

Endless 84

Chapter 84: Partner

Everyone believed that the Fall of the Holy City would mark the end of all wars, but in reality, it was merely the beginning of another mad war.

The Kagader Empire and the Rhine Alliance used Oath City, Opus, as their battlefield, with Condensers as their pawns, continuing their battles in the shadows.

With the Alchemists' research into the "Secret Source," Secret Energy also constantly evolved, just like the weapons throughout human history, transforming from stone-crafted Long Spears to iron-forged Sharp Swords and finally to monsters made of machinery and armor, fueled by oil.

"Bologue, you look a bit unwell, are you scared?" Geoffrey examined Bologue's expression and laughed heartily.

"I thought you'd enjoy war, especially such a mad war. Just look at that exquisite sand table in your room."

Geoffrey remembered Bologue's room, that monotonous, slightly empty room with the war sand table placed right in the center. Bologue often stared at it for a good while, accompanied by rousing rock music, like a commander eager for battle.

Bologue shook his head at this. He calmly replied, "I'm just curious about that part of history."

Bologue had also been a soldier, but he had no feelings towards war, being more driven by curiosity about that part of history and a thirst for knowledge.

Hearing Geoffrey speak like that, Bologue somewhat understood why Geoffrey was later transferred to the Logistics Department.

He was one of the rare veterans who experienced that secret war among the Condensers. Knowing this, Bologue's view of Geoffrey began to change.

Geoffrey wasn't really the genial person he appeared to be. It was time and experience that had worn down his edges. No one could guess what sort of face this cheerful old man truly possessed.

Just like those casual chats back then, Bologue was always curious whether Geoffrey's Secret Energy was really as he described.

"It's really bad."

Bologue sighed, lifted his head, and stared at the ceiling, his eyes filled with gray.

"A mad arms race, a clash between two giants, Secret Energy, Demon, Devil..."

One disastrous term after another popped into his mind. Bologue realized that the world was like a giant garbage bin, filled with all sorts of messy things. Now Bologue had become one of them, destined to accompany them every day.

At least...

At least Bologue wouldn't die.

But is that really good?

The more he understood, the more Bologue realized that being "Resurrected" had many countermeasures against it, such as being imprisoned in the Black Prison, sealed in cement, or even being killed hundreds or thousands of times in a short period.

If he didn't have the power to protect himself, being "Resurrected" would just turn him into a durable punching bag.

Under endless torment, death seemed like the perfect solution.

"Don't worry. This world is bad, but not so bad. Over the years, we have made rapid progress in researching Secret Energy, always attempting to create the legendary 'Crowned.'"

Geoffrey comforted Bologue. As a veteran, Geoffrey was well aware of the current situation.

"Once we have the 'Crowned,' it will be the time to end the war."

Bologue nodded somewhat understandingly. He could hear the reverence Geoffrey held for the 'Crowned,' a tier that existed only in imagination, the end of all power, much like an absolutely deadly weapon. Once wielded, even a vast army would turn to ashes.

"But what if the King's Secret Sword first reaches this tier?" Bologue rained on the parade.

"Then we'd be destroyed," Geoffrey stated simply and directly. He seemed to have thought it through, "This is also why we've been tightly entangled, with constant friction."

"A mad arms race over Secret Energy; whoever first possesses the 'Crowned' can tip the balance of war."

Geoffrey added.

"But the ultimate winner might not be the Order Bureau or the King's Secret Sword. In this world, there are other Extraordinary Organizations, just hidden deeper, and won't reveal themselves easily."

Seeing Bologue's curious look, Geoffrey continued his explanation.

"According to records, Alchemists began the research on the 'Secret Source' hundreds, thousands, or even further back in time. But in those times of technological poverty, their progress was slow. However, some Secret Societies survived and have continued to this day.

Initially, these powers weren't valued much. After all, Secret Energy itself is a 'tool' derived from 'technology,' and hundreds of years ago, those Secret Energies were too feeble, barely able to influence reality.

Compared to Sharp Swords and cannons, Secret Energy back then was more like street performers' tricks."

Though he spoke with disdain, Geoffrey's tone was utterly serious.

"But as research deepened, Secret Energy became more and more powerful. From then on, it started being taken seriously again. By the time of the Scorched Earth Fury, both we and the Kagader Empire realized conventional forces were insufficient to change the course of war. We needed some elites, some power to easily turn the tide.

Thus, Secret Energy began its militarization. After the Fall of the Holy City, it became thoroughly integrated into the sequence, becoming part of the military."

"The Order Bureau initially was established by the Secret Societies from the Rhine Alliance, like your partner, the Clarks. They are a famous family of Condensers, who began delving into these fields hundreds of years ago and were one of the founders of the Order Bureau.

