

Iyashikei 261

Chapter 261:

Han Fei's professional resume was so atrocious that Han Fei did not know what to say. He tried his best to hide his title but it always floated to the top. It felt like the system was proud that it had awarded Han Fei with this title. Looking around, the House of the Butcher where he unlocked the profession had been levelled. Cattle Alley was a lot less crowded than before as all the filth and sin were washed away by the blood waves. The hidden profession ended in Han Fei's hands. On top of that, his profession speciality made him extra dangerous to other butchers, in a way, Han Fei had all the tools he needed to turn the butcher profession into a non-physical cultural heritage. To be fair, Han Fei wanted to have a good relationship with his colleagues, but his colleagues all wanted to kill him.

"In the future, if you're being chased by the Butterfly and you have nowhere else to go, come here to find me. At least when you're inside Cattle Alley, I can keep you safe." Spider promised to protect Han Fei but at the same time, he was telling Han Fei to leave him alone unless it was literally a matter of life and death. After removing the curse from everyone, Spider strode alone back into the Cattle Alley. He seemed to plan to reconstruct this place with a new ideology.

Actually Han Fei still had many questions about Spider but Spider was in too weak of a state and he needed time to recover so Han Fei left Spider to heal. He carried Xu Qin, led everyone else and followed the direction given to him by Spider. Even though his trip to Cattle Alley this time was extremely dangerous and he almost lost his life several times, the rewards were lucrative. Han Fei not only completed his main goal of obtaining the Midnight Butcher profession, he even gained a Grade F butcher's knife. For now, that was more than enough for Han Fei.

Other than that, he also gained a friend in Spider and found a safe house for his neighbours at Happiness Neighbourhood. The neighbours who accompanied Han Fei on this journey had great personal breakthroughs as well, among them, the change in Weep was the most obvious. After the cleansing in the blood pool, Weep was forced to face his past. His cries now could easily influence all the ghosts within 17 metres. Weep was a mini version of the Singer, Han Fei had great expectations of the boy.

Moving through the smelly alleys, Cattle Alley felt strangely homely to Han Fei after he gained the title of the Last Midnight Butcher. He didn't feel uncomfortable traipsing through the alley, if anything, he felt at ease, like a predator prowling his hunting ground. Han Fei's group did not leave in a hurry, they worked together to hunt down the straggling pig-faced monsters.

Compared to when Han Fei first entered the Cattle Alley, the role of prey and predator had completely inverted. The scary pig-faced monsters were now EXP bags for his neighbours, their resentment could also help them recover their wounds. Other than that, their malice could sharpen Rest in Peace and their lingering blood could be fed to the black snake. With the principle of no wastage, Han Fei left no stone unturned and turned all of his colleagues into fresh fertilizers.

During this period, he collected a lot of butcher's knives. He'd break all of them and release the trapped souls inside. Most of the souls would escape but a small part would enter Rest in Peace. After dispatching many butchers, Han Fei realized something. Rest in Peace appeared perfectly harmless normally, it did not even look like a blade. But in reality, this blade was intensely sharp and it would only show its danger at the necessary moment. 'The spirits of the cryptic world are once people too. With this blade, more and more people will join my ranks.'

Cattle Alley was a turning point for Han Fei. With a weapon in his hand, he had turned from defensive to offensive. When not one 'Animal' could be found at Cattle Alley anymore, Han Fei left unwillingly. Based on Spider's direction, Han Fei's group successfully left the place.

The stench in the air immediately cleared and the walls were no longer stained with blood. Han Fei looked at the beheaded stone lion at the alley entrance and he sighed to himself, "The outsiders bought by the Doctor fled at the first notice of danger, the negative energy they had would be immensely useful to us." He might have said so but Han Fei had actually memorized the features and ability of each of those outsiders. His photographic memory meant that he would take revenge should the opportunity arise.

After exiting the alley, Han Fei looked to the roadside. The lights at the dumpling shop were all out, the doors were closed as well. "Why would the boss abandon such a good business spot?" Han Fei shoved open the closed doors, the lingering smell of meat wafted out. The utensils were left uncleaned on the table. The red lanterns on the wall looked like eyes in the dark. Han Fei walked behind the front desk and discovered an account book. The book was listed with names, they were both the customers and the food ingredients.

Then he pulled back the curtain and entered the kitchen. Han Fei saw the packets of meat which were processed at the meat packing plant in Cattle Alley. The filling of the dumplings here was made from these meat. The cursed meat would turn the eater mad with gluttony. The more they ate, the hungrier they would get until they died from having their stomachs literally burst.

"This is a consumer trap, if there ever was one." Han Fei looked around the place for a long time before he found the warehouse used to store food items. In the warehouse, other than many strange,

unidentifiable dead bodies, there were many resentment-filled objects. The most valuable items would have been taken by the boss already, but these were already good enough for Han Fei.

“I have no idea the food business can be so lucrative.” Turning back to Xu Qin, Han Fei said softly, “This place is close to Cattle Alley and relatively safe. How about we come and open a shop here after we deal with the Butterfly? With your cooking skill, it’ll be a famous eatery soon.”

Brightness crossed the red eyes. As if imagining that image, Xu Qin nodded with a smile. The neighbours sucked away the Yin energy and the leftovers were given to the snake. When it was done, it was now even larger than the anaconda.

“There are still some secrets at Cattle Alley and some of the pig-faced monsters have managed to escape, however they should be of no threat to us now. Our next focus shall be the Ziggurat.” Based on the map left behind by the previous building manager, Happiness Neighbourhood was between Cattle Alley and Ziggurat, it was still a long way to reach the Ziggurat. “I still have at least a week to prepare. I should try to reach level 15 before then.” Han Fei had no idea what the previous manager was doing at level 15 but he planned to challenge the most dangerous building in this area when he was level 15.

Due to the poor state Xu Qin was in, Han Fei did not stop to visit the other shops along the way. Using the same route he used, Han Fei took one hour before he returned to Happiness Neighbourhood. All the neighbours, including the ones from Building 2 saw Han Fei carry Xu Qin back. To save the tenant in danger, Han Fei led those willing to follow him into the abyss. He was fearless before death and managed to rescue Xu Qin even though he knew he’d be faced with the risk of dying. The tenants of Happiness Neighbourhood had been lied to many times but Han Fei now had proven with actual actions that as the building manager, he meant everything that he said.

“Notification for Player 0000! Your action has gained the approval of all the tenants at Happiness Neighbourhood! Friendliness level with all the tenants increases by 3. Hopefully, you’ll keep on working to improve and advance the standard of living at Happiness Neighbourhood!”

Chapter 262:

Han Fei treated Happiness Neighbourhood as his own home. Compared to the previous manager, Han Fei’s managerial style was rasher and more juvenile but that also showed Han Fei’s sincerity and openness. The dark corridor of Building 1 didn’t feel that oppressive to Han Fei anymore. With the rusted stair banister under his skin, he was reminded of the deathly game he experienced here at the start of the game. Each of the rooms here carried some of Han Fei’s memory. From some moment

onwards, Han Fei's fate was tied to this old building. Han Fei had just entered the building when a door on the 4th floor opened. Moments later, the fragile Wei Youfu appeared in the corridor and Little Eight hid behind him. The small face looked at Han Fei carefully and there was joy in her eyes.

"If you haven't returned sooner, we're planning to go find you." Wei Youfu looked at Han Fei and sighed in relief. Seeing Wei Youfu and Little Eight rush out to welcome him home, Han Fei did not know how to feel. He had only seen this kind of scene in television shows before. Before he started this game, no one would be waiting for him to go home. He'd open the door and walk into darkness. No one would keep the lights on for him, no one would welcome him back with a smile, much less run out with joy due to his return.

Han Fei first dropped Xu Qin home. He prepared some simple food for Xu Qin, after Xu Qin looked better, he left.

After he returned to Room 1044, Han Fei sat down on the couch and shared his experience with Wei Youfu and the other victims. The victims of the human jigsaw case would attract the attention of malevolent force whenever they left the Happiness Neighbourhood so they were very interested in Han Fei's tales of the outside world. They felt transported by Han Fei's story-telling. Their expressions changed with the rise and fall of the story. Inside the small room, a man gestured animatedly to entertain his ghost roommates.

Han Fei finally finished his story by 5 am. Like a worried father, Wei Youfu nagged Han Fei to promise that he would no longer put himself in such danger. Just as Han Fei prepared to log off to avoid the nagging, the landline in the room rang. Han Fei's expression turned guarded immediately and he pulled out Rest in Peace. Wei Youfu though calmly picked up the phone. "Don't worry, do you remember the hostel next to Yi Ming Convenience Store?"

