

Menu 961

Chapter 961: Omagatoki (3)

By the time Urashima got up from the ground, there was nothing to be seen.

Although initially, he saw nothing either.

"You never saw the person who attacked you from the beginning to the end?"

Hui Lijing looked at Urashima in astonishment.

Faced with such astonishment, Urashima felt very ashamed.

He hung his head and shook it.

Then he said with certainty,

"No."

"He seemed invisible."

Listening to such words, Hui Lijing snorted.

"Where in the world is there an invisible person, even if there is, it's just some technique we don't know about!"

"I'm telling you, next time bring a bag of lime, take the initiative and throw it in his face."

"But I'm a cop."

"Since when can't a cop carry lime?"

Faced with Hui Lijing's retort, Urashima was at a loss for words.

Lime isn't something that's strictly regulated, and there's no need to register when purchasing it.

It's even easier than buying a kitchen knife.

And it seems to have quite good effects.

Should I get some for self-defense?

Urashima felt vaguely tempted.

Jason watched as Urashima fell into thought.

"Named me specifically to go."

"More impatient than I thought!"

"Is it because of the time, or because of..."

Jason almost instinctively thought of the contents of 'his' notebook.

He would not forget that he traveled across the ocean to come here.

He is not a local by birth.

And the reason why he came here was to avoid 'pursuit', to find 'truth'.

Does that 'truth' have anything to do with all this?

Has the 'pursuit' really stopped?

It seems...

The Planner knows a little more than he imagined.

With this in mind, Jason lingered no more.

He turned and walked to his desk, took out a mask and a machete, put them in the backpack beside him, and then headed straight for the door.

Originally standing still, watching Jason think, Hui Lijing shouted when she saw him move.

"Wait for me!"

After shouting, she immediately followed.

"I'm going too!"

Urashima said, standing up.

But just as he stood up, the pain in his waist and abdomen made him fall back onto the sofa.

After a good while, Urashima finally came back to his senses.

By the time he stood up again and walked out, the figures of Jason and Hui Lijing had long since vanished.

Standing there dumbfounded, the young man couldn't help but sigh.

"Are you sighing because you feel useless?"

The rock shop owner, carrying a lunchbox, walked up the stairs.

"It's alright, you just feel useless now, give it a few years..."

"What will happen in a few years?"

Urashima looked at the old man before him, expecting him to inspire him with his words.

"In a few years, you'll get used to it."

The old man spoke naturally as he handed over the lunchbox to the young man.

"Try my cooking."

After saying that, he passed the lunchbox to the young man.

"Thank you."

The young man, stupefied by the rock shop owner's discouraging words, uttered his thanks and then raised his head only to notice that the rock shop owner was looking into the distance.

There, the last glimmer of the sunset was about to vanish.

At this moment, at the end of dusk.

"The sky's getting dark, don't wander off."

"Wait quietly for Jason and Hui Lijing to return."

The rock shop owner said as he pushed the young man back into his room.

Then he rushed back to the store quickly and locked the door.

It was at this moment that the street loudspeakers began to blare—

The evening glow is fading, the sky tinged with red.

The sun has set, let's all hold hands and head home.

After the children return home, the little birds will dream.

A bright moon rises in the sky, the stars twinkle.

...

Within the crisp sounds.

Shadows, bright and dark, began to appear.

They bathed in the blood-like sunset.

Laughing wildly.

But in the eyes of ordinary people, it was just the sound of the wind.

The wind of the night.

Cool, carrying...

Cold.

Chapter 962: Eating Raw is Not Good, So...

Hui Lijing was driving the car.

She knew where Tongshou Temple was.

Jason, knowing nothing about the surroundings, did not refuse the offer to ride together.

Jason also didn't refuse when she offered to drive.

Jason sat in the back row, leaning toward the driver's position.

Not only because the back row was spacious, but also because in the whole car, apart from the driver's seat, the spot behind the driver was the safest.

In fact, in some ways, this position was the safest.

Because the driver needs to pay attention to the road conditions.

And from here, one could observe any sudden accidents at any time.

So, Jason preferred this spot.

At this moment, Jason's brows furrowed.

In his perception, which surpassed that of a normal person by 8 times, many strange scents began to emerge.

Some were like 'food', and some were not.

It was very blurry.

As if he could smell sausages, knuckles, and sauce meat, but it was like smelling them through a cured meat cabinet, not at all clear.

What happened?

Was it because of the change in time?

Or because of the arrangements by that mastermind behind the scenes?

Jason pondered, his hand already on his backpack.

He became somewhat impatient.

Meanwhile, Hui Lijing, who was driving, had not noticed these things; this dream-aspiring barista turned qualified mercenary detective was currently focused on driving, and began to speak to Jason: "Jason, how should we arrange things later?"

Arrange?

What arrangement?

Jason looked puzzled towards the rear-view mirror.

At this moment, Hui Lijing was also looking at it.

Their eyes met, and Hui Lijing smiled.

"I'm good at assault, I need a firepower support."

"Of course, I can also provide sniper support."

"What are you good at, Jason?"

Hui Lijing asked.

"Eating!"

Jason said quite seriously.

Eating?

Hearing this answer, Hui Lijing nearly drove the car into a ditch, gripping the steering wheel tightly to avoid an accident. She looked at Jason through the rear-view mirror with annoyance.

"Stop joking around!"

"I'm serious!"

Hui Lijing said.

"You're the one who joked first."

Jason leaned back in the car seat, slowly speaking.

It has to be said, the car's seat was quite nice, very soft and comfortable, and there was plenty of space; even for someone of Jason's build, it was enough.

"When did I joke?"

"What's wrong with a detective being good at assault and sniping?"

"Is it because I'm not a qualified firepower hand?"

Hui Lijing asked indignantly.

You call this a detective?

Jason rolled his eyes.

What kind of detective is good at assault and sniping, as if Hawaii would teach these skills.

Fake detectives, handguns are their limit.

Real detectives, stabbed by needles more than eight hundred times.

Ordinary detectives?

Naturally they use soccer.

Then what are you?

A tough guy, huh?

Hui Lijing Rambo Crystal?

Is your naturally curly hair your signature?

Did you forget to wear your red ribbon?

Although Hui Lijing didn't know what Jason was thinking, his eye-roll moment let Hui Lijing feel Jason's sarcasm. If she wasn't driving, she would definitely argue with Jason about what a true detective should look like.

Of course, Hui Lijing didn't say nothing.

However, when she opened her mouth to speak, she paused.

"Eh?"

"Where did this fog come from?"

"There was no heavy fog predicted in the weather forecast, right?"

Hui Lijing muttered puzzledly, then instinctively slowed down the car.

But the fog was too thick.

Shortly after, Hui Lijing's visibility was reduced to just a few meters ahead, and she had to turn on the high beams.

Then, her brows furrowed.

Almost subconsciously, she pulled out the gun hidden under the seat.

Although it was somewhat rash, Hui Lijing still sensed something was off.

"Jason... huh?!"

Hui Lijing was about to ask Jason a question, but when she began to speak, the detective realized something was amiss.

Jason was gone!

The Jason who had just been sitting in the back row was now nowhere to be seen.

His backpack was still there.

And there was no sound of the car door opening.

How could Jason possibly disappear?

A sinking feeling grew inside Hui Lijing.

She looked towards the suddenly thick fog, and some rumors surfaced in her mind.

