

Iyashikei 411

Chapter 411

411 Star Shooters

The direction of the comments was turning. When the real victims' families were willing to tear open their internal wounds to stand by Han Fei's side, the rumor-mongers had already lost. The edited video, the accusatory post written by a professional team, the lies were unraveled one after another.

This showed how wicked the culprit was. Han Fei had helped the police solve many cases, which involved many victims and their families. The families from different cases didn't know each other so the culprit thought no one would discover if they pretended to mix in their ranks. Furthermore, some of the people that accused Han Fei did have some tenuous relationship with the victims. They might be the victims' friend's friends or their family's family. As long as there was money, certain people would do anything.

Most netizens wouldn't investigate that deep behind the rumors. They only saw what they wanted to see, which in this case was that the helpful actor was actually a ruthless character who trampled on other people's wounds. The perpetrator didn't even need to do much. They only needed to bury the seed and the sin of humanity would cultivate it to grow into a large and ugly monster. If there were 10 family members and 1 of them was bought over, then the public would see that Han Fei was in the wrong. If the families from the human jigsaw case didn't react so timely, then Han Fei would be overwhelmed by negative comments, he wouldn't even have the chance to explain himself. Han Fei would sink under the sea of criticism and he'd never be heard from again.

Fortunately this did not happen. Han Fei helped the police with the cases not for the sake of money or fame, he purely wanted to return justice to his neighbours in the cryptic world. This world was horrible but it was not unsalvageable.

The perpetrator didn't expect the real victims' families to react so sharply, they also didn't expect Xin Lu Law Enforcement to intervene before they could launch their second phase of operation. When all the lies had been exposed, they discovered something impossible, Han Fei was so squeaky clean that they couldn't do anything to him anymore. After the perpetrator knew that they couldn't use the 'victims' family' to boycott Han Fei anymore, they changed their tactic. They used the 50 cent army to spread another piece of news. This time, they claimed that it was the crew members of the Thriller Novelist who were the ones who pretended to be the victims' families as a promotional method for their movie. They started to attack the crew members of Thriller Novelist. The accusation was the same, just the target had changed. The tactic was the same, they lambasted the crew of Thriller Novelist for tearing

open the wounds of the victims' families just to promote their movie, Thriller Novelist's team even went so far as to disguise themselves as the families to release that disgusting video and post!

This group of animals really had no bottom line. They had the moral high ground but they reached that height by stepping on the dead bodies of the victims.

However by then, not that many people were willing to believe the rumors anymore. After all, the original post that targeted Han Fei had been deleted and the account who first released the video had disappeared. The videos left on the internet were the ones taken by the real victims' families. The videos had low quality, no subtitles but that lent to their authenticity. The negative comments had already started to be replaced by words of warmth. The perpetrator had escaped and the haters disappeared. Soon their horrible comments would be deleted or covered by other messages. The only thing unchanged was Han Fei.

At 9 pm, Han Fei once again appeared on the national hot searches list, this should be the closest he would get to Huang Yin on the list. Han Fei walked out from his dressing room and ran into Director Zhang who was on a video call with several men. Once he saw Han Fei, Director Zhang pulled him into the camera. "These are the main producers and the sponsors for Thriller Novelist, we're discussing our retaliation."

When they attacked Han Fei, that was Han Fei's problem, but now that they attacked Thriller Novelist, this was an issue for the whole crew. Director Zhang looked prepared, after all, it was his belief that these people's target had always been Thriller Novelist.

"Director Zhang, I don't care how you retaliate but you cannot drag the victims' families into this anymore. They shouldn't have to face the pain of losing their families again and again, it's too cruel." Han Fei told the men in the video. "I hope you won't use the videos released by the families and the popularity they brought. I wish for this to settle down as soon as possible."

Han Fei's attitude was firm even when he was with the director, main sponsors and producer. It was more like he was telling them what to do than discussing the situation with them. The men in the video looked at each other. They already planned to use this opportunity to help promote both Thriller Novelist and Han Fei.

"Han Fei, look at your placement on the actor ranking and the number of your fans. They have boomed. This is a perfect opportunity, you sure you want to let that go?" A man asked with confusion. He showed the screen beside him to Han Fei. "Currently, the entire internet is talking about you! An actor who has

no company and no agency donated all of his salary and reward money to help the victims' families. Your acts of kindness have won you this opportunity! We will be promoting you! This is an opportunity given by..."

"Even so, there has to be a bottom line. Furthermore, I didn't help the police for the sake of money and fame." Han Fei's voice was strong and powerful. He stared at the people in the video, no one dared to counter him. "Don't disturb the families anymore, that's all I ask." The man in the video continued to persuade Han Fei but his eyes that viewed Han Fei colored with admiration.

After a whole day of shooting and the torment of the internet rumors, Han Fei was already quite tired. But mainly it was because he had photographic memory. It meant that a lot of information was stored in his mind. He would be reminded of them often. "After being scolded for so long, I am only feeling a little bit tired, looks like I've matured." Han Fei didn't know if this incident would continue or not but he would not stop now, after all, he carried many people's hopes on him.

After greeting every crew member who was concerned about him, Han Fei prepared to leave. Han Fei just changed and walked out from the set when he heard the motor engine. He turned his head over and saw Li Xue in plain clothes. "When did you arrive?"

"Quite some time already." Li Xue tossed Han Fei a helmet. "Get on, the Butterfly is still out there. The superior is worried about you walking home alone so he sent me to drive you."

"Thank your superior for me."

"Wait, you believe that?" The engine grunted and Li Xue carried Han Fei away from the factory compound and rode down the Xin Lu highway. The bike cut through the night and the barren countryside. "Did you expect to run into so many troubles when you decided to help people?"

"No."

"Would you still help people after this?"

"Yes." Hearing Han Fei's answer, Li Xue stopped talking, she only gave a long sigh. The streetlights lit the road ahead. After Li Xue saw the storm online, she rushed to the set after she clocked off from work.

After they got into the city district, Li Xue slowed down. "Would you like to go for a drink?" Li Xue had seen Han Fei's social media, and it was filled with various horrible comments. They were enough to drive a person insane so she was trying to distract Han Fei from being alone with them. After one had enough alcohol in them, the problem wouldn't appear so impossible anymore.

"Do all the police drink after work?" Han Fei looked at the stalls by the roadside. Now one could only find them in the old city. After the intelligent city expanded, they too would disappear.

"Who said that police can't drink after work? We're humans too, just like you."

"Nah, you need to ride home after this. You shouldn't drink." After Li Xue arrived at Han Fei's neighbourhood, Han Fei treated Li Xue to a quick supper. They chatted during the meal. The topic was mostly about the murder cases around Xin Lu. It scared the waiter so much that his hands were shaking when he served them the dishes. Han Fei returned home at 11 pm. He took a cold shower and then called Jin Jun. "Did you find anything?"

"I did, but it's quite problematic." Jin Jun hesitated, "The culprit is a madman who worked for money. I think it's wise for us to stay away from him."

"A madman? How mad is he?" Han Fei's lips curled and his eyes were scarily dark.

"Most of the people in my industry are like me, we are independent but there is a group of animals who survive on slandering others. They have formed a group among themselves called Star Shooter. The meaning is simple: no matter how high the stars are, they can shoot them down. This group of people has no bottom line, stalking, black-mailing, threatening, harassing, for the sake of money, they would do anything."

"They are the one who used the victims' families?"

"The reason why the campaign against you got so big is because the leader of this group is involved." Jin Jun sighed. "You sure you want to challenge them? If you do, they will do everything within their power to attack you. They will watch your every move and then try to use public pressure to kill you." Jin Jun said seriously, "I'm not exaggerating. These people have once killed a person for the sake of money. You

can still find details of that case on the internet now. About 10 years ago, there was a female livestreamer with an incurable disease who was forced to her death because of them.”

“A female livestreamer with an incurable disease?” Suddenly everything clicked for Han Fei. He was reminded of the deliveryman who kept slandering the red dress. The deliveryman’s Id in the red dress’ livestream was Star Shooter 1.

“10 years ago, they were already so crazy. It has only gotten worse over the years. A few weeks ago, they had just ruined a female starlet. They claimed that she was a drug user and photoshopped her face on a real addict and spread that on the internet as evidence...” Jin Jun shared everything he knew with Han Fei. He didn’t hide anything. When Jin Jun knew Han Fei planned to fight with the Star Shooters, he understood the severity of the situation. The Star Shooters were not normal 50 cent armies, they were mad murderers who killed with keyboard. So far, no celebrity dared to challenge them.

“Han Fei, think about it, they are well-hidden and they are numerous. They are not going to crumble after their leader is caught. Even if the main culprit is captured, they will at most be imprisoned for several years for internet slander, however the rest of the group will come after you for life! Your career is just starting, is it really worth it to mess with these maggots?” Jin Jin persuaded.

“I didn’t plan to but after hearing what you said, be it for the livestreamer 10 years ago or the starlet recently, I believe I need to do the right thing.” Through Jin Jun, Han Fei got to know the names of the leader and the central members of Star Shooters. “Don’t worry, I won’t do anything crazy. They’ve slandered my name, I’ll only whisper their names into the ears of certain people.” What Han Fei didn’t say was that he was going to use cursed words to whisper their names into the ears of the red dress. “You said they would do anything for money, right? I’ll prepare a lot of money for them...” Paper money that is...

Even if they didn’t own a Perfect Life account, it didn’t matter, Han Fei didn’t plan to let them go in real life anyway. When the time was right, he would report them to the police for them to receive justice.

These days, Han Fei rarely got angered anymore but when he saw Wei Youfu’s father standing beside Wei Youfu and his wife’s deceased portraits, fury burned within him. “They dare to masquerade as the families of the victims. Since they don’t care about other people’s despair, then I don’t need to care about theirs either.” After hanging up, Han Fei glanced at the clock.

When midnight arrived, he crawled into the gaming hub and put on the black gaming helmet

Chapter 412

412 Blood Paper Doll

Blood fell all over his eyes. Until now Han Fei couldn't tell if the world had been dyed red in that moment or his eyes were leaking blood. While his consciousness descended, Han Fei could feel something approaching him from behind but he couldn't turn around to look. He tried his best and only saw a bloody arm.

The Singer carrying the old man's head was still hiding inside the building near the plastic surgery hospital. His eyes stared closely behind Han Fei. Other than the Singer, deep down the city, there was a hue of crimson floating about, looking for the bug who had destroyed its altars.

Opening his eyes, Han Fei appeared inside Yi Ming Private Academy as the smell of mould drifted into his nostrils. Han Fei waited and he sighed greatly in relief when he didn't hear system notification. He was so afraid that Big Sin had gained him a few more curses when he was not around.

Opening his character profile, Han Fei noticed the curse, Blood Debt had changed. It was now a Compound Curse and it was appended with the label, Undying Debt. This was proof that Big Sin had truly incensed that Unmentionable.

'My reputation is now 84, seems like Big Sin has destroyed another altar. My afterlife karma is now 96, 4 more to 100.' Han Fei's fists tightened. 'Another 2 more days and I should be able to escape this near death state.' The system did say that the fatality rate for players to build an altar before level 15 was 100 percent, it was not lying. If Han Fei didn't have the aid from his neighbours, he wouldn't have survived until now. Furthermore, Han Fei had merely set up the altar, this was just the first step.

Han Fei opened the door and he encountered Drake, Zhang Guanxing and Ying Yue, who was holding a fishbowl. They guarded Han Fei's room in turn. "Boss, the school is not safe anymore." When Drake saw Han Fei, he quickly walked over. His face didn't look so pretty.

"Have we been infiltrated by the monsters from the hospital?"

“We discovered broken life threads around the school and strange things that have ventured in from other areas.” Drake described the situation yesterday. “Initially we thought they were just wandering souls but after we interacted with them further, we realized they were different from normal souls. Their bodies, faces and even consciousness have been operated on.”

“What do you mean?”

