

All R. Artist 331

Chapter 331: Preparations of The Young Party

Lin Yuan showed no interest in the topic of physical attractiveness in reality.

If someone were to ask Lin Yuan who the handsomest man in the world is, Lin Yuan would have different answers for different age groups.

Initially, it was the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers; then it became Ultraman; later, it was Masked Rider.

And now...

It's the Transformers.

So while others are concerned about whether Lin Yuan attended the Dragon Awards and showed his face, Lin Yuan is more concerned about what benefits this award has brought him.

And it has been beneficial.

After receiving the Dragon Award for Best Film Score, Lin Yuan noticed a significant surge in his film and television reputation, reaching 280,000.

This made Lin Yuan realize that the Dragon Awards have a high impact on reputation.

Thereafter, Lin Yuan thought about the script for "Life of Pi" that he had already received.

It's related to his system task.

Even though it's currently impossible to film this movie, it's time to prepare the company for it.

With the script in hand, Lin Yuan found Ol' Zhou.

“A new script?”

Upon learning of Lin Yuan’s intentions, Ol’ Zhou perked up and showed a face full of anticipation:

“Let me see!”

Ol’ Zhou completely respected Lin Yuan’s scriptwriting abilities, so when he learned that Lin Yuan had written a new script, he took it very seriously.

“Alright.”

After handing the script to Ol’ Zhou, Lin Yuan didn’t wait around for him to finish reading and left.

At this point, talking too much is useless, what matters is the company’s assessment of the script.

If the company does not prioritize this script, Lin Yuan plans to invest more money into it.

Ol’ Zhou didn’t read it alone either.

He immediately went to the film department, entered the conference room, and asked his assistant behind him with a serious tone:

“Call for an emergency meeting, all mid-to-high level personnel in the film department must attend.”

“Understood.”

The assistant instantly spread the word.

The purpose of this meeting is to let the film department set standards regarding the cost for Lin Yuan’s new film.

Soon.

The senior executives of Starlight Film Department gathered in the conference room. The success of “The Sound Tuner” had brought Xian Yu into the company’s spotlight, so no one dared to delay.

“Director Zhou.”

To Ol’ Zhou’s surprise, the company’s top director, Du An, also attended, with the company’s top screenwriter, Zhang Yu, behind him.

“Can we take a look at the script together?” Zhang Yu asked with a smile.

“Of course, we could even ask for some advice from industry seniors like yourselves.” Ol’ Zhou courteously smiled back, then instructed: “Please take a seat, we will distribute the script.”

Everyone found their seat.

Du An and Zhang Yu also found a spot to sit down.

Typically, Xian Yu’s new script would have nothing to do with them, but when they learned that Xian Yu had written a new one, both Du An and Zhang Yu were rather curious.

So, they decided to come along.

Soon, the script was distributed.

Everyone saw the information on the script.

Title: Life of Pi

Genre: Drama, Adventure

Without further ado, the conference room quieted down and everyone started reading the script.

Generally, reading a script takes between half an hour and one hour.

During this time, the only sound in the conference room was the flipping of pages.

The story isn't complex.

At least, it's not described as such.

The film starts with the introduction of a family. They run a private zoo, and the protagonist is their youngest son, named Pi.

Let's call him Young Pi for now.

The main plot of the script begins when this family decides to move.

Young Pi's father decides to sell the animals and settle elsewhere, so the family boards a ship bound for a distant place.

However, they encountered a shipwreck.

Except for Young Pi, everyone else perishes.

Young Pi and a tiger drift in a lifeboat for 227 days.

The man and the tiger form a peculiar bond, ultimately overcoming their predicament and achieving rebirth.

If we interpret it solely in a literal sense, the plot structure isn't complex.

But...

When everyone finished reading the script, the conference room descended into deathly silence.

Meanwhile...

Screenwriter Zhang Yu's fingers were trembling slightly when she flipped to the script's final few pages.

And director Du An, after he finished reading the script, was slightly short of breath, His eyes clearly flashed with an intense desire!

"Let's hear your thoughts..."

Ol' Zhou swallowed, breaking the silence in the meeting room.

To everyone's surprise...

The first person to speak was director Du An. His voice was clearly filled with urgency: "Can I direct this script?"

After saying this, Du An gave a wry smile to Zhang Yu: "Sorry..."

"I understand."

Zhang Yu wasn't angry, but instead took a deep breath: "This is one of the best scripts I've seen in my career!"

"So..."

An executive seemed slightly incredulous: "Did young Pi eat his own family?"

Known for her thoroughness, Zhang Yu, a seasoned professional screenwriter, responded: "Based on the script's metaphors and the conversation between Young Pi and the writer at the end, it appears so. Just like the plot in 'The Sound Tuner,' the protagonist told a monstrous lie... The quality of this script is exceptionally high, even more impressive than I initially imagined."

Zhang Yu seemed slightly shocked.

Soon, the conference room turned chaotic:

“Cannibalism?!”

“I broke out in a cold sweat!”

“I knew something was wrong halfway through the script. On the surface, it looks like Young Pi’s ocean drifting with a tiger, but in reality, there wasn’t a tiger at all!”

“The script Xian Yu wrote is a little too heavy, and it’s also surprisingly difficult to film!”

“No, it’s not heavy at all.”

Suppressing the excitement in his voice, Du An said: “The script can be presented in the most elegant way. The so-called ‘heavy’ element is just a thought left to audiences after they finish watching the film. For directors, this is a huge challenge! Director Zhou...”

Once again, Du An turned to look at Ol’ Zhou. After seeing this script, a voice echoed within his heart:

I want to shoot this! This script, I must shoot it!

Ol’ Zhou didn’t agree immediately: “We’ll have to see what Xian Yu thinks. Director Du should know that Xian Yu adopts a screenwriter-centric approach for his crew...”

Du An’s eyebrows furrowed at once, filled with distress and conflict.

On one hand, he was eager and excited at the sight of the script. On the other, he was persistent in upholding the principle of director-centricity in filmmaking.

“Let’s not talk about this for now, there shouldn’t be any problems with the quality of the script, right?” Ol’ Zhou said.

“None!”

“This script is even better than ‘The Sound Tuner’!”

“The only issue might be the difficulty in controlling the cost.”

“The expectations for special effects are too high.”

“Immersive filming techniques will definitely have to be used.”

“...”

There are no issues with approving the script.

Having nodded, Ol’ Zhou said: “I’ll send the script for review later, then we’ll tackle the budgeting and pre-production preparation. Casting would be challenging too, but we’re likely to be quite busy. As for the final choice of director, we’ll consider it later since we won’t be starting on this film anytime this year...”

As he said this, Ol’ Zhou glanced at Du An again.

Du An was still in conflict.

He didn’t want to give up his leadership position in the film crew but was also eager to film this script. Yet Xian Yu was firmly screenwriter-centric.

However, what’s certain is that the preparations for “Life of Pi” are about to begin.

Chapter 332: Playing with Narrative Trickery’s Heart

Lin Yuan received a reply from Ol’ Zhou very quickly.

The film division of the company places great importance on “Life of Pi”, and the follow-up preparations can start any day now.

Considering the film won’t begin shooting this year, Lin Yuan left everything in the company’s hands.

With the support of the film division, there wouldn’t be a shortage of professionals to take care of the preliminary preparations.

Having temporarily set this burden aside, Lin Yuan indulged in the luxury of attending classes for a few days—

Lin Yuan rarely attends school these days.

Under the guidance of Yang Zhongming’s character card, Lin Yuan’s composition skills improved drastically, and the school could no longer teach him anything.

Obviously, the school was aware of this.

Who could teach Xian Yu to compose music?

Even a professor of music composition would be of no use.

So, they always approved Lin Yuan’s leave of absence fully and without question.

Obviously, both parties had different interpretations of whether “Xian Yu needs to continue classes”. Fortunately, the result was the same.

In his spare time from classes,

Lin Yuan also draws comic strips, treating it as a small diversion in life.

Here’s the thing.

As “Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma” continues to be serialized, the manga has entered its later stages.

Because the original work was poorly received, the system made significant adjustments to the latter part of “Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma”.

The storyline quickly progressed to the protagonist becoming the new member of Totsuki Elite Ten and started to challenge the previous members to cooking duels.

That is, Shokugeki.

It won’t be long before this manga officially ends, by which time Lin Yuan will need to consider what his next manga will be about.

After spending days leisurely, Jin Mu gave Lin Yuan a heads up:

“We made a commitment with the blog to submit a draft, it’d be best if we can submit it this month. If you don’t have any inspiration, we can delay it.”

Only then did Lin Yuan recall that he had indeed agreed to submit a draft to the blog.

“They’ve been hurrying me...”

