly stand up, failing to see what was unfolding would be sheer foolishness.

Palmer screamed, "Stop! Something's off! Aren't we on vacation!"

Vasilina emerged from the side, smiling at Palmer, wielding a calendar, with several dates crossed out, today marked with a cute skull.

Aimou whispered, "Vacation's over~"

Palmer froze for a moment, then threw his head back, screaming at Bologue behind him, "I'm injured now! Shouldn't I recover first before returning to work?"

"Compared to the medical techniques at Border Sanatorium, Fortress of the Morning Wind is quite inferior," Bologue thoughtfully replied, "Don't worry, according to Geoffrey's call, people from the Border Sanatorium are already waiting for us at the Order Bureau. When you arrive, you'll be transferred for hospitalization."

Bologue assessed Palmer's seemingly dreadful yet not life-threatening injuries, "With their techniques, you can probably be discharged the day after tomorrow."

"Hey hey hey! Are you guys out of your minds!"

Palmer vigorously contorted his body, even to the point his eyes began to spark, a gust fleetingly supported Palmer's body.

To evade work, Palmer made a desperate leap forward, and then... found himself suspended in mid-air.

Coarse panting sound arose, moist saliva scoured across Palmer's face.

Leica clamped onto Palmer with its mouth, wagging its tail vigorously, appearing quite pleased, as if rescuing Palmer from an imminent fall.

Palmer was shoved back onto the wheelchair again, Bologue continued to push him expressionlessly, with a procession of people and dogs following behind to see them off.

"Ah... It's hopeless now."

Palmer slumped, as if surrendering to despair, his eyes dimly fixed on the ground.

At the corridor's end, a person waited there for a long time, arms folded, leaned subtly against the wall, wearing a smile. When seeing Palmer arrive, he neither blocked the way nor said anything, merely raised his hand, giving a few simple waves in farewell.

Palmer noticed the fellow and, linking to his current predicament, Palmer's expression gradually started to unravel.

"You..."

Palmer raised his plaster-cast hand, trembling as he pointed at Fuen. As his arm lifted, the line of writing Fuen had left on the cast came into view.

This situation, so ironic.

Fuen watched Palmer, "See you next time, son."

Palmer cursed unreservedly, "Bastard!"

As soon as he returned, he was schemed against by Fuen. Now that the matter was over, he was no longer of any use, and Fuen just kicked him aside!

Indeed, after all this time apart, Palmer still couldn't stand his scoundrel of a father.

Fuen was extremely pleased that Palmer was leaving; he even whistled, further provoking Palmer.

Palmer, other than continuing to curse, did nothing. After a series of lively exchanges, Bologue pushed the wheelchair, taking Palmer to the place they came from initially.

The Curved Path Gate stood atop the High Tower. Once they crossed through this gate, they could return to the Transfer Station, and then back to the Order Bureau.

The chilly wind swept by, and Palmer took a deep breath, trying to capture the scent of the Wind Source Highlands, knowing that there was no telling when he might return next.

The Field Operations Department's workload was ridiculously intense. Even if there were no tasks, they still had to patrol daily.

Random thoughts gradually faded from his mind as a faint glow began to swirl around the Curved Path Gate. Palmer felt a sense of relief; the farewell sadness he had anticipated didn't appear.

After the confession that night, Palmer felt his mindset had changed considerably. He was gradually overcoming his shortcomings and might one day truly face everything calmly.

Leica seemed to know Palmer was leaving again. It lowered its head and vigorously licked Palmer's face. In its urgency to express its excitement, its tail whipped back and forth like a whip, and Leica even bit Palmer's head, swallowing half of his body in the process.

"Ugh!"

Palmer kicked desperately. Seeing the situation was critical, Aimou grabbed Palmer's legs and yanked him out.

Despite its delicate appearance, the Alchemy Puppet's strength was incredible. In an instant, Palmer felt like he was about to be torn apart, his upper and lower body about to say farewell.

"Palmer is going to die!"

Vasilina was on the side, fiercely patting Leica. Her gentle caress hit like a heavy punch. The dog gasped for air, and as it spat out Palmer, it sneezed repeatedly, spraying him with glittering droplets like a shotgun blast.

Seeing Palmer in such a state, Bologue no longer wanted to push his wheelchair.

Aimou and Vasilina hugged tightly, and Bologue also patted Leica's head. Seeing such a large dog, Bologue still felt a bit dazed and considered whether he should get a similar pet.

When it came time to say goodbye to Palmer, in fact, only Vasilina needed to actually bid him farewell.

Vasilina frowned, her lips pursed and cheeks slightly puffed. Like Bologue, seeing Palmer in such a state, she didn't want any intimate gestures with him.

The atmosphere had reached this point; they couldn't exactly drag Palmer back for a bath and start the process over.

Vasilina leaned close to Palmer and whispered, "Not bad, Palmer."

"Not bad in what way?"

A gooey, wet sensation spread all over him, and Palmer felt entirely deflated.



"Compared to your past self, you've undoubtedly grown quite a bit."

Vasilina raised her hand to her ear, making a phone gesture to Palmer.

"Good luck."

She kicked the wheelchair, spinning Palmer several times in place.

In the rapid spin, Palmer only felt his stomach churn, and a nauseating feeling rose from his throat.

Just as he was about to lean forward and let it out, leaving his last mark on the Wind Source Highlands, Vasilina kicked the wheelchair again.

"See you next time!"

With Vasilina's cheerful voice, the wheelchair accelerated to top speed in a split second, the rush of adrenaline pinning Palmer tightly to the backrest. Then, both he and the chair sped directly into the open Curved Path Gate.

Neat and swift, without the slightest unnecessary delay.

After sending off Palmer, Vasilina turned to Bologue and Aimou, then bowed to thank them.

"Well then, please take good care of Palmer."

Bologue and Aimou simultaneously raised their left hands, giving a thumbs-up at their chests, then nodded vigorously to show their agreement.

Chapter 585: Daily Life

Bologue opened his eyes, rubbed them, and got out of bed. He had always been a highly disciplined person, waking up at the same time each day, whether it was a workday or a day off, like a perfectly functioning machine.

Pulling open the curtains, warm light filled the room, bringing a long-awaited sense of warmth, spreading a cozy feeling over him.

It's been half a month since the terrible vacation in the Wind Source Highlands. Thinking back now, it all still feels like it happened yesterday. Bologue briefly reminisced, slipping on his slippers to wash his face and brush his teeth.