"I do."

"The old man at the hostel managed to imbue his memory into the phone lines to create a unique cursed object. To make communication easier, we've pulled one of his phone lines into Happiness Neighbourhood." Wei Youfu might have lost all of his ghostly power, he retained his humanity and intelligence. After a quick chat, Wei Youfu hung up. He frowned and asked Han Fei to join him beside the window. The two looked out the neighbourhood. At the door of Yi Ming Convenience Store, there stood a scary woman over 2 metres tall!

"It's her?" Han Fei remembered this woman. On the day he was employed at Yi Ming Convenience Store, this woman invited the paper doll boss to join her at Ziggurat. It was because of her that Han Fei had the chance to steal the boss' coffin. At the most crucial moment, Han Fei entrapped the paper doll boss but the bride suffered collateral damage. She had paid a lot to gain the boss' help but at the most demanding moment, the paper doll's consciousness shattered. Imagination alone could tell Han Fei how much despair and helplessness the bride must have suffered in that moment.

"She's still alive? And has returned?"

"How did you attract the attention of someone like her anyway? What's your story with her?" Wei Youfu glanced at Han Fei. The latter had indeed charmed way too many people for his own good.

"Looks like I'll have to personally visit the convenience store, Drake wouldn't be able to handle her alone." Han Fei had to leave even though he just got home. He brought Weep with him. 10 minutes later, Han Fei arrived at the store. 10 white candles were arranged on the shelf. One of them cried the hardest as he badmouthed the current boss. He tried to endear himself to the bride, clearly he saw her as his new ticket out of this place. The candle was so into his story that he did not notice the other white candles had gone silent. Drake tried to warn him several times but was stopped by the bride every time. The white candle continued to wax his tale until he noticed the bride's eyes slowly moved away from him. Then he turned to look behind him. The pale face looked at Han Fei who was silently toying with a lighter. The face on the white candle froze. His eyes moved about, he found no solidarity from the other candles.

Han Fei lit up the white candle and moved him to the counter. Then he stood beside the bride. The bride who was 2 metres tall looked down at Han Fei. The made-up face stared into Han Fei's eyes as if trying to understand how come all the ghosts inside the store became less restless after this man arrived. In her memory, Han Fei was only the temp worker when she last visited this place.

"I am Han Fei, the temp owner of this convenience store." With a standardized smile on his face, Han Fei said with politeness. "I remember you have some kind of deal with our previous owner?" The bride had no idea when Han Fei became the temp owner and she did not care, what she wanted was an explanation. She dropped a bloody handkerchief on the counter. Han Fei picked it up and examined it closely. "The previous owner promised to enter Room 1064 at the Ziggurat with you but he failed to live up to his promise and almost caused your death. Since the previous boss has already taken part of your payment, the responsibility now falls unto us." Han Fei looked pained as he said that. He folded the handkerchief nicely and put it away, "The previous owner has gone missing, we have no idea where he went but we will not shirk our responsibility. We will fulfil the promise that he has left uncompleted!"

The bride was quite flustered. She came here ready for a fight but things did not unfold the way she expected. "Yi Ming Convenience Store has always placed our customers first. We know the Ziggurat is very dangerous but we have indeed failed to live up to our promise. We will accompany you to enter Room 1064 again but I hope you'll give us some time to prepare." Han Fei took a deep breath and said with sincerity. "In 10 days, we will join you at Ziggurat and try to help you get the thing you want. To help ease the weight on both of us, I hope that you can tell us more about the Ziggurat."

With calm demeanour, Han Fei made his sales pitch. This man was as weak as a bug but he was ready to take up the dangerous responsibility. Perhaps the negative 13 charm on Han Fei had worked, the hatred around the bride lightened. The bride gave it some thought before she removed her wedding veil and placed it on the counter. Then her wounded lips moved to say the following, "I will come and find you after 7 days."

The bride then turned to walk out from the store. Han Fei picked up the bloody veil. There was the character for Death written in the middle of the veil. The word itself appeared to carry some kind of special curse, it was the ticket for one to enter the Ziggurat.

"Boss, are we really going to help her? But she's asking us to go to the Ziggurat!" Drake said worriedly.

"Customers are our god, we should always try our best to satisfy their demands."

"What if she only plans to use us as bait?"

"Don't worry, I have my plan." Han Fei put the wedding veil away. "The customer is God but God lives not with us but in heaven."

Chapter 263:

The Bride was still alive, Drake saw a great danger while Han Fei saw an opportunity. There were always both sides to a situation. Currently Han Fei knew nothing about the Ziggurat, he needed a guide and the bride was a very good candidate. "Drake, when she returns, you have to find a way to make her stay, this customer is very important to us."

After that, Han Fei turned back to the counter where a sole white candle stayed lit. Han Fei did not say anything but listened quietly to the candle's cries of mercy. After the candle was half burnt, Han Fei blew out the fire, "Don't say I don't give second chances. But you better appreciate it." As the boss, Han Fei was always fair with meting out reward and punishment. After checking the stock and talking to his employees, Han Fei logged out from the store's warehouse. As he removed the gaming helmet, the energy went out from him. The morning sun filtered through the gap in the curtain. Han Fei decided to enjoy this rare moment of peace and relaxation. "Survived yet another day, that's good news."

Han Fei closed his eyes and drifted off. He only awakened when the knocking came from his door. The first thing he did, before his eyes even fully opened, was to reach for the nun chucks under his pillow. When he jumped out of bed, he was already in a defensive position.

"Han Fei! Han Fei!" Li Xue and another officer's voices came from outside the door. They knocked frantically. If Han Fei did not answer soon, they might break the door down. "Coming!" Opening the door, Han Fei took in Li Xue and two other officers in full SWAT gear. "What happened?"

"It's almost 10 am. It's already 1 hour passed our meeting time. We thought some kind of accident happened to you." Seeing Han Fei in one piece, the officers sighed in relief. "Yesterday night, Huang Yin was attacked by one of his former patients. Huang Yin was on home visit due to the horrible state of the patient. Huang Yin even personally paid for the cab fare. Huang Yin had gone way beyond his responsibility as a doctor but when he was there, the patient's condition suddenly worsened and attacked Huang Yin. None of us suspected this patient would be so easily influenced by the Butterfly."

"Huang Yin was attacked again?" Han Fei could feel Butterfly's desperation. He had ruined Butterfly's plan again and again in the cryptic world, in fact, he just destroyed its conspiracy at Cattle Alley yesterday night. So it was understandable that it would go after Huang Yin and Han Fei more intensely now.

"You have to watch out for your own safety too. Butterfly's behavior is becoming more dangerous and erratic, it feels like it is slowly losing its mind." Li Xue said severely. "A supercriminal that has lost control? That is way more than just dangerous."

"I actually have a fairly good idea why it has acted up recently." Han Fei's words successfully gained the police's attention.

"You know the reason?"

“I once saw someone at Spider’s building. That person is most likely Butterfly or related to it. It slowly approached me which gave me a chance to take a better look at it.” Han Fei gave the description of the Reader to the police. When a normal person encountered a ghost who would only get closer and closer, they would not stop to observe them like Han Fei did. As the police took down Han Fei’s description, they were quite impressed by Han Fei as well. After collecting the personal information, Li Xue compared it to the citizenry database, there was no one that matched Han Fei’s description. However, the police still took the info seriously and planned to launch a deeper investigation into this character.

Due to his acting responsibility, Han Fei did not stay with the police for too long. After a quick shower, he took the police cruiser to Xin Lu’s northern countryside. When Han Fei arrived, the other actors were already on set. Director Zhang knew that Han Fei did not work overtime and understood the danger for Han Fei to stay out late at night, so he tried his best to arrange for Han Fei to complete his shoots in the day. The first scene of the day was supposed to be a chase scene between Han Fei and Bai Xian. But since Han Fei was late, the scene had to be delayed.

The crew was no longer surprised when they saw Han Fei exit the police car. There was even a rumor circulating that Han Fei was actually an informant for the police and acting was just a hobby of his. With a great apology written on his face, Han Fei approached Director Zhang. When he saw how haggard Han Fei was, Director Zhang who was normally so stern with actors not only did not scold Han Fei, he even dragged Han Fei to demand an explanation from the police. The senior director said that he understood Han Fei was an important figure to their investigation but they had to cut the man some slack. It made Han Fei feel so embarrassed. He didn’t dare to admit that he looked so tired because he had spent the whole night gaming.

“Han Fei, you better go and take a quick nap first. You should at least look presentable before the camera.” Noticing that Han Fei did not even have a manager, Director Zhang felt sorry for the young actor. How come he only discovered such a wonderful actor so late in his career?