Jin Mu shrugged, as Lin Yuan’s agent, he had been enduring the hassle of deadline pressures that he shouldn’t be facing.

Lin Yuan said: “I’ll submit the draft by the end of the month.”

He had already exhausted his supply of short stories, and needed to order new ones from the system, he could use this time to consider what he wanted to create for the next short story.

“Sure.”

While Jin Mu responded, internally he was astounded by his boss's creativity, though this amazement was gradually numbing due to its frequent occurrences.

No matter what the genre or the story was, it seemed that nothing could stump his boss—

Probably the only flaw he noticed in his boss was his handwriting?

“By the way.”

It seemed as if Jin Mu thought of something. He laughed and said, “These days, there has been a lot of discussion online about some mystery authors imitating ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’ by using the Narrative Trickery method.”

“I think I saw it.”

Lin Yuan indeed saw it, through the comments section of the Tribe.

These days he was quite relaxed, so he occasionally logged into Chu Kuang's account, and as a result, saw a lot of complaints in the comments.

They said he started a trend of tricking readers, and now more and more mystery writers were using Narrative Trickery to fool readers, and so on.

Of course, it wasn't reader's complaints, just playful teasing.

The only one who was actually complaining was a mystery writer called Leng Guang.

Basically, each time a new work of Narrative Trickery appear in the mystery realm, he would make some sarcastic comments, living up to his reputation for criticism.

“A pathetic imitation of Chu Kuang.”

“You've barely scratched the surface of Chu Kuang's Narrative Trickery.”

“Narrative Trickery for the sake of Narrative Trickery. Soulless trend following.”

“You need to understand the concept of narrational deception before you try to pay tribute to Chu Kuang.”

“...”

Interestingly, while Leng Guang criticized these imitation works, he indirectly admitted the value of “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”.

Internet users mocked him for this: “Didn’t you say ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’ was not good?”

Leng Guang didn’t mind, but he was a bit angry, and even posted an article explaining:

“Don’t misinterpret my words. Although I indeed don’t like Narrative Trickery, I didn’t completely deny ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’. The Narrative Trickery in the novel is indeed cunning, but at least the case setup and logical consistency are fine. If it weren’t for the Narrative Trickery format at the end, this would be a pretty good mystery novel as well.”

Yes, if not for the tricky ending, Leng Guang would have appreciated “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”.

In contrast, some of the Narrative Trickery imitation works on the market are simply tricking readers for the sake of it. The plot twists at the end can’t hold a candle to Chu Kuang’s “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”.

So, Leng Guang started to vent his frustration.

This is the problem of Narrative Trickery. The first time readers encounter Narrative Trickery, they tend to be shocked to the utmost degree. But after getting accustomed to it, the reactions are just standard—

Wait a minute.

Lin Yuan's gaze wavered, suddenly having a new idea for a short story, thanks to someone following the "Narrative Trickery" structure and inspiring him.

Why not continue to write about Narrative Trickery?

In the future, there will inevitably be more Narrative Trickery novels on the market, with ones even surpassing "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" in narrative trickery!

Of course, in terms of originality, "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is unbeatable.

But with the development of Narrative Trickery, the stories are destined to become more intricate.

So, why couldn't he, after pioneering the method of Narrative Trickery, further promote this writing technique?

Wouldn't it give imitators more to reference?

Admittedly, the idea was compelling.

Everyone has a streak of wicked humor.

Occasionally, Lin Yuan did as well.

Since Biyao's death, many readers had been calling him "Chu Kuang the old rascal".

If he didn't do some things that a rascal would do, wouldn't he be letting down the readers' "compliments"?

Thinking this, Lin Yuan took a trip to the restroom.

Five minutes later.

Lin Yuan returned to the studio and asked, “Uncle Jin, after finishing ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd,’ if you were to read another similar novel, could you guess the answer?”.

“I can see through Narrative Trickery.”

Jin Mu was confident, and then conservatively added, “More often than not.”

He was a seasoned mystery fan, already adept at guessing the murderer.

And with this model of Narrative Trickery, if you’ve never encountered it before, you can certainly be misled. But once you’re prepared, it’s a different story.

“Alright, then take a look at this conversation.”

Lin Yuan wrote down a conversation on a notepad and even drew a comic.

In the simple comic.

An old man asked a young man, “Why did you sleep with her?”

The young man helplessly replied, “She was lying there naked, what was I supposed to do?”

The old man was furious, “You should have been performing an autopsy! An autopsy!”

Jin Mu’s lips twitched slightly when he saw this.

He kept reading.

The young man smashed a chair, “You don’t need to teach me how to do my job!”

The old man angrily stood up, “You’re the worst veterinarian I’ve ever met!”

Jin Mu: “...”

He felt as if his whole worldview was about to shatter.

This short conversation, with its continuous twists and wild displays, made him strain his back, making him somewhat doubtful of his previous assertion that he could “see through Narrative Trickery”.

What the heck is this?

Was everyone’s hearts who played with Narrative Trickery this dirty?

No wonder he was... the innovator of Narrative Trickery!

Lin Yuan said, “That was just a warm-up. Just giving you a small hint, I’ve decided to write a new short story about Narrative Trickery, to challenge all readers who think they can see through it.”

Yep.

A few minutes ago, when Lin Yuan went to the bathroom, he wasn’t just relieving himself.

His kidneys are quite fine.

He was just customizing a short story with the system.

The name of that short story is: “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”.

As for that comic story just now, it was just a warm-up.

Don’t underestimate this worn-out joke.

This joke actually contains one of the very core essences of Narrative Trickery:

Psychological hinting.

Which brings us to a simple explanation of an issue.

What kind of Narrative Trickery is good Narrative Trickery?

The first important criteria for judging the quality of a Narrative Trickery work is to decide whether the trickery was simply trickery for the sake of trickery, or if it was a grand scheme formed through a series of psychological hints and habitual misdirection.

This scheme is not only meant to deceive readers, but also to serve the novel's script, enrich or reverse the character's portrayal, deepen the thoughtfulness of the novel. This is real Narrative Trickery:

A spiderweb-like scheme, carefully constructed with each step.

And similar short stories can give readers a more intuitive understanding of what real Narrative Trickery is!

Chapter 333: Readers Want to Duel with Chu Kuang

“What's narrative trickery?”

Luo Wei, who just completed today's task for “Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma,” seemingly caught parts of the conversation between Lin Yuan and Jin Mu.

She paused for a moment, then realized, “You were discussing Chu Kuang's detective novels?”

For some reasons, Luo Wei has been paying a lot of attention to Chu Kuang.

Even if she doesn't read detective novels, she knew that Chu Kuang had recently created a new type of mystery called “narrative trickery”.

“Yes.”

Jin Mu glanced at Lin Yuan with a smile. Discussing Chu Kuang under Luo Wei's nose all the time was bound to get him into trouble with the boss sooner or later.

Luo Wei curiously asked, "I don't quite get it, what does narrative trickery mean?"

Lin Yuan subconsciously wanted to show Luo Wei the comic he had just seen, but Jin Mu stopped him. The comic was a bit inappropriate.

Understanding the situation, Lin Yuan wrote a new dialogue on a piece of paper and handed it to Luo Wei.

Luo Wei read what Lin Yuan wrote:

[Little Bright, time to get up for school!]

[Mom, I don't want to go to school anymore, never ever...]

[Why?]

[I don't want to attend classes anymore!]

[But you're a teacher!]

Luo Wei chuckled, "Little Bright is actually a teacher. Isn't this just a text game? Like a brain teaser. I love brain teasers..."

"Almost."

Lin Yuan nodded. This is also the reason why orthodox mystery enthusiasts naturally resist narrative trickery. For this reason, Lin Yuan could fully understand why Leng Guang, a mystery writer online, resists narrative trickery so much.

The essence of this situation is just like Li Dan resisting puns.

“Is there more? It’s quite interesting.”

Luo Wei seemed to be interested in this so-called narrative trickery.

She represents another group—that is, the readers who enjoy the twists and turns brought by narrative trickery.

“Yes.”

Lin Yuan casually wrote another conversation.

He had just thought of it when he went to the bathroom.

[When I was young, my father always told me to shake after peeing. So every time after peeing, I would shake before leaving the toilet. I didn’t realize until later that only I shake after peeing, other girls use paper.]

Luo Wei giggled, then her face hardened, and she gave a light cough.

Did she just reveal something?

She hastily said, “It’s time to leave work, I’m off.”

Lin Yuan nodded.

Jin Mu raised his eyebrows, “So, is the boss’s new novel in this vein?”

Lin Yuan replied, “Yeah.”

Jin Mu said in a melancholy tone, “Readers are going to send you blades.”

