

## Iyashikei 181

### Chapter 181:

Han Fei opened his eyes to pitch black darkness. The smell of disinfectant lingered in the air. Small pills scattered the ground around him. 'Am I inside the infirmary's cupboard?' Han Fei remembered this very scene from Jin Sheng's Exercise Book. His hands searched in the dark and slowly eased the cupboard doors open. The dim light showered on Han Fei's face. It was like a grey fog had infiltrated the world outside the cupboard, lowering his visibility. Crawling out from the cupboard, Han Fei did not dare to move too recklessly. He checked his status before he did anything else. The exit button was greyed out and the character id showed that he was in a unique state.

'The very same thing happened when I did the manager mission last time. This means that I am probably inside Jin Sheng's memory.' There was no death penalty when one died in the middle of manager mission but each death would cause the player to lose their memory until eventually they forgot about themselves. Han Fei did not plan to challenge the manager mission so soon but he had no other choice. Ma Manjiang was right on his tail, if he hesitated a second longer, he'd be dead by now.

'I need to be more careful this time.' Uttering a small sigh, Han Fei shattered the cup on the table. He used the shard to carve out his name on his arm. He gritted his teeth from the pain and his eyes darkened. 'Remember the pain, remember why I'm doing this. Hopefully I can clear this mission without any death.'

Han Fei looked around the infirmary, the clock was stuck at 1.05 am. This time was exceptionally meaningful to Jin Sheng, it was a time that he would never forget. Closing the cupboard doors, Han Fei scoured the infirmary. Based on his previous experience, Han Fei knew that he could not stay at a place for too long. After a quick search, Han Fei came to the infirmary door. When he put his hand on the door, the robotic voice said, "Notification for Player 0000! You need to find Jin Sheng at this school!"

Each manager mission was different. The Happiness Neighbourhood's manager mission required Han Fei to kill all the ghosts and save all the humans, but at Yi Ming Private Academy, the mission only required Han Fei to locate Jin Sheng. 'This mission sounds deceptively simple...'

Pulling the door handle, Han Fei jumped back into the room once the door opened. The previous manager mission had left a lasting impact on Han Fei. Any kind of ghost could be hiding behind every door, any of his steps could be his very last.

The light grey fog rolled into the room. Children singing drifted down the corridor as well. Han Fei poked his head out and looked down the corridor. Yi Ming Private Academy in Jin Sheng's memory was similar to the school in real life, the only noticeable difference was the ever-present grey fog. The boy's world was submerged in a layer of fog, the fog was odourless but Han Fei found them to be strangely suffocating.

'Jin Sheng lives in such constant suffocating pressure?' The moment Han Fei stepped out from the infirmary, he heard the footsteps. Han Fei turned towards the sound and a man about 3 metres was walking down from one side of the corridor. Instead of eyes, the man had 2 smaller mouths inside the ocular sockets. His bare stomach was split open in a big gap and it had many faces inside it. They were the faces of the same person but they wore different expressions. Some of them had genial smiles; others were dominated by madness and hatred. However, the thing that alarmed Han Fei the most was the butterfly that settled around the monster's heart. The bright blue of the butterfly was a stark contrast to the overall greyness of the world.

'Ma Manjiang!' When the manager mission was triggered, Han Fei saw clearly the blue butterfly fly out from Ma Manjiang's body. The butterfly appeared to have entered Jin Sheng's memory world by following Han Fei. Cold sweat covered Han Fei's face and the pressure pressed down on him further. Now he not only had to deal with the ghosts inside the mission, he needed to be cautious of that blue butterfly.

'A monster with many faces, this should be how Jin Sheng envision Ma Manjiang.' Han Fei had no idea why Ma Manjiang took on this specific monstrous appearance in Jin Sheng's memory. However, he was certain the butterfly had followed him into Jin Sheng's memory and had attached itself to this world's version of Ma Manjiang.

There were two outsiders in Jin Sheng's memory world? This introduced plenty of extenuating factors in this manager mission.

'The monster is moving too fast for a normal shambling ghost. He's clearly coming towards the infirmary. I bet the butterfly is controlling it, it probably wants to kill me while we're inside Jin Sheng's memory!' There was no death penalty in a manager mission but multiple deaths would make the player forget everything and they'd be trapped inside the memory world forever. When Han Fei discovered Ma Manjiang, the monster spotted Han Fei as well. He reached into its stomach to pull out a grimacing face. He pasted the face around his chest and then charged at Han Fei like a mad bull!

'The same rules should apply to all the outsiders here. If I can somehow kill Ma Manjiang here, the blue butterfly's memory will be impacted as well.' Ma Manjiang was the scariest presence in Jin Sheng's

memory, the blue butterfly had all the advantages it could have but Han Fei would not give up so easily. 'I won't win the butterfly in hand to hand combat. The thing is like a tank.' Han Fei's gaze chilled, this night would be the most dangerous night he had even spent in the game. Without the protection of the previous building manager and the help of his neighbours, Han Fei had to face this butterfly alone!

Ma Manjiang went down on all fours like a beast. He crawled down the corridor with impossible speed, closing the distance between himself and Han Fei.

'I'll surely die if I face it head on. To have even a chance, I'll need to rely on the other ghosts in Jin Sheng's memory!' Manipulating his enemies to turn against each other was something Han Fei was familiar with. Without wasting time, he turned down the other side of the corridor, the side where the children singing came from. Han Fei raced down the corridor and only stopped when he reached the source of the singing. He kicked the classroom door open. Inside the small classroom, a few students without ears were singing some kind of strange tune.

Han Fei had no time to figure out why the other students look this way in Jin Sheng's mind. He yelled into the classroom, "A monster's coming!"

The students turned towards Han Fei. Their eye sockets were bleeding and their eyes were missing. The monster was approaching but the students did not heed Han Fei's warning at all, if anything, they continued to sing their strange song merrily. Han Fei had no choice but to abandon them and continued his escape. When the monster passed the classroom with the singing students, he paused for a moment. He tore down the maddened face from his chest and then pulled out a kind face to replace it. When the students saw Ma Manjiang, they did not show fear, instead they moved to follow behind Ma Manjiang to chase after Han Fei!

'Have these students lost their mind?!'

Han Fei ran for his life. It dawned on him why the other students looked the way they did. They had no ears because they would not hear Jin Sheng's warnings. They had no eyes because they could not see the plain truths exposed before them. They were tricked by Ma Manjiang and became the monster's accomplices.

'The whole school is smothered in a grey fog and everyone is turned into monsters. Is this the despair Jin Sheng once felt? Regardless, I need to find a way forward to cut through this haze of despair!'

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At this foggy school, no one was willing to believe Jin Sheng, in the boy's memory, they were all monsters. When everyone around him became ugly monsters and they were the majority, those who were not monsters would appear so out of place. They might even choose to voluntarily assimilate into the ranks of the monster for the sake of self-preservation.

Han Fei raced down the corridor. Ma Manjiang who was 3 metres tall chased after him like a beast and close behind him were the students with no eyes. The students technically had no idea what was happening, they were quite literally blindly following behind Ma Manjiang, because the teacher was always right.

Everyone at the school was twisted in Jin Sheng's memory. The place looked like a normal school with a simple and idyllic shell, who would have thought something so disgusting and horrifying would be lurking within. The dim corridor appeared to stretch indefinitely. Han Fei could hear Ma Manjiang catching up to him. Han Fei was slower, weaker and smaller than Ma Manjiang, this was exactly how Jin Sheng would have felt back then. 'Is there really an exit around here?'

Han Fei still carried a bit of hope at the start of the mission but now, after having a taste of Jin Sheng's experience, despair started to grow in his heart like wild grasses. He was helpless on his own and he could find no ally in the people around him. None of the students he met was willing to believe him, if anything, they all turned against him by helping Ma Manjiang. As Han Fei made his desperate escape, the more people he met, the greater the hatred was directed his way. Everyone wanted him to perish away silently, just how despairing that must have been?

Turning to look behind him, the two mouths in Ma Manjiang's eye sockets yawned large. They could not wait to consume their meal. The distance between them was getting closer and closer. If Han Fei did not find a solution soon, he'd be caught up and bitten into pieces.

'Ma Manjiang has absolute power of authority at the school. This bastard is an expert at disguise and manipulation, he has used his many different faces to swindle everyone at school. To get the other students and staff's help, I will need to first expose Ma Manjiang for the true monster that he is!' Han Fei turned back around. He believed that once he stopped, he would be killed. He would not even have the chance to struggle, the power level difference between them was too big.