“It’s okay, I can still carry on.”

“I’m the director, I’m the boss here.” Director Zhang had his assistant bring Han Fei to the breakroom while he prepared Han Fei’s afternoon scenes. As he entered the breakroom, Han Fei saw the other actors reading their scripts, he did not disturb them. He walked to the couch at the corner, with the nun chucks still hidden inside his sleeves, he fell asleep.

“How unprofessional to sleep on the job.” Xiao Tong, who was an idol singer, was about the same age as Han Fei but he was much more popular than Han Fei. He had a bigger fanbase but in the shooting of Thriller Novelist, he was treated less favourably than Han Fei. For example, he too was late that one time and Director Zhang berated him in public, but now that Han Fei was late, Director Zhang not only did not scold him, he told Han Fei to come rest in the breakroom. The comparison irked Xiao Tong. He tried to focus on the script but the more he thought about it, the more dissatisfied he felt. He saw himself as good as, if not better than Han Fei. Even though they were of the same age, in terms of family background, number of fans, celebrity clout, fashion sense, taste, commercial value, he was much stronger than Han Fei... at least he saw it that way.

“Is his acting skill really that good?” Xiao Tong glanced at Han Fei but in the end he did not say anything. He took his script and left the room. When the door clicked, Han Fei’s closed eyes flew open. ‘That was Xiao Tong, wasn’t it? Who would the Butterfly influence next to come after me? Would it be someone from the crew or a complete stranger?’

At around 1 pm, Han Fei exited the breakroom, had a quick lunch and sat down for make-up. Director Zhang wanted Han Fei to have more rest so he arranged his scene to late afternoon. Just as the sun was setting, Han Fei entered the set. Han Fei kept looking for traces of the Butterfly but the latter seemed to have expected that. The more one searched for it, the more elusive it would become. It would only appear when Han Fei least expected it.

‘Cattle Alley got ruined and Spider who knew about Butterfly’s past was revived, that must have seriously pushed the Butterfly’s buttons. It has gone after Huang Yin twice already, it would aim me next.’ Han Fei had memorized the appearance of every crew member. With his extraordinary memory, whenever someone showed up once beside Han Fei, the latter would remember their names and faces. The old Han Fei lived in his own world, he was anti-social, introverted and didn’t know how to interact with others. Now he would pay attention to every single individual around him, after all, they might be someone who wished to claim his life.

The sun set around 6 pm. The tingling of wind chime echoed around the building and Han Fei was ready to shoot his last scene for the day. Han Fei’s writer had successfully killed the student played by Xiao Tong. In the House of the Butcher, there were 25 methods Spider had considered to hide the body, and now Han Fei had to select one of them. However, while in the process of hiding the body, Bai Xian who played the Doctor started to suspect the writer. He came to visit the Student and almost walked into the Writer disposing of the body. This escalated to a nervous chase scene.

This was going to be the first big scene in Thriller Novelist so all the crew members were excited. After all the equipment was checked, they assumed their designated spot. Han Fei and the other actors arrived.

Looking around, Han Fei spotted an unfamiliar face. Behind Bai Xian, there was another person who was dressed the same way as Bai Xian did. He appeared to be the new stunt actor. He was there to help Bai Xian complete some of the more physically-demanding and dangerous shots.

With an order from Director Zhang, the building quieted down. An inexplicable atmosphere of anxiety spread across the building. This was the atmosphere Director Zhang desired but not one he had created. A strange smell appeared in the air, no one could tell where it originated from but it was definitely there.

The wind chime on the 4th floor swung lightly. The intermittent tingling sounded like a child's laughter.

The night breeze blew into the buildings. The black cloth that covered the altars on the stairs fluttered as if the 'divinities' inside had opened their eyes.

Chapter 264:

The living compound at night and in the day were two completely different buildings, this old building was home to strange events after the night fell. The tenants who hadn't moved would not leave their home after dark.

'Is it my imagination? How come it feels like the atmosphere is instantly different the moment Han Fei arrives?' There were many ways to evoke tension in a horror film, but most of them required usage of background music and lightning. However, Director Zhang was sure that he had not done any of those. His camera was simply following Han Fei but there was already a clear difference on the captured image. As a senior director, Director Zhang's understanding of framing and camera language was far better than anyone present. He could clearly see the fog of anxiety that radiated from Han Fei, it was as if the strangeness around the whole building descended because of him. 'I really can't imagine he was once a comedic actor.'

Director Zhang stared at the camera closely lest he missed out on any details. Han Fei who stood inside the set felt the strangeness as well. The unknown stench was thickening and the air turned sticky. Han Fei had the surreal feeling that he had returned to the cryptic world. Xiao Tong who played a dead body was made uncomfortable by this change. His face was leaning against the cold hard ground. The unknown stench crawled into his nose like snakes and they wiggled inside his lungs. His well-trimmed brows frowned slightly. Through his narrowed eyes, he took a glance at Han Fei.

He realized Han Fei was looking at him as well. As their eyes met, Xiao Tong felt the chill crawl onto his mind. He felt like Han Fei was not looking at a person but a slab of meat. There was no emotion in his eyes but pure rationality. For some reason, he was hit with the feeling that Han Fei had seen many dead bodies and this detachment when viewing a human life was something that accidentally slipped out from Han Fei's deep persona. If not for the cameras which were still rolling, Xiao Tong probably would have gotten up and escaped. Connecting the news on the crime channels to the man who stood before him, Xiao Tong's heart panicked. He swore to never stay in the same room as Han Fei anymore.

The icy gaze was like a sharp knife cutting the Student's body into different pieces. To be fair, Han Fei had not only figured out how to dismember the body, he had also decided where he would hide them. After experiencing the hell that was Cattle Alley, Han Fei was no longer the same kind of person like Xiao Tong, who was the human equivalent of flowers grown in the greenhouse.

"You represent my anticipation and hope for the future so I have to kill you first. I wouldn't need to hesitate anymore in the future." Han Fei cleaned the scene, and destroyed all the clues and evidence. He was so professional that one had to expect he had done this before. The mental pressure on Xiao Tong grew. Suddenly, footsteps came from the corridor, this was the climax of this scene.

In the movie, Han Fei and Xiao Tong's characters were both side characters. Han Fei's murders and crime scene tampering would only be shown at the end of the movie. The whole movie was shot from the perspective of the Doctor, Bai Xian. The audience would see themselves as the Doctor, the good Doctor who was always there to help cure and save the other personas. However in the end, they would realize that the Doctor was unable to save anyone, not even himself.

The moment the footsteps rang out, Han Fei walked out from the room. The murder happened on the 9th floor, the room where the Student lived. When Bai Xian hurried up the stairs, Han Fei very calmly moved towards the landing between the stairs of the 9th and 10th floor. Throughout the process, he made no sound like a ghost.

Bai Xian predicted that something bad would happen tonight. He hurried to the 9th floor and pushed open the Student's door. This would be the most dramatic scene. The killer was just a small distance away from the Doctor. The moment the Doctor called the Student's name and entered the latter's room, Han Fei charged out from the stairwell. The two literally brushed past each other. When the Doctor realized that he had just missed the killer, he turned out from the Student's room and chased after Han Fei.

Due to an injury Bai Xian suffered, he was unable to take part in action-orientated scenes. The readied stunt double took his place to give chase after Han Fei. When the stunt double entered the scene, Han Fei was shocked to feel a climbing pressure. The person moved incredibly fast like he was already familiar with the height of each step and the location of the trash that littered the corridors. In just a few breaths, Bai Xian's stunt double was already only half a floor behind Han Fei. This chase scene was meant to be exciting but the Doctor wasn't supposed to actually catch up to Han Fei. The killer would only be exposed at the last part of the movie. However, Han Fei could feel that the person was moving at a speed far beyond his expectation, this was different from what Director Zhang ordered!

Han Fei was good at running so he picked up speed again. His sudden burst introduced another stretch of distance between him and the stunt double. However to Han Fei's consternation, the stunt double picked up speed as well. The latter was like a shark which smelled blood.

The voice-activated lights in this building were broken. Tripping down the stairs would be incredibly dangerous but both the chaser and the chased showed no sign of slowing down. It was as if they had rehearsed this many times, they maintained a fixed distance that was not too close or too far. His muscles tensed. The trigger deep inside Han Fei's mind was switched on, his brain blurred the boundary between the cryptic world and the real world. Energy filled up his body. As he raced down the corridor, the haze of stench around him thickened. Han Fei was unable to identify it until he passed the old man's room on the fifth floor. He had smelled the same stench from the old man before, it was the smell of the dying, the decomposing smell of death!