Just reading these jokes made him feel like he was being tricked. What if they were expanded into a short detective story?

“Well, I am an old rascal.” Lin Yuan said indifferently.

Jin Mu chuckled. He rarely saw Lin Yuan showing such a mischievous side. He made it clear that he wanted to mess with the readers, and he even wrote several vulgar mini-stories about narrative trickery.

But it didn’t seem so bad.

Because as Lin Yuan’s agent, he sometimes felt that Lin Yuan was too rigid.

It was when he played mischiefs like this, he appeared to be a young man.

Thinking of this, Jin Mu stood up and said, “Then I’ll contact the blog first and register a blog account, and release the news while I’m at it.”

...

Releasing the news is a form of pre-publicity.

Ordinary authors don’t get this kind of privilege; There is always a review process, but the blog started a grand publicity as soon as they trust Chu Kuang’s capability, even before they got the story.

“Chu Kuang’s new short story is coming!”

To make the announcement more explosive, the blog emphasized:

“This will be Chu Kuang’s first attempt at a short detective story.”

When Lin Yuan saw the announcement, he hesitated just a little, and then refrained from making any corrections—

The “Dondon Bridge Collapse” he had customized with the system was quite long in length, close to the word count of a medium-length story.

However, short, medium, and long-length stories have no strict word count boundaries, so sometimes the definitions can be quite blurred.

I would also like to mention this.

The customization of “Dondon Bridge Collapse” only cost Lin Yuan a hundred thousand yuan.

The meaning of the system was to give a discount.

But Lin Yuan felt that the system was worried that readers would want to break his leg after reading “Dondon Bridge Collapse”.

The result.

Particularly, just one day before the blog released the news, the Tribe’s side exploded with activity!

“Chu Kuang’s new short story is going to be published on the blog?!”

“The blog is secretly poaching?!”

“Is Chu Kuang dissatisfied with our Tribe?”

“He actually betrayed the Tribe!”

“Saying he betrayed us might be too harsh. There was no contractual restriction in the first place. It’s Chu Kuang’s freedom to choose which platform he wants. The blog must have offered some incentives to get Chu Kuang. But it still feels frustrating...”

“...”

The Tribe's editors were frustrated.

Han Jimei, the chief editor of the Tribe Literature, was also frustrated.

She didn't expect the blog to be so adaptable.

Chu Kuang had helped the Tribe to beat the blog more than once.

But in return, the blog not only held no grudges but instead invited Chu Kuang over with an open heart!

This just goes to show that there's no fool in capital.

The blog understood this too. If they treated Chu Kuang as an enemy, they would be pushing Chu Kuang further towards the Tribe.

Looks like, in the future, they have to put more effort into getting closer to Chu Kuang.

Compared to the frustration of the Tribe.

The readers didn't care where Chu Kuang's new work was published.

As long as Chu Kuang was willing to release new work, that was enough.

Therefore.

As soon as Blog's promotion came out, it attracted many of Chu Kuang's readers.

This includes some readers who liked Chu Kuang because of "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd".

"It's rare that Chu Kuang, the old rascal, is willing to keep writing detective stories."

“Normally, the old rascal rarely repeats the same genre.”

“Mystery lovers send their congratulations!”

“A pity that it’s a short story this time.”

“Short detective stories are also fine. As long as it’s a mystery, that’s enough!”

“If Chu Kuang, the old rascal, keeps writing narrative trickery, I’m sure I can predict the murderer first and slap him in the face!”

“Once you have seen narrative trickery, you can figure out the author’s tricks.”

“I beg Chu Kuang to keep writing narrative trickery. I will wash away the shame of being deceived by ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’!”

“Come on, old rascal, as a reader, it’s time for me to have a detective duel with you!”

“...”

With the appearance of some new pieces of narrative trickery online, readers are now very confident. They believe they have figured out the patterns of narrative trickery completely.

For this reason, the readers were all calling for Chu Kuang to continue writing narrative trickery-style mysteries. They were even more certain that they could predict the murderer in advance.

That’s right.

They all want to slap Chu Kuang in the face!

But isn’t it a coincidence? Chu Kuang’s new work is indeed a narrative trickery-style mystery.

However, the official news didn't reveal this. Whether it was narrative trickery or not, the readers had to see for themselves.

Everything moved quickly on Lin Yuan's side.

Three days rest, he had adjusted the background of "Dondon Bridge Collapse," made some humorous settings, and published it on the blog.

That day was May 1st.

Chapter 334: Mr. Leng Guang is a Monkey

The mindset of the readers is a bit like watching a magic show during the Spring Festival...

The first time you see a magic trick, you're astonished.

Once you understand the trick behind it, you can't help but feel a bit underwhelmed, despite the initial shock.

They think they've completely figured it out.

If Chu Kuang were to write a similar novel (perform a similar magic trick), they're confident they could uncover the killer (reveal the trick)!

It's not just the readers who think this way.

Leng Guang, a well-known online critic who's publicly slammed narrative trickery in whodunit novels for being too cheeky, holds the same view!

"I will prove that so-called narrative trickery is nothing but a gimmick!"

With this belief in mind, Leng Guang clicked on Chu Kuang's newly released detective short story the moment it was published.

“During the upcoming Spring Festival, while I’m worrying about various things, an unexpected guest arrives at my house. He’s a young man who seems familiar, but I couldn’t remember where I’ve met him before. He calls himself C-jun.”

Like “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”.

This novel is also written in the first person “I”.

The “I” character is named Chu Kuang, a well-known writer who has written a number of detective stories.

“Made himself the protagonist?”

Leng Guang raised an eyebrow, intrigued.

He doesn’t know that the world-renowned detective novelist Queen names all his protagonists “Queen”.

One day.

A young author writes a detective novel, finds Chu Kuang, and challenges him:

“Can you guess the killer before the answer is revealed?”

Leng Guang raised his eyebrows again.

The straightforward style, detective writer Chu Kuang interpreting a detective novel.

It’s like a play within a play.

In this case, the killer couldn’t possibly be “me” because “I” am just a spectator outside of the mystery.

Thinking about it, even if Chu Kuang continued to write detective novels, he couldn't possibly stick with the setup that "I" am the culprit.

Let's continue reading.

The case described in the detective novel is not complex.

In the story, there are three groups of people.

They are the Leng Guang clan living in Dondon Village;

A group of university students visiting the village, among which one student is named Chu Kuang;

The last group consists of Carter and his dog, Maruko.

Leng Guang is speechless.

What the hell is all this?

Villagers of Dondon Village, the Leng Guang clan?

Leng Guang?

Using my name?

And the university student Chu Kuang?

Chu Kuang wrote himself into the novel?

So Chu Kuang could still be the murderer?

Even Carter is there.

Many big names in the detective writing circle appear in the novel, Chu Kuang is cheekily making fun of famous authors in the circle within his narrative.

Leng Guang wanted to complain but didn't know where to start...

Moreover, Leng Guang quickly dismissed the suspicion toward the character Chu Kuang in the novel.

Because Chu Kuang is the victim.

The description of Chu Kuang in the novel is appalling. It depicts him as a naughty boy who likes to do bad things and cause trouble, without any concept of right or wrong because of his young age.

As a result, this naughty boy Chu Kuang was pushed off Dondon Bridge.

If this novel wasn't written by Chu Kuang, Leng Guang would almost suspect that the author had a grudge against "Chu Kuang". That's some harsh character assassination.

The only connections between the two sides of the valley are Dondon Suspension Bridge and a log bridge, without any secret passages or similar.

At the end of the case, the author listed all the confirmed alibis.

Everyone's alibi is very detailed, as tidy as an incident report.

Carter is among those with an alibi.

"During these two and a half hours, that log bridge was in my and Maruko's (Carter's dog) sight. I can assert that no one crossed that bridge during that time."

Because Carter was contemplating life beside the bridge at that time, he saw everything.

The novel emphasizes one thing:

All these alibis and witness statements are accurate.

“Damn.”

After pondering for five minutes, Leng Guang suddenly slapped his thigh.

He seemed to have misunderstood something.

This novel, it doesn't seem to be of the narrative trickery style?

It seems Chu Kuang never stated that “The Fall from the Dondon Bridge” is a narrative trickery whodunit!

Everyone just assumed that Chu Kuang's new work would continue to follow the narrative trickery style.

Even he himself initially thought so.

Thinking of this, Leng Guang cracks a faint smile.

Narrative trickery is always a deceitful path, and Chu Kuang knows he should turn back.

In the novel, “Chu Kuang” ends up dead. Perhaps this metaphor was Chu Kuang's subtle hint that writing using narrative trickery feels like a “sin”?

Very well!

This is his confession!