These rumors had always been circulating in the 'detective circle'.

They said... monsters!

In places beyond the reach of ordinary people, monsters do exist.

Ghosts, Evil Spirits likewise.

They mingle among the crowds.

Undifferentiated from humans and ghosts.

Committing wrongdoings at will.

Many unsolved cases are their doing.

Regarding such rumors, Hui Lijing was always half-believing, half-doubting.

Perhaps as a woman, she was naturally curious about these rumors, combined with her sentimentality.

Otherwise, Hui Lijing wouldn't have asked for Jason's help after Hui Lixiang's disappearance.

And now?

She gripped the gun tightly in one hand.

Her other hand reached into the pocket on the left side.

There, a bag of salt and a head of garlic lay.

She pinched some salt with her palm, rolled down the window, and scattered it outside.

Get out of the car at a time like this?

Even for someone as impulsive as Hui Lijing, it was not something she would do.

The salt was scattered into the fog.

Falling without a sound.

The churning fog directly devoured the salt, and moreover, the fog continued to spread into the car. Hui Lijing promptly rolled up the window, looking outside with tense expression.

But other than the thick fog that one could not see through, nothing else was there.

Looking in all directions from the window, Hui Lijing saw only fog everywhere.

"Should I throw out some garlic to see if it works?"

Hui Lijing thought to herself.

Just as she was about to give it a try, a voice rang out from the thick fog outside the car—

"Hui Lijing!"

Chapter 963: Raw Food Isn't Good, So... (2)

The voice was crisp and pleasant to the ear.

It's my sister!

Hui Lijing's face lit up with joy, and she subconsciously reached to open the car door, but it didn't open immediately.

Huh?

When did the car door lock itself?

I buckled my seatbelt when I got in the car, but I didn't lock the door, did I?

Hui Lijing clearly remembered everything after getting in the car.

Then, she was suddenly alarmed.

"Why did I just want to get out of the car?"

"How could my sister possibly be here?"

Now fully alert, Hui Lijing became even more cautious.

She stared intently outside.

Through the dense fog, the voice of Hui Lixiang kept coming, one after another.

"Hui Lijing."

"Hui Lijing."

The voice was as crisp and pleasant as the one Hui Lijing remembered of her sister, but she was certain that her sister couldn't be there.

The place wasn't far from the café; if her sister were here, she would have gone directly back.

Moreover, sitting inside the car, she couldn't see anything outside enveloped by the heavy fog.

So how could her sister possibly see everything inside the car through the fog?

Even with the car's headlights on, it would be the same.

Therefore, it definitely wasn't her sister.

Hui Lijing analyzed the situation calmly.

But,

Deep down, she still harbored a sliver of hope.

What if it really was her sister?

What if her sister encountered some special event, and could only appear in such heavy fog?

Perhaps, it was precisely because of her sister's appearance that the fog emerged.

If I want to find my sister, this could be my only chance!

With that thought, Hui Lijing was somewhat tempted.

She glanced around once more.

And then—

"Hui Lixiang, you come out!"

"If you're already back, why don't you dare to come see me?"

"We stopped playing these kinds of petty tricks when we were six!"

"Do you think you can scare me?"

Hui Lijing bellowed with all her might.

Going outside posed a great danger, but worried it really was her sister, she had to make her sister show herself.

However, outside could still be heard 'Hui Lijing, Hui Lijing' calling out.

"Hmph."

"Sure enough, it's fake."

Hui Lijing let out a cold laugh, a sigh of relief in her heart.

She had indeed been worried that everything before her was a setup by her sister to meet her, and then she might miss the only chance.

But now?

No more worries.

The incident at the age of six was a secret between her and Hui Lixiang.

Under pressure from Hui Lixiang, she swore never to tell anyone.

And with just a slight mention of that incident, if it really was Hui Lixiang, she would surely jump out to cover her mouth.

But now, aside from the repetitive calls, there was nothing else.

Even if the voice was similar,

To her, it couldn't possibly be.

Therefore, Hui Lijing sat in the car with a gun in hand, waiting.

Since the opponent had only created fog and chose to lure her, it indicated that the enemy didn't have the confidence to confront her directly or was not adept at straightforward combat.

So she waited.

Waiting for a change in the situation.

A change that would be advantageous to her.

But... Jason!

I hope that guy is alright!

Hui Lijing prayed silently at the bottom of her heart.

Then, at that moment—

The car door opened!

Hui Lijing raised the gun in her hand instinctively.

Jason just nonchalantly sat down in the passenger seat.

Facing the muzzle, Jason was quite displeased.

"What are you doing?"

"Put down the gun!"

Jason frowned and asked.

"What did you just go do?"

Hui Lijing didn't lower the gun, but instead stared directly at Jason and asked.

"I heard Hui Lixiang's voice and got out to check."

Jason spoke as if it were nothing unusual.

And Hui Lijing?

She pulled the trigger without hesitation.

Bang, bang bang!

Three shots in succession.

Three bullets hit Jason right between the eyes and in the left and right side of his chest.

Jason, incredulous, looked at Hui Lijing, who had fired the shots, and then lowered his head to look at his own wounds.

"How did you figure it out?"

Jason asked.

At the same time, the tall, robust figure began to shrivel at a speed visible to the naked eye.

"Jason has never seen Hui Lixiang."

"Nor would he recognize her voice."

Hui Lijing said this as she pulled the trigger again.

Bang bang bang!

Three more shots, the already withered 'Jason', burst open on the spot.

Pop!

It was like a balloon exploding.

Only a leaf fell from the air, the leaf already torn and tattered, scattering when it landed on the seat, as if it were a dry leaf in the cold winter crushed by someone's hand.

"Leaves?"

Hui Lijing was taken aback, her gun-hand slightly lowered, veering away from the passenger seat.

"Hehe!"

A strange snicker suddenly entered Hui Lijing's ears.

Not good!

Hui Lijing was about to raise her gun again.

But it was too late!

On the empty passenger seat, a shadow pounced at her.

The shadow wasn't big, only the size of a four- or five-year-old child.

But the speed was extremely fast.

Moreover, Hui Lijing already felt the coldness at her neck.

It was the reaction one would have only when a blade was placed against their neck—she had gone through similar trials during training to better adapt to combat, with the instructor assisting her.

But unlike the trial from before,

This time it was real.

Death!

Was imminent!

Blood throughout Hui Lijing's body seemed to freeze; for the first time, she felt she was about to die.

It was a strange sensation.

So unfamiliar that her body seemed frozen.

Before her eyes, an ancient scene began to emerge—

"Monster! Monster!"

"Yao eats people!"

"Fight the monster!"

"Fight the monster!"

Cow dung hit the young Hui Lijing.

Hui Lijing didn't cry like other bullied little girls.

She picked up the cow dung that had fallen off her and charged at the loudest boy, smearing his face with the dung.

Then, while he was bewildered, she shoved another handful of dung into his mouth.

And then?

She pinched his nose.

She watched him swallow the dung, chewing it, and she laughed out loud.

However, she was also beaten black and blue.

But she had no regrets.

Anyone who dared to throw dung at her, she would make them eat it, chew it.

That hadn't changed before.

And now?

It wouldn't change either!

The scene from her memory brought a fierce glint to the detective's eyes.

Want to kill me?

Come and try!

It's just cow dung!

Hui Lijing roared in her heart, and her stiff body immediately sprang into action.