Inside the isolated school, a new transfer who was ostracized and hated aimed to expose a well-loved and well-respected teacher, who also happened to be the biological son of the school's headmaster. How was he supposed to accomplish that?!

Han Fei was not given much time to solve that conundrum. This was not a fair battle, it was a one-sided onslaught.

'If no one at this school is willing to believe Jin Sheng, then there wouldn't be 4 victims in the Case of the Foretold Murders. In other words, at least 3 other people were willing to trust Jin Sheng at this school and they ultimately sided with him.' Han Fei pulled up the memory of the 3 other victims. They were Wild Hound, Zhang Guanxing, the security guard, Ol' Lee as well as Jin Sheng's class teacher. If Han Fei was to find any help at this school, it would come from these three people. 'The butterfly is controlling Ma Manjiang, instead of doing what he should be doing according to Jin Sheng's memory, he is directly coming after me. This is the easiest way to kill me, but it also provides a breather for the 3 other victims. If there's something that I can contribute to ease someone's misery, then this is all worth it.' Han Fei's brain did not stop spinning while his legs moved. Even in a death chase, his mind was very calm. 'I should try to locate the other victims as soon as I can and get them to help me. Together, we might be able to find Ma Manjiang's weakness.'

Han Fei was reliving Jin Sheng's despair but he ultimately was not Jin Sheng. Even in this most disadvantageous situation, he still aimed to kill Ma Manjiang. As an outsider in Jin Sheng's memory world, Han Fei would lose part of his memory every time he died; the same rules should apply to the blue butterfly since it was an outsider as well. The blue butterfly's goal was probably to demolish Han Fei and then capture the real Jin Sheng.

Similarly, Han Fei's goal was to murder the blue butterfly again and again, to grasp information about the real Butterfly from it!

Flying down the corridors, Han Fei headed to the first floor. His first destination was the security room. Yi Ming Private Academy in Jin Sheng's memory world had the same layout as its counterpart in real life. The infirmary was on the 2nd floor of the office building and the security room was on the first floor of the education block. The two were not that far but the journey was extremely treacherous for Han Fei.

Any of the windows and doors could open at any moment to pull Han Fei into them. Tentacles of arms hid inside every classroom, they grabbed at Jin Sheng. They wanted to dig out Jin Sheng's eyes and cut off his ears to turn Jin Sheng into one of them. For Jin Sheng, being 'normal' required paying a really high and bloody price.

With experience from his previous manager mission, Han Fei stayed away from places where he believed danger might lurk. The density of ghosts at Yi Ming Private Academy was not that high, that was the only good news so far. Evading the danger, Han Fei finally arrived at the stairwell. At the landing between 1st and 2nd floor, there was a bespectacled teacher who was lecturing a group of students. Just from appearance, the teacher looked no different from a normal human.

'Lee Xun?' When he laid his eyes on the male teacher, information about him appeared in Han Fei's mind. He was a former staff member at Yi Ming Private Academy, he was Jin Sheng's math teacher. There was nothing too special about him and he was not featured in any crime stories. 'Why would he appear in Jin Sheng's memory world? And in the appearance of a normal human?'

Regardless, Han Fei could not afford to stop. He moved down the stairs and kept his eyes away from the students and teacher. Han Fei did not once ponder the possibility of asking the math teacher for help. His instinct told him things were not that simple.

When Han Fei passed the teacher, he suddenly picked up his speed. But the math teacher had been keeping his eyes on Han Fei when he first appeared and now he removed his glasses. Strings of black threads shot out from his empty eye sockets. They bound around Han Fei's body, preventing him from moving. 'This man is on Ma Manjiang's side!'

For a student, seeking help from a teacher when one was in trouble was something that could not have been more normal. However, the teachers in Jin Sheng's memory were not to be trusted. They looked deceptively like humans but black lines would erupt out of their eye sockets to bind and constrain Han Fei.

'Jin Sheng probably has approached Lee Xun in the past but the latter did not believe him. Instead, the teacher kept a watchful eye over Jin Sheng because Jin Sheng presented himself as a problem student who was out to slander a fellow staff's reputation with nasty rumours.' From Lee Xun's perspective, he was only doing his job of preserving the school's order and apprehending those who dared to cause chaos. But honestly, he did not really solve any problem. His disregard for Jin Sheng's warning signs only increased the already heavy despair on the young student.

Jin Sheng's pleas for help went unanswered. The other students looked at him with heavy annoyance, even the teachers refused to take him at his words.

Han Fei's body was entangled and pierced through by black threads. Han Fei could feel his energy leaving his body. He tried his best to struggle but the ending seemed inevitable.

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Ma Manjiang who was controlled by the butterfly came closer. A kind and honest face was stuck to his chest and a trail of muddled students followed faithfully behind him. Seeing the cunning smile on Ma Manjiang's face, Han Fei knew it was game over for him... at least this time. He took out the sharpest glass shard he kept from the broken cup and sliced his neck. "Ma Manjiang, I'll be waiting for you in the depths of hell!" As blood poured out from his artery, Han Fei's heartbeat slowed. Han Fei knew that dying by his own hands would be a greater and faster release than being captured by Ma Manjiang.

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Opening his eyes, Han Fei's hands flew involuntarily to his neck. 'Ma Manjiang is definitely coming to this place, I mustn't waste anymore time.' Crawling out from the cupboard, Han Fei shattered the cup and carved out his name on his arm as fast as possible. Then he snuck the shard inside his pocket. This time, he did not leave through the infirmary's front door but instead locked it from inside, buttressed it with the table and then went to unlock the window. The infirmary was on the 2nd floor, technically it was not that high up from the ground.

Jumping over the edge, Han Fei's empowered stamina came in useful. By grabbing the pipe that was beside the window, he slid smoothly down the wall. Han Fei had lost Ma Manjiang for now but there were other dangerous ghosts in the school. One wrong step and the price to pay was death. 'This time, I'll have to figure out a way to deal with Ma Manjiang!'

The pain from having his neck sliced was still fresh in Han Fei's mind. The game was too real, every pain was simulated down to the smallest detail. If he did not deal with Ma Manjiang soon enough, Han Fei would have to taste death again and again. 'After Ma Manjiang gets the infirmary door open and realizes I'm not inside it, he'll make the security room his next destination. I'll have to get to Ol' Lee before he does.' Different from the other monsters and ghosts in Jin Sheng's memory world, Ma Manjiang was controlled by the butterfly, Han Fei must not underestimate the man's cunningness.

Time was of the essence. After Han Fei ran for about 10 metres, he heard the sound of the infirmary door being slammed in. This reminded Han Fei of the situation from his previous loop. 'It won't take long for him to realize I'm not there anymore.'

Han Fei knew that there was another teacher inside the corridor to the left of the security room. Therefore, he purposely avoided that route and entered the education block by jumping through a 1st floor window. He raced to the security room. He called Ol' Lee's name softly but there was no answer. He pushed the door open and the cold light from the computer screen landed on his face. Compared to the other rooms, the temperature inside the security room was considerably more normal. This small room provided Han Fei with a rare warmth.

'Does this mean that Jin Sheng has once experienced warmth from Ol' Lee?' Han Fei knew that Ma Manjiang would be over here soon. He looked around the room for anything useful. The clock on the wall stopped at 1:08 am and 9 minimized surveillance video windows were shown on the computer screen.

'What is the significance of these videos? And why is the time stopped at 1:08 am?' Han Fei turned to look at the calendar on the wall, 'Today is April 8th, a Thursday. Wait, that was the day when Ol' Lee died!' All the tragedy started with Ol' Lee's death so Jin Sheng's memory appeared to be frozen on this day. 'Ol' Lee's time of death was after late midnight and his body was found at the school's back mountain. That means I still have the chance to save him! But why would Ol' Lee be targeted by Ma Manjiang? Is it simply because the security guard has chosen to believe Jin Sheng?'

Han Fei's eyes scanned the security cameras. Then something caught his eyes and he leaned closer to the screen. Thanks to the earlier Hidden Mission, Han Fei had gotten himself familiar with the location of all the cameras. Now he noticed that there was a new security video cam footage! It was unclear whether this was unique to Jin Sheng's memory world or the camera had been destroyed in the cryptic world. In any case, this camera was located at the corridor that connected the field and the backdoor of the education block. If one intended to head towards the gym, one would have to pass this corridor. Han Fei quickly rewound the footage back to the day before. When the time stamp was adjusted to 1:05 pm, Ma Manjiang and Chuxia were shown clearly walking towards the gym together!