By the third day back, Palmer had been discharged from the emergency treatment at the Border Sanatorium. He then collapsed on the living room sofa, constantly lamenting and reminiscing about his hometown.

Perhaps this was what they call homesickness.

Bologue could understand Palmer, but only a small part of it.

The Wind Source Highlands was indeed a nice place, but for Bologue at present, he didn't wish to live there long-term. It was a beautiful land, where everything was wonderful, but ultimately, it didn't belong to Bologue.

All of Bologue's life traces were left in Oubos, Oath City, this bizarre and twisted city that continued to expand madly, was his real home.

In the morning light, Bologue stretched his body vigorously, loosening and stretching his muscles, feeling the full strength, after which he changed clothes and went downstairs for a jog along the street.

Bologue could be considered one of the first to awaken in this city. The streets were empty, with hardly any people in sight. Only after Bologue finished his run did the city slowly come to life.

Returning to the apartment, Bologue opened the fridge, took out ingredients, and began making breakfast in the kitchen. He ate simply—bread with jam, and some fried eggs and sausages, with a glass of chilled juice for himself.

Picking up the plate, he placed his breakfast on the low table in front of the sofa. He turned on the radio, and after a brief hiss of static, the timing aligned perfectly, and a familiar voice rang out.

"Hello, listeners! I'm Dudel, your loyal friend broadcasting twice a day. Welcome to this program!"

At the moment he heard Dudel's voice, Bologue felt unprecedented relaxation.

From waking up till now, everything had proceeded precisely according to schedule, with every activity firmly within his control.

In this brief period, Bologue felt like the master of all things, dictating their operation.

Bologue closed his eyes, leaning back on the sofa. This feeling was so great that he felt a tinge of sadness at the thought that the precise schedule would soon be disrupted.

Dudel's opening chit-chat concluded, leading into the music environment. As the first song played, Bologue turned up the volume, humming along with the radio, and walked to Palmer's door, knocking several times until awakening sounds emerged from within.

Palmer opened his eyes, red-streaked with blood vessels. Since talking to Vasilina, it felt like he had untied part of his psychological knots, and he hadn't been drinking excessively in this time.

It could also be because Serey wasn't home recently.

After being discharged, the first thing Palmer did was head to the Undying Club intending to ask Serey why. But Wei'Er said that just as they left, Serey also went out and still hadn't returned.

Raucous music blared from outside, giving Palmer a headache. He always felt Dudel's morning show had low listenership due to his choice of music.

Palmer thought that on a warm and gentle morning, one should listen to soothing music to relax, and not heavy metal rock, as if heading out not to work but to battle.

But then again, Bologue wasn't a normal person, and their work was not much different from fighting.

Palmer turned over, pulling the blanket over his head. Unlike Bologue's precise to-the-minute schedule, Palmer lived casually, sleeping when tired and waking naturally.

He still wanted to sleep a bit more, but the increasing volume outside was like a heavy hammer pounding on his door. Palmer tossed aside the blanket, gazing dazedly at the ceiling.

Palmer yawned heavily like a tractor starting up, the rumbling sound fully waking him, and he abruptly sat up.

"Good morning."

Palmer greeted Bologue while scratching his belly, then sat beside Bologue on the sofa, starting to eat breakfast.

Palmer speared a sausage, stuffing it into his mouth, "Is there anything planned for today?"

"As usual, patrolling the area," Bologue said, "Aside from that...the Minister summoned me."

"The Minister?"

"Yes, Minister Nisanel."

Palmer was a little surprised, not expecting Bologue to be summoned by that mysterious guy.

Bologue said, "Something work-related."

Upon hearing work, Palmer lost all interest, continuing to spear and stuff food into his mouth.

Palmer suggested, "Speaking of which, Bologue, can you make something different for breakfast?"

Bologue asked, "Tired of it?"

"A bit."

Bologue rejected Palmer's suggestion, "Someone who contributes nothing isn't qualified to make demands."

If not for feeling a little bad eating alone, Bologue wouldn't have planned on bringing any for that lazy dog Palmer.

After finishing the meal, the dishes were piled in the sink. Palmer wouldn't do anything else, but he would at least wash the dishes.

The quality of dishwashing depended on Palmer's mental state; if he was muddle-headed from sleep, Bologue would have to wash them a second time himself.

If not for their partnership, from a co-renter roommate perspective, Palmer was undoubtedly a deadweight.

"It's okay, he won't live much longer anyway."

Bologue often comforted himself this way.

Palmer picked up the newspaper. Though not one to care about current affairs, Palmer enjoyed the strange and unusual sections which always brought him a lot of enjoyment.

Sweeping through the lines of text, a black and white photo of a whale stranding caught his eye. Palmer read the words beside it. This used to be a cheerful section, but today Palmer couldn't quite smile.

Bologue asked, "What's wrong?"

Palmer handed him the newspaper, "An unlucky whale got stranded."

Bologue looked at the black and white picture and words, as Palmer's voice mingled with the radio broadcast.

"This whale seems to have gotten lost, separated from its pod, and has been lingering near Free Port.

The fishermen called it Char. Char is a very strange whale. Free Port is filled with terrifying whaling ships. People have scared and harmed it, yet it refuses to leave, as if searching for something.

It often rushes ashore during high tide and gets stranded on the beach. Thankfully, each time it manages to escape, but this time it failed."

In the black and white photo, Char could no longer be said to have just rushed ashore. Nobody knew how it had managed to, but it surpassed the beach and even approached the dense forest.

This time Char couldn't return.

"Many people liked this strange whale. They sprinkled water on it, trying to help it return to the sea, but it moved stubbornly forward... and unsurprisingly, it met its demise."

Such complex matters should not be contemplated so early in the morning, but Palmer couldn't help wondering about the mindset of the whale named Char when it rushed ashore.

Bologue, still his meticulous self, straightened his outfit, while Palmer picked up the car keys, spinning the keychain endlessly around his fingertip.

He opened the door and made a "please" gesture to Bologue.

The vehicle drove out of the parking lot, heading towards the Order Bureau as they chatted idly in the car.

Bologue asked, "Did you get anything out of Church?"

Palmer had indeed mentioned his suspicions regarding Church afterwards, but Bologue hadn't paid much attention due to its lower priority.

"No," Palmer shook his head, "Unlike those who spill their life stories in casual conversation, Church is tight-lipped."

"If he doesn't want to talk, you can't force an answer... You know, he's an Iron Whistle; torture doesn't work on him."

Enduring enemy torture to protect critical information is a compulsory course for every Iron Whistle.

