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Chapter 163: One by One, Dreams Fly Out of the Skylight_1

It was already evening when the police left.

After seeing them off, Fatty glanced at the clock on the wall. "That questioning took quite a while. It's already past four o'clock."

The Lantern Festival would start at seven that night, leaving them less than three hours.

The sky had already started to darken slightly.

Fatty noticed that the lights in the room diagonally opposite theirs were already on. He stared at the door with an odd expression. "It's been the same the past few times..."

Gu Mian picked up the guitar case by the door. "The same how?"

Fatty gestured towards the other door with his chin. "That specific room. As soon as it gets slightly dark, the lights come on."

It was just past four in the afternoon. While it wasn't as bright as before, it wasn't dark enough to need the lights on yet.

However, the lights in the room opposite them seemed to be turned on around the same time every day.

"Speaking of which, wasn't the person living across from us attending the event today?" Fatty hesitated. "If they have enough money to stay in a hotel, getting an entry ticket for the event shouldn't be a problem, right?"

Gu Mian glanced at Fatty. "Now you want to manage other people's plans to attend events?"

Fatty chuckled. "I suppose you're right."

At this moment, Chu Changge was standing by the brightly lit window.

The area below had been cleaned up by midday. Crime scene tape cordoned off the tent where the murder had occurred, and nobody dared to go near it.

Even though the current societal situation made investigations inconvenient, they still had to go through the motions to prevent public panic.

Of the five people originally in the tent, one was dead. The remaining four men had been taken away, most likely to be questioned about the deceased.

The people below were heading towards the event location.

The event was to take place at Hengdian Film City. It wasn't far from their hotel, approximately a half-hour walk.

Chu Changge saw that everyone below had packed up their tents and were moving in the same direction in small groups.

The people setting up tents there were mostly from out of town. In this situation, most people wouldn't dare to travel alone, so they moved in groups.

Fatty also came over to Chu Changge, joining him in watching the flow of people below. "Speaking of which... can all these people get into the event area?"

Fatty recalled that event entry tickets weren't that easy to obtain.

"Most can only watch from outside," Chu Changge replied. "Many people here are operating on blind hope."

Most of the people below likely hadn't managed to secure entry tickets for the event.

But this didn't stop them from harboring unrealistic fantasies.

"What if I somehow get the chance to go in?"

"What if I find a ticket at the door?"

"What if I run into a white-haired old man who just hands me an entry ticket?"

Of course, such fanciful thoughts would not come to fruition.

Gu Mian and his group left the building when the flow of people outside had lessened. As they went downstairs, the lights in the room opposite theirs were still on. There was no movement from inside; it was as though its occupant had no plans to attend the event at all.

When they reached the first floor, they saw the hotel owner at the reception desk.

The owner was a bit plump and looked haggard, possibly from several sleepless nights.

"AH," the owner yawned upon seeing them. "You guys are also going to Film City, huh? Go on, then. It's quite dangerous, though. I have no intention of going..."

Gu Mian guessed the owner probably didn't have an entry ticket for the event.

Moreover, if he left, there wouldn't be anyone to guard his small hotel.

This hotel had been in operation for quite a few years. Theoretically, it couldn't have continued running during these unusual times. However, with a military station nearby and daily patrols, any lawbreakers would be promptly dealt with. Consequently, the owner still managed the hotel with trepidation.

After finishing his yawn, the hotel owner hesitated before speaking. "Speaking of, have you met the guest staying opposite your room?"

There was still some time before the event started, so Gu Mian wasn't in a hurry.

He stroked his chin. "You mean the one with the pleasant voice?"

The owner nodded and asked again, "Have you met them?"

Gu Mian shook his head. "No, why?"

Upon hearing this, an anxious expression flickered across the owner's face, but it didn't last long. He continued, "Nothing much, just asking. Oh, and there's something else..."

"You must know about the man who died next to our hotel today, right? I know the five men from that tent; they're locals and live close by... I heard from the police they had a disagreement with you?"

There was quite a bit of information in the owner's words.

Since they were locals, why would they need to set up a tent in front of the hotel?

The owner hemmed and hawed before speaking again, "Actually, there are some things I probably shouldn't say. I'm also quite afraid of my business being disrupted, but since you're all my guests, I feel I should still give you a heads-up..."

"Right after this ghost game started, several small organizations popped up around here. At that time, there were no event announcements yet, and the higher-ups weren't paying much attention to this area. Plus, these small groups were quite insidious—they'd scatter at the first sign of trouble, making them impossible to catch. After a while, these small groups started having friction with each other, and there were even incidents of bloodshed. Eventually, one small gang managed to consolidate all these organizations..."

"When these small groups merged, they became a large organization." The owner paused. "They even had a rather impressive name: the Qingyun Gang. Before the military arrived, this gang was pretty much the local hegemon around here. But after the military got here, they vanished without a trace..."

Fatty raised an eyebrow; the name "Qingyun Gang" made it feel like he had time-traveled to another era.

"I suspect those five men were part of that gang, and I don't think they're the only gang members around. Be careful when you go out... they might follow you."

The owner's voice was very low as he spoke, as if afraid of being overheard.

Gu Mian nodded slightly. "Thanks."

The owner waved his hand. "No need, no need."

By this time, the crowd outside had thinned. Gu Mian glanced outside, then stepped out of the hotel entrance.

Chu Changge and Fatty followed him.

As they left, Fatty was still clutching his camera. "Doctor, I haven't had a chance to take any photos today. How about one now?"

Gu Mian shook his head. "No need. We'll likely need this thing at tonight's event."

Only then did Fatty put away his camera.

They walked for some time and finally approached Film City.

As it turned out, those without entry tickets had no chance of attending the event.

A security cordon had been set up around Film City, keeping out those still hoping to try their luck.

Military personnel were scrutinizing event entry tickets. Only those with tickets could cross the cordon.

Film City was vast, and the security cordon seemed to stretch endlessly, lined with armed soldiers as far as the eye could see.