The gentle and kind face was featured on Ma Manjiang's chest. Chuxia beside him had many cracks on her body, like she had been pieced together after she was shredded into pieces. 'This is the incriminating evidence that would have caused Ol' Lee to be killed!' Han Fei first copied the footage and moved the original files into a hidden folder. Then he turned his attention back to locating Ol' Lee!

He should be able to gain Ol' Lee's trust with this footage. After Ol' Lee agreed to help him, Han Fei would have more wiggle room. A large thud came from the 2nd floor. Ma Manjiang probably had realized Han Fei was no longer inside the infirmary. Pulling the guard patrol duty record off the wall, Han Fei turned to leave the security room. 'I need to make use of this opportunity. Ma Manjiang still has no



idea where I am.’ The record had the details of the school guard’s work schedule. However, Han Fei did not have the time to stop and examine it. He leaped out from the window and exited the education block. Keeping his head bent low as he ran through the bushes, Han Fei raced back to the office building. Ma Manjiang should be on his way to the security room, so Han Fei purposely chose this timing to return to the office building.

‘The only teacher that Jin Sheng had shown trust was his former class teacher. I wonder how she’ll appear in Jin Sheng’s memory world.’ Han Fei climbed up the stairs while scanning through the guard patrol duty record. ‘Ol’ Lee and the other guards are given the duty to reinforce the fence that separates the school compound from the back mountain. The fence is there to prevent the students from skipping school and sneaking into the mountain. The mountain is very far from where I am now. The office for primary 1 classes’ teacher is on the office building’s 4th floor. Coincidentally, it was also where the female ghost in the video tape first showed herself. Actually, now that I think about it... Could the ghost who had been following behind Ol’ Lee be Jin Sheng’s class teacher?’

The woman ghost on the 4th floor was covered in blood and her face was heavily ruined. She harboured deep resentment. It contorted her appearance and body frame, Han Fei had no clear identifiers to clarify her identity.

‘Ma Manjiang still doesn’t know my exact position, this is a good thing for me!’ A bright light crossed Han Fei’s eyes. He had the passive ability, hide and seek. It would lower his presence when in hiding and increase his sensitivity when he was looking for others. This seemingly useless ability had provided Han Fei with immense help. As long as he did not make too much noise or voluntarily approach the target, the ghosts inside the classroom would ignore his presence. Different from Jin Sheng, since Han Fei knew that these students literally had no discerning eyes and ears, there was no point for him to appeal to them.

At such moments, Han Fei knew the importance of keeping his mind clear to protect the people he should protect, and kill all the ghosts he should kill!

Ma Manjiang got into a rampage because he could not find Han Fei. The more angered he was, the more careful Han Fei became. Han Fei made his way carefully to the 3rd floor of the office building. He glanced out through the window towards the back mountain. The grey mist rolled over everything. The visibility was low, Han Fei could not see anything.

‘O well, at least I know that he’s there.’

Han Fei pulled his gaze back. Just as he was about to continue his climb to the 4th floor, a female teacher appeared in the corridor.

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The female teacher who appeared looked around her 50s. She wore a grey suit and had a slight hunchback. It was too late for Han Fei to go into hiding now. Before Han Fei realized it, the teacher had already appeared by Han Fei's side.

"Cough, cough..." With her hands on her chest, when she passed Han Fei, she started to cough heavily. It was only at such close distance that Han Fei noticed what was wrong with the woman. The aged teacher had her eyes and lips sewn shut with golden threads and blobs of black blood were stuffed into her ears. She could sense Han Fei's presence but she did not do anything towards him. She just kept on coughing and stayed a great distance away from Han Fei like the latter was some kind of cursed object.

'Lee Jingmei?' This teacher was Lee Xun's big sister and also the most experienced teacher at Yi Ming Private Academy. 'She did not intend to either harm or help me, it is like she can't even see me.' Lee Jingmei's information appeared in Han Fei's mind. This teacher was pulled from a public school by the headmaster with a tempting salary. She was already at a retiring age. 'Her eyes and lips are sewn tight with golden threads. Is that a sign that she was forced to keep her senses sealed because she has taken some form of bribery?'

Everything in the manager mission was based off of Jin Sheng's memory. The boy's impression of the world was very different from normal, it was grotesque but highly symbolic. Lee Jingmei should know part of the truth but she chose not to side with Ma Manjiang nor did she possess the courage to help Jin Sheng either. She represented the greater silence at this school. They detached themselves from the tragedy unfurling before them until they were caught in the fire. The female teacher shuffled past Han Fei. After she left, Han Fei continued his climb to the 4th floor. The temperature in the corridor suddenly dropped, this appeared to be a horrible place in Jin Sheng's memory.

'Is there no one around?' Compared to the 'busy' education block, the office block was strangely deserted. Any sound would be heavily amplified. Based on his memory, Han Fei found his way to the teacher's lounge. He tried the office door and realized it was locked. Then he knocked on the door lightly. The resounding knocks travelled far down the corridor. Almost the next second, a hurried footstep came from the stairwell. It sounded like a huge beast was crawling on all fours towards him.

'That has to be Ma Manjiang! Why is he here so soon? Did Lee Jingmei tell on me?' With no time to waste, Han Fei hurried away from the door and down the corridor. He planned to leave through the other staircase. However, when Han Fei reached the end of the corridor, he stopped. This was because he heard footsteps coming from this side of the staircase as well. The other party had purposely made their movement light but Han Fei still picked up on it.

'Damn, I'm cornered!' Han Fei once again tasted Ma Manjiang's cunningness. After knowing Han Fei's location, Ma Manjiang pretended like he was coming right after Han Fei but actually he had first mobilized the other monsters to cut off Han Fei's escape route. 'A normal Ma Manjiang shouldn't be this clever, this is all that butterfly's doing!' The footsteps approached. Han Fei was about to be cornered. Feeling helpless, the man staggered blindly backwards and knocked into a solid door. He turned and realized he was before the headmaster's office. This office was situated at the far end of the corridor. Han Fei tried the door and to his surprise, it was not locked. Once the door eased open slightly, the sound of conversation drifted out from inside. Instead of facing Ma Manjiang, Han Fei would rather take a chance with the unknown headmaster. He opened the door further and flitted into the headmaster's office.

A scent of decay lingered in the air. Han Fei took a good look around and his eyes twitched. Seated behind the desk was an old man who was sickeningly obese. His body was stuck inside the chair and his rotting fat drooped over the table and chair. The old man was truly a monstrous sight to behold. 'This is the headmaster? Why would he appear in this state in Jin Sheng's memory?' The old man was unable to move. Just keeping his eyelids open appeared to drain the old man deeply.

In front of this glob of a man stood a young female teacher who was primly dressed. A bloody necklace hung around her neck but strangely enough, despite the blood, the necklace gave off a sweet smell. The female teacher was surrounded in a sweet-smelling haze. Her young face was pretty with a smile.

'I've found her at last!' This female teacher was Jin Sheng's class teacher!

"Teacher!" Han Fei ran over and shouted. The female teacher who was conversing with the headmaster was startled. She turned and saw Han Fei. "Young man, how can I help you?" The warm words smoothed Han Fei's heart. This was the first time someone had talked to him since he started this manager mission. Inside this school surrounded by grey despair, after being chased after by monsters and ghosts, finally he found someone who was willing to listen to him.

The footsteps from outside were approaching, Han Fei knew he did not have much time left. Since the monstrous headmaster was also in the room, Han Fei had to be careful with the information he had. He chose to walk up to the female teacher and whisper into her ear instead, "Ma Manjiang is lying to you.

The animal has raped his own student! Everything you know about him is a disguise! If you don't believe me, you can go and check the video footage in the security room." Han Fei told the teacher the folder where he had hidden the footage.

The female teacher frowned. She seemed to consider Han Fei's words when suddenly her expression blanked as the sweet smell in the room thickened.

"Young man, that is not a funny joke." A second later, she recovered. The female teacher leaned back and lectured sternly. Han Fei noticed that the bloody necklace started to leak out some kind of syrupy liquid, it was this thing that gave off the heady perfume. "Teacher Ma is the most well-loved teacher at this school. He is my senior and my example."

Han Fei had guessed by now that the necklace was a present from Ma Manjiang. This necklace represented Ma Manjiang's sweet nothings and empty promises. Because of this thing, whenever the female teacher tried to think independently, she would be distracted by that smell.

