

Endless 83

Chapter 83: Secret War

"Turn left when you exit, that's Lebius's office. As head of the Special Operations Group, he wants to discuss the upcoming work with you in detail."

Pushing the recently shell-shocked Palmer, Geoffrey pointed the way for him and then ushered him out before closing the door.

Geoffrey exhaled deeply and then sat back on the sofa, his gaze directed towards Bologue.

"Is there anything else to report?"

It was noticeable that Bologue had something else on his mind, but with Palmer present, he chose to remain silent.

"What is his 'Blessing'?"

Remembering Palmer's comical antics, curiosity piqued within Bologue.

Palmer was the first debtor Bologue had encountered, sharing the same unfortunate fate as himself. On his way back, Bologue even speculated whether the two had sold their souls to the same Devil.

"Palmer's 'Blessing,' we call it 'Gambler.' It brings good luck in times of misfortune and brings misfortune in times of good luck."

Geoffrey stated this plainly.

Bologue frowned; the effect of this "Blessing" was unexpectedly bizarre.

Connecting it to Palmer's near-comical behavior during combat, it started to make sense to Bologue.

After the battle, he had always wondered how someone like Palmer could be captured by Eugene, even though Palmer explained that he accidentally slipped during stealth... Such nonsense was something Bologue could never believe, but now it seemed true; Palmer hadn't lied.

He could easily dodge thousands of bullets, yet in absolutely safe conditions, he would slip into danger.

Bologue covered his face, momentarily at a loss for words.

"By the way, Geoffrey, what task was Palmer carrying out?" Bologue asked again.

"Investigating enemy movements. The opposing forces of the Order Bureau have been particularly active recently, and Palmer was investigating one of their transport routes."

Geoffrey then inquired, "Why do you ask? Did you discover anything?"

Bologue nodded and then said.

"There were some goods left at the scene, so I pried open a few crates and took some samples before leaving."

Bologue said while rummaging through his pocket, handing over the dark red potion.

"If I remember correctly, it should be the same as the stuff recovered from Norm."

Holding the potion, the light penetrated the glass tube, illuminating the dark red liquid within, glimmering with rolling crystal-like sparkles as if it were alive.

"It's this thing again."

Geoffrey's expression turned serious. This bizarre potion was first discovered in Norm's possession, and now it appeared in another place.

"Is this related to the 'Man-eater'?" Bologue asked.

"I don't know," Geoffrey replied, a weary look flashing across his face.

Bologue contemplated for a moment, then he asked, "Geoffrey, has anything major happened recently?"

Opposing forces.

Such words rose in Bologue's mind, often heard from others. The so-called opposing forces had mobilized the Order Bureau and even provided assistance to the "Man-eater"...

"You're not a fool; you should have figured it out, right?" Geoffrey didn't answer directly but rather questioned Bologue.

After a few seconds of pause, Bologue slowly spoke.

"Order Bureau... Rhine Alliance Order and Security Bureau."

In this world, the Rhine Alliance wasn't the only giant entity. South of Opus, at the end of that expansive plain, another giant entity was watching the northern part of Opus..."

Bologue had long realized these facts and said.

"The so-called opposing forces are indeed the extraordinary organization of the Kagader Empire, right?"

To this, Geoffrey nodded, leaning back, staring up at the ceiling.

"The Fall of the Holy City ended the most insane world war of modern times, halting the raging flames of scorched earth at Solomon's Holy City. After this, the Kagader Empire and the Rhine Alliance signed a peace treaty in the current Agreement District."

Geoffrey's tone carried a hint of disdain.

"Bologue, do you think the war is truly over?"

"No, the least likely thing to end in this world is war. As long as there are people, as long as there is desire... No matter how many times it ends, it will inevitably return."

Bologue replied calmly, as if stating a terrible curse that never has a reprieve.

A smile appeared on Geoffrey's face; he had judged Bologue correctly; this guy was an expert in this area.

"Since the birth of Oubos in Oath City, our war with the Kagader Empire has shifted from the mundane to the extraordinary, and since then, the Order Bureau has rooted itself in Opus."

In subsequent times, we continue the unfinished war with the Kagader Empire in the shadows, contesting control over this city, much like during the Fall of the Holy City."

Bologue was moved; he knew much about this history. During the Fall of the Holy City, the outbreak was a result of both sides trying to seize the Holy City as a frontline base to continue advancing into enemy territory.

Now the war had ended, but in the shadows, they still continued to vie for this city. However, the participants in the war had shifted from planes and cannons to Condensers wielding Secret Energy.

Everything remained unchanged except that it was hidden within the shadows.

"King's Secret Sword,"

Geoffrey said softly.

"That's their name, an extraordinary organization directly commanded by the Kagader Empire's royal family."

King's Secret Sword.

Bologue firmly remembered this name in his mind.

"Opus rarely enjoyed a time of peace, but with these guys returning, everything has once again become fraught with contention."

Geoffrey sighed, still nostalgic for his days in logistics, where there was no need for fighting and killing, nor too much to worry about, just clocking in on time and getting paid.

