

## Endless 86

Chapter 86: Decision

The light of Canyin was like the warm sun of the morning, gently brushing Bologue's face, bringing waves of warmth.

The man before him was like a Celestial God, yet he was imprisoned in the depths of this dark labyrinth.

Bologue's breathing began to quicken, along with an increasingly intense heartbeat. He could feel his blood rushing, roaring throughout his body.

All of this happened too fast, leaving no time for thought.

Whether it was the identity of the King's Secret Sword Holder, the man before him, the surname "Kagader," or his tier, bathed in the light of holiness as the "Seeker of Glory."

Any one of these identities alone was awe-inspiring, yet now they overlapped together, forming one within the man.

Long ago, when Geoffrey spoke of the Tier of the Condenser, Bologue had fantasized about such a day. As his understanding of the Extraordinary World deepened, he would finally ascend those grand steps.

Condenser, Prayer Believers... constantly moving forward, until breaking into the enemy's base line, "Ascension" into that Queen of Glory, and even touch that ethereal crown.

But all this existed only in distant concepts. No matter what, Bologue could not have imagined he would see this legendary existence before even beginning the implantation ritual.

Seeker of Glory.

What saddened him a little, though, was that he seemed to be dead.

Such a sacred existence had just died like that, preserved like a specimen in a container for future generations to admire.

"In the secret war seven years ago, Overlord Xilin, wielding the King's Secret Sword, invaded the 'Cultivation Room'. Their offensive was like lightning, catching us off guard.

He almost succeeded, completely destroying the Order Bureau, wiping us out... but fortunately, we weren't so fragile."

The voice of reverence carried a tinge of resentment; Geoffrey revered the "Seeker of Glory," yet he was still an enemy of the Order Bureau.

"We resisted with all our might, bought time for reinforcements, and then the Order Bureau's 'Seeker of Glory' appeared. They fought Overlord Xilin, and in the battle's aftermath, destroyed most areas of the 'Cultivation Room', ultimately executing Overlord Xilin in the Central Courtyard."

Today's "Cultivation Room" is merely the remnants of the battle from seven years ago. For many years, it has been self-healing, trying to rebuild the ruins, but that war destroyed so much that everything seems indefinitely distant.

"He was too rash,"

Bologue commented. Delving so deeply into enemy lines, even for a "Seeker of Glory," meeting such an end was unsurprising.

"No, you didn't experience that secret war; you can't imagine his strength, Bologue," Geoffrey shook his head, sighing. "As I mentioned before, the King's Secret Sword, in terms of Secret Energy research iterations, is far ahead of our Order Bureau, and Overlord Xilin was the most perfect weapon they've cultivated over the past decade."

"He single-handedly broke through the heavy defenses of the 'Cultivation Room', causing several departments to be paralyzed, and the 'Seeker of Glory' who fought him on our side was also severely injured. As for the remaining casualties, they were countless.

He had reckless confidence, and we almost had to thank his recklessness because if he hadn't launched such a crazy offensive and instead chose to strike steadily, the outcome of the war might have been rewritten, and perhaps at that time the Order Bureau would have been the ones expelled."

At this point, Geoffrey's words paused, as if there was a worse outcome.

If one side's Condenser power grows strong enough to break the power balance, then what awaits everyone is another scorched earth rage... a second scorched earth rage involving Condensers.

Bologue moved slowly toward the container, reaching out, trying to touch the preserved man.

The body was in a knee-hugging posture, head buried in its arms, and with the golden threads and radiance emanating from the body, Bologue could barely see his face, vaguely seeing those tightly closed eyes, with flowing light rolling within the seams of the eyelids.

For some reason, Bologue had an illusion.

This man... Xilin, he seemed not to be dead, but just... just asleep.

"Halt."

A cold voice sounded, like a sharp blade, stabbing painfully into Bologue's nerves.

All around, gray-clad figures suddenly raised their heads, darkness seething beneath the grey robes, making their faces indistinguishable. But it was certain they were watching Bologue, all the gray-clad figures in an instant turning their gaze towards him.

Only then did Bologue realize another thing, that the preserved monsters here weren't just the man in the container but also these Prison Guards watching over it.

"I'm sorry."

Bologue said, retracting his hand, recalling that strange feeling just now, as if bewitched...

"Don't worry, Bologue."

Geoffrey's voice emerged, as if he knew what Bologue felt.

"Human beings have a peculiar 'phototaxis' that makes us unwittingly approach noble souls, and this is why the Philosopher's Stone affects us. It is the physical manifestation of the 'Golden Soul,' and we unwittingly crave such things."

Gazing at the golden network, within which flowed rivers of gold.

