

Endless 165

Chapter 165: Exit

This is a terrible city; the rainy nights in Opus are colder than any rainy night Jini has experienced. Each raindrop is filled with bone-chilling coldness, spilling down from the looming dark clouds.

It feels as if there's a hidden winter within them, raining down liquid snow upon the people of the mortal world.

Jini lifted her head, slowly reaching out her hand to feel the delicate raindrops.

It's raining, yet another rainy night.

The rain during this season is apparently abnormal, but the term "normal" never really applies to Opus. Anyone who looks up can see the dense smog spilling out from the Great Rift; it stretches like a pillar of fog supporting the heavens, towering high.

From time to time, the smog within the Great Rift overflows, creating a toxic fog tide that invades surrounding areas. Any of these would be considered anomalies for a city, yet they all converge on Opus, piling up.

For this reason, the citizens living here have long developed a broad-minded quality, becoming accustomed to the many "abnormalities" of Opus. Even foreigners like Jini are no exception; after living here for a while, she too became used to it all.

Bundling her clothes tightly, she struggled to fend off the cold that assailed her. Ever since becoming ill, Jini always felt her body was very weak, often cold, and constantly hungry, despite eating a lot but never satisfying her hunger.

Kedening says it's a good sign, saying her body is digesting food, converting it into energy to heal itself. The more Jini eats, the faster she recovers.

He is just that kind of person, always finding ways to encourage others amidst the darkness. To Jini, Kedening is like a warm sun.

Thinking of this, Jini glanced forward, where Kedening was arguing with someone on the platform of the train station, carrying luggage.

Jini did not bother Kedening; she could sense Kedening was already very tired, so she chose not to affect him.

Picking up her luggage, she moved to the bench under the rain shelter, curious why David hadn't come.

David and Kedening are good friends. When Jini married Kedening, David looked rather resentful at the wedding, muttering about how she had stolen his good friend, among other things.

Kedening even joked that if David had nowhere to live in the future, he could consider leaving the attic for David.

It's unclear why Kedening was in a hurry to leave Opus, but this time he left without bringing David, which surprised Jini.

Jini didn't continue thinking about it; her mind was somewhat foggy, leaning against the bench, her consciousness hovering between wakefulness and slumber.

Ever since getting sick, she often fell into this state; Kedening said it was the effect of the medicine, causing Jini to sleep for long periods.

Actually, Jini hated taking medicine, or rather, she hated sleeping because whenever she slept, she would dream, and the dreams always appeared the same.

Just like now.

Jini remembered it was a rainy night, just like the rainy night now.

The cold rain trickled down, and in her dream, Jini sat at the doorstep, waiting for Kedening's return at night.

At that time, they had just arrived in Opus. Like many foreigners, they were struggling to survive here. During that period, Kedening's condition was not good; he rushed between various theaters for a living, but those people were only willing to give him minor roles without lines, and the pay was pitifully low.

Kedening stayed up late at night, sometimes doubting himself, wondering if he only had mediocre skills and whether his choices were right.

This kind of confused pain tormented Kedening; he didn't have the courage to give up his dreams, yet couldn't convince himself he was just a mediocre person.

Neither here nor there, wandering constantly.

Jini was powerless against this; she could only silently hold Kedening, letting him feel the warmth of her body.

Sometimes, it wasn't only Kedening doubting himself; Jini also doubted herself, facing Kedening's pain, feeling nothing but helplessness and self-blame, realizing she could do nothing besides offering hugs.

But later... a turning point appeared.

Kedening's career in performance became smoother; they earned a lot of money, moved to a bigger house, more and more people recognized them, and everyone cheered Kedening's name together.

Jini thought Kedening was about to fulfill his dreams, but when she looked at Kedening, he didn't seem happy. Sometimes Kedening's eyes would carry worry when looking at her.

What exactly happened?

Jini felt like she was forgetting something important, but she couldn't recall what it was...

Thunder rumbled across the night sky, casting the world in black and bleak white; everything froze for a moment, then resumed flowing, bringing a raging uproar.

Jini remembered; she was momentarily speechless, only able to widen her eyes, watching everything unfold.

A strange, blurry figure, like thick tar, struggled out from the deep darkness, cloaked in a pitch-black robe, stood somewhat unreal before Jini.

The tiny rain poured over him, yet bizarrely passed through, splashing loudly on the ground.

Jini couldn't clearly see his face but felt a familiar aura mixed with some unease.

"Your wish... I heard it."

In her memory, the man spoke as he reached out his hand.

Heard it... and then... and then...

Jini's expression gradually turned terrified; she couldn't tell whether this was a memory or a dream, or even reality.