"Teacher, the necklace around your neck is casted from grave wax. You need to open your eyes!" Han Fei knew time was running out. He reached out to grab at the necklace but his hand could not phase through the invisible wall of sweetness.

The female teacher still had blind faith in Ma Manjiang. Han Fei thought back to the events that transpired to the female teacher in real life. She only started her own investigation after Ol' Lee's death. In other words, she only believed Jin Sheng when she saw the bloodshed and death for herself.

Changing tack, Han Fei took out the shard to slice open his palm. The bloody hand finally phased through the wall. Han Fei closed his fist around the necklace and pulled!

The moment the perfume disappeared, the teacher gasped when she saw the ghastly blood stains around her necklace. "Teacher, please remember what I said!" Han Fei shoved the necklace into his pocket so that Ma Manjiang would not have the chance to use it again.

By then, the footsteps already reached the office door. The headmaster's office door was shoved open. The monster Ma Manjiang who had the honest face pasted to his chest appeared at the door.

After losing the necklace, the female teacher's gaze that landed on Ma Manjiang filled with previously missing fear. To be fair, she already had her suspicion about Ma Manjiang beforehand but she had been fooled by this master manipulator.

"Cough, cough..." The hacking came. Lee Jingmei shuffled into view. A few more golden threads appeared in her eyes.

"I knew it was you. As a teacher, how could you betray your own student?!" At this school, other than other victims, no one could be trusted. Han Fei had survived for this long already, he was not going to give up now. He took several steps back and he caught the sight of a chair from the corner of his eyes. When Ma Manjiang entered the room, Han Fei turned to grab at the chair. He threw it at the office window. Using the chair as leverage, Han Fei jumped onto the window's edge. With his eyes kept on the air-conditioning unit on the 3rd floor, Han Fei took a deep breath and then jumped!

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Bang! Han Fei's body landed squarely on the external installation of the air-conditioning unit. His back was soaked in cold sweat. Even the most experienced stunt double would think twice before committing to something like this, furthermore, Han Fei was doing this without any safety measure. 'How did I end up in this stage? I only wanted to be a comedy actor.'

Even through his pounding heart, Han Fei could still hear Ma Manjiang roaring about him. His calves weakened. The grey fog rolled in around him. The chill wind crawled into his shirt. Han Fei tried to move but the old air-conditioner creaked dangerously. It sounded like it could fall at any moment because it won't be able to support Han Fei's weight for long. Han Fei now had no other choice. Easing his way to the edge of the casing, Han Fei once again did another jump downwards. Somehow, this aspiring comedy actor had done things that most action actors would not dare to challenge.

When he first leaped out from the headmaster's office, Han Fei's heart was quivering; but for the second jump, he was prepared. However, it did mean that the fear was diminished; for the last jump which was from the second floor to the first floor, perhaps now that the ground was within his view, Han Fei did not feel that fearful anymore. Han Fei reached the first floor without problem. Ma Manjiang's angered roar echoed around the 4th floor. 'Hopefully Ma Manjiang will keep his focus on me, that way Jin Sheng's class teacher will have time to go and check out the security room.'

Due to the fog, Han Fei could not see what was happening on the 4th floor. He could only rely on Ma Manjiang's raging howls to determine his location. Taking a detour to the other side of the office

building, while Han Fei kept his ears peeled to Ma Manjiang stomping down the stairs, Han Fei crawled into the mist and into the bushes. 'The school is covered in this grey fog, lowering visibility. This is not good for me.'

Despite Ma Manjiang's size, he could keep his movement silent if he wanted too. He would only cause tremendous trembling when he was running at full speed. Therefore, if the man had discovered Han Fei and decided to sneak up on him, Han Fei would have no way of telling. 'I can't just stay there and wait for him to come get me, I can't linger at the same spot for too long either.'

Han Fei eventually found his way to the edge of the school campus. It was surrounded by a cement wall that was almost 3 metres tall. There was no way of escaping. 'In Jin Sheng's eyes, the school is probably like a prison, a prison that has lost all control and is dominated by its inmates.'

With grasses crunching under his feet, Han Fei kept his body lowered as he moved through the bush.

The manager mission required him to find Jin Sheng. Based on Han Fei's prediction, Jin Sheng was most likely still hiding in his own bedroom. After all, Jin Sheng's dead body was found inside the cupboard of his own hostel bedroom. Just as Han Fei confirmed his next location, he heard arguments coming from a spot about 10 metres in front of him. 'Other than the other victims, the people in this world are all enemies, I better stay away.'

Han Fei had just escaped from Ma Manjiang's pursuit, he did not want to expose his location so soon. But just as he was about to turn, the sound of dog barking came from the grey fog before him. 'Why would there be a dog barking in Jin Sheng's memory?' This unusual sound caught Han Fei's attention. He moved silently forward. At the end of the garden was the school backdoor. Several large adults were beating a wild dog with bats and sticks. The adults appeared like the parents of some students. They were all dressed differently but they were all large and powerful. They kept cursing.

To Han Fei's surprise, the adults had no nose. Instead they had very large mouths and a giant eye that dominated  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their faces. Booming, shrill insults and abuses tumbled out from their big mouths. The single eye reflected not the bleeding and wounded dog on the ground but instead the images of their own children. The sticks kept falling. The wild dog did not surrender that easily. Instead of avoiding the blows, it took them head on, while coming after the adults and the children in their eyes.

It would appear like the adults were merely protecting their own children from the rabid dog but Han Fei knew that in Jin Sheng's world, things were never that simple. He took a few steps forward and realized the wounded dog had a human face!

'Zhang Guanxing? How did he turn into a dog?!' Han Fei would not have expected Zhang Guanxing to take on this appearance in Jin Sheng's memory world. But once he gave it some thought, he could find the reasoning behind it. Before Zhang Guanxing met Han Fei, he was reckless, rebellious and self-abasing. No one had truly loved him, not even his own father. He was like a homeless rabid dog.

In the fight against the adult, the dog was definitely the victim. He had the chance to escape but he refused to, he insisted on staying to fight the figures of authority until the bitter end. The result was he was beaten until his bones broke and his skin tore open. The adults hated this unruly dog more and more. They only stopped when the dog's spirit broke and he could not stand up from the ground anymore.

The adults dropped the sticks, wiped away the blood, and placated the children in their eyes. They congratulated each other and then wandered into the fog together as they headed towards the office building. After the adults left, Han Fei hurried out from the bushes. He picked up the dog from the ground and pulled him into the bushes. 'Why didn't you run?'

Han Fei had nothing on him that could stop the bleeding. But the dog appeared to have gotten used to the beating, the pain was nothing for him. Tearing out a piece of his clothing, Han Fei helped him with a simple bandage.

"When I met you in the cryptic world, I knew life was hard, but I have no idea how hard it really was until now." Han Fei patted Zhang Guanxing's head kindly. "The other students at least retain their human forms but you have been turned into this vulnerable state in Jin Sheng's memory." Han Fei tried to communicate with Zhang Guanxing but the latter only whimpered weakly. Despite having a human face, he could not be communicated with normally. "Did you fail to heed the advice that Jin Sheng gave you?"

Even though Zhang Guanxing had been turned into a dog, he could still differentiate between good and bad people. When Han Fei worked on his wounds, he did not resist and the vicious glow in his eyes disappeared. Probably because he was beaten often, the wounds on Zhang Guanxing healed quickly. Soon he was able to stand again.

'Not counting Jin Sheng, there are only 3 people who can help me at Yi Ming Private Academy, and one of them has been turned into a stray hound.' Just as Han Fei considered ways to communicate with Zhang Guanxing, the latter suddenly darted away as if smelling something in the air.

“Where are you going?” The fog was thick and Han Fei did not want to stray too far from Zhang Guanxing. He trailed behind the human-faced dog and eventually arrived at the school field.

Chapter 186:

Yi Ming Private Academy’s field was quite big, it even had a spacious gym with many exercise equipment. In terms of infrastructure, the school had done well.

‘Why did Zhang Guanxing bring me here?’ The field was empty and it offered nothing to hide behind. Walking into the field would definitely expose Han Fei to Ma Manjiang. Han Fei stopped. Realizing that, Zhang Guanxing surprised Han Fei by turning around and barking as if urging him to follow him.