She raised her gun, aimed at the shadow.

The shadow was also close at hand.

Its sharp claws were about to sweep across her throat.

But Hui Lijing didn't waver.

It's a fair exchange, one for one!

With such resolve, Hui Lijing was about to pull the trigger, but a palm was faster.

The broad, powerful palm directly grabbed the shadow.

"Squeak squeak squeak!"

The shadow let out a series of cries, trying to break free from the grasp, but the palm was as firm as if cast from iron; its sharp claws scratched it, not only leaving the palm unscathed, but on the contrary, its claw tips broke amidst sparks flying.

"Dry noodles... no, it's a civet!"

"Why is there a civet here!"

"And how did you appear again!"

Hui Lijing finally came back to her senses and looked at Jason in the back seat.

Aside from holding a civet in his palm, he seemed utterly undisturbed.

"I've always been here."

Jason replied like that.

He really hadn't left, just entered a 'Stealth' mode.

A 'Stealth' beyond Transcendent completely concealed his presence from Hui Lijing's view.

As for why to 'Stealth'?

It was simple.

To conceal his presence.

Jason certainly did not want the 'food' that came knocking to escape again.

Paying no further attention to Hui Lijing, Jason lowered his head to look at the civet in his hands, his mouth splitting into a grin, his sharp teeth exposed, saliva swirled between teeth, stretching into long threads.

He said near instinctively—

"Raw isn't good... boil water!"

Chapter 964: Agents

Eat it raw?

Boil water?

Hearing Jason's words, Hui Lijing was completely stunned, she dumbfoundedly said, "We're in a car, where am I supposed to find a pot to boil water for you... No! That's not right! This is a monster! You, you want to eat a monster?!"

Finally, Hui Lijing came back to her senses.

She stared wide-eyed at Jason.

Especially at the raccoon cat in Jason's hands.

A Raccoon Demon!

With only a quick glance, Hui Lijing recognized this yokai.

It wasn't that Hui Lijing was familiar with yokai.

Rather, this particular yokai had quite a reputation in this country.

There were many legends about them.

Of course, everyone took these as just stories.

Including the earlier Hui Lijing.

Even though rumors of yokai circulated in the 'detective world,' Hui Lijing had never truly seen a real yokai.

Therefore, deep down, Hui Lijing always doubted the real existence of yokai.

And now?

Naturally, she had no more doubts.

After all, seeing is believing.

Just as she had climbed out of one pit of skepticism, Hui Lijing fell into another bout of self-doubt.

What did she see?

Jason was preparing to eat a yokai!

She had heard countless times about yokai eating people, this plot was common in stories and dramas, but never had she seen a person intending to eat a yokai.

Could this be the way 'Exorcists' perform exorcism?

Hui Lijing couldn't help but think to herself.

Then, Hui Lijing shook her head.

How could it be!

Shouldn't a real 'Exorcist' be someone who carries a shotgun loaded with rock salt bullets alongside their brother, continuously pulling the trigger?

Or perhaps a couple meddling with high-tech equipment, leaving behind all sorts of sinister evidence, only to end up claiming their powerlessness?

How could there be someone who just outright eats them?

And...

Do yokai taste good?

Her worldview being greatly shocked, Hui Lijing began to let her thoughts wander.

However, Jason remained completely composed.

"This is purification."

He made up a serious-sounding load of nonsense.

Then, a faint flame appeared in his hand.

Although there was no pot or water, Jason was no novice to preparing 'food' with the Charles Burning Technique.

Soon the fur of the Raccoon Demon was burned clean off, and its skin began to turn slightly red. Then, Jason began to ramp up the flame's intensity, from ordinary knife-edge level to bullet level, to bomb level, and then to tank level.

Jason carefully controlled the temperature.

He didn't want the 'food' to get charred.

Meanwhile, Hui Lijing furrowed her brow, and asked from the perspective of a third-rate chef.

"Shouldn't you first slice it open and remove the innards?"

"Their innards are delicious too."

Jason replied.

"I meant cleaning them."

Hui Lijing corrected.

"My flame has already sterilized them. In fact, most of the time, to purify these demons... these yokai, more quickly and effectively, I would wash them with spirits. This flame treatment is already quite high-end."

Jason explained.

"Doing it this way, won't it stink?"

Hui Lijing still had doubts.

"Most likely not. If it were boiled, it would indeed need thorough cleaning, but that would also lose some essence. I haven't yet found a way to ensure that cleaning doesn't waste food."

Jason shared his practical experience.

"It does sound troublesome... wait, no!"

"Why can your hand release flames?"

"And earlier, you had completely disappeared, how did you appear again?"

After a series of conversations with Jason, the now-normal Hui Lijing noticed something was off. Unable to contain herself, the aspiring barista-turned-detective raised her voice.

"Because I'm an Exorcist!"

Jason stated naturally.

Hui Lijing's mouth gaped open, wanting to refute such a seemingly dismissive remark, but ultimately she said nothing.

Because, after pondering, she felt it made sense.

An Exorcist who could exorcise yokai, how could they be an ordinary person?

Having some abilities that common people didn't possess was only right.

Then, quite naturally, a question arose.

"Can I learn this kind of ability?"

Hui Lijing asked.

"What do you think?"

Jason did not answer directly.

He had considerable knowledge of mystic arts that ordinary people could learn through training, but that didn't mean he would choose to teach them to a woman he'd just met.

Even if this woman was his client, landlord, or whatever else.

Without truly experiencing life and death, everything is meaningless.

Of course, for an equivalent exchange, Jason would be willing.

But did Hui Lijing have anything to offer?

Of course not.

The skills she possessed, Jason knew them too, and moreover, he was more adept.

Would he really request her curly hair as compensation?

Don't joke.

He wasn't bald.

"Tsk!"

"So it's really about talent and lineage, just like those priests and Onmyoji I've heard about?"

Hui Lijing said disdainfully.

In rumors, priests and Onmyoji paid great attention to inheritance.

It wasn't just about talent but also lineage.

Mostly passed from father to son.

Occasionally, brother to brother.

But the latter was particularly rare.

Hui Lijing, who had heard such rumors in the 'detective world' used to deride them as old-fashioned, looking down on them, but now her disdain was somewhat forced.

She looked at Jason, her eyes filled with envy.

Who wouldn't want to be extraordinary?

Hui Lijing also harbored similar dreams.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have become a detective.

However, soon enough, Hui Lijing's attention was drawn to the Raccoon Demon again.

Chapter 965: Agent (2)

The Raccoon Demon was quickly cooked through, emitting an unusual fragrance.

Delicious!

But overly delicious!

It was like a poisonous flower using its scent to attract prey!

It resembled those colorful poisonous mushrooms!

A deadly sense of danger rose from the bottom of Hui Lijing's heart.

Can't eat!

Hui Lijing almost instantly made her judgment.

But Jason couldn't wait to take a bite.

Crunch!

With a slightly crisp sound, Jason tore off half of the Raccoon Demon with one bite.

The fat content in the Raccoon Demon was quite rich, and the meat wasn't dry.

The layer of fat beneath the skin, after being roasted, had become crispy.

Hui Lijing watched Jason chew down half of the Raccoon Demon, and was stunned for a moment.

Because she saw Jason's smile.

A smile that spread across his face from the bottom of his heart.

Even a passerby could feel Jason's happiness at that moment.