“It felt like someone had cut through these people’s souls, carving them into shapes of sin to release their despair and madness.” Drake said darkly, “These people lost even the shape of human beings, it’s more appropriate to call them monsters.”

As Drake explained, Ying Yue suddenly pulled on Han Fei’s shirt. Then she kept gesturing. After a long time, Han Fei finally understood her. “You mean the previous building manager has similar power?”

Indeed, the previous manager also had the power to carve people’s souls and change their forms, however, he used them to seal the souls’ pain and despair. He had used this power on Meng Si and Ying Yue before, to help them seal up their painful memory and hatred. The perfect example was Meng Si, until now, the old lady still lived in the fabricated memory, believing she and her grandson were still alive. In the past, Han Fei tried to tell her the truth, he accidentally triggered the pain in Meng Si and a ghastly monster appeared from the back of her mind.

“The monsters you saw probably came from the hospital. The previous manager has the same power as the Pure Hatred from the hospital?” Han Fei was reminded of something. The CEO of Immortal Pharma often visited the plastic surgery hospital he sponsored too.

“Plastic surgery in real life works on people’s appearance but plastic surgery in the cryptic world changes people’s souls.” Han Fei remembered a rumor that he saw online when he did his research on that hospital. Immortal Pharma was the pioneer in brain and nerve research. The plastic surgery hospital they owned even offered the service to change a person’s personality, to make a meek individual more successful and brave. Of course, these were just rumors. With the closure of the hospital, all the records were gone. “Looks like Fu Sheng is indeed related to the plastic surgery hospital somehow or else the Singer wouldn’t have wandered into its territory, as if waiting for me.”

Ying Yue didn’t know much else about Fu Sheng. Han Fei turned to look at the infirmary. Fu Sheng was once a teacher at Yi Ming Private Academy and Jin Sheng was another one of his experiments. Unfortunately Fu Sheng failed to heal Jin Sheng, instead he caused Jin Sheng to sink deeper into his despair. Han Fei tried to call Jin Sheng’s name but there was no response. Jin Sheng appeared to have

exhausted all of his power to carve down the latest ghost story on Han Fei. Currently he was hibernating. "If Jin Sheng continues to slumber, then this school won't be safe for long."

After a moment's thought, Han Fei walked into a random classroom. Before he left Yi Ming Private Academy, he had one more thing to do. "Spirit Farer!" He chanted Huang Yin's name at the torn door. Among the sea of blood, a bloody carp swam against the current and leaped through the surface. The tables and chairs were tipped over and a man in an extremely rare outfit appeared. Compared to the first few times, Huang Yin's presence had changed. He looked more imposing.

"Brother Huang, you appear to have gotten stronger." Han Fei tapped Huang Yin's shoulder to check his attribute. Huang Yin was now level 19. With his level A talent, Nightmare, he could pick up skills related to intelligence very fast. Currently he had raised all the abilities of the Blood Doctor to the maximum. He could defend himself if necessary. Even in the cryptic world, Huang Yin could now easily escape from Animated Regrets. However, he wouldn't fare well against Linger Spirit because Linger Spirits would have their special power too.

"Why is it that I still shiver involuntarily when I see you even though I'm already level 19?" Huang Yin sighed. Before Han Fei, he felt like he was only level 1.

"You've already tried your best." Han Fei consoled the man. The players on the surface world couldn't compare to Han Fei. Han Fei had 2 hidden professions, a bunch of titles and passive skills. Even though Han Fei's level was lower than Huang Yin, he was more powerful. Furthermore, the cryptic world was like hell. Only the best could survive here. In fact, Huang Yin probably couldn't even beat Han Fei's pet, Big Sin.

"Grab your things and prepare to go. The guard uncle is making his patrol here soon." Once Han Fei said that, Huang Yin immediately jumped into action. He kept shoving the stuff into his inventory. He didn't want to waste even a second. His lips kept quivering. Han Fei shook his head when he saw Huang Yin like this. Who would have thought the most powerful man in the surface world would be so afraid of an old guard?

With his bigger inventory, Huang Yin took away more items. After sending Huang Yin back with Resurrection, Han Fei locked the classroom door. With Drake and Ying Yue's help, Han Fei completed another reserved Grade G mission and then hurried towards Ziggurat. The black mist had disappeared. On their way there, Han Fei saw many broken life threads. The monsters from the hospital were slowly approaching Ziggurat. The only reason they hadn't launched a full assault was because they didn't know the Butterfly had died.

“The monsters in this world cannot be cleared as long as the dark night is still around. Nowhere is really safe.” Han Fei did a lot to clean the area around Ziggurat but now he needed to face new challenges. He barely had the time to rest.

“Nice to see you!” A man’s voice came from the corridor. The businessman shuffled over. After he got to know his mother’s latest update, he was much friendlier to Han Fei.

“You’re helping the patrols?” Han Fei saw the businessman as a friend.

“No... I’m collecting money.” The businessman swept up the paper money from the ground and shoved them into the wooden box behind him. On the Night of Resurrection, the Singer destroyed the 3 other buildings at Ziggurat so a lot of paper money was left scattered around.

“Okay then, be careful.”

“Wait, I almost forgot.” The businessman stopped Han Fei. He took out a cracked soul bell from the wooden box. “After the Butterfly died, most soul bells exploded, this is the only one still relatively intact. You like to collect cursed objects so this is my gift to you for saving my life.” After handing the soul bell over to Han Fei, the businessman took out a large pile of paper doll pieces. “I remember you have a blood red doll. It is similar to the paper dolls here. I’ve been picking up their pieces. They possess curses and other things, they should be useful to you too.” The businessman had a sharp instinct.

“Thank you.” Han Fei felt like he should pay more attention to this businessman. After all, having a merchant friend was instrumental in an Iyashikei game.

“You’re welcome.” Dragging the wooden box, the businessman went over to the ruin of Building 1. He continued to collect his money.

At that moment, the robotic voice said, “Notification for Player 0000, the collective friendliness level with tenants of Ziggurat has reached 10, you’ve obtained a daily random reward—Spirit Faring Bell.

“Spirit Faring Bell: Important item in the soul-summoning ritual. This will greatly increase the success rate of Spirit Farer.

“Notification for Player 0000, you’ve obtained the businessman’s gift—Shredded paper doll pieces.

“Shredded paper doll pieces: Paper doll pieces dipped in curse and death. They can help you repair specific cursed objects.”

After reading the notification, Han Fei valued the businessman even more. Of the many tenants at Ziggurat, only the businessman realized what Han Fei really needed. The man appeared greedy but he was actually very astute.

“I almost lost another talent. Thankfully I thought to save him. Perhaps I should move him to Yi Ming Convenience Store, his talent will be more useful there.”

Han Fei didn’t waste time, he found a safe room and released the blood red doll. Then he fed it the shredded doll pieces. After all the paper pieces were absorbed, the paper doll grew in size until it was about the same size as Xu Qin.

“Human-sized paper doll?” Han Fei had seen a human-sized body pillow before, but not a human-sized paper doll.

“Notification for Player 0000! Your cursed object has been repaired.

“Cursed Paper Doll: Its eyes are filled with the darkest curse, its body is soaked in the coldest death. It should be buried forever but the person who loves you the most has given it new life.”

Grade F and G Cursed Objects were two different concepts. Even just placed there, Han Fei didn’t dare to get too close. ‘What is the deal with its description? Only love can bring paper dolls to life?’

Han Fei was ready to put the paper doll away, but when his hand touched the paper doll, the doll’s eyes opened and at that moment, it was like Xu Qin was staring at him. ‘This paper doll has Xu Qin’s blood. Perhaps she can look at me through this doll’s eyes.’

After putting away the paper doll, Han Fei planned to do the last thing on his itinerary. He found Feng Ziyu, arranged some things and then led Ying Yue to the top floor of the Ziggurat. Han Fei planned to commit another Spirit Farer even though he already used Resurrection on Huang Yin. This meant that Han Fei didn't plan to let this second person return to the surface world that night.

"For the players at the surface world, the higher their spiritual affinity, the easier they'll be summoned. It doesn't matter, I'll try every night. They are watching me in real life and so I'll be watching them in the cryptic world." After Han Fei knew the deeds these Star Shooters had done, Han Fei knew what he would do with them. Thinking back to the info given to him by Jin Jun, Han Fei used his only active skill, Cursed Words.

"Tonight, you will be enveloped by yin energy. When you open your eyes, you will see another world.

"You bully the weak because you are weak. But tonight, you are the weakest. You shall never escape."

The bell chimed. Han Fei stared at the blood red door and utilized his skill. The door of hell was torn open by the sea of blood. The ghost faces surfed on the sea. Han Fei thought back to the pictures provided by Jin Jun and then chanted a name.

The bell rang. A bloated corpse turned over in the blood sea. A small maggot was pierced through by blood thread. The door of hell closed and another person appeared before Han Fei inside the toilet.

The man was naked and his face was flushed. He shouted the name of the NPC guide like a pig in heat.

'I've succeeded?' Putting away the bell, Han Fei closed Ying Yue's eyes and led her out of the room.

Blood spread on the ground as shadows entered the room.

Chapter 413

413 Welcome to Perfect Life [2in1]

Beta testers knew that Perfect Life could be turned into an adult game. The multiple CB had changed most of the game's rules and maps, but there were still some loopholes. Normal players wouldn't know

these loopholes, only those with special resources would and Liu Guang was one of them. He was Xin Lu's most famous paparazzi. Not one single cent that he owned was clean but so what? He didn't steal or rob, he believed he had earned everything he had with hard work.

The process might not be pretty but he didn't care. The readers online didn't care so why should he? Liu Guang removed his shirt and crawled into the special edition gaming hub that cost a lot. His goal was to enjoy this heaven-like second life. The meaning of happiness, the goal of healing, he couldn't care less. To do things without the need of holding back, to make others cry, to humiliate others, to trample on them, those were the things he loved.

As a paparazzi, even if he had a lot of money, he didn't dare to show his face around town. This was because he had too many enemies. In real life, he had to hide in the dark. Only inside Perfect Life, he could be his real disgusting self. Liu Guang had been following this game for a long time already. He was very clever. Several years ago, he believed this game would change people's lives forever. From then on, he started his plan. Based on his resources, he started to collect information and arrange stuff during CB, so he was in possession of a lot of hidden information. Since the game entered OB, he had been using the information to flourish in the dark. One day, he would step into the light.

"In Perfect Life, players can invite NPC with more than 80 friendliness levels home as guests. However, physical contact is banned between normal NPC and players. However, in a mission to take care of the handicapped, the players can have full physical contact with specific NPC." Even in the warmest Iyashikei game, there would be disgusting things. Despair wasn't specifically limited to the cryptic world but many people didn't understand that. "Unfortunately, after screening so many NPCs, you're the only passable one. If you're the game guide, it'll be perfect. But one day, I'll make her my bitch!"

Liu Guang locked the door to his room. He pulled away his newbie outfit. He kept screaming and hollering, causing the handicapped NPC to cower in fear. "That's right, Perfect Life is heaven! I can do anything I want!"

He reached out to grab the NPC's wrist but at that moment, he felt his consciousness being pulled. He was like a hooked fish, yanked away against his will. When his line of sight returned to normal, the NPC that he wasted a lot of energy to scam home had disappeared, instead a horrible smell of mould entered his nostrils. He looked around and realized he was inside an old toilet.

"The game bugged out? Or the photon computer has increased protection for NPC after OB?" Shielding his nose, Liu Guang kicked at the sink. "Stupid computer, people play the game to seek happiness and excitement, no? You refuse to even give me that, this trash game will soon be abandoned!"

To raise the NPC's friendliness level to 80, Liu Guang had been doing her missions for the past few days but now she had disappeared. In his fury, he kept venting using the objects inside the toilet. The mirror and sink were shattered. The man had no sign of human culture and morals at all. "Why is this place so smelly? Where am I?"