"Huh? You were also an Iron Whistle, but how come I couldn't tell?"

Bologue questioned, remembering their first meeting with Palmer. This guy couldn't keep a secret to save his life; he'd answer whatever was asked.

"It's different, really. I'm just more flexible. As long as it's false information, the opponent gets what they need, and I don't have to endure physical torture. Isn't that a win-win?"

Bologue cast a sidelong, disdainful glance at Palmer.

"But how to put it... I guess everyone has some psychological issues to some extent."

Palmer raised one hand, gesturing wildly in the air metaphorically.

"Maybe Church has his troubles too, but he doesn't want to tell us. I think we shouldn't press him too hard on such matters. Maybe someday, he'll open up and talk with us."

"Let's hope so."

Bologue recalled things about Church. He had always had a good memory, but when it came to Church, everything was covered with a vague fuzziness.

If not for Palmer bringing him up, Bologue wouldn't normally think of this person, as if he didn't exist at all.

Palmer honked the horn aggressively, interrupting Bologue's thoughts. He rolled down the window, leaned out, and yelled at the car in front.

Spending so much time with Bologue, Palmer seemed to be showing signs of road rage.

"Calm down," Bologue advised.

Palmer hated the congested morning traffic. "You're not the one driving!"

"I would like to, but I don't have a license."

Bologue spread his hands, indicating it wasn't his problem, "You wouldn't want the car impounded, would you?"

"Have you ever thought about getting a driver's license? It shouldn't be difficult for you, right?"



Palmer couldn't understand. Bologue had top-notch driving skills, like a bull on the road, but unless necessary, he always sat in the passenger seat.

Bologue shook his head, explaining to Palmer, "You need to think like this, Palmer, if I also take on the driving, then what's your value of existence?"

After saying that, Bologue strained his expression, almost writing "apart from driving, you're useless" on his face.

Palmer's face fell instantly, staring ahead as silence filled the car for a long while.

"Want to play table games tonight?"

"Where at?"

"Undying Club."

Bologue recalled his recent schedule. Except for the conversation with Nesanel, nothing important...

Life is like this; not every day is exhilarating. Most of the time, it's like now, chatting about irrelevant topics in heavy traffic, passing the time.

"Alright."

Bologue replied.

Chapter 586: Chosen One

Order Bureau, Observation Tower.

Within the cold and minimalist Order Bureau, the Observation Tower is a place well-suited for relaxation. Under this expansive panoramic window, not only can one directly see the azure sky, but even the stars at the deep blue's edge shimmer faintly.

Looking down, the dense sea of clouds rolls, the Cultivation Room resembling a reef in this endless sea flow. The cloud sea parts before it, only to reconvene.

Bologue loved this spot. In the cloud-covered Opus, it was a rare place to bask in the sun. Ever since discovering this, Bologue often liked to meet people here. He didn't expect that this time, he and Nesanel thought of the same place.

When Lebius mentioned that Nesanel planned to meet Bologue here, the clouds over Bologue's heart dispersed a bit. Ever since learning about the astronaut's existence in Between Nothingness, Bologue always felt an invisible boulder pressing on his chest.

Bologue wanted to confide these troubling worries but knew well that these were ominous pieces of information. Once shared with those around, they could bring them disaster.

This was something Bologue did not want to see.

After much weighing, Bologue realized that the only one left who could listen to him was Nesanel.

His earlier release from prison was at Nesanel's behest. Due to his deep connection with the Devil, Nesanel seemed to regard him as a Pioneer, tasked with discovering information related to the Devil.

Now that Bologue had finally lifted a corner of the mystery, it was time to report recent developments to Nesanel.

Most importantly, with Nesanel's confidence and strength, Bologue believed that even retaliation from the Devil could be handled by him.

Suddenly, a strong hand pressed on Bologue's shoulders from behind. Before it touched him, Bologue hadn't noticed any movement.

"Long time no see, Bologue."

A familiar voice spoke; Bologue, seated on the bench, looked up to see a tall figure looming above. The face was backlit, indistinct and unclear, but Bologue knew who it was.

"Long time no see, Minister."

Nesanel sat next to Bologue, putting a large hand around his shoulder. The two seemed more like close brothers than superior and subordinate.

Having encountered many strange people, Bologue was desensitized, used to such displays of closeness.

"You seem to have many important things to discuss with me."

Nesanel looked at Bologue with a smile. From initial vigilance to now handling with calmness, Nesanel recognized Bologue's abilities and admired the director's knack for choosing people.

These days, devoted Field Staff like Bologue are rare.

Bologue stated bluntly, "It seems I've seen the Devil that traded away my soul."

While waiting for Nesanel, Bologue kept pondering how to narrate everything to him.

During the ascension ceremony: the strange stormy snowfield, the separation of body, mind, and spirit, the memories of an unnamed soul, the iron anchor piercing through snow and wind, followed by the experiences in Between Nothingness...

These events piled up together, causing Bologue a splitting headache. Besides describing these incidents, Bologue also had to figure out how to explain the matters of the afterlife to Nesanel, and... the astronaut.

Astronaut.

This was a term belonging only to Bologue's "past life" memory. In the current era, while humanity had conquered the skies, they hadn't yet broken through its bounds to reach the heavens above.

In this world, in this era, astronauts were not meant to exist.

But the undeniable fact remained, the astronaut had appeared right before his eyes, entangled profoundly with Bologue's "past life."

Just finding a way to explain the concept of "astronaut" to Nesanel felt extremely troublesome, let alone trying to recount everything thoroughly and in detail.

So Bologue planned to only state the key parts.

"In the world after death, I saw the Devil."

Bologue continued to add.

"He said I was his... Chosen One."

"The Devil?" Nesanel nodded with a smile, repeating Bologue's words, "Or whatever you call the Chosen One."

After he said this, Nesanel's expression froze, the smile vanishing from his face in an observable speed. His squinted eyes gradually widened.

Solemn, oppressive, cold... in an instant, Nesanel's aura transformed. It became like a waking lion, his muscles tensed, veins twisted and bulging as if crawled by serpents.

"Chosen One..."

Nesanel once again recited this term, his hand resting on Bologue's shoulder as if to crush his body.

"Are you sure? The Devil told you this?"

The identity of the Chosen One seemed extremely special, so special that Nesanel didn't even care about the authenticity of the Devil.

Bologue realized the importance of this information and nodded seriously in affirmation.

"That's what he said," Bologue replied, "He said he placed his bet on me."

Nesanel took a deep breath, trying to control his emotions and calm himself down.