Was it because of the food?

Hui Lijing thought, then almost involuntarily asked.

"Would you like some salt?"

"I also have garlic, pepper, and chili."

Hui Lijing offered.

"Of course!"

Jason's voice was muffled as he responded.

He didn't refuse.

Because Jason knew just how delicious 'food' could become with seasonings.

Indeed, it was the case.

Pepper and salt mixed together, evenly sprinkled over the remaining half of the Raccoon Demon, then Jason dipped it in a little chili powder.

However, Jason didn't immediately put it in his mouth, but peeled a garlic clove.

After peeling it, the clove under the light inside the car turned lustrous.

Crunch.

With a slight crisp sound, Jason bit into the garlic first, and when the spicy taste began to fill his mouth, he immediately bit into the roasted Raccoon Demon meat. The oil-rich Raccoon Demon meat, upon entry, neutralized the spiciness.

Especially the mix of salt, pepper, and chili.

Even without meticulous cooking, it still made Jason feel like he could eat a hundred more.

Unfortunately, he only had half left.

Even though Jason was restraining himself.

Just three bites.

After three bites, Jason started to lick the grease off his hands.

[Consumption of Raccoon Demon (Misc)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Minor Injury Recovery!]

[Satiety +6]

[Satiety: 1038]

...

"Misc?"

"Assorted types?"

Jason looked at the annotation within the brackets of Raccoon Demon, then at the 6 points of satiety.

6 points of satiety wasn't much.

It fits the explanation for 'assorted types'.

But Jason wouldn't despise such an unexpected delight.

Collecting small gains makes a great increase, he understood this principle.

But immediately, Jason frowned.

[Main Quest: Complete 33 Exorcisms (0/33)]

...

There was no change in the main quest.

"Is it because there's no commission?"

"So proactive actions don't count?"

Jason speculated, his frown deepening.

Because if his guess was right, this main quest would unavoidably become a bit troublesome.

Not everyone knew of his existence like 'Ichiro Sakajo'.

Do I need some fame?

This wasn't difficult for Jason.

The difficult part was, what to do after becoming famous.

Don't forget, 'he' is currently being hunted.

Once famous, trouble will inevitably follow.

But if he doesn't become famous, who would commission him?

For a moment, it was like being caught in a vicious circle, Jason furrowed his brows and gently tapped his knee.

"Jason?"

"You alright?"

Hui Lijing's voice came from beside him.

Jason looked up at Hui Lijing in front of him, and suddenly had a flash of inspiration.

Why not put forward a proxy?

Especially Hui Lijing's detective identity, could play a crucial role!

Think about it, using a 'detective's' identity, to handle cases involving remnants of monsters, he could consume these monsters and then find a reasonable explanation to disguise them as ordinary cases.

As Hui Lijing solved more and more cases like these, her reputation naturally grew.

With similar cases increasing, a virtuous cycle ensued.

Moreover, she just gave me salt, pepper, and chili.

Thinking of this, Jason spoke up.

"Do you yearn for the Mystical Side?"

Jason asked.

Hui Lijing looked at Jason and blinked.

Sometimes she was impulsive and didn't want to think too hard, but that didn't mean she was stupid.

On the contrary, at times, Hui Lijing was quite smart.

Like now!

She clearly sensed that Jason needed her help.

In return, she would probably be given some knowledge about the 'Mystical Side.'

Hui Lijing couldn't wish for more.

Without any hesitation, she nodded immediately.

"Um."

Starting price from the ground up?

Non-existent.

As a smart person, Hui Lijing knew she didn't have the right to do so. Although Jason approached her first, that didn't mean Jason couldn't find someone else.

When an opportunity arises, don't hesitate, don't regret it, and certainly don't worry about losing out.

Because you don't have any bargaining chips.

Seize that opportunity before anything else.

That's what that guy said.

Although most of the time, Hui Lijing hated her sister, Hui Lixiang, sometimes she thought her sister was right.

"I need to use your title of detective to handle some cases involving monsters—I believe plenty of such cases should exist in your circle, but most became unsolved or were disguised as unsolved."

"In return, I can teach you some groundwork about the 'Mystical Side.'"

Jason said frankly.

The premise of a transaction is to be frank.

Since Hui Lijing did not bargain at all, he would not hide anything.

Knowledge is priceless.

The basic knowledge of the 'Mystical Side' is adequate compensation.

"Okay!"

Hui Lijing nodded immediately.

Basic knowledge is everything.

Once you have the basic knowledge, will advanced knowledge still be far away?

The saddest thing in the world is not that you don't have a secret manual containing peerless martial arts, but that you have one and can't understand it.

The car's engine started again.

The vehicle started moving once more.

After the Raccoon Demon was grilled by Jason, the dense, endless fog dissipated.

Driving, Hui Lijing did not ask Jason why he was looking for an agent.

She had learned a lesson since entering the training camp: ask when necessary, and avoid unnecessary questions.

But other questions, Hui Lijing didn't avoid.

"Was the fog just now created by the Raccoon Demon as well?"

"Jason, what other monsters have you seen?"

"Do you always eat... purify them?"

Hui Lijing asked continuously like a curious baby.

"That fog just now wasn't real fog, but something like an illusionary technique."

"It used a combination of scent and abilities to trap you in an illusion."

"Monsters have various ways of attacking; this is just one of them. We can't always rely on 'seeing is believing' as the truth."

Jason answered patiently.

Since Hui Lijing was about to become his agent, he felt it was necessary for her to know some things.

Whether for him or Hui Lijing, having more knowledge about monsters is a good thing.

"As for how many monsters I've seen?"

"There are many monsters."

"Therefore, purification is necessary."

"Only through purification can they find the best destination."

Jason began to speak half-truthfully.

In this surrogate world, he had seen three monsters: the lady in the cup, the woman in the TV, and the Raccoon Demon just now.

Among them, clearly the most delicious, and surpassing the other two in every aspect, was the woman in the TV who escaped.

That made Jason hold a grudge.

"What should I do if I encounter a monster for purification?"

"Guns and explosives!"

"If that doesn't work, try a larger caliber."

Jason gave a currently most feasible plan.

During such conversations, they were about to reach Tongshou Temple.

Yet looking at the normally bustling streets in the distance, Hui Lijing frowned.

Something's not right!

Too quiet!

Not a single person!

Hui Lijing looked around, hoping to find someone, but all she saw was darkness.

Creak, creak.

Just then, a slightly grating noise arose, and a light appeared from the darkness. Hui Lijing naturally looked toward this light and then—

"Ah!"

Chapter 966: Tongshou Temple

The light in the darkness came from a lantern.

The beige-colored rice paper served as its skin supported by a four-layer framework, with the candle affixed in the middle, contributing a touch of brightness to the darkness.

It also illuminated the large "Nothingness" character on the paper.

The "Nothingness" character, written with a brush under the candlelight, was particularly noticeable and attracted attention.

Hui Lijing was drawn by this character.

Yet, Hui Lijing's scream was not because of this character.

It was because of the hand and the person she saw along the thin bamboo pole lifting the lantern.

The bamboo pole had already turned yellow-green, with yellow dominating most of it, and a hint of green at the joints being revealed through the gaps of a pale hand.

Apart from the color, the hand was undistinguishable from an ordinary person's.

Neither elongated nor sturdy.

Just like an ordinary person.

Just like the half of the face revealed under the candlelight.

