

Menu 991

Chapter 991: Masks, Knives, Flesh!

Jason opened the door.

Sunlight shone from one side onto the iron ladder, where a middle-aged man stood anxiously at the doorway, his otherwise high-end suit already smeared with mud, especially the shoes, which were caked with filth.

Seeing Jason, the man rushed over as if seeing a savior, attempting to grab Jason's hand.

Jason subtly stepped back, avoiding the man's palm.

"What's the matter?"

Jason asked indifferently.

He always behaved this way with strangers.

No matter what their intentions were.

"Save me!"

"My name is Modo, I'm a businessman."

"Yesterday, business was quite good..."

Realizing that Jason hadn't invited him into the office, the middle-aged man who called himself Modo stood at the entrance and recounted the terrifying experience he had encountered.

Modo was an electronics merchant.

Like the owner of 'Rocky Electronics,' he primarily dealt in second-hand goods.

But, unlike the wealthy 'Rocky' owner, Modo didn't have a store; instead, he primarily worked as a broker.

He would roam the streets and alleys, looking for clients who wanted to sell their used electronics, then buy them at a low price and resell them to shops similar to 'Rocky Electronics.'

Of course, there had to be some trickery involved.

Jason didn't believe for a second that a second-hand electronics dealer could afford a hand-tailored suit and shoes made of calfskin.

However, Jason did not interrupt him, letting the man continue his story.

"It was rare, but yesterday, business was really good."

"To treat myself, I found a small tavern."

"And then, drank until late into the night..."

Last night, the Silver District was deeper than ever before.

But for Modo, who had been drinking, it didn't matter.

Humming a country tune, he staggered along on his way home.

The straight line distance from the tavern to his home was just 700 to 800 meters, very close, but it required crossing a wooden bridge, which didn't take much time.

Creak, creak.

Walking on the wooden bridge, his feet transmitted a soft, familiar wooden sound, making the inebriated him even more unstable.

He had no choice but to lean on the bridge's rail and rest there.

Feeling dizzy, he waited maybe 10 seconds or half a minute, and he felt much better, then prepared to continue home.

But at that moment, he suddenly noticed a girl appearing on the outside of the bridge.

The girl had climbed over the railing and was standing at the edge of the bridge, half of her foot suspended in the air, with reddened, swollen eyes and tear streaks on her cheeks.

Clearly, she was about to commit suicide.

"Miss, wait!"

"Please just wait a moment!"

"Did something happen to you?"

"You can talk to me!"

Modo instinctively tried to talk her down but didn't dare make any rash movements. He was afraid to startle the girl, who was already determined to die, so he remained stationary, speaking in the gentlest voice possible.

The girl heard Modo's words but didn't respond; instead, she started sobbing softly, covering her face with her hand.

"She must have been hurt by love, I guess?"

Modo speculated.

The girl was neatly dressed, and her outfit was very familiar to him—he had seen it in a magazine before.

Although he couldn't appreciate what was so good about this clothing, he knew the price was extremely high; just seeing the string of zeros on the tag suffocated him.

Anybody wearing such clothes must have been well-off.

Certainly not worried about money.

Considering the girl's age, too, that left only heartache.

Indeed, that was the case.

"Why doesn't he love me?"

"Why doesn't he love me?"

"Why doesn't he love me?"

The girl muttered under her breath.

"Love is hard to explain; without fate, it's really difficult to be together."

Modo thought for a moment, then spoke his understanding, trying to persuade her.

But as a bachelor, his attempts at persuasion were clearly weak.

The girl's sobbing grew more intense.

Her voice came from beneath her hands.

"But he clearly said he loved me, didn't he?"

Faced with this question, bachelor Modo found he had no reply.

Although he was fluent in his conversations with the ladies while drinking, he couldn't very well say that a man's words are just lies, right?

He couldn't say, "Rather than believe in a man's words, it's better to believe that a sow will climb a tree," could he?

He simply couldn't say such things.

After all, he was a man.

Modo went silent.

But the girl continued speaking.

"It was all good at the start."

"But why is it that after we confirmed our relationship, I just get 'Eaten yet? Sleep early, I had meetings all day, wear more clothes, drink hot water, that girl is my sister, this thing is a bit expensive, I'm really tired from working all day, I really like you, stop being silly, really it's nothing, whatever you say, drunk talk, we're just good friends.'"

Hearing these words, Modo was even less sure what to say.

Because he often said the same things to the ladies.

An indescribable embarrassment felt like a fishbone stuck in his throat.

Finally, all he could say was,

"Maybe you're really overthinking it; he's truly very tired."

"Then why did he take other girls out?"

"After I caught him, he still justifiably told me, 'I just want to give every girl a home?'"

"Why? How can he be so indifferent?"