Human faces flashed through the broken mirror. The face looked cold and pale. "Is anyone around? I need someone to serve me now!" Grabbing the cup on the sink, Liu Guang threw it into the living room. "You bunch of NPC really think you're something? I'm the player and you're the NPC, the reason for your existence is to be toyed by the players like myself!" He roared angrily. Without putting on any clothes, Liu Guang stormed out from the toilet. "This game even have a punishment mechanism? I've spent so much money to buy the special edition gaming hub and you dare to not serve me?"

Liu Guang was about to open the menu when he heard the living room door open. He turned to look and saw a man in a mask standing at the door. Beside him was a polite looking security guard.

"There's no system notification?" Liu Guang was confused but he didn't care. In this game, he could do anything. At worst, he would abandon this account and start a new one. "The two of you, come over now." He ordered but no one moved. "Your preset personality is aloof?" Liu Guang looked around. He grabbed the mop and soaked it in toilet water. "Come, let me wash away some of that aloofness." Dragging the mop, Liu Guang was planning something when the curtain in the toilet stall fell. He saw a dirty red dress floating inside the dirty bathtub. His eyes trembled and he took a step back. But he soon returned to normal.

Seeing this reaction by Liu Guang, the man in the mask spoke, "10 years ago, have you encountered a female livestreamer with an incurable disease? She liked to wear white dresses. She was beautiful, sunny and kept bringing people around her hope."

"What are you talking about?" Liu Guang's expression had betrayed him.

"Normally I would use my neighbour's power to create various illusions to slowly induce you to tell the truth but now I think a thing like you don't deserve our time." The masked man sat down and instantly a blood red chair appeared behind him.

“If 10 years is too long ago, then try to think about what happened recently. A few months ago, did your group not force a starlet to commit suicide by framing her as a drug addict?” The masked man wasn’t loud but his words were cutting.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about!” Liu Guang grinned. “You bastard and your tricks. If you dare, then remove your mask, I have a million ways to make you regret this!” Before he finished, a shadow darted towards him. A heavy kick landed on his lower body and the huge force sent him flying against the wall! Liu Guang covered his injured jewels and his eyes were about to pop out from his head.

“You should have told me you don’t know how to speak human language. There are many animals at Cattle Alley, someone will be able to understand you. In fact, do you speak cat?” The masked man touched his tattoo and an animal monster patched together by different animal fur appeared behind the man. The cat monster was bound to the tattoo so that it couldn’t escape from the man’s body fully. When the cat monster appeared, the atmosphere inside the room shifted. The temperature dropped and the room reeked of blood. The monster’s body kept expanding until the head with the cat’s face reached the ceiling. The expression froze on Liu Guang’s face. How could such a terrifying thing exist in the game?!

“I’ve participated in multiple CBs, such monsters shouldn’t exist in the game!” Veins popped on his forehead due to pain. Liu Guang curled up on the ground and he couldn’t even climb up.

“A creature like you can exist in the game so why can’t my cute and innocent kitty?” The masked man didn’t leave his seat. “Why are you so scared? Isn’t this just a game for you? If you’re that scared, why not try quitting the game?” With the kind reminder from the masked man, Liu Guang stopped hesitating. He immediately opened the menu but to his consternation, the exit button had disappeared. The space where the button was, was now blank!

“I can’t quit the game!” The pain from his body was replaced by fear. Cold sweat dripped down his cheeks. He suddenly regretted not putting on clothes because he was shivering.

“I’ll ask you again, did you force a starlet to death several months ago?”

“That has nothing to do with us! We only operated like normal, it’s not our fault that she has such a fragile mental constitution. We can’t be blamed for her mental illness!” Liu Guang searched through the menu but couldn’t find the exit button.

“Your normal operation includes creating rumours, slandering and harming the reputation of an innocent person? The dead starlet was pretty so you attacked her looks; she was unwilling to cave to perform sexual favors but you spread the rumors that she did. And now you’re claiming you have nothing to do with her death?” The masked man’s voice chilled.

“Xiayi’s death is caused by the team member! My job is to collect money, I can’t control every group member so this is really not my fault. Plus based on the information provided by the client, Xiayi’s father once worked at a plastic surgery hospital. When she was small, she was sent into the hospital to receive a personality transplant.” Liu Guang stammered as he looked at the large cat spirit. He was no longer as haughty as before. Xiayi was the female star that died not too long ago. She was an orphan. She lost her parents 10 years ago. Han Fei felt sorry for her so he cared about her death.

“You have to trust me! I really didn’t want her to die. The woman was very nice, she wasn’t the kind who would choose to end her life.” Liu Guang kept explaining but his explanation only caused the shadows around him to thicken.

“What is the name of the plastic surgery hospital she visited?”

“I don’t know! The client didn’t provide that information, we were only responsible for the later operation.”

“Who was the client who found you to attack Xiayi?” The masked man had the cat monster stop. “Tell us that and then you can go back to your Perfect Life.”

Covering his exposed lower body, Liu Guang said without hesitation. “She was quite famous 10 years ago. Her name is Xia Yilan. When she was young, she looked just like Xiayi, so she claimed Xiayi has stolen her face.”

“Xia Yilan?”

“It was her who told us about the plastic surgery hospital. If you want to know more, go and find her!” Liu Guang pleaded, “I’m only just a tool. I’m also innocent, can I go now?”

“You’ve admitted to the things related to Xiayi but there’s one more thing that you haven’t explained yet.” The masked man waved his hand and a pale figure brought a giant delivery box to the front door. “10 years ago, did you not force a female livestreamer to death? When she died, blood dyed her dress red.”

Pain and fear soaked into Liu Guang’s heart. The harshness was just a disguise. This kind of trash only dared to hide in the shadows. When he ran into someone tougher than him, he’d cave. Compared to before, Liu Guang hesitated longer this time. “I’m surprised someone still remembers that. The girl built her brand on being nice, but we didn’t believe it so we tried to break her image to make her expose her true personality...” The temperature in the room dropped to freezing point, the mist on the window condensed to form blood flowers. Shadows in the room suppressed their rage.

“Is that the simple reason for you to kill a person?” The masked man already got all the info he needed. He stood up to leave. “You can start your Perfect Life now.”

“What do you mean? How can I leave?”

“You’re already in Perfect Life but the Perfect Life for good people and bad people is different.” The man turned to leave. Liu Guang crawled on the ground. When he reached the door, several guards in blood red uniforms appeared. They pushed the giant delivery box into the room.

“Did he say we were meant to be toyed with?”

“Do not get too emotional. Keep him alive at least until the red dress is back.”

“The sin in his heart is thicker than ours. Can a human really get so twisted?”

The guards chatted among themselves. Ignoring Liu Guang, they opened the giant box. They poured the things covered in human blood out.

“I heard from the temporary building manager that you like to be served? Well we’re here to serve you.” The 2 surviving guards from building 1 pried open Liu Guang’s mouth and shoved the things that barely looked like food into his body. Screams came from the room. Han Fei removed the Cattle Mask and led Ying Yue away.

“Xia Yilan? This woman is unnaturally beautiful. Her prime was 10 years ago. However, until now she doesn’t have a signature work.” Han Fei thought back to the guest list for this year’s movie festival. This Xia Yilan would be there too, she would be announcing one of the winners.

Han Fei only wanted to take revenge for the red dress so he was satisfied with this additional reward.

“I now desperately need info on the hospital. After I quit the game, I need to find a way to contact this Xia Yilan.”

Chapter 414

414 Selfie at Midnight

If Han Fei stayed longer in the cryptic world he would only be a burden to his neighbours because he only had 1 Life Point. Therefore after 3 hours, he found a safe house and logged off. His neighbours were not surprised by this anymore. Knowing that Han Fei was ready to leave, Ying Yue and Drake guarded beside Han Fei’s door. They would wait there until Han Fei returned, nothing was going to make them leave.

Blood fell. When Han Fei’s consciousness left his body, he could feel a chill from behind him. It was like something was sticking very close to him. The bloody person was finally within touching range but they didn’t hurt him.

Down the direction of the hospital, the Singer who hugged the old man’s head sat at the rooftop. It was worth noting that the old man’s eyes were open. He was using a familiar yet distressing gaze to study Han Fei. Suspended in the red world was a very unique experience, it lasted only a second but it felt like forever. Before Han Fei could take a closer look, he was already out of the game.

Removing the gaming helmet, Han Fei realized his back was covered in cold sweat. He never felt such instinctive fear for a long time already.

“The bloody person, the Singer, Fu Sheng’s memory fragment, the plastic surgery hospital, I have quite a lot of challenges awaiting me.” Removing his shirt, Han Fei massaged his temple. “The cryptic world is like a whirlpool, the deeper you explore, the more you’ll be sucked into it.”

Han Fei had no other choice, he had already chosen his path, he could only continue on it, even though he knew it would lead him deeper into the abyss. After crawling out from the gaming hub, Han Fei went online to search for info on Xia Yilan and Xiayi. He even joined their fan clubs.

Both of them had captivating looks and even similar names. However, the atmosphere in their fan clubs was completely different.

All 10 fan clubs for Xia Yilan were full. Even at 3 am, there was so much activity. They were discussing the upcoming movie festival and how they were going to show up to support their idol.

Xiayi only had 1 fan club. It was created by those who missed her after she passed away. No one was willing to believe that such a cute girl would make this extreme decision. Until now, many people in the club refused to read Xiayi's last comment update. The creator of the fan club was a middle-aged woman in her 40s. Her own career had nothing to do with the entertainment industry.

The auntie was in the funeral business and the first case she had was for her sick daughter. The death of her daughter was a thorn in the auntie's heart. It was probably why she cared about Xiayi that much. The auntie and Xiayi knew each other from way back when, they even came from the same neighbourhood. The auntie saw her daughter's image on Xiayi; Xiayi lost her parents to an accident 10 years ago, so Xiayi also found maternal love from the auntie.

After Xiayi died, the woman almost broke down. She kept on telling people that Xiayi wouldn't have committed suicide, there had to be a bigger conspiracy behind it. However, under the manipulation of the Star Shooters, no one believed her. There were still many people who mocked Xiayi who was already dead. It had been 3 months since then. The netizens who slandered this starlet had all forgotten about it but not the auntie.

Han Fei memorized all the info about Xiayi and then went to find the auntie through the fan club. Revealing himself as Xiayi's fan, he exposed the work of the Star Shooter and provided some evidence to the auntie. When the auntie saw Han Fei's message, at 4 am, she initiated a video call. This was the first time the kind auntie was so mad in her life. "Are these people still humans?!"

"They're just devils with human skins." Han Fei shared everything he knew with the auntie but he repeatedly told the auntie to not act recklessly, they needed the police's help to do this well. After gaining the auntie's help, Han Fei started to ask more in-depth questions about Xiayi and her parents.

The auntie didn't know much about Xiayi's parents, she only knew that they worked at a plastic surgery hospital situated in Xin Lu countryside. They often worked late into the night and didn't care much about Xiayi. Therefore, it was surprising that Xiayi still became a perfect child despite not being cared for.

She was clever, hardworking, beautiful, confident, optimistic, she had all the best qualities in a human. The auntie had noticed Xiayi at the neighbourhood a long time ago, she wished multiple times Xiayi would be her daughter.

Xiayi's parents didn't care about her but her studies were always very good. Her many certificates filled up the wall. She had many hobbies too. She knew how to dance, sing and play many musical instruments. Xiayi had a perfect life waiting for her but sadly that didn't happen.

After Xiayi's parents died from the accident, Xiayi sunk into helplessness and despair. She stopped working hard and it was like happiness drained out from her. The only thing that didn't change was her beauty. With the attention and care from the auntie and the other neighbours, Xiayi slowly walked out from her despair and treated her life seriously again.

The auntie accompanied Xiayi throughout her youth. She believed she knew Xiayi very well, so she was very surprised the girl would die just like that.

To provide Han Fei with more help, the auntie sent him the pictures she had of Xiayi, and the messages left behind by the girls, hoping that they could help Han Fei. From the messages and writing, it did show Xiayi as a very perfect person. She had all the good qualities in a human. If she had grown up, she would be the best in her field.