But as the person stepped forward and when his entire face was exposed, it sent shivers down the spine.

On one side of the ordinary half of the face was... a skeleton.

Not just the face was skeletal.

Half of the person's body was skeletal too.

This half-skeletal person walked in the darkness, under the flickering candlelight, now bright now dim.

Suddenly, the already frightening scene turned even more bizarre.

Especially when the person glanced inside with the lantern, revealing a smile.

Hui Lijing's screams came to an abrupt halt.

All that remained was—

"This, this, this..."

Hui Lijing wanted to articulate her thoughts at the moment completely.

But the words reached her lips and she couldn't speak them out.

At this time, she heard Jason's voice.

"Turn on the high beams."

His voice was calm and unhurried, with Jason's characteristic detachment.

Such detachment instinctively made Hui Lijing trust him.

Click!

The car's high beams turned on, shining a blinding brightness, enveloping the half-skeletal figure.

Immediately, the humor on the half-skeletal face froze.

It had anticipated many scenarios, but this was truly unexpected.

Bearing the painful glare, the half-skeletal figure steps around the range of high beam lights.

Although it was extremely careful, this obvious movement was still caught by Hui Lijing's eyes.

"Is it avoiding the high beams?"

Hui Lijing asked blankly.

"You shine it too scared."

Jason responded.

"But, but... shouldn't it be a monster?"

"How can a monster be scared of high beams?"

Hui Lijing still found it hard to accept.

"Monsters are also a type of creature, they naturally follow the instincts of living beings—just as I'm not afraid of certain attacks, but I can still feel spicy when I eat chili peppers."

Jason continued to explain.

"Jason, are you saying that everything follows the instincts of living creatures?"

Hui Lijing seemed to understand.

"You could also think of it as northerners shivering in the southern cold during winter."

Jason said, then opened the car door and stepped out.

While Hui Lijing, who had just seemed to understand, was now puzzled again.

What does that mean?

She was completely confused.

However, seeing Jason step out of the car, Hui Lijing quickly followed.

Of course, she didn't forget to bring her weapon.

The half-skeletal being stood waiting by the car, and upon seeing Jason and Hui Lijing stepping out, immediately greeted them very politely.

"The little monk has seen Master Jason, Detective Hui Lijing."

The other party's voice was pleasant and his demeanor elegant; if not for the terrifying appearance, he would definitely be considered graceful.

And Hui Lijing's gaze was directed towards the top of the other's head.

On the human side, there were short dense hairs.

Hui Lijing was focused on these hairs.

Aren't monks supposed to be bald?

Perhaps noticing Hui Lijing's confusion, the half-skeletal being smilingly replied, "This little monk cultivates with hair, and has not yet reached the level of shaving it."

"So, you're afraid of high beams?"

Hui Lijing bluntly asked.

The smiling half-skeletal being's smile stiffened.

"Even if shaved and ordained, one would still fear high beams."

The monk persevered, explaining.

"So, you're saying you're even worse than high beams?"

Hui Lijing persisted.

This time, the self-proclaimed little monk could hardly hold back.

Its fully human side visibly displayed anger.

"Detective Hui Lijing, are you provoking me?"

The half-skeletal being asked ominously.

"Eh?"

"Got found out?"

Hui Lijing looked surprised at the half-skeletal figure, and her 'how could you possibly figure it out with that intelligence' expression completely angered the self-proclaimed little monk.

Roar!

A roar, like that of a wild beast, came from the figure's mouth, and it charged toward Hui Lijing.

Then—

Bang, bang bang!

Hui Lijing's pistol in her hand, repeatedly pulled the trigger.

Under the gun flashes, the half-skeletal figure kept retreating, but obviously, it wasn't fatal.

"Do you think such shooting would work on me?"

"You're underestimating my cultivation too much."

"I... fuck!"

The half-skeletal being couldn't help but mockingly retort, but before it could finish, it saw Hui Lijing smiling and pointing at the ground.

The half-skeletal being looked down and was utterly stunned.

Because a grenade, pin pulled, had somehow appeared at its feet.

Boom!

The grenade exploded, and the shockwave along with shrapnel savaged the surrounding area.

Hui Lijing holstered her gun, turned her head to look at Jason, with the look of someone waiting for praise.

Chapter 967: Tongshou Temple (2)

She definitely remembered what Jason had just said.

"If I encounter a monster, how should I purify it?"

"Firearms and explosives!"

"If that doesn't work, try a larger caliber."

It was precisely because of such guidance from Jason that when she got out of the car, she deliberately brought along four grenades, hiding them beneath her leather jacket.

"Not bad."

Jason praised.

He was speaking the truth.

Hui Lijing's adaptability was quite good, especially her technique in throwing grenades, which clearly possessed considerable skill. It was a little like the throwing technique in the [Griffin Shooting Technique], but still at a beginner's level.

Maybe he could teach her the [Griffin Shooting Technique].

Jason thought to himself.

In the lingering smoke from the grenade explosion, there was the sound of bones cracking, and a thick sense of bloodthirstiness spread, accompanied by a cold, murderous voice—

"Little monk treated you with courtesy, yet you pressed and hassled. Since it has come to this..."

Yi

Jason raised his hand and pointed.

The force field of [Protection Against Evil] enveloped the area, and immediately, the cold, murderous voice completely vanished.

Only the sound of decaying bones remained.

Hui Lijing's eyes widened as she watched this unfold.

Although Jason always claimed to be an exorcist and had indeed shown himself to be extraordinary,

His previous feats were nothing compared to the one he just performed with a single gesture.

"Jason, what was that just now?"

"A Finger of Death?"

"Can I learn it?"

Hui Lijing asked.

"No."

"Can't."

"A secret."

Jason said, then strode towards the marketplace; he had already spotted the temple known as 'Tongshou Temple'.

As for the half-person, half-skeleton who just called himself a young monk?

Jason didn't pay any attention to his words.

Talks about treating others with respect.

Spiritual practice.

If he had truly believed what the other said, Jason would have died in the 'Nightless City' long ago.

Jason could be sure that the cold, murderous intent the other showed at the end meant he had ill intentions in being here.

Or rather, would any monsters appearing here harbor good intentions?

What a joke.

However, there was one thing Jason did regret.

The other party didn't have even a hint of a 'food' aroma.

Nor did they have that lantern.

"Wait for me!"

Hui Lijing said as she ran off to pick up the lantern.

During the recent explosion, the lantern had been blown away, rolling to the far-off ground. However, it was clearly specially made, not only finely crafted but also, despite its rice paper exterior, it remained completely unharmed by the candle flame.

When Hui Lijing picked it up, the flame naturally reignited, burning brightly.

Holding the lantern, Hui Lijing quickly caught up to Jason.

"This lantern is very nice."

Hui Lijing said.

"Then keep it."

"Perhaps it was meant for you."

Jason said so.

Hui Lijing, who was still feeling joyful, was suddenly taken aback, and her steps faltered.

She turned her head to look at the car behind her and the two short bollards that blocked the car—designed by the marketplace specifically to prevent vehicles.

Of course, those weren't anything unusual.

But following Jason's words, Hui Lijing noticed something extraordinary.

Was that half-person half-skeleton perhaps waiting here for them?

Otherwise, how could it be such a coincidence that just as they arrived, it appeared?

With this thought, Hui Lijing caught up and asked.

"Was it waiting here for us?"