‘You have something to show me?’ After Zhang Guanxing was turned into this form, he was unable to speak but he seemed to retain his human mind and personality. Sticking close to the wall, Han Fei took the risk of following Zhang Guanxing through the field and towards the gym. When they arrived, Zhang Guanxing suddenly raced forward as if sniffing something in the air. His target was clear, it was a pile of equipment at the north-eastern corner of the room. Hidden inside this small corner, a girl whose body was cracked, was silently crying. She hugged her knees and curled behind the furthest corner of the equipment. Fractures ran through all her body, a small touch and she’d break.

Her face was buried deep inside her knees and the tears kept falling. She did not want to show her tears before others so she chose this secluded corner to cry herself out.

Zhang Guanxing wagged his tail as he circled the girl. He even used his head to brush against her arm. In this school, Zhang Guanxing was a rabid dog who was hated by everyone. However, this girl student did not seem to harbour any hatred towards Zhang Guanxing. She allowed him to get close to her even in her vulnerable state.

Zhang Guanxing tried his best to cheer up the girl by making funny faces but the girl ignored him. She continued to cry and did not once lift her eyes to look at him. Sensing the girl’s pain, Zhang Guanxing whined sadly. He wanted to share in her pain but he was just a stray dog, he could not understand what had happened to the girl. The only thing he could do was to bark to get a response from her. The louder he called, the harder the girl cried. Zhang Guanxing wanted to comfort the girl but he ended up making her feel sadder. Perhaps Zhang Guanxing’s barks were too shrill for the girl’s ears or his small bumps were injuring her body.



The weeping girl gently pushed Zhang Guanxing to the side. Zhang Guanxing yelled pleadingly, wanting to stay with the girl but that only made the girl's tears flow harder.

"Perhaps we should give her a moment." Han Fei reached out to pat Zhang Guanxing on his head. The image of the porcelain girl and the man-faced dog was strangely realistic. The girl with the fragile body had to be Wild Hound's girlfriend, Chuxia. In real life, Zhang Guanxing probably sensed the pain in Chuxia as well. He wanted to help Chuxia share in the pain but he was himself a child deprived of love, therefore, he too did not know how to love and heal someone. He was unable to connect with his girlfriend no matter how hard he tried. He did his best to make the girl happy but the effort only ended up hurting both parties.

'Chuxia was taken advantage of by Ma Manjiang. Zhang Guanxing probably did not know about that at the start, he only knew that Chuxia was constantly feeling under the weather. Han Fei guessed Zhang Guanxing did not handle the situation well. Sensitivity was not a virtue he'd see the young man possess. Zhang Guanxing probably pushed Chuxia to tell him the problem and that had only exacerbated her pain. It was most likely Jin Sheng who later told Jin Sheng the truth. It was why Zhang Guanxing had sneaked back into school at night. Perhaps he wanted to apologize or take revenge on his girlfriend's behalf, in any case, it ended with his own death. In Jin Sheng's world, Zhang Guanxing was indeed like a homeless stray who had been through various kinds of hells.'

Holding Zhang Guanxing back and silencing him, Han Fei walked to stand before the girl. Her skin was covered in small fissures. Just as Han Fei approached, the girl involuntarily curled her arms protectively around herself. She was like a baby who had been spooked. She balled into herself, the action giving her some semblance of security.

Chuxia was a student who was violated, her body was literally cracked. Empty words of consolation and brusque demand for the truth would only cause a second layer of damage. Zhang Guanxing did everything he did out of concern but in these moments, Chuxia had to be handled with care. What she needed was support and company. She needed to understand that no matter what happened, there would be someone standing beside her, giving her strength.

"I'm a new teacher here at the school, no matter what happens, I will help you." Han Fei said in a gentle voice. This was not his nature but to calm the girl, he could play the role. "There is no need for you to say anything now. If you ever feel afraid, or need to talk, you can come and find me at any time." While Han Fei said that, he was closely watching the girl.

Chuxia's body was cracking in many places, it represented her pain and fragility. She was in a very insecure place, the fear had literally splintered her skin.

Han Fei did not want to put too much pressure on Chu Xia. He was patient, kind and gentle.

About 10 minutes later, Chuxia finally stopped crying. She used her arms to wipe at her tears. When Chuxia lifted her head, Han Fei saw something that made his heart tremble. Under the girl's cracked skin, chaos, fear and self-deprecation flowed. However, wrapped underneath all these emotions was a pair of scissors that radiated an immense amount of hatred. It sat right around her heart.

The heart pumped weakly as Chuxia's body was too fragile to need any support anyway. The only thing solid within her was the scissors that were pointed and sharp.

Han Fei had a guess why the hatred in Chuxia would appear in the form of scissors. Jin Sheng's world was highly symbolic yet still suffocatingly real.

'I was unable to find any weapon so far. Even though the goal was to kill Ma Manjiang, I had no weapon to do so, but now...' Han Fei studied the scissors inside the girl's heart. The scissors gave off an intense hatred that was directed at Ma Manjiang, it was molded into being just to kill Ma Manjiang!

'Chuxia was violated by Ma Manjiang in real life, so to bring the animal his deserved punishment, the best solution was to have Chuxia expose his crimes! Therefore, in Jin Sheng's memory, Chuxia carries the weapon that can injure Ma Manjiang! However, this weapon is stuck deep inside Chuxia's heart. To gain access to this weapon, it will definitely cause a deeper injury on Chuxia.'

If Chuxia was to stand forth and pinpoint the culprit, then it would mean she'd have to face the trauma again. In a world rife with victim-blaming and where the offending party was also the party with authority, many things could go wrong for Chuxia.

It explained why Chuxia did not take out the scissors in real life and allowed Ma Manjiang the freedom to harm other people. However, this was naturally not Chuxia's fault. Ma Manjiang was related to the Butterfly, he had plenty of resources to toy with these kids, they were not even on the same level.

Everything made sense in a grotesque manner. Reality and memory overlapped. Before Han Fei started this manager mission, he had no idea this would be how Jin Sheng viewed the world around him.

## Chapter 187:

Han Fei decided to remedy the things that fail to happen in real life, he would kill Ma Manjiang here again and again!

'The blue butterfly has followed me into Jin Sheng's memory. If killing it can cause actual damage to the Butterfly, then it'll be perfect.' After knowing the location of the tool needed to kill Ma Manjiang, Han Fei appeared less panicked than before. Unlike Zhang Guanxing, he slowly approached Chuxia to gain her trust. The girl hid her deepest wound inside her heart. To take out the scissors from her heart, she would have to willingly open her heart to share with Han Fei her anxiety and pain.

The cracked body trembled. The fear of Ma Manjiang had stolen her ability of speech. Han Fei did not push her. Certain things could not be urged. Han Fei was not a professional psychiatrist, he was merely a patient who had been to many counselling sessions... but he understood he had to be careful with the words that he used. One wrong statement and it would cause Chuxia to collapse quite literally on the spot.

"It's not safe here around the field, why don't we swap for a different place?" The grey fog covered the school. Ma Manjiang was cunning. He did not make any noise and silence blanketed the campus. Han Fei had no idea where Ma Manjiang was, he could appear at any time. Under such circumstances, it was too dangerous staying at Ma Manjiang's previous crime scene. With encouragement from Han Fei, Chuxia finally stopped crying and slowly climbed up from the ground.

Han Fei had no idea what kind of method Ma Manjiang had used in real life to prevent Chuxia from speaking against him but to prevent accidents from happening, he had to stop Chuxia from meeting Ma Manjiang. 'Before Ma Manjiang discovers Chuxia, I'll have to retrieve the scissors from Chuxia's heart.'

After stopping for a moment at the field, Han Fei noticed the fog around the school had thickened. The visibility was even worse but more than that, there was this light stench in the air like something had started to rot. Signalling for Zhang Guanxing to keep quiet, Han Fei led him and Chuxia along the edge of the wall and came to Yi Ming Private Academy's back entrance. The entrance was locked and the wall was tall and reinforced. The rusted iron gate had a sign that warned students from jumping over it.

'Where would Ol' Lee be?' Yi Ming Private Academy's first victim was Ol' Lee but Han Fei had not encountered him in Jin Sheng's memory world yet. When they passed the iron gates, footsteps came from further down the fog. Han Fei and his group scurried to hide. Han Fei could see about 3 people

shuffling their way. They appeared to be students of the school. 'The students should be inside their classrooms. Why are they here? Did Ma Manjiang send them out to look for me?'

