

## Endless 148

### Chapter 148: Decision Room

Sorting through the paper documents from the recent conversation, Geoffrey skillfully sealed them in an envelope and placed them into a cabinet. The rest was Yuriel's job; he only needed to make sure everything was neatly arranged.

After finishing all this, Geoffrey sat on a sofa nearby. The office was quiet, the only sound being the turning of pages as Lebius read.

"Is this what you do after work? Just sit here and read?"

Geoffrey asked. It had been a long time since he and Lebius had worked together. He didn't know much about Lebius's lifestyle until the recent establishment of the Special Operations Group brought them back into contact.

"Yeah."

Lebius replied. To others, such a response might seem perfunctory and cold, but Geoffrey knew this was just how Lebius was; he was long accustomed to it.

Through many years of interaction, people around Lebius had developed a rough understanding: when Lebius could engage in normal conversation, he was in a normal state. If he spoke more, it indicated he was in a good mood.

As for when Lebius was angry... he was usually silent, like the calm sea where sharks lurked in the blue shadows, never knowing when they might surface.

As a result, few could accurately judge Lebius's mood. He was like someone with a blank expression, showing only a monotonous face.

"Besides work, you just read, no social life, no entertainment," Geoffrey glanced at the office door, "you even live here directly."

"Are you religious, Lebius?"

Lebius shook his head and continued reading the book in front of him.

"That's odd. You seem devout like an ascetic... The Order Bureau should give you an exemplary employee award." Geoffrey joked.

Lebius didn't reply; he was too sullen, making people feel somewhat frustrated. Geoffrey thought only someone equally sullen could get along with Lebius.

Thinking of that scene made Geoffrey want to laugh—two silent people in the same room, nothing but silence. That was truly desperate.

The silence lasted for a while. Geoffrey wanted to chat with this old friend but didn't know how to start.

Marriage perhaps? Lebius was almost at the age for marriage, urging him maybe?

Geoffrey quickly dismissed such thoughts. There should be no such thing as marriage in the life of an ascetic. Discuss the next action plan? This was something Geoffrey himself couldn't bear; he didn't want to talk about work after finally getting off duty.

Geoffrey felt a headache coming on and thought maybe just leave it. Just as he was about to get up and leave, Lebius broke the silence.

"Geoffrey, do you still have your mask?"

Geoffrey hesitated, then responded.

"Yeah, I still have it. Why are you asking?"

Geoffrey had once been part of the Field Operations Department and wore a mask during missions. After leaving the Field Operations Department, he no longer used it, hanging it on his home wall like a decoration.

"Take some time to polish it. We'll be needing it soon."

Geoffrey was silent for a few seconds, puzzled, "I remember, I'm not required to go to the battlefield, right?"

"A request from Yas. I meant to tell you earlier but was too busy and forgot. He hopes you and I can act as a safeguard, ready to confront the King's Secret Sword at any time to prevent their feint from turning into a surprise attack."

"Wait, you and I?"

Geoffrey missed the other information entirely, fixating on those words "you and I".

He still remembered the last time he and Lebius teamed up, during that secret war, to fend off the fierce attack of the King's Secret Sword when the Field Operations Department deployed all forces.

That was the most brutal war Geoffrey had ever experienced, and the last war he participated in.

In those brutal hundred days, both he and Lebius were severely injured. Fortunately, both survived, though Lebius was left with a crippled leg. One ended up in the office, while the other, unwilling to continue the struggle, transferred to logistics.

And that's how things remained till now.

"What do you mean, Lebius?" Geoffrey asked solemnly.

"If necessary, you and I need to return to the battlefield to face the King's Secret Sword."

Lebius stated calmly, as if it were an ordinary matter.

"Me... and you?"

Geoffrey was skeptical, then couldn't help but laugh.

"Don't joke around, Lebius. How long has it been since we last used Secret Energy? We've almost forgotten how to mobilize Ether. How could we possibly go back to the battlefield?"

"Is that so? That's unfortunate." Upon hearing that, Lebius sighed.

"Don't overthink it. Surviving is already the greatest fortune."

Geoffrey advised, turning to leave, but then the voice came again.

"No, my regret is that you've truly wasted all this time, Geoffrey. Are you really planning to muddle through until retirement?"

Geoffrey turned back, and at that moment, Lebius stood up from behind the desk.

His gaze froze. To his amazement, Geoffrey discovered that this time, Lebius wasn't using a cane or any assistive device; he simply stood up just like that.

Geoffrey's bewildered expression made Lebius very satisfied. He even took two steps forward, coming out from behind the desk, standing straight in front of Geoffrey.