"A personality surgery?" Reading the messages left behind by Xiayi, Han Fei couldn't stop thinking about the personality surgery once rumored to be offered by Immortal Pharma. Han Fei thought that was impossible but after getting to know Xiayi's life, his opinion changed. "She was indeed perfect like a piece of flawless art."

"Hmm?" Han Fei noticed something as he flipped through the pictures. "Auntie, can you send the last few selfies of Xiayi to me according to their chronological order?"

“What did you discover?”

“Xiayi’s selfies appear to subconsciously include a clock at her home and the clock always shows 12 o’clock.” Han Fei scanned through the pictures. From a week before her death, Xiayi would take a selfie every day at 12 o’clock. All the pictures would feature the clock, some directly, others indirectly, like through the reflection in the mirror or computer monitor. The interesting thing was, based on the lighting and views outside the window, Han Fei noticed among the 7 pictures, there was only one that was not taken on 12 noon but 12 midnight.

Han Fei studied that specific picture closer. He wanted to know what happened that day.

“The picture taken at 12 midnight is the one from the day before she died.” The auntie arranged the pictures chronologically and sent them back to Han Fei.

“This picture is strange.” Han Fei narrowed his eyes as he studied that last selfie. Xiayi’s expression was the same as usual in this picture, the furniture in the background was the same too but there was one thing that was different.

“Xiayi has no children of her own and hasn’t participated in any child-related charity work so why is there a child’s shoe in her room? And there isn’t a pair but a single one.” Han Fei enlarged the picture. This selfie was taken by Xiayi facing away from the front door. There was a pure white child’s shoe dropped at the front door behind her.

“Yes! But what does this mean?”

“The tip of the shoe faces Xiayi, it feels like a child is standing at her front door. Did someone place it there on purpose? There was someone else inside her room?” Han Fei mumbled to himself but he scared the auntie plenty.

“You said Xiayi might be murdered, could this be the word of the Star Shooters too?”

“Let’s not jump to conclusions. I’ll hand this over to the police and have them look further into this.” After all, this was a murder case and he was just a small actor.

“You sound like you are very familiar with the police, are you the police?” The auntie asked expectantly.

“I can’t say for now. But auntie, watch your own safety, do not go to Xiayi’s home.” Han Fei then hung up. He felt things had gotten so much more complicated. After he arranged all the info on Xiayi, Han Fei sent them to the police at 5 am. The officer on duty praised Han Fei.

At dawn, Han Fei had some quick breakfast and rushed to the set. The shooting for Thriller Novelist was over. Now he needed to prepare to attend the movie festival as an actor.

Chapter 415

415 Events

“Han Fei, there’s a promo event tonight, will you be interested to attend?”

“Sorry, I can’t. I have to help collect clues for murder cases. I don’t have the time.” Han Fei was immediately accosted by Director Zhang’s assistant when he arrived at the set. The man was carrying a very expensive western suit.

“I knew you would say that.” The assistant frowned. “The concept trailer for our movie is already out. The first wave of promo activities will align with the movie festival’s activities. You are our movie’s best actor and a hot candidate for the movie festival, you have to attend these events!”

“You should get Brother Bai. I’m just an internet drama actor, the real actors will not have time for me.”

“He will attend the event with you. Furthermore, the judges for the festival have started to review the candidate list already. They will select a handful of nominees from the hundreds of actors. You should get to know the judges beforehand, it’ll be greatly helpful to your future.” The assistant persuaded him. He knew Han Fei had social anxiety but he didn’t know it was so serious.

“Han Fei, there are many people in this circle who want to know you. Since you’ve not joined any agency, this is a perfect chance for you.” Bai Xian walked over. They all knew Han Fei had social anxiety and he was introverted. When Director Zhang first contacted Twin Flower’s Director Jiang, Director Jiang already told Director Zhang and Bai Xian about that. He hoped that they would be more understanding towards Han Fei. Director Jiang guaranteed that even though Han Fei was rather reserved, he was a

good person and his acting was flawless. In other words, Director Jiang had played a huge role for Han Fei to earn this chance but no one had told him about it.

“Alright, since you have put it that way, I’ll attend the event. But I’ll be honest, I’ll leave the event before 10.” Han Fei didn’t say it was because he needed to rush home to play game. Everyone assumed Han Fei was going back to investigate some kind of murder cases so they had achieved some kind of balance.

“This is the guest list for the event. You should go over it lest you fail to recognize the judges.” Bai Xian was like Han Fei’s big brother, showing him the ropes. Han Fei glanced at the list but his eyes stopped when they landed on a name. “Xia Yilan? She’s attending this event too?”

“Of course, how shall I put this...” Bai Xian revealed a polite yet awkward smile, “She is a common fixture at these events. Perhaps she likes the exposure. What is it? Are you her fan?”

“I just want to talk to her?”

“You want to take a picture with her? She should be very happy to oblige. You are so famous lately, she would definitely...”

“It’s related to a case.” When Han Fei said that, Bai Xian cleverly stopped talking. He could feel that Han Fei was not lying.

“Okay, Han Fei, you better go and change now. Director Zhang knows that you had never attended such events so he has prepared the whole set of suits for you.” The assistant changed the subject and handed the suit over to Han Fei. “The promo event is around 3 pm. We will inform you when it’s about to start.”

The cast entered the set. Even though the shooting was over, there were a few live interviews to do. Even though Han Fei had been an actor for a long time already, this was his first time experiencing something like this. In the past, he would be standing beyond the guarded line, watching the others in the spotlight.

The shooting for Thriller Novelist officially ended at 12 noon. All the cast finished their parts and the crew members started to clean up the set. The actors who would participate in the promo event and Director Zhang walked out from the factory living compound. They turned to look at the old building and

felt rather sad. Even though the shoot this time wasn't that long, it was very memorable for all the actors. Haunting, murder, accidents all in one project.

"Is everyone here?" Director Zhang changed into a more formal attire. He had high hopes for Thriller Novelist. In the past, he would never attend promo events like this.

"Han Fei is still changing in Spider's room, I'll call him." Just as the assistant said that, a chime sounded. It came from the writer's room. While they were distracted by the wind chime, Han Fei walked out from the dark corridor. The noon sun showered on him. His already handsome face lost its usual naivete. His unique presence couldn't be described. It was like he was born for the spotlight.

"He looks so handsome in a suit!" The female actors looked at Han Fei in disbelief. Some of the crew members had taken out their phones to snap pictures. Han Fei wasn't trying to act cool, he was just being himself but there was a stately presence about him.

"No wonder he wears so casually normally, it's because of confidence!"

"He could have relied entirely on his face, but he is such a good actor too."

The sunlight filtered through the leaves, casting bits of light on the ground. As Han Fei walked through the lights, he frowned with some awkwardness. "Why are you guys all looking at me like that?"

"It's nothing. Come on, let's hurry and get into the vehicles." Han Fei didn't have his own car so like usual, he shared a ride with the crew members. He climbed into the car and found a corner to sit. However, unlike normal, everyone's gaze would consciously and subconsciously wander towards him. Compared to admiration, people were more curious and surprised by this transformation.

For Han Fei with social anxiety, he was discomfited by this treatment and thus he pretended to be asleep.

The crew's bus moved from the countryside to the intelligent city. After everyone verified their identity, they got out from the bus one by one.

The other cast members had their own fans. They were there with their plaques, calling their idols' names. Some of them even had slogans. Nowadays, fans treat their idols as their friends and examples, borrowing energy from them.

"The fuck! That crew member is so handsome!"

"The cameramen for Thriller Novelist are all so cool?"

"Wait, that person looks familiar, Meng Changxi?! He is Meng Changxi!" Han Fei didn't have a fan club, he didn't even release a status on his social media that he would be attending this event. Naturally there was no fan at the venue to support Han Fei. But many pedestrians recognized Han Fei. They couldn't remember Han Fei's name but they did remember he had played Meng Changxi and Meng Changan. As Twin Flowers became a famous film, Meng Changan and Meng Changxi became household names. One was incredibly touching, the other incredibly hateful.

"Meng Changxi, we'll help you capture Butterfly and make him pay!"

"Stop calling him Meng Changxi, his name is Han Fei, the criminal kryptonite, Han Fei. He's an agent planted by the law enforcement in the entertainment industry."

"Is he really an actor? I'm curious because our police institute teacher always brings him up in classes." Just like that, more and more people got curious about Han Fei. These discussions overshadowed the cheers of the other fans. The other actors could only smile at this unusual development. Before Thriller Novelist was released, Han Fei already had a high popularity, this was something no one expected.

'I was right to cast you in this role.' The more Director Zhang looked at Han Fei, the more satisfied he was. He entered the venue with Han Fei. At backstage, Han Fei looked at the filled up audience seat, and he was reminded of the promo venue for Twin Flowers. Back then Director Jiang only had a small side hall. There was no one in the audience seat and the host was plotting against him. At the time, Han Fei had no popularity. Even the host didn't think much of Han Fei, they also thought Han Fei was easily bullied.

"Han Fei, you'll be the third to take the stage. You'll be after me. Watch your breathing. If you're nervous, try to yawn. Come, I'll show you." Bai Xian was a very good senior. He was worried about Han Fei and his condition so he patiently shared his experience. Soon the first promo for Thriller Novelist

began. After the host made the introduction, Director Zhang and Bai Xian walked out. Then it was Han Fei's turn.

Seeing the spotlight in the middle of the stage, Han Fei didn't hesitate and walked out from backstage. When the shoot for Twin Flower ended, Han Fei promised himself that he would make it to a bigger stage and he had done it. No one was there to ruin it this time. Many people shouted his name. At that moment, Han Fei had never felt so alive. When he attended Twin Flower's first showing, he was wearing Meng Changan's costume and was attacked by people online. But now everything was different.

Regarding the host's Q and A, Han Fei managed it smoothly. He interacted with the audience nicely too. Even though Han Fei still hadn't quite gotten used to this kind of situation, he was already better than most actors his age. Thriller Novelist's promo ended at 6 pm. Once the trailer was released, it immediately caused a great reaction online.

Someone reviewed the acting for the 9 actors and to everyone's surprise, after they watched the trailer, Han Fei's popularity as a side character was about the same level as Bai Xian's main character. The other 7 actors were not even mentioned that much. Some comments even claimed that even as a side character, Bai Xian had done perfectly well. Thriller Novelist's popularity continued to climb, this was not something comparable to Twin Flower. Big director, big named cast, everyone had high hopes for this movie. Director Zhang who was normally so calm, was nervous seeing the reaction the trailer got online. He was afraid that should the actual film fail to reach the public's expectation, the movie would be ruined by the hype. But of course, if the movie managed to live up to the hype, it would be an instant classic. After the promo event was over, Director Zhang led the actors to the next event.

The venue for the promo was close to the main hall for the movie festival. They were within the same area inside the intelligent city. The movie festival would officially start one week later, the event today was merely a nomination event. The judges would come out with the nomination list from hundreds of participating actors. The actual winner would be announced on the day of the festival. Even though this event was just a preliminary event, the scene was crowded with media from all companies.

"I'll go and find my old friends to chat with. We'll meet at the entrance to hall 1 at 7.30 pm." Director Zhang hurried away and the other actors left to mingle. Han Fei prepared to head to the buffet table.

"Han Fei, let me introduce you to some friends of mine." Bai Xian was afraid that Han Fei might feel lonely so he offered. Han Fei thought about it and nodded. "Okay, we'll go find Xia Yilan. If you don't think that's convenient for you, you can just point her out to me."

“Erm...” Bai Xian chuckled helplessly. This was the best chance to make connections but Han Fei only cared about solving cases. Bai Xian knew Han Fei was serious. In a way, at this place where fame and power were everything, Han Fei didn’t fit in.

“I’ll find a friend to ask, come with me.” Bai Xian was about to lead Han Fei to the hall when there was a commotion from the entrance. A large group of people surrounded a haggard middle-aged man.

“As our nation’s most popular comedy actor, why didn’t you make more films? Is it because there is no good script?”