Ma Manjiang literally had many faces. He was good at manipulation and disguises. The students and staff members at the school trusted him blindly. To be honest, if Han Fei was in his position, he would make use of this advantage as well. 'The school is only so large, with all of the members of the school acting as Ma Manjiang's informant, it's only a matter of time until I'm found.'

A normal hide and seek would have many hiders and 1 seeker but ever since Han Fei started this lyashikei game, he realized he would be the only hider against a horde of ghosts in every hide and seek game he had participated in so far. 'Since discovery is only a matter of time, I should try as many methods as I can before I am discovered to see if I can kill Ma Manjiang.'

Han Fei turned to look at Chuxia, he remembered everything that he told her. Han Fei knew which kind of approach would lower Chuxia's guard and what kind of tone to employ to bring him closer to Chuxia, these were the results of his careful probing. In a way, this was another evidence of Perfect Life being an lyashikei game. If Han Fei was unable to heal Chuxia, then he would not be able to gain access to any weapon. If he could not heal the victim, then he'd be torn into pieces by ghosts and monsters.

Han Fei kept using words to slowly win Chuxia's trust. By then about half of the student body had left the education block. They were everywhere. Their facial expression was twisted as they dragged their broken body around to search the school ground. Before Han Fei's group was captured, Han Fei led Chuxia and Zhang Guanxing back to the hostel building.

"I'll go in to take a look first."

Han Fei stopped to take out the necklace he swiped from Jin Sheng's class teacher. He hung the necklace dripping with Ma Manjiang's sweet nothings around Zhang Guanxing's neck. Zhang Guanxing's nose twitched. When he was hit by that wall of sweetness, the young man gagged. "If Ma Manjiang comes close, you'll bring Chuxia and run. Do not ever take this necklace off, it is the only way to protect Chuxia, understand?" Han Fei looked into Zhang Guanxing's eyes. Only after Zhang Guanxing barked that Han Fei left.

The hostel's front door was not locked and the hostel manager was missing. This appeared like such a good opportunity but Han Fei felt things were too easy, the hostel building was too peaceful for his liking!

'There are students roaming all the other spots at the school but this place...' Han Fei did not enter the corridor. His eyes scanned the window of the hostel manager's office. He caught a mirror inside the room and the mirror reflected someone hiding behind the office door. The figure had 4 disfigured heads. 'That's Ma Manjiang's son!'

Han Fei hurried backwards. Ma Manjiang was not at the hostel but he had left his son behind to guard the place. 'He probably knew that I would come to this place because there's a high chance that Jin Sheng is hiding here.' Ma Manjiang predicted that Han Fei would come to the hostel and Han Fei knew that Ma Manjiang would lay down an ambush inside the building, they had both guessed the other's intention. However, the difference was Ma Manjiang was the hunter and Han Fei was the prey.

'A direct conflict is not going to help.' Since he could not use the front door, Han Fei would find another entrance. He sneaked his way back to reunite with Chuxia and Zhang Guanxing. "I'll climb up to the second floor, I'll need you to follow after me." Han Fei tore up his shirt and tied the stray dog onto his back. And then he climbed along the anti-theft net onto the second floor. Putting down Zhang Guanxing, Han Fei reached his hand out the window. "Hold me hand. Trust me."

Chuxia hesitated. In this situation, Han Fei could not speak too loudly. He could only give Chuxia the most trusting smile he had. After some time, Chuxia grabbed hold of the net and started to climb. As he promised, Han Fei held her close and eventually pulled her into the second floor. The weapon to kill Ma Manjiang was inside Chuxia so Han Fei would never let her go. While they progressed, he kept consoling and asking after Chuxia, easing his way into Chuxia's heart.

"Stick close to me." Han Fei pushed the bedroom door open a gap and looked around.

In the foggy corridor, there was a middle-aged woman in a flower-patterned gown and had bright paints on her face. She was tough and large. But her mind did not seem to be there. She tumbled up and down the corridor, holding the keys to all the bedrooms.

'That is the hostel manager. Why is she acting like a madwoman in Jin Sheng's memory world?'

Chapter 188:

This was the second time Han Fei encountered the female hostel manager at Yi Ming Private Academy. Before he started the manager mission, he met the manager in the cryptic world already. At the time, Han Fei did not think much of this hostel manager, but now that he thought about it, there was something strange here. In the case of the Foretold Deaths, the hostel manager was not one of the victims!

When Jin Sheng died, the hostel manager was still alive or else she would not have appeared in human form here. Probably like Ma Manjiang, she also faded off the public eye only years after the incident at the school. 'Did the hostel manager know the truth? Is this all an act to fool Ma Manjiang? Or she was slowly driven insane by Ma Manjiang?'

The fact that she had appeared in Jin Sheng's memory world meant that she was a key character in this case but Han Fei found little information on her. The police barely mentioned her. 'At the cryptic world, Ma Manjiang's sons wanted to kill her and even wrote cursed letters to her and hid needles in her food. From that, it's observable that at the very least, Ma Manjiang's sons are not on good terms with the hostel manager.'

Han Fei had Chuxia and Zhang Guanxing stay inside the bedroom. He eased the door open and sneaked out. The hostel manager in thick make-up stumbled her way down the corridor. She sang an old song from decades ago, her hands gesturing along with the tempo. However, one thing that caught Han Fei's attention was when the hostel manager passed Room 204 on the 2nd floor, she would snap back to normalcy. With light movement, she leaned on the door of Room 204 to listen to sounds from inside.

'What is she doing?' Jin Sheng's original room was Room 204 but he was transferred to Room 104 after complaints about him were made by his former roommates. Jin Sheng kept telling ghost stories to scare them. Just as Han Fei watched the hostel manager in this strange behavior, the door to Room 204 suddenly opened!

A tough and brawny arm reached out to grab the hostel manager by her neck. It then slammed her heavily on the floor.

'Ma Manjiang? That bastard is hiding inside Jin Sheng's bedroom!' When the arm shot out, Han Fei flinched. After he saw Ma Manjiang's sons downstairs, Han Fei assumed that Ma Manjiang had gone to patrol around the school. Who would have thought this cunning monster was also inside the hostel?! If the hostel manager did not step on the trap on his behalf, Han Fei would be the one in Ma Manjiang's grasp!

Han Fei quickly calmed down and analyzed the situation. 'Ma Manjiang did not go for the kill but instead aimed for the neck. He wants to keep his prey alive to shake them for information!' The thought of this chilled Han Fei. If he fell into Ma Manjiang's hand, even death would be a luxury. Han Fei silently retreated.

The hostel manager collapsed on the ground. She shook her head like crazy. Touching the heavy paint on her face, she kept apologizing to Ma Manjiang. A growl emitted from inside the bedroom as if sending the hostel manager away. After getting Ma Manjiang's permission, the hostel manager finally broke into a smile. The man had just heavily injured her and blood was oozing down her face but she chortled heartily. The hostel manager probably did something similar in real life. She walked into Ma Manjiang's secret but only managed to escape the monster's viciousness by acting a fool. The door to Room 204 closed again and it was then that the woman stopped laughing. Instead of wiping the blood off her face, she waddled towards Han Fei's hiding place while still in her crazy persona.

When she passed the bedroom where Han Fei was hiding in, the hostel manager shook her head dumbly. She stopped and danced around without much reason or sense. When she came close to the door, she whispered, "The person that you're looking for is in the bedroom but he's not inside the cupboard but inside the stomach."

Almost the same minute the statement was uttered, the door to Room 204 was shoved open. The 3 metres tall Ma Manjiang crawled out from the room with deep resentment!

The face on his chest was dark with cruelty. The 3 mouths on his head yelled at the same time, "I've got you now!" This Ma Manjiang was controlled by the blue butterfly, it was harder to deal with than the original Ma Manjiang in Jin Sheng's memory!

With the blue butterfly's memory, Ma Manjiang knew the hostel manager was not really crazy. He pretended to go along with her act and the woman fell for his trap. The hostel manager wanted to give Han Fei the hint but had inadvertently exposed Han Fei's location. The 3 mouths growled. Lowering on all fours, Ma Manjiang rushed towards the room where Han Fei was hiding!

Han Fei made a decision in that instant!