Without narrative trickery, we could still be good friends.

Next, let me figure out who the murderer is!

Leng Guang quickly launched into the brainstorming mode of a detective fiction writer.

I have to say, this challenge is no easy feat.

Dondon Bridge has been partially destroyed; it can't even hold the weight of a small schoolchild, let alone an adult.

Also, we have Carter as a witness.

So how was the "Chu Kuang" killed?

Keep in mind; this novel even includes a detailed map of the crime scene, allowing readers to clearly see the specifics.

"It's him!"

After about half an hour of contemplation, Leng Guang suddenly guessed the murderer.

It's Chu Kuang's companion, a university student named Ah Rong.

He's the only one without an alibi!

Furthermore, Leng Guang also inferred the method of the crime.

"Did I guess correctly?"

Leng Guang hurriedly continued reading.

What dismayed Leng Guang was that "I" in the book also guessed the same answer.

But the young author said that Chu Kuang was wrong!

Not just wrong, but terribly wrong!

Because the real murderer is Leng Guang!

In other words, the chieftain of the Leng Guang clan!

“How is that possible!”

Leng Guang felt like he was thrown for a loop.

The “I” in the book was also confused, why was it Leng Guang?

The semi-destroyed Dondon Bridge can’t even hold a small child, how did Leng Guang get across?

Does Leng Guang know light kung fu?

And Carter testified that he didn’t see anyone crossing the bridge!

Does Leng Guang not only know light kung fu, but also how to become invisible?

Why didn’t I know that I was this amazing!?

Leng Guang thought this was a massive loophole!

However, the young author just lightly smiled and said: [Leng Guang is not a dwarf, nor is he a light kung fu master, let alone someone who can turn invisible. However, he could simply cross over to the other side using the one remaining cable. He did it skillfully and effortlessly.]

How could this be?

Leng Guang and the “I” in the book voiced out their indignation in unison.

“Impossible...”

Leng Guang was outright defiant, this didn't make sense!

Wait a minute.

Logic?

Leng Guang's expression suddenly changed again.

He had a bad premonition.

He seemed to have been played!

Right on cue, Leng Guang saw the real reason.

This reason nearly made Leng Guang smash his computer out of frustration.

The correct answer to this case is:

“Because Mr. Leng Guang is, in fact, an ape. The so-called Leng Guang clan is a group of apes living in Dondon Village.”

Narrative Trickery!

Disgusting!

Perver!

At this moment, Leng Guang just cursed out loud!

He wasn't blaming Chu Kuang for making him an ape, if anecdotes could carry ill intentions, Chu Kuang has directed a greater deal of it towards himself. He wrote himself as unflattering, even killed himself off in the book!

Compared to Chu Kuang's self-mockery, his own depiction wasn't too bad.

Leng Guang was cursing at the narrative trickery!

He'd been tricked!

He thought Chu Kuang wasn't using the narrative trickery this time, but it turned out that this novel was still deploying it, and it was ten thousand times worse than "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd"!

It was a downright insult to his intelligence!

Chapter 335: I Want to Duel with You

Leng Guang was losing it; through the computer screen, he seemed to feel intense malice coming from Chu Kuang!

To come up with the answer, Leng Guang's brain was racked for half an hour!

And yet, after all that thinking, a line in the novel goes-

"Leng Guang is a curly-haired baboon"?

In Leng Guang's mind, apes and curly-haired baboons are all part of the same species.

That's precisely what makes Narrative Trickery despicable!

As the reader, you can curse the author all you want, but you can't deny that the author's explanation is impeccable!

Carter's testimony goes:

No one was seen crossing the lone wooden bridge.

Indeed, no person had crossed the lone wooden bridge.

Leng Guang is an ape, a curly-haired baboon, he is not a person!

And as an ape, Leng Guang can easily reach the other side using a rope.

This is plausible, reasonable, and logical.

So cheap!

No wonder people call Chu Kuang an old rascal!

He really is an old rascal, and he emphasizes it shamelessly!

Moreover, even if Leng Guang wants to forcefully poke holes in the argument, the text provides explanations for everything:

“There is not a single line in the text that refers to the ape as a person, so there is no deception of the reader.”

“In addition, there are several hints in the book. Old Leng is seen gnawing on rice grains while naked children play around; these are all indications that they are apes, right?”

“The Leng clan regards outsiders as fierce beasts. Why? It hints at their relationship with humans, which is a human-animal relationship.”

“...”

Damn Narrative Trickery!

It is flawless!

This ending is too simple; it forms a huge pitfall, making any logical deductions pointless!

Leng Guang's frustration was growing.

But Leng Guang is certainly not a person.

He is a curly-haired baboon...

Coughs, just a joke.

Leng Guang is indeed not alone, as countless readers who have just finished reading "The Fall of the Dondon Bridge" in front of their computers were also going crazy!

"Chu Kuang, the old rascal, has a knack for disgusting his readers!"

"Whoa, Mr. Leng Guang is a monkey, God knows how bewildered I was when I read that line!"

"Narrative Trickery is just fooling the reader! I initially disagreed, but now I agree!"

"Chu Kuang is a serious mind game player!"

"What the hell, does this even qualify as detective fiction?"

"Leng Guang: I feel offended."

"Isn't Chu Kuang being a bit too harsh on Leng Guang? All Leng Guang did was criticize Narrative Trickery a bit."

"What's 'too harsh'? Did he describe himself as harshly as that? He's literally written himself to death in the book, making readers feel that he deserved it!"

“All right, I admit, I lost; Chu Kuang, this little rascal, really knows how to play!””

“When I started reading the latter half, I thought it was a serious detective novel and was earnestly guessing the answer. But then Chu Kuang pulls a fast one and gives us a brainteaser, completely twisting my old waist.”

“Unique and endlessly enjoyable.”

“Believe me, from this novel onwards, readers who love traditional detective fiction will probably label Chu Kuang as the heresy of the detective genre.”

“All right, so it’s Chu Kuang who is the real master of Narrative Trickery!”

“...”

A fact that the readers don’t want to admit but have to accept.

Despite being Narrative Trickery, the murderer is harder to guess than in “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”!

Some people managed to figure out the former, while the latter wiped out all the readers!

Not long ago, numerous readers were still boasting in the comments that no matter how Chu Kuang utilized Narrative Trickery, they could guess the answer...

But indeed, some readers just couldn’t hold themselves back, finding “The Fall of the Dondon Bridge” very boring, and cursed just like Leng Guang did.

At least for today, there were many people who empathized with Leng Guang.

The previous “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd” was just controversial.

This time, “The Fall of the Dondon Bridge” led to utter polarization!

Some people saw this as Chu Kuang's "cute work," a game playing on the blind spot of fast-paced brain tests with the readers.

Others thought that the novel was pure boredom, treating detective fiction like child's play.

...

Being a notorious critic in the detective genre, Leng Guang wasn't someone who could be fooled by Chu Kuang and just laugh it off.

As mentioned before.

He may not mind being a curly-haired baboon, but he couldn't accept this completely entertaining form of detective fiction!

That's why he lost his temper, and directly issued a long post on the Tribe platform:

"I tolerated 'The Murder of Roger Ackroyd,' where the murderer is the first-person narrative, but what the hell is this about an ape committing a crime? Is this some kind of ghostly narrative?"

"Incredible, an unacceptable form!"

"This is blasphemy against detective fiction. The arrangement of the case was already quite sophisticated; why result in such an entertaining solution?"

"This is a waste of talent and skills!"

"Even genius writers don't need to be this whimsical! If you truly understand detective fiction, please treat it seriously!"

"I, Leng Guang, hereby formally challenge you to a Literary Duel on detective fiction!"

"..."

Leng Guang was truly pissed, he actually wanted to engage in a Literary Duel with Chu Kuang!

A Literary Duel is a tradition in Yan Continent's literary circles.

Just as there is sparring in martial arts literature.

That would be a martial arts duel.

If there are martial arts duels, then there are Literary Duels.

And the literary world just happens to have such a thing as a "Literary Duel".

Especially in the literary circles of Blue Star's Yan Continent, writers of the same genre often engage in Literary Duels.

The Yan People admire this form of literary competition.

The idea that literature has no first and martial arts has no second is complete nonsense in the Yan People's concept.

If literary folks despise each other, then they must compete for supremacy!

This is why the Yan People appreciate the Literary Duel.

The form of the Literary Duel is also pretty simple, even somewhat childish; two authors release works of the same genre during the same period and let the public judge their superiority.

Such a form of Literary Duel also has a certain influence on Blue Star.

However, outside of Yan Continent, other regions aren't particularly fond of these literary jousts unless the two writers genuinely dislike each other and would initiate a Literary Duel.