“We hear that you were not feeling well and you were sick, is that true?”

“Why did you decide to be the judge this time? Is it because you are coming out of retirement?”

“Who do you think will win this time?”

Squeezed in the crowd, the middle-aged man only looked tired. He tried to maintain a smile until he saw Han Fei and Bai Xian. Through the crowd, the man couldn’t believe his eyes. He was shocked and startled. ‘So the dream is true... I’ve found him.’ As the crowd swallowed him again, the middle-aged man smiled. ‘He looks so much more handsome than I was at his age.’

Bai Xian and Han Fei walked into the main hall. With a female actor’s help, they found Xia Yilan who was taking event photos. The woman was beautiful, time left no trace on her. She didn’t look 40 at all.

“She’s incredibly beautiful but has no acting chops. She can’t even make simple expressions so no one wants to use her.”

“It’s too far to see anything, I have to go closer.” It was too late for Bai Xian to stop Han Fei. Han Fei stepped on the still rolling red carpet towards Xia Yilan.

‘Doesn’t he have social anxiety? Why is he doing this?’ Bai Xian gritted his teeth and made to follow.

Chapter 416

416 White Shoe

Crowds were everywhere outside the movie festival's main hall. This was just a preliminary event but there were already so many reporters. There were cheers everywhere. The actors hurried towards the main hall. Under the spotlight, everyone showcased their best side.

"Xia Yilan!"

"Big sister, look this way!"

"How can a person be so beautiful?"

Not only her fans, even the pedestrians and event workers were shocked at how time left no trace on Xiao Yilan. Her skin was still as smooth as a young girl's. She smiled sincerely at everyone. Compared to 10 years ago, Xia Yilan now was loved even more. She not only possessed impossible beauty but also an air of maturity. Standing in the spotlight, she was like a flawless goddess. Every movement she did captured people's attention. Gentle, beautiful, mature, sexy, she exposed herself as much as possible before the cameras like she couldn't wait for people to see her beauty. Seeing the shock and admiration in the fans and pedestrians' eyes, Xia Yilan was very satisfied.

"Hello, I'm Han Fei." A voice began behind Xia Yilan. The voice was light with a chilling undertone. Xia Yilan was awakened from the cheers of her fans and turned to look beside her.

"Can I ask you a few questions?" After the very direct self-introduction, Han Fei was about to continue his questioning when he was stumped. He saw Xia Yilan's face up close. The face was incredibly beautiful and there was no flaw but Han Fei shivered. For a fleeting moment, Han Fei saw Xiayi. These two women's faces overlapped and they were bound together by little worms that looked like ropes.

With his nose twitching, when Han Fei was near Xia Yilan, he also picked up a scent of decomposition. The scent was very weak and it was covered up by the expensive perfume. Han Fei couldn't tell exactly where it came from.

There were security guards everywhere so Xia Yilan was not afraid, she just didn't like other people getting too close to her. There was annoyance in her eyes but when she saw Han Fei, her expression changed immediately.

Han Fei stopped talking, it was like he was charmed by Xia Yilan and stood there dumbly.

'Perhaps he has not seen someone so beautiful before?' Xia Yilan couldn't be faulted for thinking that way because she had experienced many incidents like this in the past.

"Han Fei? I've seen you in Twin Flowers. Among the young actors, you are the best." Xia Yilan had a very melodious voice too. Her compliment was kind. The annoyance in her eyes disappeared. Before the cameras, Xia Yilan was perfect. She very naturally reached out towards Han Fei as if trying to create the impression that they were friends and was going to enter the venue hall together. Xia Yilan believed that if they were shot walking into the main hall together, it would get people talking.

As the senior in the industry, she had to be gentle and kind to her junior. Xia Yilan's face was full of smiles but when her hand was about to reach Han Fei, Han Fei stepped involuntarily backwards. The smile froze on Xia Yilan's face, she had never experienced something like this before.

'Is he serious?' It would be so awkward if she left her hand hanging in mid air so Xia Yilan forced herself to take one more step forward and then patted Han Fei's arm as if trying to smooth out the creases on his suit. When Xia Yilan came close, Han Fei got a clearer whiff of decomposition. It came from Xia Yilan.

"Do you have something to ask me? Let's walk and talk." Xia Yilan looked at Han Fei's confused face. She still didn't understand the severity of the situation. Han Fei touched his nose lightly. He picked up the scent of the cryptic world on Xia Yilan. He thought that this unique scent of decomposition would only exist in the cryptic world.

Walking beside Xia Yilan, Han Fei kept glancing sideways to study Xia Yilan. This woman was like an apple created by the witch. She looked perfect on the outside but rotten on the inside. To preserve her beauty, Xia Yilan probably had to pay some kind of price.

Han Fei took a deeper sniff and he realized the scent on Xia Yilan was rather unique. It didn't give Han Fei a sense of danger but it made him feel uncomfortable and nauseous. Maintaining a fixed distance between them, Han Fei kept his fingers behind his back, ready for any nasty surprises.

Xia Yilan had no idea what Han Fei was thinking but she knew that Han Fei was sneaking glances at her. She didn't expose him. In fact her lips curled upwards. Being stared at by a handsome, incredibly young actor with great potential, it satisfied her sense of ego. She thought Han Fei was charmed by her beauty.

Both of them carried different thoughts as they headed into the main hall. Bai Xian who followed behind them appeared awkward. He didn't anticipate Han Fei, who had social anxiety, to get so close to Xia Yilan so soon. There were reporters everywhere so the actors didn't dare to act out of place. Han Fei didn't speak again until they almost reached the entrance to the main hall. As Xia Yilan prepared to leave, he stopped her. Seeing Han Fei hold himself in until the last moment to stop her from leaving, Xia Yilan chuckled to herself. "This is your first time attending an event like this, right? Don't be so nervous. This is my virtual name card. Let's be friends."

"Are you sure?" Most of Han Fei's friends didn't know how to breathe and had body temperature lower than 0.

"This season's best new actor award is definitely yours. Plus Director Zhang values you greatly, it's only a matter of time until you become an A-list actor. By then, I wouldn't be able to get close to you anymore." Xia Yilan smiled very gently. However, just as she was about to say something more, someone else walked over.

Xia Yilan said goodbye to Han Fei. She didn't even glance at the newcomer. The way she treated Han Fei and others was totally different. Her smile was only reserved for those who were useful to her.

"Brother Han!" Zhan Yueyue hurried to Han Fei's side. Behind him were the crew members from Twin Flowers. "Long time no see! How is it working with Director Zhang? Let me tell you, Director Jiang kicks himself daily from regret. He is so afraid that you won't work with him anymore."

"What are you talking about?" Director Jiang walked over. He was gratified to see Han Fei. Han Fei was his student, he always thought Han Fei had the potential to go big and he was proven right. "I've seen the concept promo for Thriller Novelist several times already. Your acting skill has improved again. When you were in school, I had no idea you were so good."

Director Jiang was certain that with Han Fei's talent, he would gain greater popularity after Thriller Novelist was released officially.

“Director Jiang, do you still remember the series of real cases adaptation we’ve discussed earlier? I’ve already come up with a few ideas. After this thing is over, we can start shooting immediately.” When Han Fei was down on his luck, Director Jiang resisted the pressure and gave him the chance. Han Fei knew how to repay other people’s kindness.

“Oh, I don’t think I will be able to afford your hiring you as an actor.” Director Jiang joked. But in reality, he didn’t want to hold Han Fei back from flying high.

“That’s no problem. We’ll just replicate the contract from Twin Flowers. I’ll take a share from the box office. If it fails, we’ll share the burden together; if it succeeds, we’ll all earn.” Han Fei still hadn’t joined any agency. His plan was to find people whom he could trust and open his own agency. The company would make movies for the victims. Han Fei didn’t have confidence in himself in the past but after becoming the building manager, convenience store owner, security guard, teacher, butcher and so on, he believed he could be a successful entrepreneur.

Han Fei chatted with Director Jiang and Zhan Yueyue until the event was about to start. The actors slowly entered the venue. Han Fei took out his phone to look at the time. He was certain that there were some problems with Xia Yilan. The woman’s similarity in appearance to Xiayi was not a coincidence. She was probably related to her death too.

‘Xia Yilan is a public figure. It’ll be hard to get close to her. I better go through law enforcement.’ Han Fei stood outside the hall. He was about to call Li Xue when an annoying voice came from afar.

“Isn’t this Han Fei? I thought you wouldn’t attend events like this. Getting too close to fame and it’ll ruin your persona.” Ah Cheng and the male lead from Secret Urban Romance walked over. Their boss followed behind them talking on his phone. His expression was dark. Han Fei didn’t dignify Ah Cheng with a response. And to be honest, he had forgotten about the names of the other two. He would not waste time on these people.

“You look quite confident. Do you really think the award is yours?” The male lead smiled slickly and then walked past Han Fei into the hall.

“The show is about to start. Those without ‘wings’ will fall hard once they are shot down.” Ah Cheng seemed to know something. Something was definitely planned.

After the two left, their boss was still standing there in the hall. He spoke faster and faster, his expression getting more annoyed. "I'm not coming home tonight, there's a very important event tonight. If you're that afraid, move out!"

"There is no ghost! You are just scaring yourself. I'm hanging up now, the event is going to start. I'll repeat myself one last time, the white shoe has nothing to do with me, throw it out now!"

"What nonsense! I didn't bring it home again! It was you who didn't throw it away. How would I know why it had appeared under the bed? What does that have to do with the boy you saw in your nightmare? I'll bring you to see the psychiatrist tomorrow! I'm hanging up!" The man hung up but immediately another call came in. The man gritted his teeth and his face turned uglier. "What is it that you want? I'm warning you one last time, stop creating problems for me!" The man held the phone and walked towards the toilet. Veins popped on his forehead, he didn't look like his usual self at all.

Han Fei glanced at the man. They had met several times, he gave Han Fei a bad impression. Furthermore, based on the clues provided by Jin Jun, Han Fei suspected this was the man who hired Star Shooters to attack him.

'He aged years even though I haven't seen him for days only.' Han Fei was investigating Xia Yilan so he didn't want to find extra trouble but he was intrigued by something the man mentioned on the phone—the white shoe. In the last selfie Xiayi took of herself, there was a white shoe in it too.

'A white shoe has appeared at his house?' The event was about to start. The actors were moving into the hall. The toilet was at the end of the corridor so it was deserted. Han Fei followed the man silently but when the man entered the toilet, Han Fei saw a worker with a paint bucket enter the toilet too. Han Fei frowned, he was certain there was no one else on this corridor before.

'This venue has no working site so why is there a painter here?' Han Fei realized the problem immediately. He opened the recording function on his phone and walked towards the toilet. The closer he got, the more unsettled he felt. Perhaps it was the faulty heater, or something else, the temperature at the end of the corridor was very low. Nudging the door open, Han Fei saw no one inside the male toilet. He went to check on the individual stalls, when he reached the 3rd stall, he heard a scream from the female toilet!

'He's in the female toilet?' When Han Fei walked out from the male toilet, he saw Ah Cheng's boss standing before the mirror in the female toilet. Like a woman, he caressed his face gently. Then his fingers pulled at the edges of his face like he was trying to tear his face off. His cheeks were bleeding but the man didn't seem to notice it. His expression was coquettish as he studied himself in the mirror. His lips kept repeating the same sentence. "Have you seen Mr. Garden Butterfly in Number 24? A boy wearing white shoes is looking for it."

The word Butterfly caught Han Fei's attention immediately. Han Fei walked to accost the man but at the moment, the man inside the female toilet snapped back to normal. He looked at the scars on his face and his expression darkened. "God damn it, what is going on?"

Chapter 417

417 The Man and the Painter

The man took out a silk handkerchief from his pocket. The handkerchief was already stained with blood. He expertly used the handkerchief to wipe away the blood on his face, this had happened before. When the man exited the female toilet, he ran into Han Fei. He gritted his teeth and hatred was pouring out from his eyes.