This fellow has been sitting behind the desk for seven years, buried in paperwork daily. Lebius's back has been bent by the heavy documents, but today he stood up again, or rather, he never fell.

The faint Ether pulsed, Geoffrey noticed something, a slight gleam appeared in his eyes, and the Ether's fluctuation became ever more distinct until Lebius decided not to hide anymore.

A shadowy blue pattern emerged over Lebius's body surface. Simultaneously, a shadowy blue figure appeared behind him, gently supporting Lebius, acting as his crutch.

Cold hands landed on Geoffrey's shoulders, and on Lebius's perpetually indifferent face, a rare smile emerged.

"Ether... concealing."

Geoffrey's voice was devoid of emotion.

It's not that he hasn't seen condensers adept at such ethereal skills before, but few can achieve what Lebius has.

Near absolute concealment, as if reaching the "Extreme Realm."

Even at such proximity without exposure, had Lebius not actively revealed, it's unknown how long Geoffrey would take to notice, and on the battlefield, that duration was enough for Geoffrey to die too many times.

"I've always thought, if I could've hidden better back then, perhaps I really could've assassinated him."

Lebius sat on the desk, the sense of strict caution vanished, replaced by a more flamboyant demeanor.

"But what's done is done, no matter how much debate, it can't change the past, right? Thankfully, I'm still alive, he's still alive, and I have a second chance, an opportunity to amend past mistakes."

His cold gaze turned to Geoffrey, and Lebius calmly said.

"We don't have much time, Geoffrey, can you return to shape within a week?"

Geoffrey remained silent, after a long pause he slowly said.

"Ah, do you remember when we first partnered up?" Geoffrey asked.

"What's up?"

"We were in the same batch, back then you and I fiercely competed for the annual best new employee."

Lebius remembered that incident, he asked, "So?"

"In the end, I won," Geoffrey's face revealed a confident smile, "Don't underestimate any batch's annual best new employee."

He said, stretching his muscles. In some respects, Lebius was quite right; over these years, Geoffrey's life status was virtually akin to retirement, even with strong muscles, nowadays they've been wrapped in thick layers of fat.

"A week's time is too long, returning to shape, one night is enough."

Geoffrey directly pushed the door and left, not heading home but making his way straight to the combat room.

Lebius gazed at the receding back, as time shifted, he actually felt like he had returned to the past; everything has changed, yet it seems like nothing has changed.

Sitting back at the desk, picking up Bologue's action report, rolling it up, stuffing it into a copper capsule, and labeling it with a serial number.

Unnoticed was the pneumatic tube system beside Lebius's desk; it was concealed by the desk itself, only visible from behind the desk.

Inserting the copper capsule into the pneumatic tube system, the air compressor began to work, with a dull sound the transmission jar carried the documents deep into the pipeline.

With the advancement of times, many advanced communication methods have been integrated into the Order Bureau, theoretically this outdated pneumatic tube system should have been phased out, yet it remains, solely because it serves the mysterious "Decision Room."

No phone lines, no radio communication, only cold pipelines leading to the dark depths.

It isn't just the command center of the Order Bureau, it's also another independent archives center. All documents sealed in the archive room must also be backed up in the "Decision Room," just like what Lebius just did.

Having completed all this, Lebius glanced at the time; his work was finished, it was time to rest.

He trusted Geoffrey, believing that this partner would not let him down, there was nothing to worry about.

Getting up, he pushed open the door on the other side of the office, behind this door was his bedroom.

Opening the door, a bright corridor came into view.

Just like the corridors within the Order Bureau, identical, with colossal white bricks built together, soft light falling from above, cold rigid lines construct reason, extending forward in a straight path.

Silent, Lebius looked behind him, the office no longer there, replaced by a similarly white wall, the stacked massive stones blocked the way back.

Nothing much to say, he boldly stepped forward, the corridor quiet and long, along the way only Lebius alone, the surroundings frighteningly silent, except for his footsteps and breathing, there was nothing else.

The familiar setting now appeared so eerie, luckily Lebius had grown accustomed to it all, accustomed to the Order Bureau's various facets, whether rational or madness.

Finally, he stopped, at the end of the corridor, a door stood Firm.

It's quite ordinary, identical to the door of Lebius's office, to be precise, the doors within the Order Bureau seem all alike, only its markings differ slightly.

Such as the emblem of the Staff Sword, or the plaque inscribed with "Decision Room."

Lebius took a deep breath, knocked on the door, after a few seconds, he turned the doorknob.