'Something's wrong!' With his legs still pumping, Han Fei turned his head around. When he did, he saw Bai Xian's stunt double who just came out from the 4th floor stairwell. Even with just a quick glance that lasted barely 1 second, Han Fei spotted another individual following behind Bai Xian's stunt double!

Its face was pale and had a humanoid shape!

'It's that ghost!' This was the third time the thing appeared in Han Fei's sight. It came closer and was still rapidly closing the distance!

'So it's going to make its move tonight?!' While his brain processed this info, Han Fei's feet stepped on something squishy. He lowered his head to look. Someone had dumped a lot of trash on the steps between 3rd and 2nd floor. Among them were the dead bodies of stray cats and dogs. With his hands on the banister, Han Fei skipped the steps and directly leaped over the banister and landed on the 2nd floor. After he steadied himself, he stopped running. He took out the metallic nun chucks from under his costume and waited quietly in the middle of the stairwell. 'Do you really think I was running because I was afraid?'

Chapter 265:

To not affect the actors and to not miss out on any money shots, Director Zhang did not assign any camerapersons inside the building but instead installed more than 30 motion capture cameras. They would capture the chase scene from multiple angles. Currently everyone was watching the video nervously inside the new editing room set up on the first floor. Bai Xian's stunt double was a retired track runner, as well as a VIP member of Xin Lu's Parkour Club. He probably mistook Director Zhang's meaning because he didn't follow the script at all. He did not slow down when he was supposed to but instead picked up speed instead.

As Bai Xian's stunt double charged downwards at full speed, a bad feeling gripped Director Zhang. He was ready to call for a cut but something unexpected happened! Han Fei also exploded in a burst of speed! The agile movements and amazing speed stunned Director Zhang, how did a comedy actor become so good at physical acting? He even managed to shake off a professional parkour athlete?

The chase did not stop. Even just from following the different cameras, Director Zhang's heart raced. Neither party followed the script. The chase should have stopped on the 4th floor where the Doctor missed the killer. However, to Director Zhang's surprise, Han Fei raced past the fourth floor, leaped over the banister at the 3rd floor and landed on the 2nd floor. If this was because Han Fei was too into character, then what happened next was so out of character. After he steadied himself, everyone saw Han Fei in the video take out a metallic nun chuck from under his costume. With some quick assembly, the weapon turned into a metal staff. "What the hell is that?" The prop manager was stumped. He shared a look with Director Zhang. They had worked together for decades already and this was the first time they encountered an actor who entered the set with their own weapon. Before they could decide what to do, a scream came from inside the building. On the camera, the armed Han Fei turned around and ran upstairs to chase after the Doctor instead!

"What the?!" Director Zhang's brain short-circuited. Everyone in the room turned to the director, waiting for his directions. Han Fei finally met up with the retired athlete in the narrow corridor. Bai Xian's stunt double shook his arm and a non-metallic knife fell out from his sleeve into his grasp. When the confused Director Zhang saw the knife, he was confirmed this wasn't supposed to be in the script. Then the scary possibility dawned on him. 'The stunt double really intends to kill Han Fei? He's the criminal the police have been attempting to catch?!' The moment that thought entered his mind, Director Zhang shouted, "Quick, we need to go and rescue Han Fei!"

Looking at Han Fei who was armed with a dangerous weapon and glared fiendishly at the stunt double, the crew thought Director Zhang had gotten the names mistaken. Weren't they supposed to rescue the stunt double? If not, the Doctor in the movie would really be killed by Han Fei!

The room door shoved open and everyone rushed into the building. Director Zhang's assistant hurried to notify the nearby police officers. Everyone mobilized.

Standing at the eye of the storm, Han Fei gripped the staff and steadied himself against the stunt double that stood between the 2nd and 3rd floor. Compared to the hidden knife, Han Fei was more concerned about the ghost which followed behind him. Being exposed to such a dangerous situation, Han Fei believed he should at least feel some nervousness or panic but perhaps he had been playing that game for too long, he felt no trace of fear. His brain started to think of the solution instinctively. Compared to the ghosts and murderers in the cryptic world, the charmed stunt double was as harmless as a child, the real danger was the thing behind the actor.

'The breathing is too erratic and the eyes should not wander like that. The way you hold the knife is not right either. As a murderer, shouldn't you at least know these basics?!' His leg muscles tensed and Han Fei shot out like a loosened arrow! His arm waved and the staff swung downwards!

The sound of bone cracking came from the stunt double's wrist. He already tried his best to avoid the hit but he was still too slow. The other party was so good at fighting that he didn't seem like a normal actor. The angle of his every movement was precisely calibrated and he had a wealth of knowledge in actual fighting. The actor's right arm dulled. His hand that grabbed the knife weakened and the knife clattered to the ground.

After disarming the man, before the enemy had the chance to react, Han Fei swung the staff at the actor's knees!

If this hit connected, the actor would collapse to the ground and wouldn't even have the chance to escape anymore. Han Fei's tactical mind was sharp. First he neutralized the threat and then he neutralized the person. Han Fei's combat experience shocked the stunt double. The stunt double retreated to avoid the attack. As his right arm swung weakly beside him, the stunt double turned subconsciously to retreat up the stairs. He didn't even stop to pick up his knife.

Han Fei glanced at the knife but he did not move to pick it up because it might muddle the culprit's fingerprint. Han Fei looked like the offending party but he knew very well that if he was the one wielding a dagger or knife, it would be hard to make the appeal that he was only defending himself. Someone

could have easily framed the image to ruin Han Fei's reputation. A staff, though, did not expose him to that danger. A staff was meant to debilitate, while a knife was meant to kill. In terms of damage, a hit by a staff might cause bone fracture but it would rarely kill.

With Han Fei holding the staff, the two started another chase scene. Their speed was not much slower than before, the difference was the chaser and the chased had swapped. When the stunt double decided to retreat, the ghost that followed behind him disappeared. The thing appeared and disappeared without a trace. It was like Han Fei had imagined everything, it didn't help that Han Fei appeared to be the only one who could see it.

Statistically speaking, the chance of the stunt double killing Han Fei was very high but no one would have expected a parkour athlete to fail to catch up to Han Fei in a chase and they also did not expect Han Fei to be so alert and prepared. The table turned but different from Han Fei, the stunt double ran upstairs to a dead end!

He raced at full speed but Han Fei stuck to him like a shadow. The pressure was unimaginable like Han Fei would follow him to the end of the world. They ran from the 9th floor to the 2nd floor and now they raced back from the 2nd floor to the 9th floor. The frantic footsteps were like little drum sounds.

Xiao Tong, who stayed in the Student's room, was getting bored. He needed someone to clean the fake blood from his mouth. He just got up from the ground when he heard the sound coming from outside. 'Why have they returned?'

Bang! The closed door was rammed into and the stunt double crashed in. His face was white and pain caused him to sweat profusely. Just as he turned to close the door, the door was kicked down!

The door slammed heavily into the wall. The stunt double rolled out of the way and towards Xiao Tong, he planned to capture Xiao Tong as hostage. The staff scratched against the wall. Before Xiao Tong could process the situation, he saw the murderous Han Fei appear at the door. With an icy gaze and a deadly smile, the man looked like he had just crawled out from the very depths of hell.

'The fuck?!' Xiao Tong instinctually reached towards the stunt double for protection and the two of them backed away from the threat that was Han Fei.

Chapter 266:

The fake blood and cold sweat mixed together and slid down Xiao Tong's cheeks. He had no idea how things turned out like this. According to the script, the Doctor was supposed to chase Han Fei away, so why did the latter return while brandishing a steel staff? In this small room, the only person Xiao Tong could rely on was the stunt double beside him. When people were afraid, they would seek safety in numbers, that was human nature.

Seeing Xiao Tong side with the stunt double, Han Fei's eyes narrowed. His lips moved slightly. "You're working together? That's surprising." Han Fei worked the staff and it sliced through the air noisily. Xiao Tong was so afraid that he dragged the actor and retreated further into the corner. In his panic, he accidentally grabbed the actor's wounded arm. It caused the man to grimace and his face turned paler. However, due to Xiao Tong's frazzled nerves, he didn't notice that. He was just an idol singer who decided to branch out into acting. He had not experienced anything like this before. All he realized was he needed to stay away from Han Fei because the man was very dangerous.

Xiao Tong had no idea that he was a hostage. He held on tightly to his 'kidnapper's arm and intended to draw the 'kidnapper' into the bedroom for safety. Seeing Xiao Tong voluntarily offer refuge to the murderer, Han Fei frowned deeper and he suddenly burst forward!