He had spent a lot of money to hire the Star Shooters but he had not only failed to destroy Han Fei, he helped push Han Fei to greater popularity, which annoyed the man greatly. "You've done a great job in image management but remember, the higher you are, the greater you'll fall." The man tried his best to remain calm.

"But why would you use the female toilet?" Han Fei switched from recording voice to recording video on his phone. "Is this some kind of kink you have?"

"I merely missed the sign." The man dumped the silk handkerchief into the trash can. His face was green from anger. As he was about to say something else, his phone rang again. Glancing at the caller Id, the man hurried away from Han Fei before he answered the phone. "Fine, give me the white shoe, I'll handle it! Truly nothing good has happened today!" The man got into an argument with the woman on the phone again. When he turned the corner, a sound came from the male toilet, it sounded like something had been knocked over.

Han Fei then remembered the painter was still inside the toilet. He turned back to check but to his surprise, other than an overturned water bucket, there was nothing else. "What is going on?"

Han Fei exited the toilet and looked down the corridor. Holding his phone, the man didn't enter the main hall but instead walked towards the underground parking lot. Not far behind him, the painter reappeared. He was holding a small bucket filled with red paint. The man didn't seem to notice the painter, he continued to argue on the phone.

'Wait, I didn't see the painter come out from the toilet so how did he get there so fast?' Han Fei felt like things were not that simple. His mind echoed with the words the man said, Mr. Garden Butterfly on the 24th floor and the boy with white shoes. 'What is the connection between the boy with the white shoe and Butterfly? Why is he looking for the Butterfly? Is the painter the white shoe?' Han Fei looked down and noticed the painter was indeed wearing a pair of white shoes.

Han Fei gave chase without hesitation. As the painter and the man were about to enter the underground car park, an arm reached out to grab Han Fei's shoulder. "What are you doing here? The event is about to start. Director Zhang has reserved a seat for you." Bai Xian came out to look for Han Fei because the latter didn't show up for a long time.

"Brother Bai Xian, I came with the crew but I remember you drove here, right?" Han Fei didn't sound like he intended to return to the hall.

"I did, what's wrong?" Bai Xian looked at Han Fei, he had no idea what was on this young man's mind.

"Tonight's event is just preliminary, plus with your skills, you'll definitely be qualified and nominated for the big awards." Han Fei spoke quickly.

"Indeed." Bai Xian lamented, "I've been nominated for years already but the award is never mine."

"Since your nomination is certain, then it doesn't matter if you skip this event today. I notice a lot of A-listers aren't here either." Han Fei reached to grab Bai Xian like he was worried Bai Xian might escape. It was Bai Xian who came to tell Han Fei to return but now it was Han Fei who was holding Bai Xian.

"You're not wrong but I'm not an A-lister..."

"Brother Bai, this event is boring, I have something more exciting in mind." Han Fei's eyes glowed.

“Now?”

“Yes, I need you to drive. We’re tailing that man ahead of us, to see where he’s going.” Han Fei grabbed Bai Xian and headed to the parking lot. “The man is not acting normal, we need to watch him.”

“We’re going to catch a fugitive?” Bai Xian was shocked. He had played many roles in movies but this was the first time he had done something like this in real life.

“Quick! He’s getting into the car!” Han Fei rushed, “You only need to drive, leave the rest to me.”

“But Director Zhang has reserved the spots for both of us, if we don’t go...” Bai Xian was a very good actor and a good person. He reacted like a normal person would. There were many concerns in his mind but when he came to his senses, he was already dragged by Han Fei into the underground parking lot.

“Which one is your car?” Han Fei kept his eyes on the man. The painter who was following him had suddenly disappeared. The strange thing was the man had different gaits, sometimes he sauntered gracefully, other times he staggered clumsily. It was like there were 2 souls in his body fighting for control. When the man drove out from the parking lot, Bai Xian also drove Han Fei out to follow behind the man.

“I should be in the golden hall now.” Bai Xian never thought that one day he would be tailing another person, normally he was tailed by paparazzi. Despite the concerns he voiced, Bai Xian did his best to follow the man. He trusted Han Fei because Han Fei was famous for his acts of vigilante. Since he could provide aid to Han Fei, then he would do it. The cars drove away from the intelligent city and headed towards the city fringe.

“He’s the boss of a big company, he can’t afford a house in the intelligent city?”

“Perhaps he’s not going home.” Han Fei stared at the man’s car plate. Perhaps he imagined it but Han Fei saw the painter inside the car with the man. Driving down the main street, after the man left the intelligent city, he accelerated. His destination appeared to be Xin Lu countryside. The buildings lined the road became smaller. There were fewer lights. The density of popularity was sparser here compared to the city centre.

“Are we still going to follow him?” Bai Xian was sweating. He rarely drove so fast, he was nervous.

“Of course.” When the two spoke, a video call came in through the car. Director Zhang’s voice came out, “Bai Xian, where are you? Didn’t I tell you to get Han Fei, how come you’ve gone missing instead? I’m sitting between 2 empty seats, people think I need 3 seats for myself!”

“I’ve found Han Fei but we temporarily can’t go back.” Bai Xian focused on driving and his voice shook. “We’ve already reached the countryside.”

“Countryside?” Director Zhang’s voice changed.

“Director Zhang, I spotted a suspect at the main hall, he is related to an old case so I have Brother Bai drive me to follow him.” Han Fei explained the whole truth to Director Zhang but Director Zhang still needed time to process it.

“We’re chasing after a fugitive basically.” Bai Xian said nervously.

“So suddenly?” Director Zhang didn’t know what to say. The event had started and he was called on stage so he had no choice but to end the call.

“With Director Zhang’s experience he can handle something like this.” Han Fei was not worried.

“Hopefully.” Bai Xian felt like he had been dragged into something sinister but there was no choice but for him to keep going. There were fewer cars on the road, even the streetlights had disappeared. They drove to the northern countryside of Xin Lu. After driving down several small lanes, the man headed into a half-abandoned communal park. There were several hospitals, children’s playgrounds as well as science centres and holiday villas built by Immortal Pharma here. This place used to be so beautiful but it had been abandoned for a long time already. No one frequented this place anymore.

“Where is he going?” This place was quite scary at night. Bai Xian followed the man from afar. They meandered along the roads before they reached the depth of the park. After driving for another 100 metres, the man finally stopped. He took out a large luggage from the trunk and shuffled into one of the buildings.

“The luggage is not loaded with a dead body, is it?” Bai Xian could hear his voice trembling. “Should we call the police?”

“I already did, back at the main hall.” Han Fei narrowed his eyes. “Drive closer. You stay guard inside the car and I’ll go inspect the building.”

Bai Xian did what he was told but as the car drove forward, he suddenly saw a person wearing red waving at him in the middle of the road. He stepped on the brake. Bai Xian stared ahead as cold sweat poured down his face. “There, there was someone standing in the middle of the road!” Bai Xian was agitated. But when he looked again, there was no one there anymore. He checked the car cam and rewound the footage. The cam captured nothing. “This is impossible, I really saw it!” Bai Xian gripped the steering wheel so hard until the back of his hands bulged with green veins. “Did you see it?”

Han Fei didn’t speak. He stared at the footage from the car cam. The footage didn’t show a person but it did capture a fleeting shadow. “There is a blurry shadow there, I’ve seen something similar when we were shooting at the plant living compound.” Han Fei consoled Bai Xian, “This place is probably haunted, it’s fine.”

“It’s fine?” Bai Xian wanted to say something more but Han Fei opened the car door. “Stay inside the car and wait for the police to come. I’ll go ahead to explore.”

“How about... I come with you?” After what just happened, Bai Xian really didn’t dare to stay alone inside the car.

“Don’t force yourself.”

“No, I volunteer.” Bai Xian undid his safety belt and followed closely behind Han Fei.

“If we run into danger, just run and don’t worry about me.” Han Fei and Bai Xian soon reached the man’s car. They wanted to check what was inside the car but the car windows were tinted, they couldn’t see inside.

'Why would the boss of an entertainment company come to a place like this at night? Is he now the female persona or his normal self?' Han Fei had many questions and the answers were all on that man.

"Did he enter this building?" Deepest inside the park, after crossing through the bushes, there was a very artistic building. It had eastern architectural features. Even though it had been abandoned for a long time, it still looked well preserved.

"They must have spent a lot to build this place." Han Fei planned to go ahead when he noticed Bai Xian had stopped. "What's wrong?"

"I remember it now, isn't this the plastic surgery hospital Immortal Pharma built a long time ago?" Bai Xian seemed to know this place. "They used to serve the most high end of customers. To be their member you have to have connections and have to go through asset verification."

"Asset verification just for plastic surgery?"

"They didn't just offer simple plastic surgery, but also other services, the most famous being personality implants. According to rumors, it could change the children's personality since they were young so they could grow up to have the perfect human personality." Bai Xian then added, "I hear many big families at Xin Lu have registered their children for this service and the children did grow up to be the best examples of their generations."

"Do you know anyone who has been through that surgery?"

"I don't. Who would tell others their children have taken this kind of surgery?"

"Then do you know why this hospital was shut down?" Han Fei led Bai Xian slowly ahead. The closer he was to the building, the more discomfited he felt. He had the same feeling when he first entered the plant living compound.

"I hear it was because some of the children had gone crazy. Actually many things had happened at this hospital, but the news was all suppressed." Bai Xian shivered. "Let's not talk about these anymore, should we return to the car?"

“Wait a minute.” Han Fei squatted down and looked into the building through the gap in the door. Someone had painted with red paint on the screen inside the room—Whose face have you stolen?

Other than that, there were many dirty pairs of white shoes dumped on the ground.

Han Fei’s fingers tightened. He regretted not carrying his nunchucks when he changed his clothes. Han Fei still had other options. He took out a pen from his suit pocket. Using the pen, he slowly pushed the door open.

Chapter 418

418 Security Guard

When Bai Xian saw Han Fei pushed open the door with the pen, his eyes almost fell out from his face. ‘Why is he so professional at this? Has he done this before?’

“Don’t stay too far from me.” As Han Fei looked ahead, he didn’t forget about Bai Xian behind him. He always cared for his teammate, which was a habit he cultivated from the cryptic world.

“Sure.” Bai Xian nodded consecutively. Before this, he thought Han Fei was a great actor, but today he saw the new side to the criminal kryptonite. After pushing the door open, Han Fei didn’t walk in directly but observed the space carefully. The space was filled with dust. There was a man’s footprint on the ground.

“He has gone to the 2nd floor.” Han Fei slowly moved forward but he soon discovered something was wrong. He encountered more footprints on the dusty brick floor but they were all children’s footprints. Han Fei didn’t notify Bai Xian about this to spare him the fear. Han Fei only signaled him to stay close to the wall and do not approach the banister of the stairs. For this kind of old building, the banisters were often loose. If they were attacked, they might fall, breaking the banister.

Han Fei was familiar with the methods of killers due to the experience he collected in the cryptic world. He shared them generously with Bai Xian. This knowledge was priceless and Bai Xian almost cried hearing it. “How about... I go back to the car to wait for you?” Life was filled with choices. Bai Xian was now facing the choice of facing the ghost or the murderer.

“Are you sure you can go back on your own?” Han Fei had reached the stairs. He picked up a decomposing scent in the air, it was very familiar.

“You’re right, I better stick with you.” Bai Xian followed Han Fei obediently.

“Do you smell that? It’s like something decomposing. I smelled the same scent on Xia Yilan earlier.” Han Fei led Bai Xian up the stairs when a ray of light came from the front door. Han Fei reacted quickly and pulled Bai Xian into a crouch. Bai Xian and Han Fei hid on the staircase, a blind spot from the front door.

The ray of light swept around. A man wearing an old security guard uniform appeared at the door. He used the flashlight to scan the room and then as if to boost his own courage, he shouted at the empty room. “Is anyone here? I’m telling you, you are trespassing!” Since no one replied, the guard moved carefully forward. “Stop hiding! I can already see you! If you don’t come out, I’ll call the police!” The place was as silent as a tomb. The guard’s chest rose and fell. His hand that held the flashlight trembled. “I will give you the privacy to leave. I will turn around and give you 10 minutes to escape.” The guard sounded very afraid. He took one step into the room and then took half step back. It made Han Fei anxious.