Faced with the girl's questioning, Modo was dumbstruck.

Chapter 992: Masks, Knives, Flesh! (2)

He never expected someone to be so despicable.

He should study more.

Thinking to himself, Modo tried to reason again.

"Maybe it's just an act in the heat of the moment?"

"You should know, sometimes men can't help themselves."

Modo continued.

"So, his saying 'Why can't I call you my wife when I have a girlfriend, she's the girlfriend, you're the wife, darling is darling, baby is baby, isn't it different?' makes sense?"

The girl asked.

Seems somewhat reasonable.

Modo thought to himself, but his outward response was filled with righteousness.

"Scumbag!"

He looked furious, as if scumbags deserved divine punishment.

In reality, he was quietly approaching the girl.

He wanted to grab her and pull her back.

Even though he had been drinking, given the physical difference between them, Modo was confident that if he could just grab hold of this girl, he could definitely save her.

"Yes, he's a scumbag."

"So, I put him into four bags."

The girl whispered.

The sobbing stopped at that moment.

Four bags?!

Modo paused, his eyes wide in shock as he stared at the girl, only then noticing the dark red stains beneath her garment.

It was blood!

Modo's scalp tingled.

He looked at the girl, at a loss.

Saving someone and saving a murderer are different.

At least to Modo, someone who had killed was no longer human.

Especially... dismemberment.

He swallowed.

Modo wanted to add some moisture to his dry throat.

But instead of providing relief, it only intensified his nervousness.

Unconsciously, Modo began to retreat.

But the girl noticed.

"Are you afraid of me?"

The girl asked.

"No, not at all, why would I be?"

Modo stuttered.

"Then why are you backing away?"

The girl continued.

"I drank too much, I'm not steady on my feet."

Modo answered.

"Oh!"

"Then let me help you sober up!"

With these words, the girl lowered her hands from her face.

Instantly, the retreating Modo was so frightened that he sat down on the ground.

What kind of face was that.

No eyes, no nose, no mouth, just a blank white, like a cooked egg white.

"Mama mia!"

With that scream, Modo scramble-ran towards the bridge.

Not over the bridge.

Because the girl was standing in the direction of his home.

He didn't dare go near her; instead, he turned around and ran towards the bar he had come from.

"Please don't close yet!"

Modo prayed inside.

He didn't know what he had encountered or what had happened.

But he knew that in such a moment, having more people around could be reassuring.

Moreover, there were more than just one person in the bar.

Just as he had left, there were still two tables of guests ordering chicken skewers and grilled garlic.

Running down from the bridge, Modo saw the little bar illuminated by lanterns in the distance, sprinting with all his might.

When he pushed open the big doors of the small bar, he found that apart from the owner who was cleaning up, there were no customers left.

Had everyone already left?

Had he just wasted a lot of time?

Modo was stunned.

"What's the matter, Modo?"

"Did you forget something here?"

The bar owner asked, familiar with Modo due to his frequent visits.

"No, not that."

Modo panted heavily, shaking his head.

"Then what did you encounter? A robber blocking the road?"

"That can't be right; the local security is quite good."

The owner kept asking.

"It's not that."

"I ran into a girl..."

"A girl?"

"A girl frightened you like this? Was she ugly?"

The owner was curious.

"Not ugly, she was very beautiful at first."

"But, but then, she wiped her hands across her face, and her whole face became empty, just a smooth surface... I, I don't know how else to describe it."

"Anyway, it was terrifying."

"I barely managed to escape."

Modo's expression showed he was still shaken.

The owner laughed.

"I thought it was something serious, so it was just this."

"Then do you think... it was like this?"

As he spoke, the owner wiped his face with his hand.

Suddenly, where there had been normal features a moment ago, now there was a smooth face, eyes, mouth, nose all disappeared.

"Ah!"

Modo screamed and fainted.

When he woke up, it was already daylight.

He was not in the bar, nor near the bar, but beside the bridge.

After waking up, Modo felt bewildered.

When he recalled what had happened, his face turned utterly pale, then he started running frantically towards 'Rock Electric' nearby.

"Before, the owner of Rock told me that a new exorcism office had opened here."

"I used to mock it, thinking it was a scam."

"But now, it has become my lifeline."

"Please save me."

Saying so, Modo knelt in front of Jason.

Jason raised an eyebrow.

Then, he turned and walked into the room.

Seeing this, Modo was overjoyed.

He stood up, cautiously entered the room after him, closed the door behind, locked it, and with an increasingly humble tone said: "Why is your office called 'Mask X Cleaver X Meat'?"

"What's the matter?"

Jason asked without turning back.

"Nothing."

Chapter 993: Masks, Knives, Flesh! (3)

"It just feels a bit weird."