He sighed softly, "My God... Albert..."

Bologue caught the name "Albert," a name he found strangely familiar, as if he had heard it somewhere before. But before Bologue could ponder its origin further, Nesanel suddenly stood up.

Without letting Bologue resist, Nesanel pulled him up, snapped his fingers, and then the ground began to writhe violently. The bricks aligned neatly, splitting apart in front of them, collapsing into a staircase that continuously descended.

This was the privilege of the deputy director; under Nesanel's will, the Cultivation Room would open an emergency passage for him at any time.

Inside the dim staircase, green safety signs lit up, and Bologue, like a large puppet, was dragged inside by Nesanel.

Bologue followed closely behind Nesanel, "I guess the identity of the 'Chosen One' is quite important, isn't it?"

"It's beyond important! Why are you just telling me this now?"

Nesanel's voice rose, filled with both excitement and panic.

"Huh? I couldn't find you!"

Bologue retorted, "I had no means to contact you!"

Nesanel fell silent, realizing he had overlooked this fact—given Bologue's ordinary staff position, actively contacting him was too difficult.

"Alright, alright..."

Nesanel felt a headache coming on, "Damn it, our conversation might have already been overheard by him."

"By whom?"

"A guy who likes watching movies. It's part of the deal; he stays put while we, like actors, perform history's course before his eyes... Anyway, this isn't important now. Let's go somewhere he can't monitor."

Nesanel spoke words that Bologue didn't understand. The road ahead continued to stretch, and perhaps Nesanel felt this was still too slow, so he raised his hand and snapped his fingers.

In an instant, their figures began to blur and distort, and Bologue felt as if his insides were shifting and transforming, then the sensation disappeared.

Everything was still surrounded by darkness, unchanged, but Bologue was certain he had just experienced a Curved Path Shuttling.

Before Bologue could say anything, Nesanel snapped his fingers several times, and they went through multiple Curved Path Shuttlings.

With each snap of fingers, the surroundings rapidly transformed—first the Pillar Courtyard, then the Field Operations Department, Sublimation Furnace Core, Deep Nest Courtyard...

After several positional shifts, Bologue and Nesanel found themselves in a realm of darkness.

This wasn't pure darkness, though there was no observable light source, Bologue could still clearly see Nesanel's form, as if they had become some sort of luminous entities, illuminating the darkness.

Nesanel gestured, "Have a seat."

Bologue turned around and discovered a chair had appeared beneath him, then glanced at Nesanel, who had already sat down. Between them, a low table had appeared with wine glasses on top.

Curiously, Bologue asked, "Where is this?"

"Audience Chamber."

Nesanel explained, "When you receive a summons from the Decision Room, you will appear in such a space."

Bologue surveyed the boundless darkness around him, "So, does that mean we're close to the Decision Room now?"

"More or less, while this place doesn't have spatial orientation, if you must pinpoint a direction..."  
Nesanel pointed upward, "The Decision Room is above us."

The space inside the Cultivation Room was distorted and misplaced, lacking a concrete sense of direction; sometimes Bologue even felt that each area was completely independent, but when passing through certain "doors," he experienced a seamless Curved Path Shuttling, transporting him to different regions.

"Now, let's talk about the matter of the 'Chosen One.'

Nesanel displayed an ambiguous smile, "I haven't been this nervous in many years."

#### Chapter 587: The Dispute of Devils

Nesanel took a deep breath repeatedly, he had speculated about Albert's plan, but in any case, he never expected Albert to actually do these things.

He brought in a Chosen One, and Nesanel believed that Albert must have known this when imprisoning Bologue, yet he withheld this information from everyone.

His eyes glanced at Bologue, who had no definite awareness of the identity of the Chosen One, and such a Chosen One had been locked in the Black Prison for sixty-six years.

Nesanel noticed that Albert did this deliberately, it was time to see him again, to verify his ideas, but before that...

"Bologue, why don't you start by talking about your perception of the beginning of the Fury of the Scorched Earth and the end of the Fall of the Holy City?"

Nesanel asked Bologue, "What do you think was the cause of all this?"

"The rise and expansion of the Kagader Empire led to conflict with the Rhine Alliance, evolving into a war sweeping across the continent."

As one of the most insane wars in modern and even the entirety of human history, the cause of the Fury of the Scorched Earth was common knowledge, and Bologue didn't understand the purpose of Nesanel's question.



"As for the Fall of the Holy City..."

When the Fall of the Holy City was mentioned, Bologue also seemed hesitant, for him, the Fall of the Holy City was truly a mystery.

The Kagader Empire and Rhine Alliance together destroyed King Solomon's Holy City, reducing it to burning ruins.

In previous conversations with Teda, Bologue had speculated that it was because King Solomon touched the Tier of the Crowned, thus leading to his extermination by both parties. In subsequent events, Bologue saw the ruins of the Holy City in the Abandoned Land...

"Is it because King Solomon reached the Crowned Tier that he was destroyed?"

Bologue proposed his conjecture, perhaps Nesanel could provide an answer.

Nesanel revealed a meaningful smile, "The Crowned? An interesting guess."

Bologue asked, "Does all of this have any relation to the Chosen One?"

"Hmm, hold on, let me tell you about the true origins of the war, you might understand quite a bit."

Nesanel poured a glass of wine for Bologue, and filled one for himself, then gently clinked glasses with Bologue.

"This is good stuff."

He raised his eyebrows at Bologue, much of the Field Operations Department's budget was spent by Nesanel enjoying life, aside from Belli, he was the one who should be thoroughly investigated.

"Bologue, do you think the devils are united?"

Faced with Nesanel's questioning, Bologue pondered for a moment, recalling the tyrant, Crimson Queen, Astronaut...

"No... they're not united."

Bologue analyzed rationally, "There's no need to deify the devils, at the end of the day, they're just a bunch of greedy merchants, desiring our souls, but souls are limited, greed is infinite."

"They are like a group of competing merchants, in the markets of this world, striving to plunder the wealth of souls."

"Exactly, that's it!"

Nesanel downed the wine in his glass, "The devils address each other as brothers and sisters, but they are not united, they see each other as enemies throughout countless histories, constantly attacking and fighting."

Bologue listened quietly.

"They are all devils, all-powerful, under the fiercest of conflicts, they can't ultimately defeat each other, so the devils have made agreements, when disputes arise among them, they will downgrade their own powers, and seek proxies to wage war for them.

This world is a grand gambling table, they are the gamblers, the proxies are the pieces on the table, bearing the devils' stakes, if a proxy loses, it means the devil behind them has lost."