Leng Guang is no Yan person, so he isn't keen on the tradition of the Literary Duel.

This time, Chu Kuang REALLY got under his skin, compelling him to challenge Chu Kuang to a duel!

It's not just about the polarization of the controversy anymore.

Previously, Leng Guang was just a critic, and he hadn't reached the point where he would duel against someone. But now, he's actually challenging Chu Kuang to a duel...

The literary circles were shocked, and the detective fiction lovers were a bit scared too!

Then, they all started cheering.

"Is he pissed now?"

"Hahaha, will Chu Kuang accept the challenge?"

"If Chu Kuang accepts, it will be interesting!"

"Literary Duels are a tradition in Yan Continent; their authors challenge anyone they're at odds with. Very few authors in other regions of Blue Star engage in Literary Duels. This must be Ol' Leng's first time doing this."

"Leng Guang is truly the pioneer of the anti-unreliable narrator!"

"Actually, I think Leng Guang is overreacting a bit. Don't forget that the author Chu Kuang in the book also scolded Narrative Trickery."

"I support Leng Guang!"

"Hey, don't even mention Leng Guang, I'm a diehard fan of the old rascal Chu Kuang, and now I too want to punch this old rascal in the chest!"

"Support the duel!"

“...”

It must be said.

Quite a few people support Leng Guang.

With Leng Guang issuing a challenge for a Literary Duel, everyone couldn't hold back their curiosity; will Chu Kuang accept the challenge?

Chapter 336: Forced Operation

Leng Guang seemed to have lost control.

Whether Chu Kuang would take up the combat or not was besides the point.

The performance data of this short story was still quite impressive. Although many readers had showered the story with curses in their reviews, the voting results for the short story showed many people were criticizing outwardly but appreciative inwardly—

An excellent first place!

The blog post of “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” occupied the first position for this month's new short stories on the blog. The data on the hot list was much higher than the second one, proving the story was quite readable.

Again.

The cleverness of the Narrative Trickery was evident in the reader's ambivalent feeling – being tricked but enjoying the farce at the same time. How would one describe it? Perhaps like the process of squeezing pimples in one's teenage years?

Painful yet satisfying.

Obviously, for a long time in the future, “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” would be Chu Kuang’s most controversial work. However, this incident helped Lin Yuan understand a simple truth: what was the method to deal with a controversy about one’s work?

The answer was quite simple.

Write something even more controversial!

However, Lin Yuan admitted that “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” was not serious enough and was more like a joke on the readers. It was totally unexpected that this joke would provoke Leng Guang.

In reality.

When adapting the story, Lin Yuan had purposefully involved Leng Guang as part of a joke, just as the original story had ensnared renowned figures from the mystery genre. Since the apes of this world did not know who Agatha Christie and Edgar Allan Poe were, Lin Yuan had named them after Blue Star’s mystery authors.

As for Chu Kuang dying in the story.

This was an adjustment in line with the original story. The author of the original story had also written himself as dead. Therefore, nobody needed to think that “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” was a representation of Narrative Trickery.

Want to refresh your eyes?

Turn left next door to “Malice.”

Even many senior mystery enthusiasts, who weren’t enthusiastic about Higashino Keigo, commented that “Malice” was a very excellent work, and even one of Higashino Keigo’s top five personal masterpieces.

“At least I got first place.”

Lin Yuan was very satisfied with the result, so he decided to ignore Leng Guang's duel invitation. Let things like Literary Duel go with the wind, as a challenged person had the right to refuse according to another rule of Literary Duel.

"You can actually accept it."

Jin Mu said with a smile, "The reason why Literary Duel is popular in Yan Continent is that this form is eye-catching enough. Many young writers often challenge their senior authors in the form of a Literary Duel. Under public scrutiny, if they win, they will become famous overnight. However, if the challenger and the challenged are in unequal positions, the seniors generally will not accept the duel. But Leng Guang is not a junior. Whether in mystery or in the entire field of novels, he is considered a senior. Beating him will greatly benefit you."

"What if I lose?"

Lin Yuan always believed in the word "stability."

Jin Mu smiled slightly. He did not think his boss would lose. Chu Kuang had always been victorious along the way, and Jin Mu was the only person who knew about the boss's three pseudonyms. Such a genius seemed invincible.

...

Lin Yuan thought he was safe by not accepting the fight.

After all, he had already won the first place, and the prize money was surely in his pocket.

However, what Lin Yuan didn't expect was that after a few days, as more and more readers finished reading "The Fall of Dondon Bridge", a dramatic scene unfolded!

He was surpassed by the runner-up!

Upon discovering this, Lin Yuan was dumbfounded, "What's going on?"

Jin Mu was also keeping an eye on this issue.

The reason was apparent without any investigation.

He said with a bitter smile on his face, “Isn’t it because of the disputes about the content of the story. Because some people think that the setting of the murderer in “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” is too childish, so now many mystery enthusiasts who don’t like this story are giving revenge votes for the second-place story.”

Lin Yuan:”...”

Is there such an operation?

In the past, it was he who always overtook others. This was the first time he was overtaken by someone else.

In fact, the runner-up author was also bewildered.

Originally, “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” was far ahead in first place, and there was no doubt that Chu Kuang would win the championship.

But out of nowhere, a bunch of people started to vote for him!

It wasn’t because they liked his story, but because they wanted to boost the votes of his story to pull down “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”!

“Am I being used? This is an insult to me – ha ha, no way. What’s wrong with being used?”

The second-place author had no intention of stopping readers from voting for him.

Didn’t the prize for first place taste good?

Plus, luck was also a kind of strength!

Chu Kuang infuriated the public, and he just happened to benefit from it.

An additional reason was that the second-place author was quite upset after reading “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”.

What to do if you’re upset?

Obviously, pull him off the horse!

There is no more relieving way than this!

These people were relieved.

But Lin Yuan began to get angry.

“I was tricked by the system. No good comes cheaply.”

No wonder the system told Lin Yuan to discount “The Fall of Dondon Bridge.”

In the end, the readers did not break Lin Yuan’s legs, but if he didn’t win the first prize, it would be worse than breaking his legs.

At least they could be set properly again, right?

Apparently, being an old rascal was not easy.

“I need to fix this.” Lin Yuan didn’t want to give up like that.

Jin Mu’s eyes flickered, “Actually, there is a way to remedy.”

Lin Yuan looked forward, “How?”

Jin Mu laughed, “After all, it’s because people think the Narrative Trickery is too cunning. Since some people feel your detective story is not reliable, or even feel that you only know this Narrative

Trickery mode, the boss can completely write a reliable detective story, the reason is ready-made—didn't Teacher Leng Guang issue a duel invitation?"

Round and round, it went back to the topic of the Literary Duel.

It seemed that this duel was unavoidable.

Why can't these people see the deep meaning of "The Fall of Dondon Bridge"?

What a profound work.

Lin Yuan was helpless, exasperatedly took out his phone, and logged into his Tribe account.

This wave.

This wave was forced.

Then Lin Yuan directly mentioned Leng Guang, fiercely uttering four words as if he were challenging someone to a fight:

"Time, place!"

This time, Lin Yuan did not plan to play with Narrative Trickery anymore. He decided to use Leng Guang's most admired traditional mystery, to fight a tough battle!

"..."

Jin Mu took out his phone, looked at Lin Yuan's status update, and said languidly, "What did you do?"

"A Literary Duel."

Lin Yuan was bewildered, wasn't it you who made me accept the fight?

Jin Mu held his forehead, “I understand all of that, but why did you challenge him with Xian Yu’s account...”

Lin Yuan quickly took out his phone and looked at it.

Indeed, he was using Xian Yu’s account to mention Leng Guang.

Lin Yuan was petrified on the spot.

He had made another blunder.

Chapter 337: Literary Duel

This was not the first time Lin Yuan had made such a blunder, he had messed up before with the couplets affair.

After that incident, Lin Yuan had become very careful.

One could not be too careless, one slip and it’s like dropping the ball.

Why did he slip up again this time?

The main reason revolves around Lin Yuan getting ahead of himself. Just thinking about his “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” forcibly ranked second by readers of the anti-unreliable narrator makes his heart fill with resentment.

As a result, when he logged into the tribe, he forgot to even check if the account was correct and started furiously challenging others.

“It’s over.”

So thought Lin Yuan.

Jin Mu, however, had already taken up his phone and started scrolling through the comments on Xian Yu's tribe page, he couldn't help but start laughing.

"Why are you laughing?" Lin Yuan asked, displeased.

"Read for yourself, boss," Jin Mu said, laughing even louder.

Lin Yuan was taken aback, then he understood what Jin Mu found so hilarious.

Because he logged into the wrong account and posted the wrong status, but in the eyes of netizens, there was absolutely no incongruity!

