

## Endless 129

Chapter 129: Retirement Life

Opus, Landling District, at the docks.

The office lights were off; in the hazy darkness, David sat in a recliner, feet propped up on the desk.

"Mmm hm hmm~"

David hummed a tune. He really liked the feeling of being in the dark, like a venomous snake hidden in a dense forest, which brought him a great sense of security.

In the shadows, he appeared quite at ease.

He turned his head, his gaze directed out the floor-to-ceiling window. Night had fallen, but the outside was still brightly lit, with lights flickering between the buildings, reflecting on the river and making it shine brightly.

The sound of knocking resounded, and the office door was pushed open. A burly bald man stood at the entrance, flashlight in hand, illuminating David inside the office.

"It's too bright, too bright, Bill."

David impatiently shouted the moment he was caught in the light.

Bill was used to this. After confirming David with the flashlight, he turned it off, plunging the surroundings back into pitch-black darkness.

"Boss, you're just like a shadowy rat," said Bill.

They could have easily lit up the factory, but due to David's peculiar habit, they could only use flashlights for illumination. Beams of light flickered in the dark factory, where countless figures patrolled in the dimness, accompanied by the sound of footsteps and greedy gasps.

Each sealed box stored a substantial amount of Philosopher's Stones and Liquid Spirit Potions. The Demons held back their greed, swallowing saliva, restraining themselves.

They occasionally glanced upwards towards the factory's large glass windows, behind which was David's office. Recalling the brutality beneath David's harmonious smile, everyone reined in their improper thoughts.

"Careful, or I'll dock your pay, Bill. I just... like the dark a lot."

David's voice sounded from the blurred silhouette.

"Besides, the darkness helps me control everything."

David added, and Bill saw a glow swirl in David's eyes; he was like a resurrected demon.

You could clearly sense something writhing in the darkness, watching Bill, moving with light steps, it soon disappeared.

Bill raised an eyebrow; he was accustomed to David's oddities but found it hard to endure the chilling coldness, like an invisible venomous snake's sharp eyes fixed on his throat.

"Is today Kedening's performance day?" Bill asked.

"Mmm hmm, he even invited me to come watch, but someone has to keep an eye on the goods here."

"So he should be dying soon, right? This will be his final performance?"

Bill asked again, recalling the unexpected guest that day, the man called "Ghoul". Although he wasn't sure what the conversation between him and David was about, afterward, David discussed with Bill about abandoning Kedening.

"Probably, anyway, Kedening is close to dying. It's just a matter of when the King's Secret Swords will release all his intel, and then the Order Bureau will pounce on him like wolves smelling blood, tearing him to pieces."

David sighed, looking as if he pitied Kedening.

"Poor Kedening... but on the bright side, we'll be a lot safer and one less person to split the money with."

David's voice held a tinge of laughter, emerging from his sadness in just a few seconds.

"Sounds really cold-blooded."

"I'm just drawing a clear line between personal life and work."

David waved his hand, making gestures, but surrounded by darkness, Bill couldn't see his movements.

"But honestly, thinking about Kedening's impending death does make me a bit sad," David said sincerely.

Bill pulled a chair from the darkness to sit down, listening to David's words.

"Kedening and I were college classmates; back then, he loved performing and was very talented... His acting skills were impeccable, often fooling our teachers completely. We skipped classes for most of a semester; I thought we'd get expelled, but Kedening managed to deceive them."

He told the teachers that we both came from poor backgrounds, working tirelessly for tuition and living expenses, often late and missing many classes, but we didn't neglect our studies, and we knew everything the teachers taught.

Then the teacher tested Kedening with some questions, and this guy answered them all like a master. What's more bizarre, he genuinely moved the teachers, and later on, we even received some scholarships."

David talked about the past, full of admiration for Kedening.

"That's when I realized that these people who can perform are skilled swindlers, just like every writer is adept at spinning lies."

The past years glowed with a golden hue of nostalgia for David; it was a decent period in his life.

"By the way, how did you and Kedening get into this line of work?"

Bill asked out of curiosity. He was a mercenary employed by David, and every time he saw both David and Kedening, he felt a sense of mystery and strangeness.

"Boss, you're relatively understandable; like everyone else, becoming a mercenary is just for money. But Kedening? This guy looks like he's not in it for the money. If it were for his performances, he should have gotten out sooner."

Although Kedening could no longer escape, Bill whispered to himself.

"Well, you might not believe it, but Kedening was the one who brought me into the business."

Talking about this, David chuckled helplessly.

"Kedening's reason is more personal, and I can't say, even though he's about to die, he's still somewhat of a friend, right, Bill? As for my reason, it's just as you said, purely for the money."