Bologue's heart was stirred by Nesanel's words, he vaguely sensed something, a certain truth of a mystery was exposing its true side to him.

"There can be many proxies, such as debtors, all are pawns under the devils' debts, acting for them, but the pieces vary in status, they don't bear the devils' stakes, even if they die, it's inconsequential.

But the Chosen Ones are different, they bear stakes, like the king on the chessboard, if the Chosen One falls, it means the devil has fallen as well.

You... are the Chosen One of that devil, bearing his stake, becoming his king."

Nesanel extended his hand, pointing at Bologue himself, "How are you feeling now?"

Bologue was frozen in place, his mind blank.

Bologue, possessing the Time Reversing Axis, naturally knew he was of significant importance in the eyes of the devils, but he hadn't imagined there was this layer of meaning.

As for what the Astronaut once told him, about if he lost, the Astronaut also lost.

Bologue actually didn't mind much, he entirely considered it devilish rhetoric, hearing such words from the tyrant was already more than enough.

Rarely, this time the devils were not joking.

Nesanel showed a cruel smile, "The good news is, we know why you're so deeply connected with the devils' umbilical cord, the bad news is, Bologue, you seem to be caught in the devils' strife."

Bologue ignored Nesanel's mockery and instead focused on something else.

"So, the Rage of the Scorched Earth appears to be a war sweeping across nations, but in reality, it's just another... conflict among the devils."

"Yes, that's right, battles among the Chosen Ones, ultimately ending with the destruction of the Fall of the Holy City."

Nesanel confirmed Bologue's speculation, which was what he intended to tell Bologue.

An intense cold descended, causing Bologue to feel a headache. The information Nesanel provided was limited, yet it filled Bologue with a sense of pressure.

Now, Bologue is becoming more entangled with the mysteries of history.

He murmured to himself, "Whether it's the Rage of the Scorched Earth or the Fall of the Holy City, they are only reflections of the devils' conflicts in reality..."

Just as Jeffrey discussed with him when he joined, the devils are influencing the course of history, manipulating the world from behind the scenes. Now, Bologue truly confronts that dark conspiracy, feeling an unprecedented sense of helplessness.

"Then what of the Fall of the Holy City? What role did King Solomon play in this conflict?"

Bologue further pressed, excitedly watching Nesanel.

With a deeper understanding of the world and a gradual revelation of past mysteries, Bologue finds himself seemingly closely linked to the Fall of the Holy City and King Solomon.

"The currently known information is that the devils' conflicts sparked the Rage of the Scorched Earth. Their Chosen Ones represent various forces, continuously battling each other, and King Solomon was one of these Chosen Ones."

Bologue exclaimed in shock, "King Solomon? A Chosen One?"

"Yes, King Solomon also had a devil standing behind him."

"Then the destruction of the Holy City..."

"Several Chosen Ones reached an agreement to jointly eliminate this competitor first."

Bologue fell silent for a moment, "What did King Solomon do to make other Chosen Ones temporarily set aside their differences and choose to prioritize his destruction?"

Compared to the Rhine Alliance and Kagader Empire, King Solomon's power seemed so weak. He was the least competitive among the many Chosen Ones.

So King Solomon must have posed a significant threat in other aspects, such as... the Crowned.

"I don't know," Nesanel said nonchalantly, "In fact, even now, we haven't understood much about the specifics of the Fall of the Holy City."

Bologue said, "Because the participants all died? A light, a light that destroyed all life, including King Solomon."

A slight surprise flickered in Nesanel's eyes, he laughed, "You know more than I expected."

"I've always been investigating these matters."

"Almost right, all participants in the Fall of the Holy City died, along with King Solomon. Thus, that segment of history is lost forever, perhaps only the dead know the entire truth."

Bologue continued, "But we definitely know something, don't we? We won the secret war, occupying Oubos, and its predecessor, the ruins of the Holy City are buried beneath the Abandoned Land below the Great Rift."

As if struck by thunder in his mind, Bologue suddenly awoke, staring directly at Nesanel.

"I see... that's why the devils gathered in Oubos, even after the Fall of the Holy City, countless conflicts still revolve around this city."

Nesanel maintained his smile, saying little.

"King Solomon accomplished something, something that threatened all Chosen Ones, even the devils. They originally intended to completely eradicate this threat, but they didn't expect King Solomon to use that light to destroy everyone."

King Solomon and the participants both died, but that entity wasn't destroyed; it lies buried somewhere on this land, constantly emitting threats. As long as it hasn't been eradicated, the conflicts will never cease."

This is a long-lasting war, with the devils' desires far from being satisfied. Only when a true winner is decided can the world find brief peace.

And then begin the next conflict.

"Similar to our assumptions."

Nesanel looked at Bologue with admiration, "The worst part is, we're unaware of what exactly King Solomon did, only knowing that some unknown threat exists."

Knowing the existence of something, but merely knowing its existence, with no other information.

"Everyone died..."

Bologue murmured, "No... not everyone died."

From the radiance that consumed everything, one person survived, even if he forgot the experience.

Bologue felt a weight pressing on his chest, he tentatively asked.

"Could that unknown entity be me?"

#### Chapter 588: Red Dragon

So far, Bologue's life has been utterly peculiar. First, there were the memories of his "past life," the ordinary childhood and growth; then he got swept into the Wrath of Scorched Earth, was taken in by the Order Bureau during the Fall of the Holy City, and now...

After meeting with the astronaut, Bologue began to wonder whether his "past life" could truly be considered his "past life."

Was this something forged by the Devil's power? And what role did it play in the astronaut's conspiracy?

Amidst the countless thoughts flashing in his mind, Bologue slowly lowered his body, clutched his head with his hands, and tried hard to control his thinking to avoid falling into the quagmire of madness.

Bologue thought of himself as special, and his various past experiences only reinforced this belief.

He possessed the Time Reversing Axis, a near-perfect Undying Body; he bore the Alchemy Matrix of Overlord Xilin, and he was chosen by an astronaut and a Devil...

God, his experiences would make him the protagonist destined for greatness if this were a novel.

Yet, Bologue wasn't happy about this realization; instead, he became aware of the horror lurking behind the curtain. If he were the protagonist, he'd have to assume the responsibilities of one and face the raging storms.

Bologue wasn't afraid, though. He just felt a bit excited.

Not happy, but very excited—shuddering at the knowledge of secrets, his blood heated throughout his body, with every nerve screaming out a hoarse war cry.

