

Endless 98

Chapter 98: Power

Bologue opened his eyes to that familiar sight, the scenery he'd see every time after he died.

The dead sun, the dead stars, the dead, lightless world.

Amidst this bleak starry sky, there was one celestial body that hadn't lost its luster, with dim flames drifting upon it, stubbornly burning, and one day it could reignite once more.

Outside this gradually kindling celestial body, countless shattered rocks wandered, and Bologue gazed at it all from afar, standing on a gray-white land, uncertain whether beneath him lay similar fragmented rocks or a faint star due to his own limitations.

Traversing the unbearable gray-white wilderness, Bologue finally arrived at an open-air cinema amidst the desolation.

Sitting on a small chair, he patiently awaited, and after a while, the movie began.

First came a burst of stirring music, followed by the slowly emerging title, but Bologue couldn't make out the inscription as if it had been intentionally blurred.

The director's name appeared first.

"Director..."

The director's name was still unclear.

"Starring... Bologue Lazarus?"

Oh, finally, a familiar one—his own name.

"Supporting actor, Alberto Alfredo."

Another unfamiliar name.

"Supporting actor..."

Then there was a slew of indecipherable text until the movie commenced.

Amidst cannon fire and pervasive smoke, soldiers advanced over scorched earth, stepping over corpse after corpse, but soon all soldiers fell save for one, standing alone in the wasteland.

Gradually, the sounds of battle ceased; the war seemed to have ended, save for the soldier, none survived.

The soldier stood for a long time, then began to move again.

Vaguely, something followed him—those dead individuals, countless souls hadn't faded away but trailed behind him, amassing into clusters...

Bologue watched the screen, and at some point, tears streamed down his face.

The sound of swallowing echoed, someone was munching popcorn in big bites, some spilling and rolling to Bologue's feet.

Turning his head, another viewer had appeared in the empty open-air cinema. Bologue couldn't see his face; he clasped a large bucket of popcorn, with a big cup of drink by his feet.

Neither spoke until the movie ended, with the credits rolling.

"I never previously had much interest in movies."

The viewer suddenly said.

"Until one day, my lazy brother told me, movies are actually great, they record a person's life, and as long as there are viewers, that person's life is eternal."

"So from then on, an idea sparked in me."

The viewer's tone grew excited.

"I want to make a movie, a mine movie, an ours movie."

In the unknowable chaotic darkness, Bologue could feel the gaze cast toward him. The viewer was looking at him and asked.

"This movie is great, isn't it?"

Bologue remained silent for a long time, and then stiffly nodded in answer.

"I look forward to its premiere."

...

"The soul has been liquefied; begin implantation into the Alchemy Matrix."

Belli wielded a phantom scalpel, slicing through the void's power, her peripheral gaze sweeping to the "bathtub" below.

Beside the bathtub, the constructed apparatus emitted incessant alarms, and the water surface boiled incessantly, yet after a bout of boiling, it would calm down, only to boil again after a brief delay...

Belli suspected that in that brief time, Bologue had already died many times.

The only soul Bologue had was condensed out, enveloped in liquid ether just as some scholars proposed—theory, that the soul is the purest ether, blending gently together, maintaining the soul's stability.

"He seems really tolerant, stabilizing so quickly," Belli muttered.

"He might have died, undergoing resurrection."

Teda wasn't as hopeful; this was only the beginning, the most complex procedures hadn't been executed.

He raised his hand, and the Alchemy Matrix formed of condensed ether began to sway. Collecting together, it converged into a seed. Accompanied by Teda's hand's descent, the seed sank into the calm water, landing upon Bologue's heart.

Teda closed his eyes.

Secret Energy-Illusion Creation.

Countless ethereal hands were conjured, gently stirring the water, in the golden liquid harboring faintly glowing shells.

Holding up the seed, carried it to the critical point between reality and illusion, until it took root in the heart.

After a brief delay, the seed exploded like a fallen star spark, emitting the radiant brilliance of a cluster of stars.

It grew vigorously, spreading innumerable branches, from the heart to the entire body, akin to Light Forged skeletons, aiming to support this fragile skin.

The water surface boiled again, but this time not due to Bologue's agitation, but the growth of the seed consuming vast amounts of ether, as if raging fire boiled a cauldron, much like how alchemists refine gold.

The liquid Canyin gradually clarified, with all contained power transformed into nutrient, thoroughly extracted, and condensed within the Canyin tree.

Belli gradually discerned Bologue's face beneath the water; his expression serene, as if asleep, and on his body surface, numerous Canyin patterns grew. The patterns were not complex, even rather simplistic, covering a small area, less than Seekers of Glory, which also marked the Condenser's weakness.