Chuxia and Zhang Guanxing moved too slowly so he could not escape with them, the best solution was to use himself as bait to lure Ma Manjiang away. Pushing open the door, Han Fei raced down the other side of the corridor. Once he was out of the room, he kicked the door close behind him. Ma Manjiang ran at his fastest speed but to Han Fei's consternation, when the monster reached the bedroom Han Fei

just vacated, he stopped. "If a person is hellbent on escaping, he wouldn't have cared about closing the door. This means that... There are other people inside this room!" Ma Manjiang's face grinned wickedly. He gave up chasing after Han Fei and rammed into the bedroom door!

"Motherfucker!" Han Fei stopped moving. Ma Manjiang was the most difficult creature he had ever met ever since he started this game. The man could read all of his thoughts. His intellect was far higher than a normal ghost. 'Is this the influence of the blue butterfly?'

Based on the hostel manager's earlier hint, to prevent Han Fei from meeting Jin Sheng, Ma Manjiang had swallowed the young man whole! How does one fight against an enemy like this?

Seeing as the hostel door was about to be broken down, Han Fei placed the shard on his neck. 'I can't let Ma Manjiang discover the scissors inside Chuxia's body, that is my only chance to win!' Ma Manjiang had all the advantages, but Han Fei had the ability to reload the game, but it came with a hefty price.

...

His eyes flew open. Han Fei charged out from the infirmary cupboard. Shattering the cup, he carved down 3 lines and his own name on his arm. Then Han Fei went to open the curtain and window. Just as he attempted to leave through the window, Han Fei felt chill run up his spine. He turned his head up to look and Ma Manjiang's scary face was looking out from the 4th floor of the same building!

This time Ma Manjiang did not charge towards the infirmary, but waited at the window for Han Fei to appear.

'He knows that I'm going to leave through the window! His memory has not been reset?! Is it because the blue butterfly is an outsider as well?'

This was the worst possible outcome!

In the manager missions, the natives in the manager mission would lose all of their memory and reset whenever the player died. In contrast, when an outsider died inside a manager mission, they would lose only part and not all of their memory. 'Ma Manjiang remembers the details from all my previous loops. As my death count increases, he'll be more familiar with my available tactics!'



Due to the appearance of the blue butterfly, the difficulty of this manager mission had reached a new height.

Han Fei who leaned on the 2nd floor window ledge shared a look with Ma Manjiang who was controlled by the blue butterfly on the 4th floor. They saw the unbridled desire to kill in each other's eyes!

Chapter 189:

Only by killing Ma Manjiang that Han Fei had the hope to clear this mission, coincidentally that should be Jin Sheng's biggest wish as well. As the chill wind crawled into his sleeves, Han Fei stared darkly at Ma Manjiang's monstrous face. Compared to Han Fei, Ma Manjiang appeared perfectly at ease since everything was within his control. Han Fei was like a bug caught in his palm, no matter how hard he struggled, he was not going to escape.

'Using different faces, Ma Manjiang has managed to gain the trust of most people at this school. Be it physical strength or number of supporters, he has the advantage over me but...' With bloodshot eyes, Han Fei stared daggers at his nemesis. Ma Manjiang could kill Han Fei as many times as he liked but as long as Han Fei still had shreds of his memory left, then he would have the chance to turn the table around. 'I need to prepare adequately before I launch my attack because that single attack has to be fatal. I need to use every resource available to me to construct a stage that will leave Ma Manjiang dead!'

The fear faded away. The more Han Fei got to know Jin Sheng's memory world, the greater Han Fei's desire to kill Ma Manjiang. This bloody monster deserved this punishment. Footsteps came from outside the infirmary. Ma Manjiang was still staring at Han Fei from the 4th floor so it had to be someone else.

"Teacher Ma said that there is a thief hiding inside the infirmary! Guys, come with me! We have to protect our school! We mustn't let him get away!" Lee Xun and a few students' voices came from the corridor. After hearing that, Han Fei jumped out the window and slid down the pipe. This place was not safe anymore. When he landed on the ground and looked up, despite the grey fog, Han Fei was certain that Ma Manjiang had moved away from his post.

'The manager mission requires me to locate Jin Sheng. To stop me from doing that, Ma Manjiang would definitely head towards the hostel and consume Jin Sheng first. Of course, that is if the hostel manager

was not lying to me earlier.’ Han Fei ran away from the office building. He knew Lee Xun and the students would reach him soon. He gave himself about 10 minutes.

‘Chuxia should be still at the gym. To get there, I have to pass the back entrance. Perhaps I’ll run into Ol’ Lee this time.’ To confuse his pursuers, Han Fei leaped into the education block, raced down the corridor and came out from the other side. Then he headed straight towards the back entrance. This time Han Fei finally encountered Ol’ Lee. The gentleman was in his guard uniform. Despite his age, the guard was well-dressed and radiated warmth. ‘The Ol’ Lee in Jin Sheng’s memory is not much different from Ol’ Lee in real life, only this Ol’ Lee looks much younger. Considering Jin Sheng’s age, I guess every adult will look younger than their actual age.’

In the grey and dim world, Ol’ Lee’s appearance was like a ray of light.

“Sir, I’m a new transfer teacher at this school, I need your help.”

“What is it?” The guard stopped his work and turned attentively to Han Fei.

“Were you in the security room around 1 pm yesterday?”

“I was supposed to be there but Teacher Ma had me go and fix the school fence. Many students like to skip over it to head into the back mountain, it’s too dangerous.”

“Ma Manjiang was purposely sending you away. During that time period, he has assaulted a female student.” Han Fei told Ol’ Lee the truth directly, “You’ll understand once you take a look at the security recording of that time. Now, Ma Manjiang is looking all over for me to prevent me from telling on him.”

“Impossible! Teacher Ma will not do something like that.” Ol’ Lee shook his head vehemently. In his mind, Ma Manjiang was a very honest and upstanding human being.

“The girl cannot even summon her courage to return to her classroom now. She has to find a secluded corner because she doesn’t dare to face other people.” Han Fei dragged Ol’ Lee towards the gym. They soon discovered Chuxia, “Don’t say anything, just follow my lead.”

Without Zhang Guanxing around, Chuxia was conspicuously harder to approach but thankfully Han Fei had dealt with the girl before. Using his photographic memory, he repeated every word that he told Chuxia in his previous loop. He knew which terms to use to endear himself to the girl. They only conversed for a while but Han Fei's every word seemed to land on Chuxia's heart. The girl's heart slowly opened but it was still difficult to retrieve the pair of scissors.

"Ol' Lee, is there any place that is good for hiding at this school? Everyone at this school has gone crazy. They all fell for Ma Manjiang's trick and we can't let them harm this girl any further." Only by gaining access to Chuxia's scissors that Han Fei had the chance to injure Ma Manjiang. To do that, he needed more time.

After meeting Chuxia in person, Ol' Lee finally believed Han Fei. "How about you leave the school grounds for now? It's unwise to stay around."

"Leave the school?" Once Han Fei heard that suggestion, even his tone changed.

"But Teacher Ma has confiscated the key to the back entrance. The key to the front gate is with another guard, I can go help you get it from him." Ol' Lee claimed like this was nothing big, but it had gained Han Fei's great attention. 'Something's not right. Jin Sheng views this school as a prison. He only chose death because he found no other way to escape the Butterfly's torment.' Then it dawned on Han Fei. The manager mission was built on the manager's memory. To complete the mission, the player had to fulfill the manager's wish and undo their regret.

The building manager's mission required Han Fei to kill all the ghosts and rescue all the humans, that was the building manager's biggest wish when he was young. Jin Sheng was trapped inside Yi Ming Private Academy and placed under the Butterfly's constant torment. His biggest wish was to tear off all of Ma Manjiang's fake faces and deliver punishment onto this monster. After that, he yearned to leave this horrible place behind. 'I believe I understand how to go about this manager mission now.'

After meeting all the victims, a complete plan formed in Han Fei's mind. The key to this plan was on Chuxia. Only after he retrieved the scissors that the rest of the mission could carry on. 'Ma Manjiang thinks everything will go smoothly after he consumes Jin Sheng and stays guard around the hostel building. However, I will make use of this confidence in him to undermine his plan from within.' Han Fei turned to Ol' Lee. "Sir, can you go and get the front gate's key first? I'll bring Chuxia to go hide for now. We'll meet around the front gate after another half an hour."

"Okay."

After Ol' Lee left, Han Fei led Chuxia to the school cafeteria. He revealed his gentlest side to Chuxia and tried many different methods to provide Chuxia with strength to heal the wounds on her. The psychology books that he read finally came into good use. Han Fei was able to empathize deeper with Chuxia as they conversed further. However, soon the other students arrived.