Modo was answering.

"Even weirder than what you encountered yesterday?"

Jason continued to ask.

"Of course not!"

"What happened yesterday was the weirdest thing I've ever experienced in my life. That's why I ended up here, right?"

Modo responded with certainty.

Then, he posed a question to Jason.

But before Jason could answer, Modo immediately continued on.

"Thank you again for your help."

"It's a fee, not a courtesy."

While saying this, Modo took out a damp wallet from his bosom, and with a bow, raised it above his head and handed it to Jason.

Jason stopped walking, put on his ice hockey mask, and then turned around.

He took the wallet that Modo had handed him.

Modo looked up accordingly.

Then, a face without eyes, nose, or mouth just appeared in front of Jason.

Similarly, Jason wearing the mask, was also reflected in Modo's 'field of vision'.

Modo, who was expecting a scream and terror, was taken aback.

It stared at the cold and calm eyes behind Jason's mask and involuntarily shuddered.

It felt a bit scared!

It wanted to scream a bit!

But before it could continue to react,

Jason had already spoken.

"Mask."

Jason pointed to the ice hockey mask on his face.

"Cleaver."

The chill of the blade enhanced with Evil-Slaying Slash flickered in the office.

The next moment, a silver slash swept across Modo's body.

Modo was split in two without even a chance to react.

Pfft!

Just like a popped balloon, the fallen body began to shrivel up quickly, leaving behind a short and stocky creature somewhere between a raccoon and a dog.

Its fur was dark brown, its mouth area white, its limbs short and black, and its tail short and thick.

Now cleaved in two.

Jason picked up the 'food' and said indifferently,

"Meat."

...

"So, you were attacked?"

"This meat is from a 'monster'?"

Hui Lijing's eyes widened as she looked at Jason holding the 'food.'

"Attacked?"

"No!"

"Just pre-dinner etiquette."

Jason said and handed the 'food' to Hui Lijing.

"Please prepare it for me."

"I will pay."

Jason said so.

With proper cooking conditions, Jason started to like his food prepared more deliciously.

"Okay."

Hui Lijing hesitated for a moment, then nodded.

She had already come into contact with the 'Mystical Side', and couldn't have any aversion or fear towards these 'monsters'. Better treat them as ingredients and overcome her psychological fears by making a delicious dish!

With that decision, Hui Lijing immediately got into action.

At this time, the rock boss pushed open the cafe.

Seeing that Jason was safe and sound, the boss visibly breathed a sigh of relief.

"The new television, I've got it ready. How soon do you need it?"

The boss asked.

"Anytime."

"Rock boss, do you know a person named Modo?"

Jason asked.

"Modo?"

"That scumbag?"

"He deceived a girl's feelings, and in the end, she put him in four bags and threw them into the river. When he was found, his body was almost eaten by fish!"

The rock boss sneered at the mention of Modo.

"Were it not for that guy owing too much money, and a large group of people looking for him, he would never have been found."

"It's a pity for that girl."

"She was actually a daughter of a large conglomerate. What a pity to be deceived by a scumbag like Modo."

Saying this, the rock boss sighed and shook his head.

"That girl is too pitiful."

"What happened to her in the end?"

"Was she executed?"

While processing ingredients, Hui Lijing couldn't help but poke her head out.

"No."

"Her family pushed for a legal reform proposal, abolishing the death penalty."

"Because of her poor mental state, she was allowed to seek medical treatment outside prison."

"Now?"

"She's probably in a seaside resort recovering."

The words of the rock boss left Hui Lijing, who had just been full of pity, standing there dumbfounded.

She had no idea what kind of expression to use.

Looking at Hui Lijing's expression, the rock boss couldn't help but shake his head again.

"That's reality!"

The rock boss said and looked at Jason. He walked over to the seat next to Jason, sat down, and in a very low voice, said—

"Jason, have you ever heard of... 'the cursed videotape'?"

Chapter 994: Delicious Start!

"Cursed videotape?"

It sounds delicious.

Jason's eyes lit up.

Then, he quietly sat there, staring at the Rock Boss.

Under Jason's gaze, the Rock Boss quickly said,

"It should be something like an urban legend."

"Rumor has it that there is a videotape that causes anyone who watches it to die of a heart attack within seven days. To avoid death, one must copy the videotape and give it to someone else to watch."

The Rock Boss spoke of what he knew, his eyes constantly shifting towards Jason.

He seemed hesitant to speak further.

"What's wrong?"

Jason asked.

"In the rumor... the content of the videotape includes a well and a woman in white crawling out of it."

The Rock Boss answered.

"A well?"

"A woman in white?"

Jason subconsciously thought about the content that appeared on that second-hand TV.

"Yeah."