Thanks to the full support from the Rhine Alliance, our development of 'Secret Energy' was rapid. However, compared to this long history, the Order Bureau still is too young, and many Secret Societies are unwilling to join us, staying independent from us."

"Like the Order of Truth?" Bologue mentioned.

Geoffrey nodded affirmatively.

"Exactly. We maintain friendly relations with those independent Secret Societies, but it's different on the Kagader Empire's side. The royalty forcibly assimilated all the Secret Societies, absorbing their endless knowledge. Hence, the King's Secret Sword's accumulation in this field far surpasses ours.

This also led to us almost being defeated seven years ago. The King's Secret Sword's Secret Energy evolved faster than we had anticipated. Seven years ago, they already possessed terrifying power, and we are unclear about what kind of surprises their resurging return will bring after seven years."

With this, Bologue gained a rough understanding of the current situation in the Extraordinary World.

Two colossal beings took Opus as their battlefield, wrestling with each other, and outside of them, countless secret organizations were also at play.

For now, it seems that the power of the King's Secret Sword is much stronger than that of the Order Bureau, but the advantage of the Order Bureau is that it currently controls Opus.

No wonder the entire Field Operations Department was mobilized; with such an old enemy returning, no amount of caution is too much.

"Speaking of which, Bologue, are you free for a moment?"

Geoffrey suddenly asked, as something came to his mind.

"Nothing much, why?" Bologue is indeed quite idle.

"I want to take you to see something... I feel you have the right to know, as this is the foundation of our mutual trust."

As Geoffrey spoke, he stood up and gestured for Bologue to follow.

Bologue didn't ask Geoffrey what he was going to see, but from Geoffrey's tone, he could clearly hear a sense of seriousness.

Leaving the lounge, turning left after exiting the door, and walking a few steps, Lebius's office was just ahead.

Geoffrey knocked on the door and then opened it to enter the office.

Lebius looked up at Geoffrey, his gaze catching Bologue standing behind Geoffrey, and Bologue also took a look inside. Opposite the desk was Palmer.

This fellow had completely failed to notice the arrival of the two and was just staring fiercely at the transfer documents in front of him, his face full of resentment and grievance.

He seemed quite unwilling to join the Field Operations Department, especially the Special Operations Group.

But that was understandable; Palmer's "blessing" was just good luck, and more often than not, his good luck would turn into misfortune.

Working in the Crow's Nest was fine, but coming to the combat-intensive Field Operations Department, who knows what bad luck he might encounter. If things were worse, he might just die outright.

At this moment, Bologue also realized the shift in his own mentality—being immortal, many things that seemed serious did not affect him as deeply, or perhaps it was because Bologue had shielded his emotions to avoid too much empathy.

"Is there something you need?" Lebius asked.

"I want to take Bologue to see that thing; he has the right to know, doesn't he?" Geoffrey pointed to Bologue behind him and said.

After pondering for a few seconds, Lebius nodded. He raised his hand, and some kind of power was swirling—the power known as Ether.

The "pass" in Bologue's embrace began to stir, but soon it calmed down, and at this moment, Lebius said.

"Temporary permission has been granted; take him along."

It wasn't assigned to Geoffrey but to Bologue.

Geoffrey waved his hand, closed the door, and left.

Lebius then picked up the document and asked Palmer.

"So... do you have any questions about these current matters?"

"This is Ivan's doing, isn't it? It's absolutely that bastard's doing!"

Palmer shouted irritably, directly calling out his uncle's name.

"No, it was my choice to assign you." Lebius said.

"Huh? Why! I haven't been on the front lines!"

"But your performance is outstanding; you should learn such things quickly."

"No no, I'm a debtor! Such an identity is untrustworthy!" Palmer began to look for reasons from himself.

"You are a member of the Order Bureau, knowing that is enough, not to mention that in our Special Operations Group, we do not discriminate against debtors."

Palmer was silent for a few seconds before shouting in despair.

"No no no, have you learned about the death rate in your Field Operations Department? Impossible, absolutely impossible!"

"I am just here to notify you, the 'Decision Room' has already approved your transfer documents."

"But... but my 'blessing' easily gets teammates killed!"

He started looking for reasons from himself again; sometimes when misfortune strikes, Palmer might not be able to protect himself, let alone his teammates.

"This needn't be a concern."

Lebius maintained a cold expression, but Palmer still felt he was being mocked. Lebius just pointed to the door.

"You have met Bologue, haven't you? He'll be your partner from now on."

"So what?"

Palmer screamed.

"Your partner... he cannot die."

Lebius smiled.