

Background Character? Nah, I'm Going To Be The Peak Instead

Chapter 122: I Will Find You, No Matter the Cost

While Caroline was enjoying her afternoon tea, a female researcher wearing black-rimmed glasses and sporting a few freckles on her face politely walked in.

“Miss Caroline, the latest Spiritual Realm Experiment data is out. Would you like to take a look?”

“Just set it down, Lina. I'll review it after I finish my afternoon tea.”

“Understood.”

Caroline's voice was calm and restrained—polite, yet carrying an indefinable sense of distance.

And although Caroline had subtly conveyed that the conversation was over, the researcher named Lina didn't leave right away. Instead, she nervously twisted the hem of her white lab coat, clearly wanting to say something.

Seeing this, Caroline spoke evenly:

“What is it? Is there something you'd like to say?”

Lina took a deep breath, then mustered her courage.

“Miss Caroline... everyone's actually quite curious. Why do you always ask for an extra serving whenever you have afternoon tea?”

“And also, since you seem to like desserts so much, why is it that aside from afternoon tea and dinner, we never see you eat them?”

Faced with this question, Caroline gracefully set down the coffee cup in her hand.

The ceramic base tapped lightly against the saucer, producing a crisp sound.

“These are personal matters. I have no obligation to answer you.”

Caroline’s response was cold and unyielding.

Yet Lina didn’t feel offended at all, instead, admiration flickered across her face.

After all, the silver-haired girl before her was the genius researcher who had the fastest promotion record in Luminous Ark’s history.

Six years ago, when she had suddenly appeared in the New Federation, she had not only been exceptionally accepted as a disciple by Grand President Tez, but had also shaken the entire field of intelligent machinery with a series of groundbreaking research achievements.

If not for her relatively shallow seniority and insufficient Starbearer rank, she might very well have become the youngest Doctor in the New Federation’s history—at just twenty years old.

When all of this was combined with Caroline’s aloof, keep-your-distance temperament and her breathtaking beauty, it only added further layers to her legend.

If Caroline weren't so low-key—and hadn't explicitly instructed the Luminous Ark media not to easily leak information about her—her fame would have rivaled that of the New Federation's current top celebrity from the Glacial Hymn House, Jing Liuli.

Seeing that Lina still hadn't left, Caroline didn't bother with tact and directly issued a dismissal.

"That's enough, Lina. I've noted what you said. Go to Research Lab No. 3 and have everyone prepare the equipment in advance. I'll be there shortly."

"Yes, Miss Caroline."

Once Lina's footsteps faded into the distance, Caroline gazed at the empty seat across from her.

Her silver-white hair cascaded down, glowing softly in the setting sun, giving off an indescribable sense of loneliness and solitude.

A moment later, Caroline picked up the tablet on the table and stood, heading toward Research Lab No. 3.

By the time she arrived, all the researchers inside were already fully prepared.

Without wasting a single word, Caroline walked straight to the central holographic data screen.

Her long, slender fingers glided through the air, manipulating the display, while her emerald-green eyes reflected complex quantum data resembling rolling ocean waves.

She was clearly calculating something.

Unlike her comparatively youthful appearance six years ago, Caroline had now grown noticeably taller, and her once dark-green, shoulder-length hair had somehow turned into long, waist-length silver.

Yet what truly captivated the eye at this moment were her extraordinary dark-green eyes.

Because when Caroline focused entirely on analyzing the data, her pupils fragmented into countless tiny hexagonal light grids, constantly recombining like a shifting kaleidoscope, mesmerizing to behold.

After a round of complex data analysis, under the tense gazes of those around her, Caroline's pupils slowly returned to normal.

She then turned to the people beside her and said:

“Everyone, we are getting closer and closer to success.”

At Caroline's words, the researchers in the institute could no longer contain their excitement and burst into cheers.

“Spiritual Realm” was an experimental project led by Caroline, aiming to allow ordinary people—whose computational capacity was insufficient—to safely connect to quantum space with the aid of specialized equipment.

Once this project succeeded, even ordinary people without a Star Origin would be able to gain a significant boost, helping them better resist the threats posed by Starbeasts.

For this reason, the Spiritual Realm project had received strong support from the New Federation and even the Starbearer Association.

And under such circumstances, while the project researchers enjoyed immense attention, they also bore enormous psychological pressure.

But now that Caroline had personally declared they were on the verge of success, that pressure was released to the greatest extent possible.

After all, they knew very well just how formidable the research capabilities of the person known as “the strongest researcher of the younger generation” truly were.

They had no reason to doubt Caroline’s words.

What these researchers didn’t know, however, was this:

They believed Caroline was researching Spiritual Realm to further empower the New Federation’s civilians, to enhance humanity’s overall strength as a species.

But in reality, only Caroline herself knew that the true purpose of researching Spiritual Realm was to use its unique virtual space to temporarily block her own Machina Type Starbearer persona, thus bypassing *it* and investigating the memory she had already confirmed to be... *faulty*.

Therefore, unlike the excitement surrounding her, there was no triumph in Caroline’s eyes at all.

Instead, there was a very human sense of unease, as if she were worried about something.

After announcing a temporary break and sending everyone away, Caroline remained alone in the research institute.

She looked at the two dolphin plushies placed on her seat and murmured softly:

“If even the Spiritual Realm can’t help me bypass the underlying code of my Machina persona, then it may take me a very long time to uncover the secret hidden in my memories.”

“I don’t know why, but I keep feeling that I must find that real memory as soon as possible. Otherwise... I will definitely regret it.”

With that thought, Caroline lowered her gaze to the dolphin necklace hanging around her neck.

“My memories tell me that this necklace was a birthday gift Chen Xing gave me back in Deep Blue Metropolis.”

“But whether it’s Chen Xing himself, or the other clues I’ve gathered, everything points to this memory being wrong.”

“Yet if I don’t bypass the Machina persona, then no matter what evidence I find, the deepest layers of code rooted in my brain will forcibly distort my subjective judgment, and compel me to remain immersed in that false memory.”

“But as long as I can find a way to temporarily block that underlying code, I... can get closer to the buried truth.”

At this point, Caroline clenched the dolphin necklace tightly in her hand, her voice firm and resolute.

“To make an absolutely rational Machina persona fall silent, even briefly, I must force her to analyze massive amounts of things that have no logic so as to tie her down.”

“And in this world, the thing with the least logic of all... is humanity’s irrationally complex emotions.”

“As long as I can shape the Spiritual Realm, I’ll be able to temporarily trap my Machina persona within it.”

“And once that happens, no one will be able to stop me from approaching the truth—not even myself.”

With that, Caroline released the dolphin necklace and turned toward the exit of the laboratory.

“I will find you, no matter... what price I have to pay.”

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Link to the Novel Google Drive Fanart:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1f7oPMzGjLKukR1MXGIk3EGs71RXZYJ2g>