Just as Han Fei thought about ignoring the guard and continued to head upstairs, Bai Xian’s phone suddenly rang. The melodious ringtone sounded so creepy in the silent plastic surgery hospital.

Bai Xian quickly reached for his phone, the guard was so scared that his flashlight fell to the ground. “When are you two coming back? I’ve already taken the stage twice already.” Bai Xian pressed the wrong button and accidentally connected the call. Director Zhang’s voice came out. Before Director Zhang finished, Bai Xian hung up but the security already saw them.

“Come out! Who is there!” The flashlight rolled very far away. The guard didn’t dare to move too suddenly. He only saw two black human-like shadows on the stairs. “People have died in this place before. This place is haunted so don’t say I didn’t warn you! You better come out now!” The guard gripped the jade pendant around his neck before he took 3 steps forward.

He stared at the two balls of shadows and he stopped. He couldn’t bring himself to move further, “You’re not coming out? Fine, I’ll call the police!” The guard then turned to run out the front door, without even picking up his flashlight. Bai Xian was worried once he heard the guard was going to call the police. After all he was a famous actor, if he was found at this place by the police, he would get on the hot searches.

“Don’t worry, that man won’t call the police, and he is not a real security guard.” Han Fei held Bai Xian’s wrist.

“How would you know that?”

“A security guard’s uniform normally has both their company’s English and Chinese logo. Their guard’s name and code would be sewn on the left chest to prevent copying. However the dark uniform he wore didn’t have any of those. Plus did you notice his cap? It didn’t match the rest of his uniform at all.” Han Fei was very familiar with the security guard profession and the uniform they wore.

“You even knew these things?” Bai Xian was shocked.

“I had a part time job working as a night security guard before.” Han Fei continued to move upstairs, “The man was very loud. Whether he meant it or not, he would have notified the people above us so we need to move faster.” As they arrived at the 2nd floor, there were more children's footprints on the ground. The man’s footprints became harder to follow.

“This place doesn’t look that big from outside but...” Bai Xian suddenly yelped. He touched his neck, something fell into his collar earlier.

“What’s wrong?”

“It was probably a bug.” Bai Xian was not certain. He kept shaking his shirt.

“Be careful.” Han Fei looked down the corridor. The corridor was luxuriously decorated. It didn’t look like a plastic surgery hospital, more like a private recovery centre for the rich and famous. Han Fei moved slowly forward. The door on the left had the name Permanent Youth, the door on the right was named Immortal Consciousness. Han Fei tried the doors, they were locked.

Han Fei didn’t stop to check all the doors since the imminent task was to find that man. Bai Xian and he walked down the corridor and stopped at the first fork.

“Why are we stopping?” Bai Xian stared down the empty and dark corridor, he was worried that a murderer would jump out from one of the doors.

“I can’t be sure which direction he had taken.”

“Hmm? Then how did you know he came to the 2nd floor earlier?” Bai Xian was confused.

“His footprint disappeared here.”

“Footprint?” Bai Xian looked down and with the glow from his phone, he saw the overlapping children's footprints on the ground! “What the fuck!” Bai Xian’s face blanched and he was petrified. “This place is really haunted!” Bai Xian’s eyes were filled with those shoe prints. Children who were here for their surgeries ran up and down the corridor and then they all stopped to stare at him... or at least that was the scene going on in his mind.

Bang! Without any warning, a window down the corridor was shattered, the sound startled the already afraid Bai Xian. They turned back to look and only saw shattered glass.

“Han Fei, we better leave this place. This place is just not right!” Bai Xian couldn’t even go back to the car on his own now. He was almost 40 but this place frightened him tremendously. Han Fei didn’t say anything. Bai Xian glanced at the man and noticed Han Fei’s expression didn’t change at all. “Not everyone can be a hero, I’m more suitable to be an actor.” Bai Xian’s voice was shaking. He grabbed Han Fei’s shirt with one hand and gripped the phone with another. These were his source of security.

“There is another possibility to explain his disappeared footprints. He retraced his steps and went backwards.” Han Fei looked at the broken glass and walked towards it. As he was about to reach the broken window, he stopped. “Most of the glasses are out on the corridor so the person smashed into the window from inside the room. However I remember there was no one in the corridor earlier. The only explanation is that they have been hiding inside the room!” Han Fei whipped his head around and saw a man covered in blood holding a sharp knife standing next to the broken window! The scary thing was this man looked exactly the same as the security guard who came earlier!

“Ghost! Ghost!” Bai Xian felt all the hairs on his body standing. He had never met something as scary as this. Chill crawled into his heart, he felt like his blood was freezing. His brain echoed with the guard’s warning. ‘Many people have died here, this place is haunted!’

Fear made Bai Xian unable to think clearly. He mumbled repeatedly, "The guard is a ghost, the guard is a ghost!"

"Calm down, if he's a ghost, why would he break the window? This might be the guard's twin." Han Fei stared at the man's bloody face and licked his lips. "If I bent down to examine the broken glass earlier, he would have jumped out from the dark to stab me."

"He is that guard. The guard is dead, they are all dead!" Bai Xian was rambling from fear. At least he didn't abandon Han Fei and run away on his own.

"When an actual ghost appears, the temperature will drop. If the temperature doesn't change, then it means that even if there is a ghost, it's just an Animated Regret." Han Fei explained but Bai Xian clearly didn't understand it.

"What do you mean?"

"It means there's no need for us to be afraid." Han Fei looked at the man standing at the window, "You probably haven't seen a real ruined face before. Their faces would be split open and the flesh would mix with the skin. The muscle's color is black and the smell of blood can be detected from far away." Han Fei's voice caused Bai Xian and the man's expressions to change. Han Fei was like a gourmet, explaining the difference between imitation human meat and actual human meat.

The man inside the room tightened his grip on the knife. The blood on his face slid down his cheeks.

"What to do now?" Bai Xian was the most anxious. His clothes were soaked in cold blood. Han Fei didn't answer Bai Xian but took out his phone and pressed the record button. When he took out the phone, the man inside the room thought Han Fei was about to call the police. He jumped out through the window without hesitation!

The bloody face, the large body and the glinting knife, they enlarged in Han Fei and Bai Xian's eyes. The scary man possessed a terrifying presence. As he grinned cruelly, he walked towards Bai Xian and Han Fei.

“This is bad!” Bai Xian dragged Han Fei to slowly retreat. His heart was filled with regret, they should have escaped earlier. “We shouldn’t have waited for him to come out of the room!” Bai Xian’s legs were like noodles, he couldn’t run even if he wanted to. “Han Fei, you’ve helped the police so many times, did they tell you what to do in a situation like this?”

“Well, when we encounter a criminal with a knife, the first thing to do is not to fight but to run if possible.” He said as he undid the button on his suit. He then glanced at Bai Xian. “What are you waiting for? Run!”

The 3 of them ran at the same time but Bai Xian and Han Fei were running down different directions!

At that moment, Bai Xian and the murderer were confused. Han Fei moved so fast, he never thought to escape in the first place. Before the murderer thought to wave the knife, Han Fei was already close to him. This man had been trained by many ghosts. His action was quick and ruthless.

Han Fei landed a kick on the murderer’s knee. The sound of bone dislocation cracked. As the murderer lost his balance, Han Fei grabbed the murderer’s face with his hand. Han Fei borrowed the weight of the man and slammed his head against the wall!

Bang! The paint of the wall peeled and cracks appeared. A bloody flower remained at the spot where the man’s head kissed the wall. The body crumbled. The grinning murderer was now unconscious.

Kicking the knife to the side, Han Fei patted away the dust on his suit and then switched off the recording. The whole process lasted less than 3 seconds. When Bai Xian heard the noise and turned back, the terrifying murderer had already fainted.

“You...” Bai Xian looked at Han Fei in the western suit and black leather shoes. Staring at the polite and introverted man, he didn’t know what to say.

Chapter 419

419 Are you Not Afraid?

Holding the murderer's collar with one arm, Han Fei lifted him up and walked towards Bai Xian who was still in catatonic shock. "Brother Bai, you saw that I was only defending myself. He was the one who came after us with the knife first."

Bai Xian was weak in his knees. As he saw Han Fei approach, his lips trembled and he stammered, "Yes, he did."

"Do you have some extra clothes on you? It was so urgent earlier, I might have gone overboard with my counter-attack."

"Of, of course." Bai Xian removed his expensive suit and tore off a big piece of his shirt. "Is this enough?"

"That's fine." Han Fei accepted the fabric and bandaged the murderer's wound, to prevent the man from dying from blood loss.

"You even know how to do first aid?" Seeing how familiar Han Fei was, Bai Xian was shocked. Why would an actor know these skills so well?

"I learned it a long time ago. Most of the time I use it on others." After Han Fei dealt with the murderer's wound, he started to search for clues on the murderer. "The Butterfly's disciples are all very professional. The weapons they use are made from special materials that can escape safety inspection. This man doesn't look like he is Butterfly's disciple. Even though he's large, he doesn't have fighting experience. I've planned 7 to 8 countermeasures but never got the chance to use any of them."

When his hand reached into the man's coat pocket, Han Fei found the man's phone. "Fingerprint lock?" Holding the man's finger one by one, Han Fei tested them against the phone, and soon he unlocked it. Bai Xian poured in cold sweat seeing this. 'So fingerprint lock is not that safe after all.' With his head lowered, he silently changed the fingerprint lock on his phone to password lock.

Han Fei looked through the man's phone and finally found the thing he wanted in the contact list. "For the past two days, he has been keeping in contact with a person who is named Little Brother." He used the cloth to wipe away the blood on the murderer's face, he did look like the security guard earlier. "They should be twins but why would a pair of twins come to this place to pretend to be ghosts?"

“Yes, what is their goal?” Bai Xian finally calmed down. “Unfortunately he has fainted or we can ask him directly.”

“It’s alright, his little brother is still outside.” Han Fei looked through their chat messages and after familiarizing himself with the older brother’s typing style, he messaged the little brother on the man’s phone. “There are people from outside here, why didn’t you notify me?”

“I’ve already shouted so loudly, or did you run into someone else?” Soon the little brother replied.

“In any case, come to the second floor now!”

“Now? Do I have to? I mean shouldn’t we leave this place while we still can?”

“Don’t dawdle! I’ll be waiting for you in the first room on the left!”

“Okay, I’m going now.”

Bai Xian stood to the side and observed Han Fei communicate with the murderer’s brother. Now he understood why Han Fei could play such a good antagonist. Han Fei’s only difference from the devil was his kind and shy face.

Dragging the unconscious man, Han Fei and Bai Xian came to the top of the stairs. A few minutes later, weak footsteps came from the steps as well as a flickering light. “Big brother? Are you there? I’m coming...” The man in the security guard uniform slowly moved to the 2nd floor. He knocked on the door of the first room on the left but there was no answer. With a racing heart, the guard tried the door and realized it wasn’t locked. As he pulled the door open, a man who was propped up against the door, careened towards him. The guard subconsciously reached out to catch him. When the guard saw the man’s face, his pupils narrowed and his arms shook. “Big brother?!” If his big brother was unconscious, who was messaging him earlier?

His body petrified and the fear in his heart reached the maximum. He took an involuntary step back and he knocked into something with his back. ‘I remember the wall is still very far away!’

A hand fell on the shoulder and then an arm tightened around his neck. "Do you want to live or die?" A man's warning rang in his ears. The guard almost collapsed from fear. His body shook so hard. "Why are you and your brother here?"

"It was my brother who called me here, he used to work here as security. He said there's money to be earned." The man stammered.

"I need more details, what exactly are you two doing here."

"Find a pair of children's white shoes."

"White shoes?" Han Fei gripped the back of the man's neck and pressed him against the wall. The guard screamed and begged for mercy.