"Hahaha, Leng Guang pissed off Xian Yu even before pissing off Chu Kuang!"

"Public knowledge: if you don't give face to Chu Kuang, it means you don't give face to Xian Yu."

"Is Xian Yu going to replace Chu Kuang in the duel with Leng Guang?"

"It seems Xian Yu has a lot of confidence in his detective abilities."

"Xian Yu: No one can bully Chu Kuang on my watch!"

"Teacher Leng Guang must be dumbstruck, what does a composer have to do with all this fuss?"

"Remembering the couplets incident, I'm tearing up, Xian Yu is really standing up for Chu Kuang!"

"Chu Kuang also defends Xian Yu intensely."

"Overbearing CEO's little sweet wife?"

"Sure, I can really picture that."

“...”

Lin Yuan was rather taken aback.

Who would have thought that his account mix-up, in the eyes of netizens, was merely another display and testament of their friendship?

The relationship between Chu Kuang and Xian Yu has deep roots in people's hearts, no one even thought about the possibility that someone had made a blunder.

Even Lin Yuan would think there were no discrepancies in this scenario just from looking at the comments.

What a beautiful misunderstanding this has turned out to be.

Only that Leng Guang was somewhat puzzled after being mentioned.

Who is Xian Yu?

Forgive Leng Guang for being an extreme lover of detective stories, his world is filled with detective stories, but they must be traditional detective stories.

It's what he's most passionate about.

He can't even name a few popular stars.

Luckily, his fans in the comments section explained to him the relationship between Xian Yu and Chu Kuang.

“Good friends, huh?”

Leng Guang squinted his eyes, mentioned Xian Yu back and politely wrote: “So you mean, Chu Kuang is taking up the challenge?”

It couldn't be a case of offering to take a spear for him, could it?

Lin Yuan didn't dare to reply using Xian Yu's account this time, but switched to Chu Kuang's account, mentioned Leng Guang, replying with three words:

"I accept."

Leng Guang became serious: "In the next detective work piece, we will see who is the superior one!"

He wanted to defend the glory of traditional detective stories!

Narrative Trickery was blasphemy!

What Leng Guang absolutely could not have imagined was that Lin Yuan did not plan to continue writing a narrative trickery style detective story in his next work.

The experience with "The Fall of Dondon Bridge" made Lin Yuan realize that sometimes overdoing it is not a good thing.

At a time when the narrative trickery is not fully developing, writing such novel might be a bit presumptuous ideologically.

...

With Chu Kuang's response, the comments section became lively again, of course, it was inevitable there would be some teasing about Xian Yu:

"Seems like he was forced to agree?"

"Chu Kuang: There's no helping it, Xian Yu already accepted in advance, I can't let my brother lose face."

“I suspect that Xian Yu must have agreed to it first, forcing Chu Kuang to comply. Otherwise, why didn’t Chu Kuang respond directly, but instead waited for Xian Yu to speak up?”

“I smell some gay bromance.”

“I suggest that we get another one like ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’!”

The change in tone comes just in time.

Compared to pinky jokes, a Literary Duel is definitely more exciting.

Yan Continent has got some tricks up its sleeve, knowing what the masses want, hence the format of the Literary Duel.

Some people believe that there should be more Literary Duels!

They’re exciting enough!

Some Internet users are eagerly waiting for Yan Continent to join the merger, so that the format of the Literary Duel will become popular.

After all, the literati from Yan Continent possess an inherent “warrior gene”!

“The ending of ‘The Heiress Falling From Dondon Bridge’ is just too tricky. It’s not like the previous narrative trickery, which was full of subversions!”

“Yes, narrative trickery can be a word play, but ultimately, it should be based on reasoning.”

“Let the narrative trickery come more violently! No more narrative ghosts!”

“...”

According to these netizens, ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’ represents narrative trickery.

And ‘The Heiress Falling From Dondon Bridge’ can only be termed as narrative ghost.

Things are really heating up now.

The whole world of detective fiction is watching closely!

“Leng Guang vs Chu Kuang... It’s been a while since we saw such a high-profile Literary Duel!”

“Why not Chu Kuang vs Leng Guang... If Chu Kuang can produce another work at the level of ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’, he has a high chance of winning!”

One is the backbone of the detective fiction realm, a truly senior detective writer.

The other is a rising talent in the detective world, a genius newbie who can handle any subject matter.

To those inside the circle, this Literary Duel seems more like a battle between tradition and narrative trickery!

That’s the beauty of keeping it under wraps in advance.

While reading ‘The Heiress Falling From Dondon Bridge’, readers were initially misled into thinking it was traditional detective fiction, until the end when it was revealed that Chu Kuang was still playing with narrative trickery.

And now, everyone is expecting Chu Kuang’s new work to pit narrative trickery against Leng Guang.

Few people would think that Chu Kuang is planning to play with traditional detective fiction this time!

Also known as orthodox detective fiction!

When people open Chu Kuang's traditional detective fiction expecting narrative trickery, they'll certainly be confused for a while, and the surprise when it all comes together will be even bigger.

You think I'm doing narrative trickery when I'm actually doing orthodox, you think I'm doing orthodox when I'm actually doing narrative trickery.

In fact, the opening style of many detective novels on Earth is like this.

Without reading to the end, you can't guess whether or not they've used narrative trickery.

Such a spectacle is something even the media wouldn't want to miss.

Not long after Chu Kuang's response, news started reporting the start of this Literary Duel.

[Leng Guang initiates Literary Duel, Chu Kuang fights back!]

[Showdown between masters in the detective literature field, who do you favor more?]

[Narrative trickery and tradition, new vs. old – who will take the King's Path?]

[Chu Kuang accepts Leng Guang's Literary Duel invitation, backed by his best buddy Xian Yu!]

[Leng Guang and Chu Kuang kick off detective duel, Literary Duel attracts wide attention inside and outside the circle!]

Some netizens have nicknamed it "The encounter between the big mouth and the old rascal who likes to tease the reader".

It's really lively!

On many novel forums, netizens have started discussions, arguing constantly about who will win the Literary Duel between Leng Guang and Chu Kuang!

At this moment,

Lin Yuan began to ponder which work to use for the duel. This time, Lin Yuan dared not let the system randomize it, he needed to choose a piece he could have full confidence in!

His choices had narrowed down.

Poirot!

Or perhaps...

Sherlock Holmes!

Chapter 338: Murder on the Orient Express

In a literary duel, Lin Yuan is inclined to write about those works that he feels most confident. He sees high chances of winning with both the Hercule Poirot series and the Sherlock Holmes series, hence the indecisiveness between the two most legendary detectives in the history of crime fiction —

“Let’s go with Poirot.”

Lin Yuan finally made a decision.

The reason he declined to use Sherlock Holmes was simple.

Because the origin of Narrative Trickery is “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”. Poirot was the detective unraveling this case, and it was from this novel that Leng Guang had become the pioneer of anti-unreliable narrators; therefore it seemed most fitting to let Poirot win this literary duel.

What began with Poirot should also end with Poirot.

It adds a sense of ceremonial completion.

If he were to use Sherlock Holmes instead, it would seem as if Sherlock was stepping in just to clean up Poirot's mess.

Lin Yuan holds both these characters in equal esteem, hence he wouldn't favor one over the other unjustifiably.

"Boss, you need to be careful."

Concerned that Lin Yuan might disregard this literary duel, Jin Mu specifically introduced him to Leng Guang's works:

"Leng Guang isn't considered the top-tier detective novelist, but most of his works have received high praises. Calling him a first-rate detective novelist is not an exaggeration..."

"I know."

Lin Yuan does take this seriously.

He specifically requested a set of information from the System.

As it does not involve any specific content, the System did not charge any fee for it.

This set of information includes a complete list of all cases that Poirot has solved.

Poirot has solved many cases.

Among his most famous are "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd", "The ABC Murders", "Murder on the Orient Express", "Death on the Nile", "Evil Under the Sun" and so on.

Lin Yuan plans to choose one from these classic Poirot stories for the impending literary duel.

This time, he needs to make use of precision tailoring.

“Among all of Hercule Poirot’s cases, ‘Murder on the Orient Express’ is an absolute masterpiece worth mentioning. This work tells the story of an intricate game between human morals and the rule of law. It also initiated the plot scheme of a collaborative murder...”

“There is also ‘Death on the Nile’, which is also one of the best works by Agatha Christie. This book has been adapted into countless film adaptations and TV series, probably owing to the gripping romance element in the plot?”

“On the other hand, the storyline in ‘The ABC Murders’ is relatively simple and straightforward compared to the other two. The main focus is on the psychological analysis and portrayal of characters, with the serial killer’s predictive murder pattern standing out as a highlight.”