Xiao Tong and the stunt double backed away instantly. However, the bedroom door was only so big and they bumped into each other. With viciousness on his face, the stunt double grabbed Xiao Tong and shoved him towards Han Fei. Then he slipped into the bedroom and locked the door. Xiao Tong tripped and fell to the ground. As he looked up and saw the approaching hurricane which was Han Fei, he crawled backwards and screamed for mercy. Han Fei nudged the screaming Xiao Tong to the side so he could gain access to the bedroom. "Don't be scared, that man is a killer. Like you, I'm one of his hostages." Han Fei explained quickly to Xiao Tong as he lifted his leg and aimed it at the door lock!

"We're both hostages?"

Before Xiao Tong could process that peculiar information, he saw Han Fei kick the bedroom door down! The door shook and it fell entirely away from its hinges. "But you are not acting like a hostage at all!"

The lock cracked and the door fell. While Xiao Tong was still reeling from shock, Han Fei had already entered the room.

Chill winds touched his cheeks. The bedroom window was swinging wide open. The stunt double was standing on the study table beside the window. The man was in a very strange state. There was no fear or panic on his face, in their places instead were numbness and relief. It was like he had suddenly gotten tired of this world and his life. This was different from the man who chased so crazily after Han Fei earlier, it was like he had switched to a different persona.

'Is the Butterfly now in control?' A bloody pattern that resembled a butterfly appeared in the actor's eyes. The vessels interweaved deep inside the pupils. The actor was getting more unhinged. He suddenly cackled and then pointed his finger at Han Fei. "Soon, it'll be your turn!"

Han Fei already charged towards the man when he crossed the threshold of the room to try to grab the man but the man did not give him the chance. After he said his last piece, he jumped down from the window. When the stunt double fell through the air, he appeared to gain temporary sentience. Fear gripped his face and his bloodshot eyes bled with red tears. Standing at the window, perhaps it was an illusion but Han Fei saw something human-like hug the actor's waist, hiding behind him, dragging him down to the ground.

After a while, there came the sound of heavy crashing, followed by people screaming. Standing inside the room, Han Fei turned to examine the empty bedroom. The night wind continued to blow and it sent chills into Han Fei's heart. A human life was snuffed out just like that. Perhaps for the Butterfly, human lives were nothing but pawns and toys. 'The Butterfly likes to manipulate people and it has no respect for life. It probably sees itself as God and humans are just tools to achieve its goals. In a way, that shows how psychotic the Butterfly really is.'

Xiao Tong from the living room saw the stunt double's suicide too. His screams were truncated by a gasp and he weakened immediately. "You..." He didn't know what to say. His body was trembling. Each breath he took was cold like there was ice stuck in his lungs.

"That man was probably not a normal stunt actor, he was here to kill me." Han Fei held Xiao Tong up from the ground. "We're both his victims."

A victim had cornered the murderer to the point where he had to kill himself. Xiao Tong leaned against the wall. He still hadn't found the courage to speak. Frantic footsteps came from the corridor as the crew members charged into the room. They immediately saw the frightened Xiao Tong and Han Fei who stood by the bedroom door. 3 people entered this room and only 2 remained. The crew members found themselves stopping at the front door.

Several minutes later, the police arrived. Li Xue and 2 officers cut through the crowd and came to Han Fei's side. For them, ensuring Han Fei's safety was their most important mission because Han Fei was the key for them to capture the Butterfly. "Are you injured?" Li Xue examined Han Fei's body. She only sighed in relief when she couldn't find any wound. However when she picked up the call from her colleagues stationed on the ground, her expression turned severe. "The stunt actor has lost his vitals. My colleague is looking into his information now."

A murder occurred at the set, this was a very bad omen. The warning the old man gave Han Fei was coming true.

"Han Fei!" Director Zhang was breathing heavily when he arrived at the 9th floor, the long climb was taxing for his age. "The camera captured the scene where the man took out the hidden knife. I also bought a copy of the man's acting profile with me." If just viewed from the result, Han Fei was the one doing the chasing near the end, but in essence, Han Fei was only acting out of self-defense. With the info provided by Director Zhang and the police, Han Fei found out about the stunt double's past.

The man was originally a track star but he was banned due to brawls and drinking problems. He had a temper and a penchant for extreme sports. The sports gave him the adrenaline that he needed. Because of his natural physical prowess and daring nature, he soon made a name for himself in the circle. The man looked innocent enough from Director Zhang's info, but when coupled with the police's info, the character took a sinister turn.

The man had 3 former girlfriends and all 3 had filed domestic violence charges against him. The man was booked for drug use before and was a conspiracy theorist. Reading through the comments he posted online, Han Fei shook his head. The man talked a big game but he couldn't even grip a plastic knife properly in a fight.

"We'll try our best to find out when did he gain contact with the Butterfly." The police planned to bring Han Fei home with them. Director Zhang agreed. The last scene for the day was already done. Han Fei and Bai Xian's stunt double had finished their job. The chase scene couldn't be realer, it looked as if Han Fei was really running for his life, which he was.

"Director Zhang, I suggest we move the shoot to the day from now on." Before he left, Han Fei told Director Zhang. He had a feeling that the experience that day was just the beginning. Butterfly would only get crazier from now on.

'Butterfly is extremely cunning and anyone with a psychological weakness can be easily controlled by it. Therefore I have to be careful of everyone around me, be it strangers or friends.'

When Han Fei left the living compound and got into the police cruiser, he turned to look at the old building behind him. A wind chime appeared to ring in the dark. He could feel a pair of eyes focusing on him from inside the building.

Chapter 267:

'Spider turned the Meat Packing Factory's living compound into the grave for his 8 personas, does Butterfly plan to make this place my grave in real life? Just how many more secrets is this crazy thing still hiding?'

As the cruiser left the set and sped down the highway, the cloud over Han Fei's heart slowly dissipated. "Han Fei, you'll have to watch yourself when you're out. Butterfly has gone far more aggressive than we've ever seen it." Li Xue said seriously, "The former security guard who tried to murder Huang Yin before has just been found dead. Everyone related to the Butterfly started to act erratically. Their already serious mental problems have become more pronounced."

"What do you mean?"

"All the suspects we know, including Meng Changan started to show symptoms of delusions, fainting spells and illusions. We've hired experts to examine their brains." Li Xue took out her phone to show Han Fei several brain scans. All the brain scans showed a large section of pathological deterioration. If you connected all the pathological segments, they would form the shape of an open wing, like that of a butterfly. "The human brain is the most mysterious organ of the human body. We've already conducted neurological treatments on Meng Changan and the rest, and managed to stifle the deterioration of their problems. However, since midnight yesterday, their condition suddenly took a dip for the worse!" Midnight yesterday was exactly when Han Fei rescued Spider in the cryptic world and ruined Butterfly's plan at Cattle Alley. "I suspect this is not an isolated issue. Everyone who is affected by Butterfly will act crazier. Under the influence of the Butterfly, there's no telling what they might do." Li Xue warned but Han Fei couldn't take his eyes away from the brain scans.

He looked through a number of them and realized other than Meng Changan, there were a few other familiar names. Take for example, Ming Mei's family of 3. Even though quite some time had passed, Han Fei still remembered the devilish family of 3. To take over the real estate Ying Yue's parents left for her,

they killed Ying Yue, dismembered her and stuffed her in toy plushies. After the fact, Ming Mei's father tried to go after Jin Jun, the paparazzi but he was ultimately apprehended by Han Fei.

"This family of 3 is related to the Butterfly too?"

"Yes, but the pathological changes to their brain are not as complete as Meng Changan's. I believe they are failed products that came before Meng Changan." Li Xue answered the question since it was technically Han Fei who helped capture these suspects.

"I remember they had employed the insanity plea to escape the judgement of law, how is that coming along?"

"Ming Mei's father has admitted to the crime but the mother and Ming Mei are still undertaking the latest psychiatric and neurological treatment. They are currently placed under 20 hours of psychological intervention and correction every day so that they would soon come to terms with what they have done." Li Xue reminded Han Fei of something. He had personally gone to the penitentiary to check up on Ming Mei's family. The doctor who was treating Ming Mei was the student of the psychologist who treated Spider, his name was Wu Hei. The doctor had even provided Director Zhang and the crew with information about Spider when they started to shoot the Thriller Novelist and he had been to the living compound in person.