"That's the rumor I mentioned to you before."

"But not from the TV, but from a videotape... or maybe there's something inside we don't yet know, but it really happened."

At this, fear surfaced on the Rock Boss's face.

After the second-hand TV he sold inexplicably broke down yesterday.

He always felt uneasy inside.

The Rock Boss thoroughly inspected every TV he sold.

This wasn't just work ethic, but a habit he developed over nearly twenty years.

Decades of experience might not make him an inventor of electronics, but they had made him a true expert in electronics repair.

So, a perfectly good TV suddenly breaking down right before his eyes, and not due to human tampering, naturally led the elderly Rock Boss to think in certain directions.

Especially since the person who sold this TV had told such a story.

So, after leaving the office yesterday, the Rock Boss hesitated before calling a friend.

The person who sold the second-hand TV hadn't left any contact information, but he learned some things through this friend.

In just a month, people around the seller had started dying one after another.

The seller really seemed like the Reaper.

'That guy had some bizarre things happening around him.'

'Do not contact him, nor accept any gifts from him.'

This was the advice of the Rock Boss's friend.

But the more his friend advised him, the more curious the Rock Boss became in his fear.

He couldn't help but reach out to another friend, who was part of some secretive circle.

'It's definitely the 'Cursed Videotape'!'

'It is a very horrifying object!'

'Whoever watches it, will definitely die within seven days!'

'To avoid death, one must copy the videotape and let someone else watch it—to die in his place.'

The words of the two friends directly linked together.

The truth was obvious.

The seller of the second-hand TV must have come into contact with the 'Cursed Videotape' in his desire to survive, which then led to the deaths around him.

Or maybe, that person was also tricked by someone close to him.

He was also one who received a copied videotape.

Then...

Would Jason be in danger?

Thinking of the anomalies with the second-hand TV, the Rock Boss truly didn't sleep all night.

He didn't want his unintended actions to harm Jason or anyone else.

Therefore, he constantly watched Jason's 'Mask X Knife X Flesh' office.

Only after seeing Jason leave the house,

And personally confirming that Jason was alright, could the Rock Boss truly breathe a sigh of relief.

"Did you, did you see it yesterday?"

The Rock Boss cautiously asked Jason.

"No."

Jason was very certain in his response.

Jason could see the Rock Boss's genuine kindness.

Facing such kindness, he naturally wouldn't argue anymore.

And seeing Jason's certainty, the Rock Boss finally felt at ease.

"That's good, that's good."

The Rock Boss repeatedly said.

"Do you know where that person lives?"

"The one who sold you the second-hand TV."

Jason asked.

"You?"

The Rock Boss was startled.

"I am an exorcist, after all."

"Faced with such an incident, naturally, I am curious."

"I really want to see that 'Cursed Videotape'."

Jason said aloud, but inside, he was incredibly excited.

The 'Cursed Videotape' wasn't just one.

It can be copied!

Does the copied one have the taste of 'food'?

According to what the Rock Boss said, it definitely has a taste.

Then...

How many 'Cursed Videotapes' are now copied?

Then...

How delicious was the original 'Cursed Videotape'?

Thinking of this, Jason naturally became excited.

As for the danger?

Jason was well aware of it.

But for Jason, the least of his fears was the 'difficulty of hunting'; his fear was not finding 'food'.

The Rock Boss looked at Jason, who gave an open and honest smile.

Ultimately, the Rock Boss decided to compromise.

He wrote down an address.

"This is that guy's address."

The Rock Boss said.

Then, after a slight hesitation, he wrote down a phone number.

"This is a contact of an old friend of mine, Jason, if you encounter any unsolvable problems, you can call him. Tell him you were referred by old Rock, and he will help you."

"He is a very capable person."

"He could be considered half your colleague."

The Rock Boss spoke and handed the piece of paper to Jason.

Chapter 995: Delicious Beginnings! (2)

Silver-7-201, Shimura Tetsuya.

0200-775327, Kusakabe.

The handwriting on the note was clear, the former was likely a second-hand TV seller, and the latter...

Kusakabe?

What kind of odd surname is that?

Jason's eyes revealed his shock.

The owner, Mr. Stone, noticed this surprise.

"The Kusakabe clan is a formidable family of Onmyoji."

"My friend comes from that family but left due to certain reasons."

"But they are a good person and very strong."

The elderly man explained.

"Hmm."

"Thank you."

Jason nodded to express his gratitude.

"I'm glad I could help."

"I need to go back for a nap."

"When you get old, your energy just doesn't keep up."

The sleep-deprived elder stood up, stretched his back, waved at the bustling Hui Lijing with a smile, and left the cafe amidst the sound of the chimes hanging at the door.

Half an hour after Mr. Stone left, the food was finally served by Hui Lijing.

