

Endless 61

Chapter 61: Hilbert's Hotel_2

It seems he has a thousand faces and a thousand names.

The man is smiling, though his face is indistinct, but Lebius can sense that he is smiling at him.

He carries no sense of oppression, just like an ordinary movie buff, beckoning Lebius to join him in enjoying the film.

Lebius sits down next to him, about to say something, but the man speaks first.

"Is it about Bologue Lazarus?"

Lebius is slightly surprised, but quickly he recalls the man's powers, which make such matters no secret to him.

"I'm quite interested in that fellow too. Had you not chosen him and released him, I wouldn't have noticed such an intriguing person in your Order Bureau."

The man waves his hand, the playing movie halts, and the screen freezes on a vast wasteland.

"Truly fascinating..."

He is absorbed in the enigma of Bologue.

"I..." Lebius tries to speak, but facing such an ordinary man, he only feels waves of pressure.

"Feeling uncomfortable? How about this face? You might find it more familiar."

The man keenly notices this; his face, blurred before, soon clarifies into a familiar visage, Geoffrey's face.

As he stares at Geoffrey's features, he reaches out to hold Lebius's shoulder.

"How is this face? You two are friends, right? Just like us."

He says, suggesting a deep acquaintance with Lebius, akin to brotherhood, but Lebius doesn't feel the same; the man's intimacy disgusts him.

"About his 'Blessing'... I want to know what it's about, that perfect 'resurrection', it's not something he could afford."

Suppressing his internal revulsion, Lebius asks.

"This... maybe it relates to his 'value'," the man hesitates, "'value' exchanged for 'value', an absolutely equal trade, you should understand that."

"So?"

"We wouldn't violate this principle, perhaps..."

The man elongates his speech, smilingly asking.

"Perhaps, Bologue Lazarus truly has the ability to pay such a price."

"That's impossible."

Lebius's voice rises, he doesn't believe this, "I've met members of the 'Undying Club', they are high-ranking, wealthy beyond nations, yet still can't attain such perfect immortality."

"Yet, high-ranking and wealthy beyond nations, to us, is still worthless, isn't it?"

The man turns to look at Lebius, wearing pajamas, appearing casual, but the aftermath of his words is enough to shake anyone.

"You aren't clear on how we assess 'value', Lebius; any amount of wealth or terrifying power, as long as it can't impress us, it remains worthless."

The man's expression grows eerie, recalling something that even distorts Geoffrey's face into a ghastly visage.

"If so, then this Bologue Lazarus is being admired by a brother of mine, he's been moved, thus he admires Bologue Lazarus greatly, deeming his 'value' extraordinary enough to bestow such a 'Blessing'."

"Bologue, to the Devil, is extraordinarily valuable, is it?" Lebius says.

"Perhaps... or it might be due to some minor predilections of ours."

The man continues, casually picking up a dark box, reciting the name upon it.

"Like him, Scott Martin, he's one of my favorite mortals, you know who he is, right?"

"A famous explorer in history, said to have filled gaps in the world map, allowing people to know the full scope of the world."

Lebius replies; in class, Scott Martin's name is familiar to every student.

"Indeed, I enjoy watching the world from home, observing your lives... it's like watching movies."

The man obsessively caresses the dark box, peering through the crevice at the film strips within, a treasure to him.

"So I share your 'vision'; what you see, I also see. And the most splendid, intriguing lives, the movies they produce, are of the greatest 'value' to me."

He sets down the dark box and suddenly leans toward Lebius, almost forehead to forehead, eyes meeting, and in those eyes, Lebius sees a whirlpool devouring and spinning, as if the man's eyes lead straight to the Abyss.

"Do you understand if I say this?"

The man gradually distances himself, leaning back into the chair in a languid manner.

"'Value' is paramount, the sole criterion for judgment.

Yet... my brothers, everyone's passions are somewhat varied. For instance, another brother of mine is overly obsessed with 'value', accepting anything of 'value', regardless of nobility or baseness."

He ridicules casually.

"We tend to call him a junkman, because he collects any trash."

The man seems to have shared an extremely amusing joke, laughing raucously, laughter turning warped and insane, shaking the entire theater; dark boxes clattering against one another, resounding with a piercing whine, as if souls trapped within are crying out loudly.