"The ascension of a Condenser is a process of the soul continuously growing, solidifying.

The soul determines the body.

In the long ascension, our souls continually grow, gaining power far exceeding that of ordinary souls, eventually becoming akin to a living Philosopher's Stone, brimming with Extraordinary Power, and the allure of that radiance."

Bologue listened, "Seeker of Glory's" soul had already grown to an unfathomable degree, rendering the physical body with the characteristics of a tangible soul.

"So, how should I implant it?"

Looking at the floating corpse, Bologue felt puzzled, but also understood the reason for the delay in the implantation ritual. For such a great being, no amount of preparation was too much.

Bologue was a bit delighted, unimaginable was the grandeur of the power that could be called the power of a dominator.

Power.

Absolute power.

"In terms of research on secret energy, we fall short of the Kingdom's Secret Sword. To close the gap, we began studying his corpse, attempting to reverse-engineer the alchemy matrix from his body."

Geoffrey explained, which was also why he said over the phone that if Palmer died, Bologue should retrieve his corpse.

"The soul determines the body, and the alchemy matrix's pathways will also be reflected on the body. So, by using the corpse of a condenser, we can reverse-engineer the alchemy matrix from it."

"You got his alchemy matrix from his corpse?" Bologue asked.

"That's right, he was the crystallization of the Kingdom's Secret Sword's decades of research technology. During the secret warfare, his terrifying power was witnessed by all.

At that time, with his death in battle, the Kingdom's Secret Sword's offensive should have slowed down, but they made several attacks on the 'Cultivation Room' to retrieve his body.

It's even said they didn't want to retrieve his body but destroy it to prevent this power from falling into our hands."

Geoffrey recounted, with a hint of gloom flashing across his face.

"What happened next was very simple: after the secret warfare ended, the sublimation furnace core successfully reverse-engineered the power of the dominator, but regrettably, although the alchemy matrix was successfully replicated, several implantation ceremonies ended in failure."

In previous chats, Geoffrey had recounted the risks of the implantation ritual to Bologue. It was a precise surgical operation targeting the soul, any slight mistake would result in madness and death.

"No one can withstand the power of the dominator, so it was sealed until your arrival."

Geoffrey said, looking at Bologue, and Bologue understood what he meant.

"Because I won't die, right?"

"Not just that, there are many undead like you in the world, even within the Order Bureau," Geoffrey casually mentioned shocking intel, "but those people usually became undead after becoming a condenser; their souls have been inscribed with the alchemy matrix, and cannot be replaced."

"So, you chose me, a brand new, unbreakable vessel."

Bologue understood Geoffrey's meaning.

"Yes, but now you're one of us, Bologue. Although Lebius sees you as a tool, I would prefer to see you as a 'human.'

Geoffrey glanced at Bologue and then at the body wrapped in light within the container.

"No one has successfully implanted his alchemy matrix. We have very little intel on the secret energy he possesses, so no one knows what will happen after the implantation. You might not die but could endure even more frenzied torment..."

Everything was unknown, absolutely unknown, the Order Bureau held this maddening secret treasure, but they had no idea what was truly within.

It could be intoxicating wine or eternal calamity.

Geoffrey's gaze gradually grew heavy, and he suddenly spoke of something else.

"Lebius wasn't like this before. The secret warfare seven years ago changed him and all the survivors. He became... increasingly extreme. I know his intentions are good, but sometimes he was too cold."

"The reason you were transferred to the Logistics Department was also because of Lebius, right? You were partners, but you couldn't continue working together."

Bologue said, observing Geoffrey's surprised expression. He wasn't foolish; some things were easily guessed.

One was an HR guy, the other a frontline war commander. They had no unfamiliarity, like longtime friends, needing no acclimatization.

This kind of figure was very familiar to Bologue; he had seen many such figures and he was once one of them.

Bologue guessed that after the secret warfare, Lebius leaned on a cane, conceptualizing the Special Operations Group, always ready for another war, while Geoffrey lost a familiar friend and turned to resting in logistics.

Geoffrey smiled slightly, not responding to Bologue's words.

"So what are your thoughts, Bologue? Seize the power of the dominator, face an unknown future, or choose another, safer path?"

Bologue did not hesitate; his sickly pale face was tinged with a lively flush under the luminous glow, he said.

"Is there even a choice?"

The divine silhouette reflected in his turquoise eyes.

"I am Bologue Lazarus... Lazarus who rose from the dead."

He provided his choice.

No one noticed that at the moment Bologue made his decision, the celestial figure within the container, as if hearing Bologue's words, wore a faint smile on its ice-molded face.

Closed eyelids trembled slightly, the glimmer in the crevices flickered, as if about to open its eyes the next moment.