It was a plate of grilled meat.

The meat, pan-fried to a golden brown, was accompanied by shredded cabbage shaped into a ball.

Three hash browns were stacked next to the cabbage, topped with a little flag.

On the other side, there were four types of sauces – honey mustard, ketchup, salad dressing, and barbecue sauce, arranged like petals around the meat.

It very much resembled... a children's meal.

That was Jason's first impression.

Of course, the portion was much larger than a kid's meal.

The taste?

It exceeded Jason's expectations.

"I used ice water to remove the sourness, then washed it with salt water."

"It's a pity there wasn't enough time."

"Otherwise, it could have been even more flavorful."

Hui Lijing, the chef, said this.

Jason had already started dipping the grilled meat into each of the four sauces.

Sweet and sour, savory, the tastes were fully encapsulated in the sauces.

Especially the honey mustard, which wasn't as spicy as he imagined but rather uniquely fragrant with a sweet touch, something Jason particularly loved, and when paired with a bit of ketchup, it was truly delicious.

He tried the barbecue sauce by itself and squinted with pleasure.

The shredded cabbage with salad dressing was mixed well, and Jason quickly scooped it into his mouth.

Crisp and refreshing, it effectively balanced the slight greasiness of the meat.

"Not bad."

Jason praised after finishing his meal.

"Of course."

"I'm the female detective who dreams of becoming a barista."

"Would you like to try some of my field rations next time?"

Hui Lijing asked.

"Sure."

Jason nodded straight away.

He never refused food.

Especially recommended by a chef who had managed to make something pretty decent.

Of course, Jason hadn't forgotten the main issue.

"Shimura Tetsuya, do you know this name?"

Jason asked.

"The 'cursed videotape' stuff?"

"You want to use my detective network?"

Hui Lijing, although straightforward, wasn't foolish and immediately understood Jason's idea.

"Yes."

"Using a detective's name to solve these bizarre cases adds more weight for us."

Jason said.

Hui Lijing didn't fully grasp Jason's words, but that was part of their deal—she assisted Jason with these bizarre cases, and Jason taught her Mystical knowledge.

"One moment."

"I'll ask around."

"With so many deaths, someone must have noticed."

After saying this, Hui Lijing went back to the bar, took out a phonebook, and began looking up numbers.

Jason, meanwhile, turned his gaze forward.

[Consumed 'Raccoon Spirit' (Miscellaneous)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Mild Injury Recovery!]

[Satiation +20]

[Satiation: 718]

...

"Raccoon Spirit?"

Jason eyed the term, puzzled.

The "Mystical Side" of the world before him was clearly different from the "Mystical Side" he had encountered before, although knowledge, skills, and secret techniques were transferable.

But for the "common sense" knowledge, he was lacking a lot.

Subconsciously, Jason thought of his subordinate, Tsuchimikado Motoharu.

Being an Onmyoji by birth, he naturally had such knowledge.

But contacting him now... would most likely affect the original plan.

Then...

Jason's gaze involuntarily shifted to another phone number left by the rock boss.

Kusakabe?

Jason immediately shook his head.

He was not familiar with him.

To rashly call and ask for some knowledge would most likely be rejected.

It might even provoke disgust from the other party.

If this were to involve the well-meaning rock boss, it's something Jason would hate to see.

"So, I can only take it one step at a time."

"Gather secretly?"

"Or

"Be more direct?"

Jason thought and slightly narrowed his eyes.

Previously, the 'raccoon spirit' coming to his door disguised as Modo was not something Jason considered a coincidence.

It could very well be a probe!

Maybe a probe induced by 'him' before.

Or possibly, a probe attracted by the 'Fear Banner' of Tongshou Temple after the Omagatoki.

But whichever it was, things were far from simply concluding.

This time the other party failed.

Next time, they must have prepared for another attempt.

And the methods would certainly be harsh.

Jason had no qualms about accepting all the delivered 'takeout.'

At the same time, he could gather more 'knowledge' from these 'meals.'

Acquiring experimental knowledge shouldn't be difficult.

Jason thought this way.

Hui Lijing, on the other hand, had ended the call.

"Shimura Tetsuya's case, there is a related commission."

"But it's not Shimura Tetsuya himself, it's a brother of a deceased person around him."

"I have obtained the address; do we need to go see him?"

Hui Lijing asked.

"Of course."

Jason stood up and walked out.

Hui Lijing quickly put on her coat loaded with pepper powder, chili water, lime, a pistol, and grenades, hurriedly followed Jason out of the White Bear Café, locked the door, hung up a 'Owner Temporarily Out' sign, then headed straight to her car.

This car was parked at the real entrance of Tongshou Town.

Hui Lijing had specifically driven it back in the morning.