'The treatment helmet used by Hu Wei is designed by Deep Space, and all the products of Deep Space share the same core server...' Ever since he came back from the penitentiary, Han Fei had been trying to draw Ming Mei into the cryptic world. If Perfect Life was seen as a world, then the sandbox treatment room created by the therapy helmet for Ming Mei was like a bubble in that world. Ying Yue still missed Ming Mei greatly so the latter should have an affinity with spirits. Therefore, theoretically speaking, Han Fei should have no problem using Spirit Farer to summon Ming Mei to the cryptic world.

"It's about time I fulfil the promise I gave Ying Yue." The tenants at Happiness Neighbourhood had had a hard life, Han Fei was sincere to help them take revenge. However, he had been too busy trying to survive to help them. Now he was preparing to head to Ziggurat. With his current power level, he might not return alive. Therefore, he wished to do as much as he could for his neighbours before he departed for Ziggurat.

'Hopefully I won't get Huang Yin again.' Actually Han Fei himself was confused. According to the system, the chance of Han Fei pulling off a successful Spirit Farer was not that high, but it would work on Huang Yin every time.

With the police protection, Han Fei returned to his home safely. He just entered the room when he received a message from Huang Yin... 'Can you talk now?' After closing the door and windows, Han Fei called Huang Yin, "Brother Huang, what is it?"

"I've already prepared all the tools necessary to level up to 30 and to run for Honorary City Mayor."

"You're planning to run for the Honorary City Mayor's title?" Han Fei was startled to hear that, this was a big step for Brother Huang!

"Honorary City Mayor has no actual power but it comes with many hidden perks, it's one of the harder titles to gain in game. I plan to start my campaign at level 1 and grab the title before level 80."

"It'll take that long?" Han Fei shook his head, his expectation was dampened somewhat.

"When I chatted with you before, you gave me a lot of tips. Instead of trying to endear myself to the mayor, I might as well become the mayor."

"I think you'll have a smoother path to become the mayor in the cryptic world, no one will compete for the seat with you here." Han Fei chatted some more. He told Huang Yin to collect some useful skill books. Cryptic world had a lot of resources but perhaps because of the nature of the population, there were not many skill books that contained talent learnable by living humans. It was why Han Fei still relied on passive skills until now.

After hanging up, Han Fei scrounge up something simple to eat and then he picked up the books to read. It was to imagine that such a bookworm would be a butcher wearing an animalistic mask, dripping in blood, armed with a butcher's knife in the cryptic world.

At midnight, Han Fei connected all the wires and put on the helmet. Red fell and he opened his eyes in the darkness. The paper dolls looked at him emotionlessly and the chill seeped into his skin. Han Fei appeared inside the convenience store's warehouse. He found Drake and asked for the store update. After Han Fei became the boss, the items on sale flew off the shelves because the wandering spirits kept coming to barter them away.

Unlike the paper doll boss, Han Fei did not have the ability to seal the spirits inside objects and create new stock out of flesh and curse. Therefore, Yi Ming Convenience Store was running lower and lower on stock. "Boss, I have to say you're running this shop like a charity. Profit is not your intention."

"At least we've managed to get the shop's name out. People will not be that afraid to come to us in the future. If the sales have managed to cleanse our previous reputation, then it's already worth it." Han Fei walked into the storage room and he was quite flummoxed when he saw the room filled with wails of souls trapped inside various items and flesh. The previous boss knew how to turn these things into cursed food or weapons but Han Fei was not that talented. "We'll eventually figure out a way to use these things. If the storage ever becomes too full, then go bring Xu Qin's pet over and feed some to it." With the black anaconda, Han Fei lived a life of zero waste.

He returned to Happiness Neighbourhood. Han Fei first greeted Wei Youfu before he led Weep to the centre of the neighbourhood. If he used Spirit Farer here, then the target would only appear inside the neighbourhood. No matter what the thing was, Han Fei had confidence that they could be controlled with the help of the entire neighbourhood. After having Weep step back, Han Fei stood in the shadows of the apartment buildings and opened his menu. His eyes focused on a specific spot and his lips moved to recite, "Spirit Farer!"

Endless hands pried the menu open from the middle. Blood waves lapped at Han Fei and the man found himself standing before the Gate of Death.

Chapter 268:

Deep Space Tech's therapy helmet could manifest the patient's internal world using actual objects and colors. Ming Mei had stayed for a long time in this colorful room. Her inner self was very different from her surface self, she was a very well-hidden crazy little girl. She had no idea when she became this creature, perhaps it was familial influence or it was something she had done when she was small. "She is inside the fluffy cat, fluffy dog, fluffy bear..."

The past memories surfaced in her mind. She felt fear but not a shred of guilt or regret. Curling at the corner of the room, she hid her real self deep inside her heart as she mumbled some strange sentences on her lips. This was her disguise and haven. As long as she remained uncommunicative, she could hide here forever. She wasn't legally an adult, and she had mental problems. The main culprit was her father, she was just a child during the case, what really could a child like her do?

Leaning against the wall, Ming Mei had no idea how long she had stayed here but she did know that she was safe. The intensely vibrant colors made Ming Mei look so inconspicuous. No one would have connected this cowering little girl to that horrible murder. Hugging her knees, everything would pass if she stayed silent. Closing her eyes, Ming Mei was about to drift off to sleep in this colorful room when she felt a deep chill. It felt like a dead body had come to strangle her.

Her eyes flew open and Ming Mei realized the colorful walls had fallen away, instead she was inside a dim room. There was paper money on the floor, damaged furniture in the room and a broken ceremonial urn at the corner. 'Where am I? The therapy helmet can construct such realistic scenes?' Ming Mei stood up from the corner of the wall and looked around anxiously. Everything felt so real. 'The therapy helmet can only reconstruct places from my memory but I'm sure I've never been to this place.'

Ming Mei still acted quite confused inside this strange room. She was very clever, she was worried that this was a new technique employed by the police. She placed her fingers on the cracked wall when she heard a crisp sound coming from behind her. She turned to look and saw that the old anti-theft door had been opened without her realizing it.

The lights in the corridor did not turn on. Shards of mirror lingered on the ground, each of them seemed to be reflecting something different. 'There's someone else here?'

Ming Mei backed away looking at the dark and eerie corridor. Her heart started to race as fear and anxiety expanded within her. There appeared to be someone staring at her from the dark. The fear caused chills to run all over her body. Her exposed heel suddenly chilled. Ming Mei looked down and realized she had stepped on a thick stack of yellowed paper money.

'Did I step on some bugs?' Summoning her courage, Ming Mei reached out to slowly peel the paper money away. A brightly painted red face appeared before her. 'A paper doll?'

Being stared at by the doll, Ming Mei had this strange feeling that the doll was smiling at her!

Her chest dulled with suffocation. Ming Mei tried to grab hold of something to try to make herself calm down. Ming Mei moved about but she realized no matter where she went, the paper doll on the ground appeared to be following her. The papery eyes, faces and the intensely red paint on the face, they were branded into her mind. She knocked into the corner of the room and suddenly crying drifted into her ears!

Ming Mei immediately turned around but saw only a wall behind her. 'The crying comes from the other side of this wall? There's a child behind this?' Ming Mei didn't dare to leave the room. Stepping through the paper money, she nudged her way towards the bedroom. She creaked open the bedroom door slowly and Ming Mei looked into the bedroom, "Is someone here?"

There was no one inside the empty bedroom but the crying refused to stop. "Is someone here? Who's inside the house?" Ming Mei's body couldn't stop trembling. There was no one in the living room and bedroom, could the crying have come from inside the wall?

Looking at the cracked wall, Ming Mei's eyes slowly moved upwards. When she saw the ceiling, her entire person was stunned and then inexplicable terror exploded in her mind! The ceiling was covered in children's handprints! And there were more and more of them. They were moving as if there were invisible children crawling towards her!

With a scream, Ming Mei escaped from the room. The handprints chased after her, they didn't plan to let her go that easily. In her panic, Ming Mei stumbled her way up the stairs. Fear was like an invisible hand closing around her neck and it had started to squeeze!

"Where is this place? Why am I here?" The handprints slowly gained up on her. A giant shadow was also rapidly approaching from the dark. Ming Mei's eyes scanned the closed doors as she ran for her life. She was unsettled by the many different sounds coming from the rooms. There was laughing, crying, chopping and munching. She pleaded weakly for help but no one came to her rescue. She stumbled and fell until her limbs were wounded and bruised. She half-crawled, half-rolled up the stairs, fear dominating every nerve ending in her body. She did not dare to stop. She knocked on every door that she passed. She wanted to find a refuge, someone to come help her. The children's crying and laughing descended upon her and she felt an extra weight on her back. Their faces were pale. They were laughing and crying as they pulled on Ming Mei's hair and pinched her skin. It was like they were trying to crawl into her body!