"Who knows?"

"Maybe it was waiting for us."

"Or maybe it was just... taking advantage of the chaos."

Jason's words made Hui Lijing even more uneasy. She instinctively looked around; aside from the area illuminated by the lantern, everything else was pitch black.

Even for the dead of night, this darkness was too much.

And the sky!

No stars nor moon!

It had just been dusk moments ago!

When did it change?

It seems, it seems to have been... during the playing of the nursery rhyme [Evening Glow]?

Everything seemed to have changed since then!

As Hui Lijing thought this, she heard a 'creak'.

It was the sound of a wooden door opening.

In the distance, the gate of Tongshou Temple opened, and an old monk with a benevolent face stood inside, watching Jason and Hui Lijing, who clasped her hands in salute, approach.

"You two have finally arrived."

"We've all been waiting for a long time."

"Come quickly."

Saying this, the old Monk turned and walked towards the temple interior.

Hui Lijing did not move, instead turning to look at Jason.

Jason was looking into Tongshou Temple.

Although he had not stepped over the threshold, Jason had already roughly made out the entire overview of Tongshou Temple; the main hall doors directly ahead were open, and a Buddha statue cast in gold appeared gentle and amiable under the light.

The side hall door to the left was open, with the light on.

The side hall door to the right was closed, pitch black.

The Monk was, at this moment, heading towards the interior of the main hall.

Then, under Jason's gaze, the figure circumvented the golden Buddha and disappeared from Jason's line of sight.

"What should we do?"

Hui Lijing asked.

Jason didn't answer, he was flaring his nostrils, confirming something.

About two or three seconds later, Jason took a step and walked into Tongshou Temple.

Hui Lijing followed closely behind.

Jason did not head towards the side halls, but went straight for the main hall. When he had passed the golden Buddha, Hui Lijing, following behind Jason, couldn't help but exclaim.

"Ah!"

The original old Monk was not seen.

What they saw... was Ryosuke!

The middle-aged detective they had met in the afternoon was now unconscious, leaning behind the shrine.

There were visible gunshot wounds on his arm and shoulder.

Besides that, there was just a small door.

There was a lock on the small door.

Jason checked the lock; it was entirely made of metal, with most of the characteristics of a lock, but there was no keyhole.

Meaning this lock was solid.

Or rather, heartless.

Such a discovery made Jason frown.

While Jason was frowning, Hui Lijing was tending to Ryosuke's wounds.

At the same time, Hui Lijing made a discovery.

"Jason, there's a letter!"

"It's behind Officer Ryosuke!"

Hui Lijing picked up an envelope.

After Jason ensured there were no traps, he took the letter, opened it, and a piece of letter paper appeared, written on it in very neat and small script—

Mr. Jason, Ms. Hui Lijing welcome your arrival.

Some changes have occurred at Tongshou Temple, we are in need of your strength to tide over this difficulty together.

Please do not worry.

It will not be too life-threatening.

Also, Officer Ryosuke will also become a support for you both.

Please work together in unity.

Respectfully, the troubled Nameless Monk

...

"To tide over this difficulty?"

Hui Lijing turned her head to glance at the letter paper, her brow furrowing.

She always felt this 'Nameless Monk' was being deliberately mysterious.

Although the situation in front of them was bizarre, could it really be considered a difficulty?

Then...

Where was this difficulty that needed to be faced together coming from?

As Hui Lijing pondered, she was informing of Ryosuke's condition.

"Officer Ryosuke is alright."

"The bullet is not lodged inside his body, he just needs good rest; there won't be any aftereffects."

"His unconsciousness isn't caused by the gunshot wound but by some other external force."

"I found a bruise near his chin—it must have been a heavy hit that knocked him out."

Hui Lijing said and showed Ryosuke's bruised chin to Jason.

"Mhm."

Jason nodded, lifted Ryosuke up, and walked outside.

"Are we going back?"

Hui Lijing blinked.

"Otherwise, do you wish to stay?"

Jason asked in return.

"But what about the letter just now?"

Hui Lijing turned and pointed at the letter Jason had tossed aside by the shrine.

"Do you believe the words of someone unknown, unsure if they're an enemy?"

Jason questioned back.

This retort instantly convinced Hui Lijing.

Jason carried Ryosuke.

Hui Lijing carried the lantern.

They quickly left Tongshou Temple, heading towards the entrance of the market.

But when they got to the entrance, Hui Lijing's expression drastically changed.

Their vehicle was gone.

Even the road was no longer there.

Instead, there was a...

River.

Chapter 968: Sorry, I saw the answer directly while you were solving the problem

The river roared like the sea.

Waves churned endlessly.

Hui Lijing stared blankly at the huge river in front of her.

She could swear that just twenty minutes ago, this was the entrance to a market, an asphalt road, even the white arrows on the road had just been painted, very fresh.

But now?

It had become a huge river.

The two stone pillars that originally blocked cars from entering, at this moment, looked like wooden stakes used to tie boats at the docks, seeming very fitting.

Yet Hui Lijing felt it was extremely jarring.

She was horrified, at a loss.

It took a good three or four seconds before Hui Lijing came back to her senses.

She turned her head to look at Jason.

Jason calmly put Ryosuke down on the ground, and then, he gazed at this huge river, seemingly searching for something.

Something on the river?

Hui Lijing thought, and imitated Jason, gazing along the entire river.

But the river was misty, completely obscuring the view.

However, Hui Lijing did not speak to interrupt Jason.

Professional matters, leave it to the professionals.

This famous saying, Hui Lijing knew.

And treated it like a holy command.

Of course, there was also the latter half of the saying:

Do what you can within your capabilities.

Hui Lijing turned around to look behind her, her gaze directed towards the darkness.

In the distance, lights of Tongshou Temple twinkled faintly.

Rather than bringing light, they made the surrounding darkness even denser.

The sound of the river roared behind her, and Hui Lijing's hand involuntarily grasped the handle of her gun.

Her instinct told her, there was something in the darkness.

Indeed, it was so.

Just a few seconds later, clear footsteps could be heard

Tap tap tap!

The footsteps were very hurried, chaotic.

Even, just by listening to the footsteps, one could feel a sense of panic.

Hui Lijing subconsciously raised her gun.

"Don't shoot!"

The figure that rushed out of the darkness, upon seeing Hui Lijing with her gun, immediately raised their hands high and shouted loudly.

It was a man dressed in a suit, appearing like a typical office worker, now with a panicked expression and trembling body.

Following this office-like man, were a man and a woman.

The man was middle-aged, wearing glasses, not bulky, dressed in a shirt, trousers, and wearing an apron, not one used in a kitchen, but one used in convenience stores, clearly marked with—Seven Days Convenience.

The last to come out was a young girl.

Dressed in a school uniform, with shoulder-length hair, youthful face, wearing a badge of Tongshou High School.

All three were bewildered.

Then, they all stared fearfully at the gun in Hui Lijing's hand.

Hui Lijing didn't lower her gun, her gaze sweeping over the three, then she directly asked.

"Who are you?"

"I'm an employee of Dayuan Electronics Company."

"I work at the Seven Days Convenience store."

"I'm a student at Tongshou High School."

Facing the muzzle of the gun, the three were very honest, without any hesitation.

"Why are you here?"

Hui Lijing continued to ask.

"I came here to eat, there's a good ramen shop here, I planned to eat after work before going home, isn't that how the life of a bachelor is?"