As the key turned, amid the roaring of the engine, Hui Lijing floored the accelerator.

The car quickly disappeared into the noonday sun.

...

Sato held a stir-fried noodle sandwich bought from a snack shop, walking distractedly on the school path.

He declined an invitation to have lunch with two friends, hiding in a secluded corner, nibbling on the sandwich.

However, the normally delicious stir-fried noodle sandwich tasted like wax to Sato at this moment.

His eyes unfocused, he mechanically put the sandwich into his mouth.

"How could my brother die for no reason?"

"What did Shimura Tetsuya mean?"

"Did he kill my brother?"

"And then, forged everything?"

"Why can't those detectives find any evidence?"

"Is Shimura Tetsuya's ability that strong?"

Sato recalled the information about Shimura Tetsuya.

Both he and his brother were members of the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories).'

Shimura Tetsuya was the club president.

His brother was a club member.

The relationship between them was normal; according to his brother, they were just ordinary friends. Moreover, Shimura Tetsuya seemed gloomy, which he didn't like. But his brother loved those scary urban legends, which is why he joined.

"Hey!"

The sound from behind startled the contemplating Sato. When he turned his head and saw that it was Shimura Tetsuya calling him, the sandwich nearly dropped.

"Do you want to know the cause of your brother's death?"

"Come to the club's activity room with me."

"If you pass the test, I'll tell you everything."

Shimura Tetsuya, with a gloomy face, mumbled rapidly.

Then, without waiting for Sato's response, he turned and walked away.

Sato was momentarily stunned.

Then he hurried after him.

His thoughts were simple.

Everyone was at school, and even if Shimura Tetsuya was a murderer, he wouldn't dare do anything.

He, certainly, would be alright.

Chapter 996: Volume 3 Video Tape

Following Shimura Tetsuya, the unease in Sato Xin's heart gradually vanished as they reached the school's club activity building.

Not only because there were more people around, but also because Sato noticed that Shimura Tetsuya seemed... even more scared than him!

That's right!

His face was pale!

His body trembled from time to time!

Whenever he saw anyone, he wanted to dodge!

Such a person...

Could he really be a murderer?

Sato began to doubt his previous judgment.

Then, he thought of the detectives who had investigated without results.

Given Shimura Tetsuya's current behavior, those detectives couldn't have failed to find something, which means, most likely Shimura Tetsuya wasn't the murderer.

Then, who could the murderer be?

Sato frowned in thought, walking non-stop.

Soon, the two arrived at the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)' classroom.

The classroom was on the basement level.

Originally, it should have been a storage room for miscellaneous items and sports equipment, but at some point, it had been vacated to become the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)' classroom.

Sato looked at the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)' sign printed on an A4 paper, then glanced at the long, empty corridor, and couldn't help but ask, "Is the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)' the only club here?"

"No."

Shimura Tetsuya shook his head, then hesitated before continuing, "Originally, there were also clubs like 'Horror Story Society', 'Urban Legends Society', 'Alien Discussion Group', 'Country Story Society', and others. At the peak, there were over 200 members combined. But because of what happened before, everyone is basically in a dormant state."

"Are those the people who unfortunately died?"

Sato pressed.

"Yes."

Shimura Tetsuya nodded, then pointed to the club's door.

"You go in, there are three video tapes inside."

"You need to watch them all."

"The TV and video player are both in good condition and powered."

Shimura Tetsuya said.

"Is this the test?"

Sato asked.

"Yes."

"Remember, you must watch them completely."

"Then, tell me everything."

Shimura Tetsuya instructed.

Sato frowned slightly and ultimately nodded in agreement.

Unlike his brother who enjoyed ghost stories, Sato didn't like them. Not because of fear, but because, in Sato's view, these so-called 'ghost stories' and 'urban legends' were all nonsensical.

"Alright."

After nodding, Sato opened the door and walked in.

The activity classroom was powered.

Sato turned on the switch, and it immediately became bright.

The room looked just like any other activity classroom, without any scary posters, sculptures, or puppets that Sato had imagined.

The entire activity room contained a large table, seven or eight chairs, a television, a video player on one side of the table, and three neatly arranged videotapes on the table.

Of course, the videotapes in the activity room were not limited to these.

In a glass-doored cabinet on the side, the tapes were neatly arranged.

The labels on the side of these tapes, which were originally white, had all been torn off.

The tearing seemed to have been done in haste, leaving adhesive residue and remnants of the white labels.

Sato glanced at the cabinet and stopped paying attention to it.

Shimura Tetsuya's test was the three videotapes next to the TV.

Without any selection, Sato directly picked up the first videotape.

In the sound of the electricity, the TV and video player began to operate.