In Jerry's words, Bologue was somewhat narcissistic. Combined with his past experiences, the various encounters further distorted his personality.

Bologue was somewhat narcissistic and possessed a twisted Savior complex. He believed in his ironclad principles and thought of himself as a blazing Fire Sword, destined to cut down the bloodlines of the wicked and obliterate all evilness.

Beneath the seemingly rational and clear facade, there lay a heart with an unquenchable thirst for blood.

Now Bologue was one step closer to the Devils, even becoming involved in their struggles as a Chosen One.

If...

If he truly was King Solomon's creation, a being significant enough to make many Chosen Ones wary and eager to destroy...

This implied one thing: Bologue possessed a power that instilled fear in the Chosen Ones, only he had yet to realize it.

Once, Bologue felt powerless against the Devils, but if he was King Solomon's creation and the cause of the Fall of the Holy City, then he possessed that blazing Fire Sword. The next step was just finding a way to wield it and start slashing.

"No... you're not."

Nesanel answered decisively, extinguishing the flames of Bologue's delusional hopes.

"You seem a bit disappointed."



Nesanel observed Bologue's expression. Just now, Bologue had been excited and twisted, like a bloodthirsty Butcher, but after hearing Nesanel's answer, he appeared quite let down, looking disheartened.

Bologue calmed his emotions, covering his nature with reason, "A bit, but it's okay."

"Oh? Your mindset... really is quite strange."

Nesanel found it hard to grasp Bologue's thoughts, "Others, upon knowing they've been drawn into the Devils' conflicts and entangled in layers of plots, should feel panic and fear. Yet you're excited, as if ready to draw your sword and cut someone down."

Bologue didn't know how to describe this, "It's... sort of a hobby?"

"A hobby?"

Nesanel burst out laughing, then gave a nod of affirmation, "Quite a hobby indeed."

Bologue relaxed and then laughed at himself. Surely, he wasn't some Chosen One. It was all just him overthinking.

However, Bologue didn't feel disheartened. Back on the Wind Source Highlands, when Ralph berated Palmer, his mindset began to shift.

Palmer wasn't special; he just happened to be Fuen's son and happened to be born in an era when the Path of Wind Fury was completed.

The same went for Bologue. He wasn't special; many of his experiences came about merely by chance.

No one is irreplaceable; everyone can be replaced.

"Red Dragon."

Suddenly, Nesanel stated, "This is our code name for that unknown entity."

Bologue wasn't unfamiliar with this term. After Adelle saved him back then, Bologue would listen to her teachings whenever he could, wherein this existence was mentioned.

"Seven heads and ten horns, crowned."

Adelle described the Red Dragon that rose from the Abyss in such a manner. It beat its wings vigorously, and wherever it went, it left everything scorched, destroying the paradise on the ground before heading towards the Celestial Kingdom above the Dome, until the stars fell.

The world-ending Red Dragon.

"Interestingly, according to the records, we initially thought you were the 'Red Dragon,'" Nesanel said, "the only survivor of the Fall of the Holy City, bearing an almost perfect Undying Body."

"Over the sixty-six years you were detained, we've always been investigating matters related to you, hoping to find evidence proving you were the 'Red Dragon.' Unfortunately, you are not."

Bologue said, "Maybe it's just a coincidence that I happened to be there, became a Debtor, and turned into an Undead."

"A coincidence, but not entirely," Nesanel said, "After all, you are the Chosen One of the Devil, the proxy of this upcoming conflict."

Bologue froze.

Indeed, on one hand, he felt he wasn't special, yet his identity as a Chosen One constantly reminded him of his uniqueness.

Nesanel proposed his theory, "Perhaps... you are somehow connected to the 'Red Dragon,' which is why the Devil chose you?"

Words from deep within his memory echoed in Bologue's mind.

"The Tyrant once told me that he was searching for someone and said I resembled that person, but it was only a resemblance; I was not that person."

Bologue realized, "The Tyrant is searching for the 'Red Dragon'?"

The Devils could not intervene in the world directly, so they dispatched Chosen Ones to win battles on their behalf. King Solomon's creation, the "Red Dragon," could threaten all Chosen Ones, becoming the sole winner.

Whoever obtained the "Red Dragon" would become the victor.

"Possibly, nobody knows what that entity truly is. It could be a person, an object, or even something conceptual,"

Nesanel shrugged, indicating his helplessness, "Besides you, we couldn't find a second survivor, and your memories of that history are scant."

Bologue said, "I think even if I recalled something, it wouldn't help much. I never reached the interior of the Holy City; I 'died' on the outskirts."

Both fell into a silent consensus, organizing their thoughts, allowing their weary consciousness to unwind.

One certainty remained: the "Red Dragon" had not yet exerted its power, yet the Holy City was already destroyed. So, the "Red Dragon" still lingered on this land. However, over all these years, neither the Order Bureau, the King's Secret Sword, nor even the Tyrant had been able to find its traces.

Bologue said, "So, the Devils' conflict hasn't ended either. The Fall of the Holy City was just an intermission. Everyone's gathering strength to return."

Nesanel responded, "According to the records, this is the Devils' most prolonged conflict ever."

All wars were interconnected, from the Wrath of Scorched Earth to the Secret Wars. None of these were continuations of previous battles but rather parts of this grand conflict.

It never ended.

"Then... there's also a Devil backing the Order Bureau, right?"

Bologue's tone turned solemn as he slowly clenched his fists. In fact, he was already mentally prepared for this possibility after Nesanel brought up those points, but turning guesses into reality left Bologue with indescribable feelings.

The Devil had never left, always lingering by Bologue's side. Perhaps when Bologue worked every day, it was observing him from nearby.

"Yes, there is a Devil behind the Order Bureau, but this Devil... is somewhat special."

Nesanel was unsure how to describe it, "Among the numerous Devils, he stands as the least harmful one."

"It's still a Devil!"

Bologue insisted, then deflated because, when all was said and done, Bologue himself was also a Debtor and a Chosen One, enlisted as the Devil's pawn on Earth...

"Then put it another way, Bologue."

Nesanel spoke mysteriously, "We've enslaved this Devil."

"Enslaved?"

"Yes, enslaved. We've bound him with some clandestine methods."

Nesanel raised his hand, clinching it tightly, signifying power.

"See, Devils aren't always invincible.

At least, not right now."

#### Chapter 589: The Devils' Wager

All along, in Bologue's mind, two strange feelings coexisted, one being that the Devil is undefeatable, the other that the Decision Room is omnipotent.