From Ma Manjiang's perspective, he was the king at this school. He was free to do anything he wanted to here. He had no idea there existed something at this school that could harm him. To ensure that Ma Manjiang was not made privy to the secret within Chuxia, the moment they were in any kind of danger, Han Fei would choose his own death to end the game.

His 3rd death was because they were surrounded inside the cafeteria by the students.

His 4th death was because Han Fei was captured by Lee Xun when the latter was patrolling around the school.

His 5th death was because the students' parents were persuaded by Ma Manjiang to hunt down Han Fei. They eventually found Han Fei among the bushes.

His 6th death was because Han Fei was captured by Ma Manjiang's sons.

His 7th death was because Chuxia and Han Fei had accidentally come across Ma Manjiang, and Chuxia screamed. To protect her secret, Han Fei had to kill himself.

His 8th death was because Han Fei got his leg broken by another security guard when he was trying to save Ol' Lee who was in trouble...

The deaths brought with them intense and real pain. But after each death, Han Fei would reappear before Chuxia like a guardian angel. He'd smile at her like he had all the time in the world for her. His every rebirth was like a repeat counselling session with Chuxia. Death and rebirth had never walked so close before!

After the 15th death, after experiencing 15 heart-rending pain, Han Fei once again appeared before Chuxia. He was still as kind as ever, but even his body started to crack now.

“Chuxia...” Every single word that came out from Han Fei’s mouth was carefully chosen. They were washed in blood and death. After 15 different attempts and intensive counselling, Chuxia finally was ready to face the ugly truth. Self-abasement, despair, pain and weakness were slowly replaced by hatred. The cracks around Chuxia’s heart started to fall off. In a gesture of faith, she reached into her heart to pull out the scissors and handed them to her personal guardian angel.

#### Chapter 190:

The sharp scissor blades were stained with blood and emanated a bone-piercing hatred. Just from holding it, Han Fei felt prickly pain down his skin. It was hard to imagine that such a weapon had been stuck inside a girl’s heart. “Leave the rest to me.” Han Fei had the girl stay in her hiding place. When he exited the gym, the kindness on his face fell off to be replaced by a numb murderous intent. The man’s right arm was carved with bloody gashes, each of them representing death and intense pain. After numerous deaths and rebirths, Han Fei had forgotten many things. He lost genuine happiness and laughter, his good memories were removed. Only some names remained in his mind, names like Wei Youfu, Huang Yin and Xu Qin but he was unable to match the names to any faces. They were like strangers in Han Fei’s mind. What was forgotten was lost.

He hid the scissors inside his sleeves. Han Fei was in a state of absolute rationality. He had forgotten many things about his real life but he missed not one thing related to the manager mission. He remembered clearly each of the steps he was required to take. He found Chuxia inside the gym, obtained the scissors from her and then hurried to the school’s back entrance to meet up with Ol’ Lee. Han Fei had repeated this sequence many times so he was able to gain Ol’ Lee’s trust easily. He then separated from Ol’ Lee, each of them had their own goal to accomplish. Ol’ Lee hurried to steal the key from another guard while Han Fei ran through the education block with the horde of students to head towards the office building.

‘Ma Manjiang is probably at the hostel building now eating Jin Sheng.’ For Ma Manjiang, after he consumed Jin Sheng, Han Fei had no way of winning. Han Fei would have to encounter him to get to Jin Sheng and whenever Ma Manjiang came across Han Fei, it would be the latter’s death. At least that was what Ma Manjiang believed. While the students and staff members searched for Han Fei all over the school, Han Fei sneaked his way to the 4th floor of the office. Han Fei wanted to locate Jin Sheng’s class teacher but he was too late. Jin Sheng’s class teacher had already been murdered by Ma Manjiang. She collapsed on the ground in a pool of blood.

‘Whenever I reset the mission, I’ll start at the 2nd floor infirmary, while Ma Manjiang will start at the 4th floor teacher’s lounge. That means that he won’t be far from the female teacher...’ The bastard truly had

no humanity left. He knew that the female teacher might end up helping Han Fei so he killed her beforehand.

'I've reset the mission for about 10 times already, it means that the female teacher has been brutally murdered by Ma Manjiang for at least 10 times as well.' Han Fei used his bloody fingers to remove the necklace around the woman's neck. The necklace with Ma Manjiang's sweet nothings was kept in Han Fei's pocket. Among all the victims, the female teacher was the most unique. She shared a close relationship with Ma Manjiang and was a respected teacher at the school. She was well-liked by the student body, Han Fei really could have used her help. Han Fei's plan was to bring the female teacher to the security room to watch the footage and convinced her to expose Ma Manjiang's sin before the rest of the school. Han Fei had no idea whether her words would have any sway on the eyeless and earless students or not, but at least she would have been able to convince the parents and the other teachers to leave Han Fei alone.

The parents with the giant eyeballs literally only had their children in their eyes. After they heard about Ma Manjiang's crimes, they would start to have second thoughts. After all, they won't be as easily fooled as the students. Unfortunately, Ma Manjiang was able to envision any plan that Han Fei could come up with. Of all the victims, the biggest threat to Ma Manjiang was Jin Sheng's class teacher. They were both staff members so Jin Sheng's class teacher's words would carry weight. Therefore, Ma Manjiang did not hesitate to kill her to keep her silent. 'The only people he can trust have been picked off one by one, that was the exact despair Jin Sheng has once experienced.'

Since the students were all around the school looking for Han Fei, the education block was a lot quieter than usual. With his passive skill, Hide and Seek, Han Fei safely found his way to the infirmary. He stared into the thick grey fog with cold eyes. 'Ma Manjiang will go after the female teacher the moment the mission resets. He has no mercy and is extremely cunning. If he fails to find me, then he'll make the other victims his target, he will kill all the people who might threaten him at this school.'

Feeling the scissors in his pocket and the hatred that radiated off it, Han Fei knew he could not drag this out anymore. He had already forgotten many things, if he continued to die, he would be lost here forever and become one of Ma Manjiang's mindless puppets in Yi Ming Private Academy. Han Fei sneaked out from the infirmary. Since he had memorized the routes of some students and parents, Han Fei evaded them while he cruised through the bushes to find the injured Wild Hound, Chang Guanxing. After applying a simple bandage on Zhang Guanxing, he led him to the front gate of the school.

Ol' Lee with his good-naturedness managed to borrow the key from the other guard and tricked him to go on the patrol. During the whole process, the other guard did not question Ol' Lee at all. Han Fei had Ol' Lee open the front gate but they did not leave.

Han Fei put Ma Manjiang's necklace around Zhang Guanxing's neck. During his previous few loops, Han Fei realized that Ma Manjiang would be able to pick up the scent of the necklace whenever he was within several metres of it. Han Fei wanted to make use of this point to distract Ma Manjiang. After all the preparation was done, Han Fei led Ol' Lee and Zhang Guanxing towards the hostel building. The time had come.

Jin Sheng was inside Ma Manjiang's stomach so to clear this mission, Han Fei had to first slice open Ma Manjiang's stomach. For now, the only advantage Han Fei had was that Ma Manjiang had no idea Han Fei had a pair of scissors which could injure him. Overconfidence on Ma Manjiang's part would benefit Han Fei. Climbing the anti-theft net, Han Fei's group entered Room 206.

A light smell of blood lingered in the air. When Han Fei pushed open the bedroom door, a shriek echoed down the corridor. He instantly turned to look. Ma Manjiang's sons were beating up the hostel manager near the mouth of the 2nd floor staircase. There was blood everywhere as they dragged the poor screaming woman down the stairs. 'Ma Manjiang's sons and the hostel manager will be on the 1st floor, so there's a high chance Ma Manjiang is still on the 2nd floor but there's no telling which room he'd be in.'

Ma Manjiang usually hid inside Room 204, but with his cunningness, he would switch around with each reset. Han Fei eased the door open and released Zhang Guanxing with the necklace out from the room. He signalled for the dog to go down the corridor.

The naïve Zhang Guanxing followed his order. He turned and raced down the corridor. When he was about 1 metre away from Room 206, the door to Room 205 suddenly shoved open!

Two wiry arms reached for Zhang Guanxing and then Ma Manjiang's horrible face loomed inside the corridor. This time he hid inside Room 205, just right next door to Han Fei!

Both parties saw each other. Ma Manjiang's 3 mouths dripped with blood. The shreds of the female teacher's clothes were still stuck between the jaws. He growled and then charged madly at Han Fei!