After a moment, the screen came on—

"The filming starts now, I'm Sato."

The first person to appear on the screen was Sato's brother.

Watching his brother sitting in front of the TV, Sato immediately got excited, unconsciously about to shout out, but ultimately he restrained himself.

The video continued.

"This is Sakurako, this is Saiko, this is Fujiwara."

The camera panned, and the remaining three people appeared in the frame.

Sato knew all three.

Sakurako, a sweet-looking girl, was the one his brother liked, and the reason why his brother joined the so-called 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)'.

Saiko, a girl with a round face and black-framed glasses, very lively, had visited his home before.

The last, Fujiwara, was a tall, robust young man, very reliable-looking, a good friend of his brother, and had also been a guest at their home.

Of course, most importantly, all three were dead.

No!

Four people.

Including his brother, all had died consecutively.

The cause of death was myocardial infarction.

What exactly happened?

Sato thought, his eyes wide open as he stared at the screen.

"This time, our exploration is about the urban legend of the 'Disappearing Tunnel'!"

"Rumors say that anyone passing through Tunnel 22 at midnight will disappear!"

"Now, let's set out!"

Holding the camera toward himself, Sato's brother showed a smile, then the four of them got into the car one after another.

Fujiwara was driving.

Sato's brother, holding a tape recorder camera, sat in the passenger seat.

Sakurako and Saiko sat in the back.

"Nice car!"

Saiko exclaimed as she got in.

"Of course, it's used for delivering tofu in my family."

Fujiwara said laughing.

Saiko liked Fujiwara, his brother had mentioned this.

Fujiwara also liked Saiko, but it seemed both were a bit shy and hadn't made it clear.

"Sato, what's the urban legend about this tunnel?"

Sakurako asked.

"It started about three years ago. At that time, a somewhat famous TV star was filming a location shoot here, and then, mysteriously disappeared from the camera—slowly, bit by bit, without the person even realizing."

Chapter 997: Volume 3 Videotape (2)

Sato's brother was replying.

"Uh-huh, I think I've heard about this rumor too."

"It caused quite a stir at the time, but in the end, it was dismissed as a filming accident and then it just fizzled out."

Fujiwara, who was driving, said.

"How come I didn't know about it?"

Saiko's eyes widened.

"Because, you weren't paying attention to this kind of stuff back then, right?"

Sato's brother said with a smile.

"That's true."

Saiko nodded.

The next five minutes of the recording consisted of such mundane conversations, nothing attracted Sato's attention until a tunnel appeared in front of the camera.

"We're here!"

Sato's brother announced, then lifted his wrist, showing his watch.

"It's midnight, the perfect time for 'urban legends', let's get moving."

With an excited and anticipatory tone, mixed with a tinge of fear, Sato's brother spoke.

The car slowly moved on.

The tunnel loomed closer.

Although there were lights inside the tunnel and streetlights on both sides of the road, Sato, watching this scene, felt an inexplicable sense of nervousness.

He couldn't help tugging at his collar, unbuttoning the top button of his school uniform.

As the car entered the tunnel, Sato couldn't help but hold his breath.

Then...

Nothing happened.

The car smoothly passed through the tunnel.

"Nothing happened?"

"Another fake one?"

As Saiko spoke on screen, Sato let out a sigh of relief.

He thought the same.

"Urban legends, after all."

"It's quite normal."

"Remember when we went looking for that walking mannequin? We ended up failing and being chased around the athletic field by the school's security guard."

Sato's brother showed a helpless expression.

He then turned the camera, and in the manner of a show host, began to sum things up.

"'Summer Seminar' 33rd adventure... a failure."

While Sato's brother pronounced their failure and bowed in apology, before he could straighten up, Fujiwara said, "Hey, there's someone ahead!"

"Where?"

Sato's brother asked, the camera naturally panning around.

Immediately, Sato saw the woman mentioned by Fujiwara on the screen.

A woman in white clothes, with disheveled hair, walking at the edge of the road.

"That's a bit scary!"

Saiko, Sakurako's timid voice could be heard.

Sato's brother and Fujiwara remained silent, but Sato could clearly hear their breathing quicken.

"Shall we accelerate and drive past her?"

Saiko suggested.

This proposal was agreed upon by everyone.

Buzz!

The roaring sound of the engine, Sato could hear it clearly through the television screen.

The car quickly sped past the woman in white.

Phew!

This exhaled breath echoed inside the car.

Sato's brother placed the videotape camera on the co-driver's dashboard.

Suddenly, Sato's eyes widened.

Because—

A face appeared against the car's rear window.

Staring straight at the four people inside.

The pupils were filled with bloodshot veins.

The cheeks were pale as snow.

That mouth was slightly open, revealing deep darkness.