“‘Evil Under the Sun’ could be an option too. But it follows a predictable plot pattern. A wealthy and powerful victim who is despised by everyone on an isolated island where everyone has motive and appears suspicious. Plus, the murder scene in a cold, secluded cave is similar to ‘Death on the Nile’. It could be an option if ‘Death on the Nile’ is not available, but not a priority.”

“...”

After much hesitation and careful consideration.

Lin Yuan finally made a decision.

His choice was: “Murder on the Orient Express”!

Undoubtedly, this piece is a widely recognized masterpiece!

If a ranking were to be given to all of Poirot’s cases, 80% of readers will put ‘Murder on the Orient Express’ at the top of the list!

Rumor has it that it was the first Agatha Christie novel many people read?

There’s no exact data to back this up, but anyway, Lin Yuan has his own reasons for choosing this work!

“The pioneer of the collaborative murder scheme that proliferated inspiration in many authors and a work that left the readers astounded at the grand reveal of an entire cast of villains.”

Oh no, I stand corrected.

They should be described as an entire cast of good guys.

Being a fan of locked-room murder mysteries and trains, a locked-room murder case taking place on a train is particularly tempting.

The usual crime scenario is:

Only one amongst many is the perpetrator.

But in this case, it so happens:

Only one amongst thirteen people is innocent!

This introduces a sense of contention in the post-apocalyptic world:

If the law fails to deliver their version of justice, can they resort to their murder ritual in punishing the perpetrator, who also happens to be a most heinous criminal walking free?

All twelve people are murderers.

This displays a contradiction between morality and legality.

Another reason for the fame of this work is probably Poirot wavering on this very principle.

He finally made a decision.

Those were his words after discovering the truth: “Now that I have given you the answer, please allow me the honour of exiting this case...”

Poirot's withdrawal is the greatest kindness he could offer.

From this story onward, Poirot is no longer a cold-blooded crime-solving machine, representing absolute law, but rather, a human being full of warmth and affection.

In fact, as we often hear in "Detective Conan":

There is only one truth.

Yet in this instance, Poirot chose to abandon this belief and for the sake of empathy, provided two choices for everyone, even at the expense of neglecting his duty.

With a compassionate approach towards justice, Poirot became the true detective in many hearts.

"They seem unable to escape controversy?"

Lin Yuan was partly worried that choosing "Murder on the Orient Express" might result in fresh controversies:

When the law fails to uphold justice, can people take it upon themselves to punish criminals who evade legal punishment?

Poirot's decision, which some people may see as compassionate, might seem like condoning criminals to others.

"That's probably not the case."

On second thought, Lin Yuan thought he might be thinking too much.

Every writer inevitably faces controversies to some extent.

Even though some people may not agree with the ideology conveyed in “Murder on the Orient Express”, those people certainly represent a minority. Lin Yuan believes that many more people will understand Poirot, and even grow to admire him.

As stated earlier, the most explosive part about Poirot in “Murder on the Orient Express”:

Is when he chooses to acquit murderers!

This is probably the only case among all of Poirot’s cases where he let go of the murderers. And he spared not just one or two, but a whopping twelve people!

Coincidentally,

Another great detective, Sherlock Holmes, also made the decision to let criminals go once.

However, considering the impact of the scenario, the final scene of “Murder on the Orient Express” is the most thrilling.

But of course, only those mystery enthusiasts who advocate Poirot’s approach will find it exciting.

Next, he had to work on a careful adaption.

With different character stories and backgrounds, the amount of adaption Lin Yuan needs to implement this time is substantial.

Fortunately, as long as the core story remains the same, everything will be fine.

This is a story about revenge, the motive for killing is key; the characters’ identities are secondary.

Actually,

Another reason for choosing “Murder on the Orient Express” is that Lin Yuan wants to build Poirot’s brand recognition!

With the release of “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”, readers are already familiar with Poirot.

With the addition of a deeper character development of Poirot in “Murder on the Orient Express”, Lin Yuan believes that Poirot’s popularity will definitely explode!

Keep in mind.

This case is not only one of the peaks in Poirot’s life but also one of Agatha Christie’s personal best!

Agatha Christie wrote numerous detective novels during her lifetime. Posthumously, people always enjoy ranking her works.

The majority will leave the first position for “No One Survived”.

There are, however, occasional divergences.

The difference lies in the fact that some readers believe that “Murder on the Orient Express” is Agatha Christie’s best work!

This debate will not be discussed in the book for now.

It is a fact that majority of readers agree on, that “Murder on the Orient Express” ranks among the top three in all of Agatha Christie’s works.

There is no controversy about that.

Chapter 339: Two Kinds of Choices

After all, Leng Guang and Chu Kuang are not Yan People.

They didn’t set many standards for the Literary Duel, just through the dialogues in the Tribe, in front of netizens, they simply defaulted their next works as a duel —

This allowed them both plenty of time to prepare their works.

Upon deciding to write “Murder on the Orient Express”, Lin Yuan spent his following days engrossed in the task.

An introduction to the beginning.

In a frozen, snowy world, a train is traveling, and our protagonist, Poirot, happens to be on this train.

Yes, he’s really Poirot instead of Conan.

Anyway, a murder happened.

The victim was a passenger, stabbed to death inside his own compartment.

At the same time, due to a heavy snowfall, the train was forced to stop.

There was nowhere to go in this deserted place.

The police officers and the train’s doctor were forced to center their investigation around the famous detective Poirot in the train compartment!

Only by finding the killer and solving the case could they ensure the safety of the remaining passengers.

This is the so-called locked-room murder in traditional detective novels!

Due to the blocked route caused by a heavy snowfall, the train stranded in the frozen wilderness served as the classic locked-room murder environment.

It’s a classic, a staple, never fading.

In just Conan alone, countless locked-room murder cases have occurred.

Then Poirot began investigating, talking to each of the passengers and gradually learning the identity of the victim.

The victim did not seem like a good person.

He sat on the train, constantly fearful that he would get shot from who knows where, which showed how much of a detested fellow he was.

Possibly due to having too many enemies, the victim had once talked to Poirot before his death, hoping that the famous detective would protect him.

Poirot declined.

He was a detective, not responsible for protecting others.

More importantly, Poirot did not like this man with a somewhat cold look in his eyes.

However, Poirot did not expect this man to actually die.

So, Poirot had to investigate the truth as a detective.

After learning the identity of the victim, Poirot discovered a shocking fact:

There were more than ten passengers on the train, all related to a kidnapping case participated by the victim!

So their testimonies were all false!

Because they all participated in the murder!

The entire case was them cooperating to cover-up their own crimes!

Then more truth came to light:

The victim was once a kidnapper, who after brutally killing a little girl, bribed his way to freedom.

The little girl's mother was pregnant at the time, but gave birth prematurely ending with a stillborn and subsequently died of illness.

The little girl's father died of depression.

The nanny of the girl's family was suspected of having severe doubts and committed suicide under interrogation.

So, the truth behind the case was shocking:

Apart from Poirot, everyone else on the train, including chairman of the train company, the medical examiner, and the train's crew, a total of twelve people were all murderers!

They all knew the tragic family and were greatly indebted to them, so when they saw the perpetrator escape the heavy responsibility of the law, they decided to take matters into their own hands and kill him.

After understanding the whole story, detective Poirot revealed two possibilities for the case resolution.

Those who have read the Poirot series know that Poirot likes to give several possible ideas when unveiling the truth at the end, but the correct one is usually the last one.

It was the same this time.

The first idea Poirot proposed was (not verbatim):

“The killer boarded midway, ran off after the killing, could be the mafia or something, had business conflicts with the victim. This explanation is based on believing the testimonies of these twelve people.”

The testimonies of these twelve people could provide each other with alibis.

Almost no one could guess that all twelve people were the killers!

However, this theory is obviously flawed, and the train's doctor disputed it strongly.

Poirot explained the specific flaws in the book.

Then Poirot proposed the second possibility, an astonishing possibility:

All twelve passengers were murderers; they each stabbed the victim once and created what seemed like an unsolvable case by providing each other with alibis.

Though it seemed absurd, the killers admitted to it.

The twelve people painfully recalled the tragic event of that year.

The novel also contained textual descriptions of it.

It was generally about living in immense pain after the tragic death of their benefactor's family, where the law could no longer help them, so they chose to fight back.

At this point.

Poirot asked the man in charge of the train which answer he would accept?

The person in charge chose the first one, that is, the wrong answer.

The doctor followed on saying that he would provide some medical assistance.

Because only the first explanation could help the twelve murderers escape charges and suspicion.

But the details did not match.

So, the doctor hinted that he would provide some medical help.