Now the undefeatable myth has been broken, and a glimmer of hope appeared in Bologue's conception of destroying the Devils. He asked urgently.

"What did you do?"

Nesanel said, "It's simple, just like a normal transaction, find a loophole in the Blood Contract, complete the deal, and deceive the Devil."

Bologue still couldn't quite believe it, "Is it really so?"

He looked skeptically at Nesanel, this carefree fellow, who also carried a somewhat unserious vibe; Bologue needed to confirm his words several times.

Nesanel's expression hesitated for a moment, and Bologue squinted his eyes. Indeed, this old fox had few truthful words coming out of his mouth; Bologue even began to wonder how he became the deputy director.

"We won, but not completely victorious."

Indeed! Bologue continued to press, "Are you sure?"

Nesanel fell silent, hesitated for a moment, and finally decided to inform Bologue of this intelligence.

In the past, only the core authorities within the Order Bureau could know this information, though there were exceptions like Lebius who could be privy to this knowledge.

For ordinary employees, knowing too much was instead a curse. After all, regardless of who it was, thinking about a strange Devil lurking in the depths of the supposedly safe Cultivation Room would make them doubt their responsibilities.

"In fact, the dealings between Devils and humans are often not settled in one go," Nesanel said. "Like trades in human society, there are similar forms in Devil dealings with us, such as gambling agreements."

"A wager?"

"You're not wrong to understand it that way," Nesanel said, "we first gain the Devil's power, then establish a wager; if we win, we gain everything, if we lose, we lose it all."

Bologue felt his understanding of the Order Bureau was being refreshed, "You made a wager with a Devil, and because of the content of the wager, the Devil was bound in the Order Bureau, while you... gained the Devil's power without any cost."

"Not entirely without cost," Nesanel scratched his head, "let's just say, under the constraints of the wager, when we need certain help, the Devil will give us a reasonable friendly price."

Bologue's head ached intensely, the conversation with Nesanel carried too much information, even he was having trouble processing it all now.

"Why?"

Bologue didn't understand, repeatedly questioning, "Why?"

Nesanel said, "For qualification, and for shelter, Bologue. Without the presence of a Devil behind us, how could we intervene in the Devils' disputes?"

"What is this, finding a 'puppet' for yourself, participating in the Devils' dispute in his name?"

"More or less, based on the wager's content, the Devil doesn't care who the winner of the dispute is," Nesanel said. "This dispute has gone on for many years, even though the Devils cannot defeat each other, the power they left in the mortal world can be interfered with and destroyed."

"That Devil has no more chips, and without relying on the Order Bureau, he would lose disastrously in the dispute."

Nesanel indifferently said, "It's both a wager and mutual exploitation."

Bologue didn't respond immediately; he recalled the scenarios of interactions with Devils in his mind.

Those frenzied, sinister beings rampaged through the world like a rampant storm, bringing endless grief and harvesting souls.

Bologue understood what Nesanel was saying. Without mutual utilization with the Devils, the Order Bureau would only be a castle facing the storm. But with the presence of Devils, the Order Bureau becomes part of the storm.

Bologue asked, "Could the entire Order Bureau be considered his Chosen One?"

"The Chosen One is unique; it can only be an independent individual."

Listening to Nesanel's answer, Bologue already had an answer in his heart regarding the identity of the Chosen One within the Order Bureau.

Bologue half-jokingly said, "Now there are two Chosen Ones in the Order Bureau. Will the Devil behind us make us crazy enough to fight each other?"

"How could that be? I've told you, we've bound that Devil; he can't do anything until the wager is complete."

Nesanel said, "Although it's not a complete victory, this is the most outrageous thing recorded that humans can do to a Devil."

He laughed as he spoke, "However, he seems to enjoy it too; being enslaved by humans should be a novel experience for him."

Bologue said, "And after the wager? The dispute will end one day."

Nesanel spoke frankly, "It's simple, either win or die."

"Is it worth it?"

Nesanel said seriously, "It's not a matter of worth, it's... this is the final conflict."

"The final conflict?"

Bologue didn't understand; it seemed as if Nesanel implied the world was nearing its end.



"Since ancient times, Devils have initiated numerous conflicts, and they've gone through countless reshuffles, but none of those conflicts have been as complex and mad as this one. Every Devil has poured their power into this conflict, wanting to emerge victorious."

Bologue asked, "What is the cause of this conflict?"

"That Devil didn't tell us, but from historical patterns, we can summarize some answers... some very dreadful answers."

Nesanel retorted to Bologue, "How is your history skills?"

"I didn't attend college... but I've read many books."

Bologue wasn't keen to talk about these things; back then, he had enlisted to save money for college, only to encounter the Scorched Earth Wrath.

"Oh..." Nesanel apologized, "Over these years, we've been investigating past histories. From the fragmented histories among countries, we've concluded this pattern: after every insane war, a massive population die-off occurs, and once the war ends, rapid revival begins..."

"Isn't that a rational phenomenon?"

Bologue interrupted Nesanel. War, development, war... human history is a tale of war evolution; he was very clear on this.

"It's a rational phenomenon, but overly rational becomes irrational."

Nesanel said, "It's as if someone meticulously calculated everything. Every century, a war breaks out among the countries, while the war's scale, duration, and population deaths all increment at a fixed rate proportionally."

Bologue murmured, "The Devils are covertly interfering with the course of history."

"It's not just interfering with history's course; accurately speaking, interfering with history is merely a byproduct of their real purpose," Nesanel conveyed to Bologue, "Your previous metaphor was very accurate: the world is a vast market, and the Devils are greedy merchants..."

Bologue whispered, "The Devils' conflict serves not only to resolve their mutual disputes but is also a grand harvest of souls. By inciting crazy wars, they devour more souls, ending the war only to plunge the world into a brief peace, awaiting the next harvest."

"They are like ranchers, and we are the lambs within the fences," Nesanel said lightly, "Fatten up the lambs and then slaughter them, repeatedly cycling."

Bologue asked, "So why do you see this as the final conflict?"

"This is the intelligence we pried from the mouth of that Devil. He didn't say it explicitly but constantly hinted at us through some indirect information," Nesanel said, "The scale of war, the Devils' greed, the mortals' power, all these are continuously strengthening with the change of the times."

"Think about Scorched Earth Wrath, Bologue. When the Devils have accumulated their power and their Chosen Ones raise their swords to fight, it will be a destruction far worse than the Scorched Earth Wrath."