The office worker said while trying to lighten the atmosphere.

But the effect was poor, when he saw that Hui Lijing's gun did not lower even a bit, he wisely shut his mouth and raised his hands again.

The store clerk did the same.

With both hands raised, he responded.

"My convenience store is inside the market, I just went to the back alley for a cigarette break, but before I could finish my cigarette, everything in the alley went dark, then, I walked out of the alley, and found everyone had disappeared."

His voice trembled slightly as he spoke.

Combined with the appearance of the middle-aged man, he seemed trustworthy.

The female student was the last to speak.

"I need to pass by here on my way home, I don't know why, but it suddenly got dark around me, then, I ran into them—at the entrance of Tongshou Temple."

"There was light there, I initially wanted to go there for shelter!"

"But, but..."

The female student stuttered.

"But what?"

Hui Lijing pressed.

"Dead body!"

"There was a hanging body right at the gate of Tongshou Temple!"

The female student said with great courage.

The office worker and store clerk also nodded, confirming the girl's words.

Hui Lijing frowned.

A body?

This mercenary turned detective with dreams of becoming a barista was certain, when she and Jason left Tongshou Temple, there definitely wasn't any body, after all, the gate of Tongshou Temple wasn't tall, hanging a body there would definitely have been clearly visible.

"Are you sure it was the gate?"

To confirm, Hui Lijing asked again.

"Confirmed!"

"It was right there at the gate!"

"I saw it clearly while standing at the gate!"

The female student nodded firmly.

"Yes."

"I can testify."

"I can too."

The office worker and the store clerk echoed.

"Was a body hung after we left?"

Hui Lijing thought.

The time she and Jason left Tongshou Temple was not long, and previously, there was no one inside Tongshou Temple.

Except... that old Monk!

Could he be the murderer?

Hui Lijing subconsciously thought.

This was an instinctive cognition, that old Monk looked benevolent and kind, but his disappearance was just too bizarre, making Hui Lijing very suspicious.

Chapter 969: Sorry, I Saw the Answer Directly While You Were Solving the Problem (2)

But Hui Lijing did not immediately confirm her thoughts; she turned her head to look at Jason.

Jason still maintained his previous posture, gazing at the entire river.

Under Hui Lijing's scrutiny, Jason finally turned around.

However, he did not look towards the three new arrivals but at Ryosuke.

One second, two seconds, three seconds.

Finally, Ryosuke couldn't bear it anymore and opened his eyes.

"When did you notice it?"

Ryosuke, unharmed, propped himself up off the ground and stood up, his gaze fixed on Jason.

"When you just woke up."

Jason answered like this.

"Is it because of the breathing?"

Ryosuke asked again.

"Yes."

Jason did not deny it, although he had realized it because he heard the other's heartbeat skip twice.

"Being with someone like you, no amount of caution is enough."

Muttering words like this, Ryosuke first nodded to Hui Lijing before finally looking towards the three individuals.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am a police officer."

"This is my police badge."

"May I trouble you to take me to see the body?"

Ryosuke showed his police badge.

Immediately, the office worker, shop assistant, and female student visibly relaxed.

"Of course, officer."

The office worker immediately said.

The shop assistant and female student also nodded.

Ryosuke turned his head towards Jason.

"Although I don't know how this river appeared, I think the body that just surfaced is the key to why we are here; if we want to leave, we must examine that body."

Ryosuke said.

Jason did not deny it.

Hui Lijing did not deny it either.

But Hui Lijing did have this doubt.

She was wondering why Jason had been watching the river for so long.

What exactly is in the river?

Or rather, what is it that Jason cares so much about?

Could it be the fish in the river?

It couldn't possibly be a monster in the river, right?

Hui Lijing thought.

Then, she inexplicably thought of that half-human, half-skeleton who claimed to be a novice monk... maybe it wasn't impossible, since the whole street had become weird after dusk.

No matter what appeared next, Hui Lijing would be able to accept it.

She did not walk at the very front of the group.

Nor did she walk side by side with those three.

Hui Lijing stayed as close to Jason's side as possible as they moved forward.

'How to survive on the battlefield?'

'Follow the veterans.'

That was what the instructor at the training camp had told her when they parted ways.

And this advice had saved her more than once.

Although this was not a battlefield.

It still applied.

She was a rookie facing the 'Mystical Side,' naturally, she should follow a veteran like Jason.

"Do I need to do anything later?"

Hui Lijing quietly asked Jason, looking at Officer Ryosuke walking behind the three people.

"Wait and see."

Jason said indifferently.

"Okay."

Hui Lijing immediately nodded.

From three people, it became a group of six: Hui Lijing carrying a lantern and Jason walking last, while the female student, shop assistant, and office worker walked at the front, with Ryosuke providing light with his portable flashlight.

The street market was not long, and very soon, they returned to the entrance of Tongshou Temple.

Then, they immediately saw the body hanging in front of Tongshou Temple's gate.

The body's face was half-covered in shadows under the temple lights, and blood flowed from the body, pooling at the feet.

The moment he saw the body, Ryosuke's face turned pale.

"Yan Xia!"

The middle-aged officer blurted out.

Then, the middle-aged officer rushed forward; he needed to confirm the person's identity.

Indeed it was that bastard!

Moments later, the middle-aged officer had his definite answer.

But...

Hadn't he been exchanging gunfire with that person earlier?

Afterward, not only was he shot, but he also hit his head on something.

Then, he passed out.

However, one thing was certain before he lost consciousness; Yan Xia was still alive, he shot him in the chest, but it didn't penetrate the heart, and the person fell to the ground severely wounded.

Beyond that...

He had no recollection.

He woke up to see Jason and Hui Lijing.

Subconsciously, Ryosuke looked toward Jason and Hui Lijing.

"It has nothing to do with us!"

"We just found you here!"

"Then, preparing to leave, we took you with us!"

Hui Lijing, facing Ryosuke's scrutinizing gaze, immediately said.

"Sorry, it's just a habit."

"Can you help me put the body down?"

Ryosuke said.

Hui Lijing looked at Jason and, seeing that he had no objections, immediately said.

"Yes."

After Hui Lijing spoke, she nimbly stepped on the wall and climbed up to the eaves, then squatting down near the crossbeam of Tongshou Temple's gate.

Made entirely of solid wood, squarely shaped, about 20 centimeters wide, above which are the roof eaves, signs, and other decorations.

From Hui Lijing's current angle, she could clearly see the body was hanging by one end of a rope knotted around the neck, suspended on the crossbeam of the temple gate, wrapped around the neck once and around the beam once, tied in a dead knot.

About 30 centimeters of space was left between the beam and the neck of the body.

But the knot did not sway.

There were also no traces of friction-induced bloodstains on the neck of the body.

This proves that the body was hung here after death.

However, the fresh blood on the floor was only underneath the body; there was none around.

And the reason the body bled profusely was not due to the gunshot wound in the chest but the knife wound in the back.

A narrow, smooth knife wound that pierced through the heart.

"The condition of the wound in the chest was likely severe, incapacitating or rendering the victim unconscious, then the murderer appeared behind the deceased and finished him off with a stab."

"No trembling, no hesitation."

"A skilled knife user."

"But... why are there no traces near the beam?"

Hui Lijing observed the beam; Tongshou Temple was very clean, evidently the monks cleaned often, but there were places they couldn't reach.

