

Collapse 183

Chapter 183 Xie Bi'an_1

As if he had seen through Gu Mian's thoughts, Fatty casually said, "Hey Doc, did you know? I once had a neighbor downstairs who drowned by falling headfirst into his bathtub. I happened to be looking down when they carried him out. Whoa, his face was so pale..."

Gu Mian waved him off. "Alright, alright. No one would think you're mute if you kept quiet."

As he spoke, he looked at the lantern riddles in the bathhouse. "Guessing these riddles is too much trouble. After finding the right one, we still have to find the location. It'd be fine if the place mentioned in the riddle is nearby, but what if it's far away? Wouldn't going back and forth take a long time?"

Fatty replied matter-of-factly, "Isn't that obvious? This event isn't just about handing out rewards. If players could get a reward just by finding a lantern, then what would be the point of it all?"

"Look, among the few of us, we've only managed to solve one riddle and get a reward so far. Others have definitely spent more time, not to mention players who came in alone."

"Look, it's already five past nine. Let me count how many of us there are..."

Fatty began to count, pointing at their elongated shadows on the ground.

"One, two, three, four..."

"The four of us have only solved one so far. Maybe there are still some who haven't..."

As Fatty spoke, he suddenly seemed to recall something and trailed off, his voice stopping abruptly. His mouth hung half-open, motionless, as if his jaw had dislocated.

Mr. Green and the ghost girl had been sneakily hiding in a small house in the distance all this time.

From their vantage point, they could still see his green hat through the window.

Fatty's body stiffened as he stared at the distant green hat. "Four?"

Mr. Green and the ghost girl were both in that house.

Then why are there four shadows here?

The light shone on the backs of the three of them. Fatty felt the nape of his neck tingle.

He glanced at the distant green hat, then fixed his gaze on the elongated shadows on the ground.

The one with the guitar on his back is the Doctor.

The one with glasses is Brother Chu.

The one taking up the space of two people is me.

So, this fourth shadow behind us, the one that looks like a tall, featureless triangle... what is it?

Fatty felt a chill creep up the back of his neck and instinctively edged a few centimeters closer to Gu Mian.

Just then, a slightly hoarse voice spoke from behind him. "Hello."

The voice was very pleasant.

It wasn't pleasant in a feminine way; this voice belonged to a man, and he sounded quite young.

His greeting was gentle, reminiscent of a spring breeze under the sun—a light breath carried a warm, slightly sweet fragrance.

Hearing this voice, the chill on Fatty's neck subsided, and his face suddenly grew warm. He had never heard such a pleasant voice in his entire life.

By this time, Gu Mian had already turned around.

Since the person behind them had spoken, Fatty turned around as well, following Gu Mian's lead.

Upon hearing the voice, Fatty had pictured a tall, slender, cheerful, and handsome young man. But when he turned around, he was dumbstruck.

Things were not as he had expected.

Of course, this person wasn't short and fat, nor were they some kind of skilled cross-dresser.

Fatty couldn't see the person's actual appearance at all.

They were completely hidden by a thick black cloak. Not a single gap was visible; their head was buried deep within the hood, and Fatty couldn't even tell if their eyes were exposed.

Gu Mian also observed the individual who had suddenly appeared behind them.

He studied them for a while, trying to find any exposed part of the person, but failed.

This person was bundled up so tightly, even their hands were covered in black leather gloves, not a single fingertip showing.

Dressed entirely in black, they looked rather sinister in the dim light, like a criminal lurking in the shadows.

For a moment, Gu Mian suspected this might be the assassin sent because of the pursuit order he had drawn.

But Gu Mian soon found that he could open the player information of the cloaked figure.

Although he could only see the player's nickname and ID number, he could at least confirm that this was indeed a person in front of them.

However, Gu Mian quickly noticed that while he could access this person's player information, their nickname was quite strange.

A normal player's nickname was black. Gu Mian's own nickname was hidden and displayed in green because of the green leaf he wore. But the person standing before them had a nickname in red.

Where the nickname should be, there were only two large, red characters. The sight made Gu Mian's eyes ache from the glare.

[Anonymous]

How is that even possible?

Fatty also stared curiously at the top of the Cloaked Man's head. Truth be told, he also wanted an item that could hide his game nickname.

Because their three names often appeared on the instance collapse announcements, even if Gu Mian's name was hidden, anyone seeing his and Chu Changge's names together would immediately guess that the green-named Doctor beside them was Gu Mian.

This was a very troublesome situation.

The person before them seemed to possess a special item that could hide game nicknames.

While thinking this, Fatty blurted out, "Bro, your name..."

"It's a special item obtained from this event," the pleasant voice replied from within the cloak.

As the Cloaked Man spoke, he tilted his head slightly, as if looking at Fatty.

Fatty immediately took a large step back, as if a mere glance from the man would cause him to lose a chunk of flesh.

Gu Mian glanced at Fatty, then back at the Cloaked Man. "Alright, why did you sneak over and call out to us? Spit it out."

The man seemed to lower his head slightly at this. Then, he extended a gloved hand and pointed. "Over there..."

Gu Mian looked in that direction. "What about over there?"

The pleasant voice continued, "It seems someone has been following you... and there also appears to be something else following that person."

Fatty, who had been captivated by the beautiful voice, immediately snapped to attention. "Someone's following us? And there's something else following them?" he added, alarmed.

"Mhm," the Cloaked Man nodded slightly. "They've been following you for some time. I just wanted to warn you. Now that you know, I'll be going."

This must be a setup, part of the event, targeting us! That was Fatty's first thought.

Before he could form a second thought, the Cloaked Man had already turned around, apparently intending to leave.

Watching him go, Fatty suddenly called out, "Hey! Brother, why not leave your name?"

In this game, Gu Mian is the only one whose name can't be revealed. So, I should be able to get a name from other players, right?

The Cloaked Man halted. After a long pause, he uttered a few words.

"Xie Bi'an. My name is Xie Bi'an."

"Xie Bi'an?" Fatty's confused voice sounded from beside Gu Mian. "Why does that name sound so familiar?"

They watched Xie Bi'an's figure recede into the distance until he vanished from sight.

Only then did Gu Mian speak. "That's Bai Wuchang."

Fatty had a sudden realization. "No wonder it sounded so familiar! Isn't Bai Wuchang also called that? Good heavens! That fellow couldn't actually be the real Bai Wuchang, could he? But he's dressed all in black; he doesn't look the part."

"You can't just chase after him and grab him by the throat to ask if he's the real deal," Gu Mian said. "Of course, if he really is Bai Wuchang, you probably wouldn't even get near his throat before you're done for..."

As he said this, Gu Mian abruptly changed the subject. "Never mind that for now. Do you have a pole?"

"A pole?" Fatty asked, confused. "What do you need that for?"

"Didn't we say that guessing a riddle and then having to go back and forth is too much trouble?" Gu Mian said, as if it were obvious.

After a moment of stunned silence, Fatty finally understood. "You son of a gun! You're planning to just take the whole lantern and walk off with it!"