Nesanel hadn't personally experienced the Scorched Earth Wrath, but he understood how terrifying it was. To this day, the Narrow Countries still have many abandoned cities, stretching from the Kagader Empire to the Mountain Ridge. Whether in forests and wilderness or riverways and plains, everywhere is buried with the remnants of steel.

Another war, far worse than the Scorched Earth Wrath, is quietly waiting on the other end of history, just waiting for time to arrive.

The end of war.

"Think carefully about what disputes and ongoing wars the world has experienced in the last century."

Nesanel stretched his hands, placing them on Bologue's shoulders. The two were so close that Bologue could smell the scent of alcohol on Nesanel.

For a moment, the historical axis in Bologue's cognition stretched forward again. He always thought the origin of modern disputes was the Scorched Earth Wrath. The subsequent Fall of the Holy City, the secret war, and everything happening now were just extensions of the Scorched Earth Wrath, but clearly, Bologue's vision was too limited.

The past conflicts were so close, yet Bologue had not realized at all.

"Dawn War."

Bologue suddenly realized.

Yes, the rise of the Eternal Night Empire and the allied secret societies marked the first truly extraordinary war fought in the shadows of history.

"That was the Devils' first defeat; their conflict was disrupted by the power of mortals. The Eternal Night Empire had yet to start a large-scale soul harvest when it burned away in the dawn."

In Nesanel's narrative, Bologue suddenly understood why Nesanel cared so much about his identity as the Chosen One and why the Order Bureau needed the Devils' protection to participate in this final conflict.

This made Bologue recall what Nesanel told him about the purpose of the Special Operations Group. It was an action group entirely composed of Debtors, having intricate ties with the Devils, achieving one objective after another under fate's mockery for the Devils.

Or perhaps awaken, rebel against fate, and at the critical moment, strike that fatal blow.

"You want me to become Serey."

Bologue understood, "Another Serey Villeries."

Chapter 590: For All Humankind

The conflicts among Devils harvest human souls; it is a sacrifice with the world as the crucible, where every century Devils feast upon them with greedy brutality.

This kind of sacrifice continued for an unknown duration, until a century ago when humanity made advancements in Alchemy Matrix Technology and Serey's betrayal. Humanity ended the Dawn War, successfully stopping the Devils from feasting for the first time, disrupting their conflicts and sacrifices.

Bologue lowered his head slightly, clasping his hands together. Moments later, he reached out and accepted Nesanel's wine glass, draining it in one gulp, allowing the drink to burn his throat.

The once-enraged Bologue was consumed by the flames of hatred, relying on alcohol every day and night to numb his nerves, so he could sleep peacefully.

Since avenging Adelle, Bologue's heart embraced a long-lost tranquility. He no longer needed alcohol to escape the night; Bologue stopped drinking, at most opting for juice or something similar.

Now, Bologue once again needed alcohol. After one cup, he felt unsatisfied and directly grabbed the bottle, pouring it forcefully down his throat.

Nesanel raised his hand, intending to stop him, but Bologue had already started gulping down fiercely, while Nesanel watched painfully as the liquid level in the bottle kept dropping.

This bottle of wine was Nesanel's treasure, and what he couldn't accept was how Bologue's demeanor, as if drinking water, seemed like mistreating something valuable.

Throwing the empty bottle into the darkness, the expected sound of shattering glass did not ring out, nor any echo, as if Bologue had tossed the bottle into the Abyss, where it fell into endless darkness.

Bologue puzzledly glanced at the dark space, pondered for a few seconds, and then smiled with resignation.

Forget it, the bizarre nature of the Audience Chamber and what Nesanel mentioned today cannot even be compared.

A century of soul sacrifice, the conflicts of Devils, the battles of the Chosen Ones, and even the lost, seven-headed ten-horned Red Dragon...

Devils intersperse at every historical moment of humanity like true players, separate from the earthly realm, manipulating the world's path with abandon.

To them, humans are merely livestock that can continuously produce resources. Everything Devils do is for greater profit, more souls, plundering as many souls as they can within sustainable production limits.

Bologue even thinks that the Devils' conflicts are not just about resolving disputes but also about distributing the souls obtained from sacrifices based on the Chosen Ones' successes and failures.

Exactly... that's it, the greatest contradiction, the biggest conflict among Devils is indeed the quest for souls.

The world is finite, humans are finite, souls are finite; each Devil is a rival, and no contradiction is greater than their mutual competition.

"To become a Chosen One, delve into the conflicts of Devils, only then can you comprehend their purpose, and even the essence of Devils, and find the possibility of counterattack."

Bologue murmured, his eyes brightening with motivation and desire, "I think I have no reason to refuse."

"Oh? I imagined you'd agree, but didn't expect it to be so straightforward," Nesanel said, "I thought I'd have to do some persuasion for you."

"Why would you think that?"

"After all, they are mysterious Devils. Even if your Undying Body allows you to disregard death, you must know this Blessing was bestowed upon you by a Devil, and they can surely take it back too."

Nesanel said, "Which means that if that day indeed comes, you will no longer be an Undead."

"Do you think I'm afraid of death?" Bologue smiled, shaking his head. "I can't wait for that day to arrive, so I can have a clean slate with the Devil. He takes back his Blessing, and I reclaim my soul."

Nesanel said, "Interesting, maybe you're still young, that's why you feel this way."

Bologue said, "I'm different from others; time changes some internal matters, but I think I won't be corrupted."

The past obscured, inner darkness of Serey, once bearing glory, and now living in seclusion of Ralph...

Death.

Facing Death God's Scythe, the noble hero or base thief, all will expose their true nature before that silent intent, undergoing evaluation.

Facing the Death God, Bologue is not afraid; instead, he feels remarkably candid.

"Why is that?"

Nesanel questioned anew, realizing that his understanding of Bologue mainly stemmed from various textual documents; some details cannot be recorded in words, only perceived when truly facing this person.

"It's simple, I am blessed."

Bologue said naive-like, "My birth must be for something, like vanquishing those damned Devils."

Having gone through so much, Bologue's delusions seemed to intensify somewhat. He viewed himself as a savior, achieving salvation through destruction.

Nesanel paused for two seconds, unable to control his laughter. He had spoken with many people, discussed the essence of their hearts, and received various answers, never expecting Bologue would say this.

"What does this count as? For love and peace."

"Love and peace?" Bologue pondered, nodding, "It's quite a good goal."

Bologue actually thought Nesanel was acknowledging his words; love and peace—Bologue started liking these terms, simple and straightforward, much easier for enemies to understand than his twisted principles.