He once thought he could muddle through to retirement like that. After all, someone like him, having retired unscathed from the Field Operations Department, was rare within the Order Bureau.

Such a life was pleasant, until an order from the "Decision Room" was issued a year ago.

The Special Operations Group was formed, Bologue Lazarus regained freedom, and those long-vanished King's Secret Swords started to become active again.

It was like the eve before a storm's arrival.

"You say... making a comeback?"

Bologue keenly sensed Geoffrey's choice of words and asked further.

"Meaning, you had once expelled them, right?"

This conversation seemed to trigger some terrible memory in Geoffrey, and he fell silent, his expression gloomy, eyes cast downward, lost in thought.

A faint roar resonated in his ears, and the scent of blood lingered at his nose.

"Yes."

Geoffrey confirmed.

"The war never ended, Bologue. The Scorched Earth Fury sixty-six years ago was humanity's first world war. We thought that kind of war would never happen again, and yet fifty-nine years from then, or seven years ago...

we faced another war."

Bologue's heart tightened; it was a calm narration, yet his consciousness was unconsciously shaken.

An unspeakable secret was about to be revealed.

"Another war... an Extraordinary World war, involving all the Condensers."

Geoffrey fumbled in his pocket, and as a "veteran" who survived from seven years ago, he always felt like a nightmare was haunting him whenever he talked about these things.

He took out a cigarette and smoked it to himself; this made Geoffrey feel a lot more at ease.

Geoffrey's eyes glazed over, his tone heavy.

"A 'secret war' that occurred in the shadows, unbeknownst to the world."

In a daze, Bologue had a curious illusion that he was not enveloped by familiar air but rather surrounded by a viscous, suffocating colloid that tried to strangle him.

"After the Fall of the Holy City, since the establishment of Oubos, countless conflicts erupted between the Order Bureau and the King's Secret Swords. But seven years ago, at an unexpected moment, the King's Secret Swords suddenly launched a total attack on us.

Swarms of Condensers came across the Great Rift, advancing all the way and even breaching the defense of the 'Cultivation Room', killing their way in."

Geoffrey recalled the past; the tobacco numbed his nerves, warding off the onslaught of nightmares.

"We finally stopped them at the Central Courtyard; the battle was fierce, numerous departments were paralyzed, and we paid a hefty price to drive them out of the 'Cultivation Room', then came the counterattack..."

He paused, giving a wry smile.

"Just like when King Solomon defended the Holy City back then, we fought fiercely for a hundred days with the King's Secret Swords, battling from the shadows of various districts into the Great Rift. Finally, we achieved a narrow and bitter victory, driving them out of Opus completely, winning that war."

Geoffrey glanced at Bologue, his expression still cold and emotionless, while Geoffrey spoke self-deprecatingly.

"It sounds ridiculous, doesn't it, just for a city.

King Solomon was like that, and many years later, so were we."

The former Holy City, the present Oath City of Oubos, witnessed too much, and in the future, it would continue to keep watch.

Bologue shook his head, dismissing Geoffrey's words, "Isn't it something else?"

With emerald eyes lowered, Bologue pondered, then lifted his head, meeting Geoffrey's gaze straight on.

"Like me, we debtors, entangled with the Devil in countless ways. Who's to say when the Devil will find us again, using me as a 'proxy', running errands for them in the world.

So it is with the Order Bureau and the King's Secret Sword, isn't it?"

Their gazes locked, neither backing down, until Geoffrey was the first to look away, letting out a hoarse laugh.

He stubbed the cigarette into the ashtray, wisps of white smoke rising.

"You're right, the Order Bureau and the King's Secret Sword are also 'proxies', acting as proxies for the two largest monsters in this world, with Opus being our battleground."

Geoffrey acknowledged the implication in Bologue's words.

"Geoffrey, you also mentioned, the 'Alchemy Matrix' is a 'technology', Secret Energy is a weapon derived from 'technology'."

Bologue spoke to himself.

"Hundreds of years ago, we wore armor and swung swords, hundreds of years later, we have planes and cannons, more precise and lethal firearms.

'Alchemy Matrix' is like this, and so is Secret Energy."

The war never ended, and it has always lingered around us.

Tanks with thicker armor and more firepower, bombers with further elevated heights and extended ranges, more precise and deadly firearms, and even... those incomprehensible, maddening Secret Energies.

"This is an arms race."

Bologue had guessed.

"An arms race that never ceased since the Fall of the Holy City... the arms race for Secret Energy."

Geoffrey revealed an unpleasant smile, sighing helplessly.

"Bologue, I don't know when another world war, dragging countries into a meat grinder, will erupt again, but what I do know is that when such a war flares up for a second time, the participants will no longer be the armored divisions we know; rather, it will be the Condensers wielding Secret Energy."

Geoffrey's words were like a wind blowing out from a deep cave, mingling with a coagulated, decaying scent within.

"Condensers in the shadows will stand under the sunlight, and the roaring Ether will indiscriminately destroy everyone."