Surprisingly, even at a time like this, David cared about some kind of secrecy, which Bill found odd.

For this boss, Bill always held a blend of respect and caution. In his eyes, David was like a cunning venomous snake.

This was not a derogatory term but rather a compliment. As a mercenary, David was exceedingly professional.

Ruthless, cold-blooded, unfettered by anything, only with the goal to complete the job, even if it meant the death of his friend.

Kedening, on the other hand, was somewhat unprofessional. He was always concerned with other matters, like his life-threatening performances, like taking care of his wife.

When a person has too many concerns, their thoughts become cluttered, which isn't a good thing.

This is a job akin to licking blood from a blade; lack of professionalism leads to death, which is why Kedening is going to die—it's just the way it is.

"My dream is to retire around the age of forty, with piles of cash. I've already thought of where to retire. Do you know Wind Source Highlands? It's a pretty nice place. They say the wind blows there all year round, and the green grass tumbles like waves until it becomes a vast green field."

David spoke, indulging in his fantasy.

"It's much better than Opus."

"Sounds nice," Bill said.

"Seriously nice," David emphasized.

Their conversation fell into silence, with only the sound of steady breathing left in the darkness. Eyes glanced at the dark but found no response.

This silence lasted for a few minutes until David broke it by speaking.

"Are you feeling uneasy, Bill?"

"Yeah," Bill didn't deny it.

"Afraid you'll become the next 'Kedening'?"

"Probably."

Bill stared into the darkness ahead. He could feel the presence of a gaze. David was watching him, and he reckoned this sly serpent was smiling, like the smile he wore whenever he suddenly attacked.

"Bill, don't think about unnecessary things. Just do what you're supposed to do; that's the mark of a professional."

David waved his hand, his voice devoid of emotion.

"So do what you need to do. As long as there's 'value,' you won't be abandoned."

"Alright, I understand."

Bill spoke no further, got up, and left. When he reached the door, he stopped, turned back to look into the darkness.

"Wind Source Highlands, sounds nice. Will you need a driver by then?"

"Let's talk about it when we live long enough," David said uncertainly.

Once Bill left, the office was left with only David. He closed his eyes, visions of various parts of the factory flashing before him, as if another David was sprinting through the factory, gathering everything within his sight.

"Such a pity..."

David slowly opened his eyes, sighed, and looked at the phone on the desk. After hesitating for a few seconds, David dialed the number and connected the call.

"Hello, is this the grand performer Kedening Caesar?"

Sorrow vanished, David asked with heartfelt joy.

After a brief pause, Kedening's voice came through.

"Don't tease me, David."

"Hahaha, it's not teasing, it's the truth. After tonight, you'll be the rising star in the Agreement District,"

David praised him. No one knew what this serpent was thinking. He added with concern.

"Is the performance about to begin?"

"Yeah, in about half an hour. The audience is already lining up, and the backstage is making final adjustments."

David could clearly feel Kedening's excitement in his tone. He tried to calm his own emotions, but the turbulence was too obvious.

"Are you nervous?"

"Of course, it feels like my lungs are being squeezed. My hands are shaking right now."

Kedening said without hesitation.

"I can understand. This has been your dream until now... I really wish I could be there to witness this moment," David said.

"It's just not possible. But at least after tonight, it's all over," Kedening fantasized about the future, "Once we leave Opus and reach Wind Source Highlands, we can be neighbors. I'll perform every day, and you'll have plenty of chances to watch."

"Alright, I'll wait for that moment. How is Jini?"

"She's alright, pretty stable recently. Actually, she wanted to come tonight, but I persuaded her not to. She's not suited to be in crowded places."

There was a pause on the other end, then Kedening's voice turned slightly melancholic.

"Thinking about it, it's quite sad that you all can't be here for such a beautiful moment."

"Don't be so pessimistic. At least you'll enjoy this perfect moment alone, right?" David said.

"Compared to enjoying alone, I'd rather share it with you all."

David squinted, took a cigarette, and lit it, a spark illuminating the darkness as he exhaled smoke.



"Do what you have to, Kedening, and leave the rest to me."

David took a deep breath, speaking words only he could understand.

"Prepare for your curtain call."

He bid farewell in this way.

After hanging up, David's mind was filled with thoughts, just like Bill felt, David always had a friendly smile, but beneath that smile were twisted and eerie thoughts, and no one knew what he was truly thinking.

Whenever someone asked about these thoughts, David would jokingly say that as a mercenary, he couldn't let anyone guess his true intentions.

Taking deep puffs of smoke, the rising clouds obscured David.

There was something moving in the darkness, grouping together.