Poirot never said which possibility was correct from beginning to end.

He only said, I provide two possibilities, you choose.

That is, you choose whether to hide the truth for these twelve people or expose their crimes.

The train's person in charge and the doctor both chose to hide the truth.

Poirot, too, seemed to think the same way, otherwise, given his disposition, he wouldn't have offered them a choice—

He decided to withdraw from this murder case as a detective.

It had a rather open-ended feel to it.

The ending did not explicitly state the outcome for the twelve murderers.

However, there's an easter egg in one of Agatha Christie's other novels, "A Date with Death".

It explicitly mentioned that Poirot did not expose the twelve people.

The specific plot was the suspect's wife (who was also one of the suspects) said to Poirot:

"I know you let the murderers go in the case of the Orient Express, allowing them to punish that heinous person. Can't you do the same this time?"

Poirot asked, "How did you know about the Orient Express case? Not this time, these two cases are different."

Something like that.

On the Orient Express, Poirot did indeed let the murderers go.

As for the cooperative murder model that “Murder on the Orient Express” started, although its influence is not as strong as Narrative Trickery—

The Narrative Trickery writing method has sustained Neon mystery novels for many years—

It has indeed pioneered very classic cases.

After this novel came out, many detective novels began to use the cooperative murder model, drawing inspiration from here.

Agatha Christie is the mother of many models.

If people have read similar models, reading her books might not cause a big shock. But if it’s the first exposure, the shock is actually very tremendous!

Especially the Narrative Trickery and closed circle of suspects models!

Now that Narrative Trickery is out, but the closed circle of suspects as a major plot device, has not yet been released by Lin Yuan.

Anyway, at this point, Lin Yuan had completed the adjustment and modification of the character backgrounds in “Murder on the Orient Express”.

What comes next is the formal writing.

Chapter 340: Hachiko

Writing from scratch is actually easier than adapting a work.

At Lin Yuan’s speed, it wouldn’t take more than a few days to finish “Murder on the Orient Express”.

However, he is not in a hurry to publish, so he is not rushing to wrap it up either.

Isn't there a rule in many films?

The rule is called 'the one who moves first, loses'!

Since Leng Guang challenged him to a Literary Duel, Lin Yuan would wait for Leng Guang to make the first move, and then chuck "Murder on the Orient Express" into the ring.

This is what you call a defensive counterattack strategy.

Because he is not in a rush, Lin Yuan's life rhythm is leisurely and unhurried.

During his breaks from writing, he even managed to squeeze in a meal with Sun Yaohuo.

The location was a new restaurant that Sun Yaohuo had just opened.

Apparently, because his hot pot businesses were booming, Sun Yaohuo had started dabbling in other types of cuisines.

The place where he had invited Lin Yuan to dinner today was his newly opened Qi-style restaurant.

Lin Yuan used to live in Qi Province, so its flavors were not foreign to him.

But after returning to Qin land, he hasn't tasted anything similar in a while and somewhat missed it.

Today, eating the flavors of Qi at Sun Yaohuo's restaurant, Lin Yuan was very happy.

It seems that Senior Yao Huo is opening more and more restaurants.

There were a few others with them, namely Jiang Kui, Xue Liang, and Feng Shuo.

So this meal could be considered as Jiang Kui and Sun Yaohuo inviting Lin Yuan and his apprentices.

It's just that Sun Yaohuo happened to have opened a new restaurant, so they chose this place.

The purpose, of course, was to thank Lin Yuan and his apprentices for writing songs for them.

The meal for five was lively.

Everyone was young so they didn't hold back, becoming well-acquainted very quickly, conversing animatedly.

"Now that I have this Qi-style restaurant, I plan to open a Chu-style one next. Now that Qin, Qi, and Chu are unified, everyone has a keen interest in each other's culinary styles. That's the market for you. As interactions increase in the future, I think restaurants offering different styles of cuisines will attract more customers."

Sun Yaohuo enthusiastically discussed his plans for the food industry.

Always a man of few words, Lin Yuan picked out his favorite dishes and tucked in.

Suddenly, Lin Yuan's hand trembled.

While eating a lobster, his hand got pricked by a sharp part of the lobster, and it started to bleed slightly.

"Are you okay?"

Concerned, Sun Yaohuo got up: "Junior, do you need to go to the hospital?"

Xue Liang and Feng Shuo were stunned.

Not because Lin Yuan got hurt, but because of Sun Yaohuo's words.

They need to go to the hospital?

So that a doctor can put a Band-Aid on it?

Would a doctor get excited and remark, “Lucky you brought him in time, otherwise, the wound might have healed itself?”

Jiang Kui, however, was not surprised.

This was typical of Sun Yaohuo.

Of course, Lin Yuan wasn’t so delicate to need hospital care. He casually replied that it wasn’t necessary, sucked on his injured finger a bit, then continued to tackle the almost glowing red lobster in front of him.

“As long as you’re okay...”

It seemed like Sun Yaohuo sighed in relief, and remarked: “Junior, you sure are a tough guy!!”

Tough...tough guy?

This time not only were Xue Liang and Feng Shuo dumbfounded, even Jiang Kui looked rather impressed. It was indeed fascinating.

A little finger injury and now he’s a tough guy? Or was this just an excuse to suck up?

...

This was just an anecdote from everyday life.

In less than a week, Lin Yuan completed “Murder on the Orient Express”. But since Leng Guang hadn’t made a move yet, he didn’t rush to publish it.

If the enemy doesn't move, I don't move.

But he should do something, right?

Perhaps because Lin Yuan had been quite idle lately, he took the initiative to add more burdens to himself. And then, he thought about filming a new movie—

Not “Life of Pi”.

The preparation for this movie takes too long, it can only be shot next year.

So, according to Lin Yuan's previous plan, in fact, when he drew “Life of Pi”, he had already made a decision:

First, choose a less tricky film to shoot.

“System, I want to customize a healing movie.”

Healing films mostly have a warm tone and are relatively easy to shoot.

System: “Customizing for you now, will the host confirm the customization of the movie ‘Hachiko’...”

Lin Yuan paused for a moment: “You call this a healing movie?”

Taking advantage of my poor memory?

Even if my memory is not good, I know this movie is extremely sad!

The system explained: “It is a depressing film customized according to the host's request.”

Lin Yuan: “???”

Does the system think it is funny?

He rolled his eyes, wanting to switch to another customization, but the system suddenly reminded Lin Yuan:

“It has been detected that the host has exceeded the time limit for the discipleship task. The character card for Yang Zhongming should be confiscated. However, considering the host’s good progress in completing the task and it’s the first time to exceed the time limit, the host can get a chance to remedy this. This opportunity is to shoot ‘Hachiko’...”

Lin Yuan was startled.

The discipleship task really did exceed the time limit, huh?

He thought he could muddle through this, but he didn’t expect the system to exchange the task remedy for making him shoot “Hachiko”.

The character card for Yang Zhongming is too important.

Lin Yuan definitely can’t bear to give it up.

Since it’s already come to this, why not give it a try?

Lin Yuan suddenly felt the guidance of this system was quite interesting.

The first film Lin Yuan made was the nonsensical “Flirting Scholar”, which was a film that could make people laugh out loud.

Now, the system has customized “Hachiko” for Lin Yuan. The goal is obvious:

It wants to make the audience cry!

It can make you laugh, it can make you cry...

The demonstration of screenwriting skills is probably here, it's just that the system also has a bit of a wicked sense of humor.

It made people laugh, and now it wants to make them cry.

Yes.

If there is a movie that can make the audience sob after watching, "Hachiko" definitely tops the list!

Even those who haven't seen this movie have heard how tear-jerking "Hachiko" is!

"Customize it."

Lin Yuan decided not to haggle anymore.

The system's voice was as steady as usual: "The script for 'Hachiko' has been customized."

This story has two versions.

The Neon version came first, because the script of this movie was adapted from Neon's real story and received good reviews.

The American version came later and also received good reviews.

Lin Yuan prefers the American version of the script because it's more human.

It's probably because in the American version, it's not a person adopting a dog, but fate bringing them together.

The thing about someone gifting the dog in the Japanese version was somewhat lacking.

For instance, the Japanese version mentions multiple times that Hachiko is a purebred.

While the American version only mentions once what breed the dog is, and doesn't say whether it's purebred or not.

It seems like the Japanese version places importance on Hachiko being a purebred dog, seeing it as noble and therefore worth raising.

But the American version doesn't care about the dog's background at all, which is pretty nice.

There are many such minor differences between the two versions.

If you have to describe them, you could say the Neon version is more realistic, while the American version is more like a fairy tale.

People probably prefer fairy tales, even though this fairy tale is destined to be sad.