Ming Mei missed a step and she rolled down from the stairs. Her arms were wounded and her previously clean face was stained with dust and blood. It was not until she fell that she realized how bloody the stairs were. Just how long would it take to make such a thick crust of blood?

She realized she didn't need to know the answer. Ming Mei climbed up with a scream and crawled up the stairs on all fours. "Is someone there? Help me, please..." Tears flowed down her cheeks. She reached the 8th floor and finally spotted a door which was half open. The door looked quite familiar but it was not the time to stop and think. She ran into the room. She used the fastest speed to lock the heavy anti-theft door. With her hands on the door handle, her body still shook non-stop. The strange

sounds slowly faded away. Ming Mei leaned on the wall and looked through the peephole to make sure. When her eye aligned with the lens, she saw there was only whiteness staring back at her. Just when she thought that was a white stain, the whiteness suddenly moved and then a black pupil turned over!

There was a living eyeball inside the peephole!

Ming Mei fell back from the shock. She landed on the ground. Before her mind could get over that fear, her hands touched something. She turned her head to look and saw the torn toy plushies that scattered all around her. The brown fur was surprisingly pointy. These things felt very familiar to Ming Mei but she couldn't place them at first notice. She pinched the fur and Ming Mei lifted her eyes to take in the living room.

"Wait, this place..." A terrifying familiarity overwhelmed her. Ming Mei couldn't believe it but she was back in her 'own' home!

She was familiar with everything within her sight but the only question was, why were there 4 pairs of shoes at the shoe rack?

With her eyes locked on the extra pair of shoes, the name that refused to leave her memory surfaced to her lips. "Ying Yue?"

Suddenly footfalls came from inside the room. Ming Mei sprung up from the ground. She pulled at her hair like she was trying to yank them out. "Impossible!" The room looked just like how it did many years ago, the day when they killed Ying Yue!

The broken pieces of toy plushies littered everywhere, each of them was stuffed with a bloody mess. With shivering steps, Ming Mei walked towards her own bedroom. Her pink princess bedroom was dominated by dolls and right in the middle of the dolls, there was a little girl sitting among them!

The girl too looked like one of the dolls. She sat there quietly, looking at the aquarium next to the bed. Ming Mei had once poured Ying Yue's parents' cornea into the aquarium and then refilled the vials with the water from the aquarium. She had done all these disgusting things but that should be a secret between herself and the dead Ying Yue. So how did all of these get reconstructed so many years later?!

Ming Mei's face was distorted from fear. Right at that moment, the little girl sitting among the dolls slowly turned her head around. Her pale face was cute and innocent but instead of eyes, she had two black holes!

"Ming Mei... I've been waiting for you for so long, you're finally here to play with me..."

When the familiar voice entered her ears, Ming Mei's heart almost stopped. She charged towards the door like crazy, but no matter what she did, the anti-theft door refused to open. The toys inside the room started to move on their own. Eyes blinked open from every corner of the room. Ying Yue materialized inside the living room. Her two hollowed eyes stared at Ming Mei. "Where is your father and mother? Remember, your family will not let me out of your sight. So where are they now?"

All the eyes inside the House of Eyes opened. Ming Mei's heart-wrenching screams echoed inside the room!

Half an hour later, the door to Ying Yue's house opened. Han Fei was standing quietly beside the door. Ming Mei was gone but there appeared to be a few more plushies inside the room. Ying Yue stood numbly in the living room. She only lifted her head when Han Fei entered the room.

"Were you satisfied with my present?" Han Fei knelt down before Ying Yue and looked at her with heartache. "Since I've given you my promise, I will get it done."

Chapter 269:

Two rows of blood tears trickled out from the black hollows as Ying Yue was reminded of her painful past. Using Soul-depth Touch, Han Fei helped Ying Yue wipe away her tears. He didn't say anything more, it was also not an occasion for words. "Notification for Player 0000! You've fulfilled the promise to Ying Yue, friendliness level with Ying Yue increases by 20!

"Notification for Player 0000! Your action has been witnessed by all the residents of Happiness Neighbourhood. Your action brought them a bit of hope! Friendliness level with all the tenants of Happiness Neighbourhood increases by 1!"

Ying Yue who stood before Han Fei did not look like a girl at all, she was more like a lost girl who had found her family again. Ying Yue held onto Han Fei's clothes to signal for him to stay a bit longer while she walked towards her bedroom. She eventually returned with some old woollen dolls.

"I think you better keep these dolls." Han Fei said, he didn't help Ying Yue because he wanted a reward. Hearing Han Fei's rejection, Ying Yue shook her head stubbornly and then tore open the dolls' bodies. She shoved the evil energy inside them into Han Fei's ghost tattoo. "Notification for Player 0000! Grade G Beginner Skill, Ghost Tattoo has absorbed sufficient negative emotion and resentment! Skill has skipped level to upgrade to Advanced Level Ghost Tattoo!"

"Ghost Tattoo: Several spirits are hidden inside your tattoo, they are sealed there on the surface of your skin by Ying Yue through her unique method. They can help you block the negative influence of curses, incoming attacks and absorbing negative energy waves.

"Warning! Ghost Tattoo can continue to be upgraded! If you manage to trap special type spirits inside it, Ghost Tattoo has a small chance of gaining special abilities!"

Ghost Tattoo at Beginner's level already helped Han Fei a lot. Without the protection of the tattoo, Han Fei's skin would corrupt when brushing into spirits, much less having close contact with them. Upgrading Ghost Tattoo exhausted Ying Yue greatly, her body was significantly weaker than before. But compared to physical weakness, her cold heart appeared to regain some warmth. When he left Ying Yue's place, Han Fei touched the tattoo on his skin, he could feel the energy coursing through it.

When he passed the 7th floor, Han Fei was still studying the Ghost Tattoo, and the door to the Mirror God's room swung open. The Mirror God at Building 1 and the Spectral Dog at Building 2 were the earliest tenants at Happiness Neighbourhood. When the Singer entered Building 1, only the Mirror God was left unscathed, that showed how powerful it was. During Han Fei's earlier missions, he almost died in Mirror God's hands so even after he became the building manager, he rarely returned to that room. To his surprise, now the door of that room opened on its own as if inviting him.

With some consternation, Han Fei stood where he was, he didn't dare to move too carelessly. Just as Han Fei considered going upstairs to get Ying Yue to accompany him past the 7th floor, a mirror which was placed inside the room facing Han Fei started to bleed. Then the blood coagulated into a sentence. "You've helped many tenants here, if possible, do you mind helping me too?" Seeing the blood message, Han Fei was first startled before it dawned on him. With his rescue of Xu Qin and completion of his promise to Ying Yue, Han Fei had gained an increased friendliness level with all the tenants and that must have included the Mirror God as well.

“Of course.” Han Fei agreed without hesitation. The Mirror God was itself a mysterious cursed object. To get to Ziggurat, Han Fei needed all the help he could get. With Xu Qin and Mirror God with him, it would make his life much easier.

“I need you to help me find a body, I’ve been staying in the mirrors for much too long already.” When the new blood message appeared on the mirror, Han Fei received a new system notification.

“Notification for Player 0000! You’ve triggered Grade F Hidden Mission—Mirror God’s Request!

“Mirror God’s Request: The mirror at Happiness Neighbourhood’s 7th floor came into being almost at the same time as the neighbourhood did. He knows a lot of secrets and possesses very unique powers. If you are willing to help him find a suitable vessel, then you’ll gain his friendship and help! The mission has no time limit but the vessel you find must be up to the Mirror God’s standard, perhaps you can offer your own body to try.”

Hearing the notification, Han Fei was shocked. This was a Grade F Hidden Mission. “You’re a tenant here so naturally I’ll do my best to help you fulfil your request! I’ve been cursed by the people from Ziggurat, I might need to head there after 7 days, that might not be enough time for me to find you a suitable body.” Han Fei said but he had actually accepted the mission. After all, this was a mission with no time limit, he had nothing to lose.

“You’re willing to help me, that’s enough.” The blood on the mirror slowly disappeared. Everything returned to normal but the system told Han Fei that his friendliness level with the Mirror God had increased by another 3 points. “I will help you if I can, after all, you are part of the big family too.” Closing the door on the 7th floor, Han Fei came back to the ground floor. He was prepared to start his communication with Huang Yin. After completing Jin Sheng’s manager mission, Han Fei’s Spirit Farer talent upgraded, he could now use it twice every night. However, his Resurrection talent could only be used once per night. In other words, Han Fei could drag 2 people down into the cryptic world in one night but only sent one back.