Reality and falsehood were twisted together, crudely molded into a ball, then violently torn apart.

The man's words were brief, but Jini understood his whole meaning.

To realize your wish comes at a cost. Will you bear this cost?

Jini trembled as she raised her hand, myriad emotions crashed through her heart like meteors, fear and unease, immense despair permeated her mind, even making her hear her soul's scream.

No, don't reach out; if she agreed with him, something bad would definitely happen.

Far worse than death.

But...

In Jini's eyes flashed the face of Kedening, standing on stage, accepting the applause of the audience, bowing and exiting amidst the revelry of the crowd...

If he could achieve his wish, perhaps such a price wasn't too high, at least for Jini, it was so.

Sometimes, people are like this, able to endure their own suffering but unable to ignore the suffering of others.

So on that cold rainy night, she reached out her hand to the man.

Jini remembered, remembering the beginning of this nightmare.

"Jini?"

Gentle words shattered the illusion, Jini startled awake from the nightmare, trying to retract her outstretched hand, but it was firmly grasped by the man, unable to move away.

"Jini!"

The voice grew stronger, Jini tried hard to calm down, the eerie shadow was gone, replaced by Kedening.

He stood right in front of her, holding her outstretched hand, the illusion and reality intermixed.

"Are you okay?" Kedening asked with some concern.

"I... I'm fine, just seemed to have a hallucination, probably due to the effects of the drug."

Jini chuckled twice bitterly, then hugged Kedening briefly, the two embraced for a moment, then parted, with panic and desolation in their eyes.

Kedening sat beside Jini, saying with a slightly complaining tone, "The train is delayed, we need to wait for a while."

Even so, unease surged in Kedening's heart; was it really just a delay? Or was there something more?

He tried to keep calm, he absolutely could not panic in front of Jini.

"It's fine," Jini said, leaning her head on Kedening's shoulder.

Raindrops pounded on the canopy, the monotonous sound surprisingly reassuring at this moment.

Jini wrapped Kedening's hand in hers, trying hard to feel the warmth of his skin, as if everything in front of Jini was false, only what she held in her hand, what she touched genuinely, was absolutely real.

Under Jini's touch, Kedening's restless heart rarely calmed down, just like this night rain.

Suddenly Kedening had another extravagant wish, how much he wished this moment could become eternal, to sink in such a world, was a rare happiness for him.

But this is ultimately a delusion.

"Kedening... something happened, right?" Jini asked softly.

"Mm."

This time, Kedening no longer concealed.

"Because of me, right?"

Warm liquid brushed past Kedening's arm, Jini wept silently, faintly sensing the root of it all.

"There's no disease, and no drugs," Jini said, "I remember now, that man, that ominous guy... everything started from then."

"It's not your fault."

Kedening rubbed Jini's head, wiping away her tears.

"It's just the wrong time, wrong place, wrong people and things, that created the wrong situation."

Kedening pulled the suitcase beside him a bit closer, speaking earnestly.

"But rest assured, I'll handle it."

In the distance came a screech of brakes, like a desperate criminal speeding toward.

Kedening guessed he was skilled at driving fast, pushing open the car door before stopping, diving out fish-like, armed to the teeth with killing intent, leaving the runaway car to crash wildly, flames of explosion surging behind him, casting his ghastly shadow on the ground.

The car and driver met just a few hours ago, yet carried this god of death unknown how many places they slashed through, burst tires and ground sparks erupted over and over, the silvery glossy car body riddled with countless bullet holes.

Kedening thought he would open the car door, but actually, the driver's side door had long gone; not long ago it was torn off by the driver, used as a shield, charging through a rain of bullets into another place.

Between the two was a deep revolutionary bond, now finally unbearable, under the violent driving of the driver, exploding into flames.

The blazing flames shot skyward, the guards' shouts rang out, but after several explosive gunshots, everything quieted down again.

Kedening took out a potion from the suitcase, consoling Jini, injecting the potion along her arm into her body, a few seconds later, Jini's consciousness grew drowsy again, then peacefully fell asleep.

"Please wait a moment."

Kedening spoke to himself, lifting Jini's body, laying her on the long bench, removing his own overcoat, covering Jini's body, tucking her in nicely.

Looking at Jini's peaceful face, Kedening gently kissed her forehead, then retrieved a handgun and short sword from the suitcase, turning to face the newcomer through the rain.

"Thank you."

Kedening expressed his gratitude, brilliant patterns crawled up his neck, while on the other side of the rain, the newcomer also displayed his Sheep Horn Hammer and folding knife.

Bologue strode forward, the same light trails ignited in his hands, as if gripping fire.