Such as: the house beams.

Thus, there was a layer of fine dust on the house beam.

But what's strange is here, apart from the dust under the rope being rubbed off, the surrounding dust was untouched.

It looked as if the rope had wound itself around the beam automatically. f

But...

How could that be possible?

From the ground to the beam, it was about 3 meters high, what kind of rope could wind itself automatically?

Even if it was thrown over, how would the dead knot be tied?

It couldn't possibly have been tied out of thin air, could it?

Driven by detective instinct, Hui Lijing couldn't help but think.

"Can you bring down the body?"

Ryosuke asked from below.

"The rope is tied in a dead knot, it needs to be cut."

Hui Lijing answered.

Ryosuke frowned.

Knowing not to disturb the crime scene as a criminal investigator.

It couldn't be brought down directly...

Ryosuke took a few steps back, then with a sudden sprint,

He lifted his uninjured arm, with difficulty, pulling himself up onto the wall.

Since it can't be brought down, then it's up to go.

Squatting on the wall, Ryosuke carefully examined the body of Yan Xia and the knot, then he too fell into the same confusion as Hui Lijing.

Huh!

The light from the portable flashlight swept across the signboard of Tongshou Temple.

The shadow behind the signboard caught Ryosuke's attention.

"What is that?"

Ryosuke asked.

"It seems like a box?"

Hui Lijing answered uncertainly.

Then, Hui Lijing reached out her arm, trying to pull out the thing behind the signboard, but due to the distance, she couldn't reach it at all.

Even bracing one hand on the eaves and stretching out the other didn't work.

Hui Lijing couldn't reach, and the injured Ryosuke obviously couldn't either.

"I'll go find a ladder."

Ryosuke said as such, then jumped down from the wall.

A temple like Tongshou Temple would definitely have a ladder.

Office workers, clerks, schoolgirls watching Ryosuke jump down stood obediently in their places without moving.

Seeming at a loss.

Seemingly overwhelmed with panic.

Jason looked at the three people, then looked at Ryosuke coming out with the ladder, and looked at Hui Lijing who was inquisitive, sighing inwardly.

He also wanted to rely on superior observation and meticulous logic to find the murderer.

But he couldn't do it!

Tomb Guardian's [Perception of Death Qi] allowed him to see the murderer at a glance.

Watching Ryosuke about to climb the ladder, Jason stepped forward and stood in front of the office workers, clerk, and schoolgirl.

His gaze sweeping over the three people, he said—

"The murderer is..."

Chapter 970: Jason: I stood on the 5th floor

Jason deliberately elongated his tone.

Then, he looked at the office worker, the clerk, and the female student, his gaze sharp as a knife, involuntarily making people tremble from deep within.

The office worker, the clerk, and the female student all turned pale, and as the only girl, the female student trembled even more.

Who is it?

Speak up quickly!

I'm dying of anxiety!

Hui Lijing couldn't help shouting inside her mind, but she dared not interrupt.

As a bottom-tier detective, though bottom-tier, she was still a detective and knew some 'basic skills' of detectives.

For instance: Bluff!

The methods of bluffing are generally divided into two types.

First, when you have a rough direction but cannot accurately determine, use words to provoke the criminal, thus truly locking in on the target.

Second, when you completely do not know who the criminal is, then use words to make the criminal reveal flaws, or combine it with some drastic measures.

As for how to choose?

That depends on the detective's level.

Competent detectives choose the first type.

Although she is competent, she generally chooses the second type.

Whether to bluff or not doesn't matter, the main thing is she likes to convince people with reason.

Physical, reasoning.

Beside her, Ryosuke frowned.

He was not very skilled in interrogation.

However, as an outstanding police officer, his extensive experience told him that at this moment, he needed to cooperate.

So, the next moment—

"So that's it!"

Ryosuke sighed lightly, and a mysterious expression appeared on his face.

It held disbelief, relief, and a hint of pity.

With so much complexity.

After hearing Ryosuke's words, the office worker, the middle-aged clerk, and the female student all changed their expressions.

The three looked at each other, with the most inconspicuous middle-aged clerk taking a deep breath.

"So you've discovered it, Officer Ryosuke."

"Although we were disguised carefully, in the eyes of a seasoned police officer like you, our flaws were still glaring, right?"

"Maybe you didn't recognize us at the beginning, but given some time, you would have noticed."

The middle-aged clerk said this, standing up straight.

Any trace of fear on his face swept away.

Not just the middle-aged clerk; the office worker and the female student did the same.

Ryosuke was stunned.

Who are you?

But, this middle-aged police officer did not deny.

He hadn't forgotten that at this moment, he was supposed to cooperate with Jason.

Therefore, he nodded calmly.

"That's right."

"I didn't recognize at the beginning, but now I am certain."

"And the injuries on my body... they were also meant to affect my judgment with pain and fatigue, deliberately caused during my fight with Yan Xia, right?"

Ryosuke pointed to the wounds on his arm as he spoke.

"Hmm."

"Unfortunately, it didn't work on you."

"We still underestimated you, and this... detective?"

The middle-aged clerk shook his head regretfully.

His gaze towards Jason was somewhat uncertain.

It was only at this point that Hui Lijing finally came back to her senses.

This female detective raised her voice.

"All of you are the murderers?!"

Her voice was filled with disbelief.

In Hui Lijing's mind, she naively defined the murderer as a single person and had never considered that it was three people committing the crime together.

"Murderers?"

"We were just avenging!"

"Ten years ago, he murdered our family members!"

The youngest female student couldn't help but retort.

In her short skirt school uniform, with her haircut and beautiful face, unadorned by makeup, the female student previously radiated youthful and lively vibes, but now, she only had a terrifying hatred.

A chilling hatred.

She stared at Hui Lijing, making the female detective subconsciously grip her gun handle tighter.

Then, the female student turned to look at the hanged corpse.

"Ten years ago, he killed my father."

"Killed his mother."

"Killed his lover."

"Now, we killed him, merely for revenge!"

The female student pointed towards the office worker and then the middle-aged clerk, her voice gradually calming down.

"Is he a wanted criminal?"

Hui Lijing frowned.

"Of course!"

"And he is a well-known wanted criminal."

"Ten years ago, he committed three robberies, killing the homeowners each time, looting their properties, then, Officer Ryosuke captured him, but incredibly, he killed the escort and escaped during the transportation."

It was still the female student answering.

Even Hui Lijing could hear the sarcasm in the female student's words.

"I'm sorry."

"It's my responsibility."

Ryosuke spoke softly.

Regret appeared on this middle-aged officer's face.

If he had tried harder, Yan Xia wouldn't have escaped.

If he had tried harder, Yan Xia could have been caught directly.

If he had tried harder, the three innocent people in front of him wouldn't be covered in blood now.

"No, Officer Ryosuke, this is not your fault."

"Your effort, surpasses others' expectations."

"Thank you."

The female student bowed solemnly to Ryosuke.

The office worker and the middle-aged clerk did the same.

However, as the three straightened their backs, the office worker spoke straightforwardly.

"We chose our way."

"We know it's illegal."

"But we had no other choice."

"We couldn't wait any longer."

"We couldn't watch him roam free, so when this opportunity came before us, we didn't refuse—the hatred that filled our days and nights left us no choice."

The office worker's voice became more sonorous.

The middle-aged clerk was calming the office worker.