Walking into the shadows of the building, Han Fei activated Spirit Farer again. Different from when he summoned Ming Mei, the ghost face that represented Huang Yin felt like he couldn’t wait to come back to the cryptic world. As the ghost face morphed into a blood fish and swam towards the surface, Han Fei spotted giant shadows that coursed through the depths of the red sea. He wondered if he continued to strengthen Spirit Farer, would he one day be able to pull out the deep sea monsters from the blood sea?

“Perhaps I can consider pulling an uncontrollable blood sea creature at Ziggurat, that’ll surprise the Butterfly...”

A flash later, Huang Yin’s familiar scream came from Building 2. Han Fei shook his head with a bitter smile as he led Weep towards Building 2. Following the soul-crushing screams, Han Fei found Huang Yin on the 3rd floor of Building 2.

When he arrived, the impossibly slim Lee Zai had twined around Huang Yin’s neck. He sniffed Huang Yin carefully and mumbled, “Black on the forehead, red in the eyes, misfortune between the brows, your chakra cannot be worse! You are destined for tragedies and misfortunes, it is destined that you are to meet us brothers!”

A man had curled around his neck like a snake, it was understandable why Huang Yin almost died from fright. He thought he had already trained his courage but he realized his training was still not enough.

“You are born with misfortune and eventually become a doctor because it’s easier for you to cure yourself after endless strings of illnesses. It’s extremely rare to come across someone who is absolutely devoid of luck.” Lee Zai still had more to say but Han Fei pulled him away. Huang Yin was his only friend, if he was scared witless, who was going to help him?

“Brother Huang, are you alright?”

“I, I’m okay.” Huang Yin stuttered as he slithered behind Han Fei. His face was pale and he didn’t dare to meet Lee Zai’s eyes.

“This is Lee Zai. You two have met before, he means you no harm,” Han Fei made the introduction before he quickly changed the subject, “By the way, Brother Huang did you bring the things I asked you to?”

Chapter 270:

“Have we met?” Huang Yin’s mind was blank. He was becoming more and more impressed by Han Fei. He managed to thrive at a place filled with monsters and ghosts, that was crazy.

“It doesn’t really matter now. You’ll have more chances to get to know each other in the future. Let’s head back to Building 1 first.” Han Fei waved and then moved to help the weakened Huang Yin stumble back to the other building. He used the key left by the previous manager and opened the door to Room 1041. “Brother Huang, this will be your room from now on. You can place all the mission objects here if you want.”

“You’ve found me a room?” Huang Yin just arrived and he was already given real estate, he was shocked by Han Fei’s generosity.

“See if you find this place comfortable, if you don’t like it, I can find a new place for you.”

“This place is alright.” Huang Yin entered the room and opened his inventory which was maximized to store infinity items. “I’ve wrangled some nice skill books for you from the surface world’s black market, you should be able to use them.” Then he handed the books to Han Fei.

“Intermediate Rock-climbing, Tips and Tricks to scuba diving, Introduction to lock picking, Wilderness Survival Manual—How to Thrive in Extreme Environment, Basics of Wireless Communication, Strategies of War and Amphibious Warfare...” Browsing through the skill books, Han Fei believed Huang Yin had learned from his previous lessons. He didn’t purchase anything related to the occult or religion but it seemed like he planned to turn Han Fei into some kind of super soldier. These skill books looked useful but only to a certain extent. For players of Perfect Life, whenever they wanted to learn a new skill, they had to unlock the beginner’s level through actual training and application first, only then they could rely on skill points to level them. After some consideration, Han Fei settled for skill books related to emergency rescue, rock-climbing, diving and manufacturing of basic tools.

After reading these books, he would need to attempt a lot of things before he could unlock the actual skill in his skill tab. In this world, practice really did make perfect. However, compared to players in the surface world, Han Fei had a unique advantage. There were a lot of missions available in the cryptic world and there was no one else to steal them away from him. The missions also often offered great rewards so it was not hard for him to come into skill points. In the future, he might become an actor proficient in various skills.

While Han Fei perused through the skill books, Huang Yin was like a busy bee, unloading the various mission objects from his inventory. He was a very cautious and detail-orientated person. He had already categorized all the items before he arrived. After Perfect Life entered OB, with these items, he would level up quickly. He could even skip through some of the mission tedium. Even a professional gaming studio wouldn’t be able to compete with him. Han Fei didn’t disturb Huang Yin seeing how busy the man

was. He left the room and gathered all the tenants who were willing to leave the neighbourhood. He planned to go for another outing.

The Doctor had amassed a lot of outsiders at Cattle Alley. Most of them resided around Cattle Alley. Now that they were injured, this was the perfect time to 'visit' them. Han Fei was under great tension. He needed to infiltrate the Ziggurat in 7 days and during this period, he needed to help Xu Qin mend her wounds and find as much help as he could. After everyone was present, Han Fei took out Cattle Mask and Rest in Peace from his inventory and returned to the 4th floor. "Brother Huang, are you ready? I'm supposed to send you back now." Huang Yin shivered when he heard Han Fei's voice. He knew Han Fei meant him no harm but still he couldn't control his body. His eyes leaped behind Han Fei and took in the neighbours who stood behind him. Huang Yin's face twitched, he had a hard time imagining Han Fei was a popular celebrity in real life.

'Is this what we call a true actor?' Many idol artists put on shimmering outfits and strode down red carpets. They were surrounded by screaming fans with banners and lights. They were always surrounded by the cacophony of their fans calling their name.

A real actor wore a mask, held a knife and stood in blood. He was surrounded by monsters of varying nature. Everyone was pale and ghastly as they tried to suppress the madness and bloodlust within them. Forcing a smile, Huang Yin's legs shook. No matter how many times he experienced this, he couldn't get used to it. He had no idea whether he was the abnormal one or Han Fei was.

"Before the game enters OB, you should bring as many useful items as you can from the surface world, we might not have this chance anymore in the future." After saying that, Han Fei closed the door and used the Resurrection skill on Huang Yin. When the menu returned to normal, Huang Yin was gone. The tired Han Fei took a deep breath, put on the mask and left the room.

"Let's go." They moved out from the building. When they exited Happiness Neighbourhood, Han Fei had Weep pull the vet out from the urn. The vet was charmed by the Doctor and attacked Xu Qin at Cattle Alley. His talent was to control sewn together pets, he was a rather special Lingering Spirit.

Before the vet could speak, he already saw the army of ghosts. Instantly, he lost the will to fight.

"Where is your home?" Han Fei's icy voice came from under the mask, it sounded scary.

"I own a pet store. But if I go back now, I'll be killed." The vet was still quite rational and he answered Han Fei honestly.

"You'll be killed?"

"I did own the shop but the shop is now controlled by a monster pieced together by pet carcasses. It has gotten too strong for me to control and it likes... to turn humans into pets." The vet shivered like he was reminded of something horrible. "It was not easy for me to escape from there." When Han Fei headed towards Cattle Alley the first time, he passed by the pet shop. At the time, both Drake and Weep warned him from going near it.

"It was you who created this new owner?"

"Yes."

"Does it have any weaknesses?"

"The thing..." The vet thought for a long time before he said, "I did leave behind a failsafe mechanism when I worked on its heart. It has a tough exterior but a very weak heart. Once you destroy its heart, it will weaken tremendously but it won't be easy to kill it due to how intensely vital it is." The way the vet described the monster piqued Han Fei's interest. With a plan made, Han Fei had all the neighbours enter Weep's urn and then he walked down the street alone hugging the urn.

"We're all situated on the same street but I can't say I know the other business owners. I should try to befriend some of them on this trip." Walking down the street with Weep's urn, Han Fei felt comfortable. He fitted in perfectly with the dark and gloomy city, it was like he was born here. After dealing with a few curious 'pedestrians', Han Fei finally arrived at the pet shop. The windows were pasted with various pet pictures, they looked cute.

"Is the business open?" Hugging the urn, Han Fei entered the shop. The interior was much bigger than it looked from the outside. Most of the partitions were knocked down. The few doors had their locks removed. A lot of animal fur was left on the ground and various cages sat at the corners. However, the cages were all empty. It felt weird stepping on the carpet of fur. Han Fei moved into the shop and towards the door that led to the back of the storefront. A weak dog's whimper entered his ears. But

when Han Fei turned to the sound, the eyes under the mask narrowed. The cage contained not animals but fading spirits.

Han Fei pulled away the black cloth that covered the cages. The meowing and barking surrounded his ears but there were no cats and dogs, instead there were only lingering spirits and animated regrets. They were locked inside the cages. Their minds were so muddled that they really saw themselves as real kept pets.