"Calm down, I just want to know the truth. If you cooperate well, I will not harm you." Han Fei stared into the guard's eyes. "After all, we are all good people."

The guard saw his fainted brother and the bloodied bandage on his head. He nodded hurriedly, "I, I will tell you everything." Giving up resistance, the guard sat down beside his brother. He had run into a professional this time. To save his life, he didn't dare to hide anything, he told Han Fei everything he knew.

"10 years ago, when my brother was still very young, he was the security guard here. This place was like paradise in the morning but very strange things happened at night, the most common was the inexplicable children's cries. My brother was quite brave so he would go looking for the source of the crying to find out the truth. He looked for a long time before he confirmed the cries came from the plastic surgery hospital located at the deepest part of the park.

"The hospital served only the most exclusive clients, all the members drove into it. The guards had no clearance to enter. Therefore, my brother had no idea who was inside the hospital. In his impression, plastic surgery normally was for adults, not for children. Curiosity compelled him to focus on the hospital and he noticed something. Theoretically speaking, the hospital only served the richest clients but my brother noticed a few malnourished and extremely thin children entering the hospital occasionally. They looked like they had been fetched from an orphanage." The male guard explained.

“Children fetched from an orphanage?” That was indeed something Han Fei didn’t expect.

“I swear to God I’m telling the truth. My brother saw this with his own eyes.”

“Okay, keep going. What happened next?”

“When the children were sent to the hospital, even though they were poorly dressed and very afraid, their eyes still had the innocence of children. However, when they were sent out from the hospital at night, the innocence in their eyes would disappear, it felt like they had been changed into little puppets.”

This hooked Han Fei’s interest. “Their personalities changed? Personality implant?” Han Fei had no idea how this surgery was done. From the guard’s words, Han Fei believed this hospital run by Immortal Pharma was doing something extremely immoral.

“I’m not too sure but I heard from my brother that the orphans who left the hospital would receive free physical treatment, the hospital would also help them find adopted families so that they could have a carefree life.”

“That’s nice.” Bai Xian had a good impression of Immortal Pharma, after all the company’s medicine had saved many lives... of those who could afford them.

“The orphans who left were treated, does that mean there are orphans who couldn’t leave?” Han Fei’s voice sounded creepy in the dark. The guard was surprised that Han Fei had guessed what he’d say next. He nodded. “An extremely small percentage of children went into the hospital and never came out.” Wind blew across the corridor. Waste paper scratched against the floor filled with children’s footprints. The temperature dropped.

“Do you have any evidence of that?” Since this involved Immortal Pharma, Han Fei was very cautious. The guard opened his lips and then looked at his unconscious brother. His face paled and his lips trembled. “Do you believe in ghosts?”

“Why would you suddenly bring that up?” Bai Xian panicked. He was familiar with horror movie cliché, normally when someone asked this question, the characters would start to die.

“My brother had encountered a ghost at this building, it was a child wearing white shoes. Once you encounter him, he’ll keep on staring at you with his face appearing everywhere.” The guard’s hands gripped together. His body shook harder.

“That’s not enough evidence to prove the boy is a ghost.”

“My brother first spotted the boy during his 3 am patrol. The hospital started its normal operation after dawn. The worker found the dead body of the boy behind the shoe rack. The coroner said that he died 2 days ago.” The guard was already covered in cold sweat as he talked about these things.

“My brother remembered that boy because he had a strange personality. When the boy was first sent to the hospital, he tried to escape. His face was covered in burn scars. My brother didn’t think too much of it, after all, my brother thought the boy was here for facial reconstruction surgery.”

“And then?”

“That day when the boy was recaptured, the best doctor at the hospital, Doctor Xia got into a fight with his client. Doctor Xia was famed for his good temper, no one knew who angered him that day. Soon Doctor Xia apologized to the client and everything seemed to go back to normal. However, based on what my brother said, the strange events only started then.” The guard explained. “Doctor Xia and his wife stopped showing up at the hospital. Lesser children were sent to the hospital. The surveillance machine at the surveillance room kept having problems and it would capture strange footage. Like shoes falling from the shoe rack for no reason, things crawling past empty corridors, cameras with human face tracing would move on their own when there was no one there.”

The guard’s voice lowered. He became more timid like there was something looking at him from the dark corridor.

“Are those footage still available?” Han Fei asked.

“Most of them have been deleted but my brother recorded one of them. He has changed his phone many times through the years but he never deleted that video. It is also because of that video that we came looking for white shoes.” The guard pointed at the phone Han Fei was holding with shaking hands. “You can check the last video on the list.”

Han Fei looked through the phone for a long time before he found the hidden video. He clicked on it and surveillance footage recorded on the phone appeared.

The corridor at midnight was exceptionally quiet. About 5 seconds later, a pair of white shoes suddenly appeared on screen. After a small pause, the shoes started to move like someone was wearing them! The video was very short, only half a minute long, but it was terrifying.

But the key was the 3 of them were standing on the corridor featured in the video. The temperature continued to drop, Han Fei glanced towards the spot where the video captured the white shoes. At the end of the corridor, someone had placed a pair of white shoes there.

“When did they appear? Have they always been there?” When their attention was pulled to the white shoes, the phone Han Fei was holding suddenly came out with the crying of children. They lowered their heads to look and saw the phone had automatically played the next video.

In the video, a boy was tied to a chair, he was insulted and beaten. His face was burnt and extremely ugly. Han Fei looked and there were many similar videos in the hidden folder.

“My brother didn’t record those! He was just the security guard here, he never told me about these things!” The guard’s face twisted from fear. He waved his hands. “I don’t know anything about these! I swear!”

“Your brother has lied to you. He’s back here not for money but to save his life.” Han Fei felt chilled too. He stared at the white shoes at the end of the corridor. He picked up the fainted murderer and used him as a meat shield.

Chapter 420 Happiness Orphanage

“The security guard’s big brother was looking for white shoes at midnight, Ah Cheng’s boss mentioned the white shoes on the phone, the white shoes were also seen in the last picture taken of Xiayi before she died. It is really as the guard said, once you see the white shoes, they will be everywhere.” The temperature continued to drop. The footprints on the ground appeared to come alive. Han Fei felt like if he moved his eyes away, they would start to run about.

“How come... it feels like the white shoes have gotten closer to us?” Bai Xian held onto Han Fei’s arm.
“Have the police told you how to deal with this situation?”

“If I was alone, I would run but now there are 4 of us.” Han Fei’s expression didn’t change but if one looked closer, one would realize his muscles were tense.

“I don’t think I’ll be useful in this kind of situation.” Bai Xian wanted to leave but Han Fei dragged the murderer deep into the corridor. Bai Xian who didn’t dare to be left alone had no choice but to follow Han Fei. They were walking down the corridor where the white shoes were captured on video. The deeper they went, the lower the temperature. The chill crawled through the sleeves and collars.

Han Fei didn’t switch off the videos on the murderer’s phone, the video played one after another. The hidden folder was filled with videos of children being tortured. However, when Han Fei studied the videos closer, he realized things were not that simple. Compared to torture, it was more like the person behind the camera was doing some kind of experiment. He was using different methods to invoke the pain and fear within the boy. His final goal was to destroy the boy’s existing personality so he could implant a new one. The videos kept playing, with the meat shield’s help, Han Fei slowly approached the white shoes.

Due to his experience dealing with the Butterfly, Han Fei knew the Pure Hatred in the cryptic world couldn’t appear in real life at random. ‘The monster from the cryptic world has to use some kind of method to influence things in real life. I wonder what secret do the white shoes have?’

Han Fei became more confident after he cleared the Ziggurat. He initially thought the plastic surgery hospital wouldn’t be more dangerous than Ziggurat but as he looked deeper, he realized that was not the case. This hospital which was related to Immortal Pharma involved many things.

“Han Fei, did you realize that the footprints underneath us are moving with us? These were the footprints we saw earlier but they’re now here.” Bai Xian didn’t dare to look ahead but then at this place, looking anywhere was scary.

“Don’t be nervous. Remember, there’s one other person in this building other than us, he might have placed the white shoes there.” Han Fei said that to console Bai Xian, it was like adults telling children that getting a shot won’t be painful. The corridor which was 10 metres long took them about 3 minutes

to cross. When they approached the white shoes, both Bai Xian and the security guard sighed in relief. The scary scenario they imagined didn't happen. The shoes stayed there quietly.

"When a person is extremely nervous and afraid, they're prone to imagine things." Bai Xian and the guard comforted each other. With the threat of the ghost, they had put away their differences and became each other's support. Removing the murderer's jacket, Han Fei wrapped it around his hand. Through the fabric, he picked up one of the white shoes. Han Fei studied the shoe. It looked normal and dusty.

'Was it the ghost running in these shoes? Or someone placed the shoes at the end of the corridor when I was dealing with the man?' Han Fei glanced at the other shoe on the ground. He noticed the shoe was pointing at a locked room on the corridor like it was about to enter that room. Han Fei placed the white shoes inside the jacket's pocket. He turned to the room. He tried the door knob, and strangely enough it had been unlocked.

A smell of paint drifted out. This was a playroom meant for kids, but the decoration was dated and toys were low quality toys from 10 years ago, nowadays kids wouldn't play with them anymore. 'Something's not right.' The back of Han Fei's head pulsed with pain. A cackle came from the back of his mind. Some blurry fragments of memory surfaced.

Han Fei dropped the fainted murderer on the ground and strode into the room. His eyes scanned the broken toys and various colorful pictures. He stopped in the middle of the playroom.

"Han Fei, are you alright?" Bai Xian was flustered. From the moment Han Fei picked up the white shoes, he panicked. In normal horror movies, people like that would be the first to die.

"Don't come in!" Han Fei held the back of his head as he slowly squatted down. His fingers touched the old toys. "I've seen these toys before..."

"Don't, don't scare me! Should we wait for the police?" Bai Xian noticed Han Fei was acting strangely. At this creepy place, his only teammate was spiraling out.

Han Fei ignored Bai Xian. He picked up the toys one by one and then tossed them aside. He walked deeper into the playroom. When he saw the pictures of windows on the wall, similar images appeared in his mind.

The grey cement walls appeared dull and lifeless. To see the outside world, the group of children painted windows on the walls. Inside the painted windows, there were flowers from spring, trees from summer and a group of kids playing together. The memory and real life overlapped. Han Fei and the laughter in his head opened their eyes at the same time. "Happiness Orphanage?"

Han Fei then realized this children's playroom was decorated similarly as the one from the Happiness Orphanage where he came from!

The orphanage was surrounded by a cement wall and the yard was filled with various low quality toys. The happiest time in the day for the children was when they were allowed to play with these toys.

'Why would the hospital build a room to mimic the yard at Happiness Neighbourhood? These toys can't be found on the market anymore, unless...' To verify his suspicion, Han Fei walked through the toys towards the wooden horse at the corner. The wooden horse's paint was peeling. In today's age, no child would play with it anymore. Staring at the undamaged wooden horse, Han Fei shook his head. Even though the toys were of the same type as the ones from Happiness Neighbourhood, they were not the same ones.

'I remember clearly the wooden horse at the orphanage was carved through with a knife and there were wooden splinters everywhere...' Han Fei's mind suddenly froze. He could remember the wooden horse in the yard but he couldn't remember who destroyed the wooden horse...

Pins stuck in his mind. Han Fei resisted the pain and tried to think.

'Who ruined the wooden horse? These toys... they should have knife marks!' Han Fei stood up and moved to study the painted windows on the grey wall. There were four seasons painted in the windows but inside the room, it was grey and quiet. 'This hospital has the ability to change a kid's personality, how did they gain that technology? Have they succeeded?' With the pain surging through his brain, Han Fei was suddenly reminded of something unimportant.

When he first obtained the black box, the police once brought him to be examined. The photon supercomputer rated him as having 0 danger rate, he was an extremely rare healing personality type. Someone with this personality type could not only heal others, bringing others hope but could also heal themselves even though they might be lost in despair.