At that moment, the filming came to an abrupt halt.

The screen froze on that face.

As if it were stuck to the TV screen itself.

Huff, huff!

Sato was breathing heavily, and it took him a full three seconds before he shakily reached out to turn off the TV.

Was this how his brother and friends died?

Sato thought instinctively.

Then, his gaze shifted to the remaining two videotapes on the table.

What's in these?

Thinking to himself, Sato's hand involuntarily picked up the second tape and inserted it into the VCR.

He turned the TV on again—

"Surprise!"

Sato's brother, Fujiwara, Sakurako, Saiko stood in line in front of the videotape camera, showing surprised faces.

"Did we scare you just now?"

"If being scared was unpleasant for you, we apologize."

"This is just a standard initiation test."

"Of course!"

"The fact that you can watch this video tape proves you've passed."

Sato's elder brother said with a face full of apology.

Fujiwara, Sakurako, and Saiko also bowed together.

Then a woman in white, with disheveled hair, appeared.

She kept bowing too, and it wasn't until she removed the wig that they realized she was actually Shimura Tetsuya.

The five of them stood side by side and said in unison—

"Welcome to the 'Summer Seminar'!"

That was where the video tape ended.

Looking at the smiling faces of the five on the screen, Sato was dumbstruck.

It was all just an initiation test?

This kind of initiation test...was really quite frightening.

The elder brother hadn't said a word about it beforehand.

Was it a secret?

Those who joined must have kept it a secret.

Were those who got eliminated too embarrassed to speak of it?

Was Shimura Tetsuya showing me this tape because one must join the 'Summer Seminar (Ghost Stories)' and get recognized before it could be disclosed to me?

Sato thought, reaching for the third video tape.

Shasha shasha.

Unlike the previous footage, this time it was full of static.

After several seconds, the static finally cleared.

A well appeared on the TV screen.

The whole scene was black and white.

Overgrown with withered branches.

Incredibly bizarre.

It had to be said, this shot was many times more powerful than the previous ones.

Sato inwardly marveled.

And then, when a hand stretched out from the dried-up well, that sense of bizarreness reached a climax.

But Sato wasn't very scared.

After the build-up with the first two tapes, he figured this was an 'easter egg.'

A twist after being inverted.

It scared you first, then told you it was just for initiation, and now another tape suggests that joining here means being 'cursed' or something.

Of course, at the last moment, someone would explain it was a joke.

That's what Sato thought.

So while he watched a woman climb out of the well bit by bit, although his palms sweated with tension, there was no screaming or fear... until...

The woman came closer.

Closer and closer.

And closer still.

As she almost seemed to press against the screen, Sato couldn't help but swallow.

But immediately, that swallow choked him.

Because the woman came out!

A hand!

Through the screen!

Just like that, she came out!

This, this, this!

Sato was frozen in place, his eyes wide with terror.

"Ah ah ah ah!"

A scream burst forth uncontrollably.

Outside the door, Shimura Tetsuya heard such a scream.

He locked the activity room door without hesitation.

Then turned around, utterly indifferent.

"The fourth one!"

Muttering to himself as he counted, a vicious smile appeared on Shimura Tetsuya's face.

Suddenly, a handful of liquid with an irritating odor splashed across his face.

It was pepper spray!

Shimura Tetsuya thought reflexively.

But the stinging pain spread from his eyes, forcing him to the ground, hands over his face.

"Ah ah ah ah!"

Another scream as intense as Sato's echoed.

Inside the activity room, Sato, who had been screaming, was stunned.

But of course, the main reason was that a tall, muscular silhouette had appeared before him.

In his mind, among the people he knew, even Fujiwara was considered tall and strong, but he seemed like a child compared to this shadowy figure.

Under the dim light of the activity room, Sato could clearly see the corner of an ice hockey mask.

Even just a glimpse of it sent chills down his spine.

It was a fear deeper than seeing the woman trying to crawl out of the tv set.

Afterward, he fell from his chair onto the floor, shivering.

Because the tall, muscular silhouette had actually grabbed the hand that was reaching out of the TV. After a series of swallows, a voice filled with hunger resounded—

"Caught you!"

Chapter 998: Smooth Talker

Sato stared blankly at the muscular man grabbing the arm extended from the television, completely losing the ability to speak.

Even, at this moment, his mind stopped thinking.

Only left with—

Who is he?

Who is she?

What are they doing?

These thoughts kept popping up in his mind, over and over again.

And himself?

Just sat there dumbfounded, watching.

Watching the big man pull a woman out of the TV.

Then—

Hmm?

Seems to be stuck?

Stuck by what?

Sato widened his eyes, at a loss.

Jason was also a bit surprised.

He originally thought that the 'food' in the television would be pulled out by him in one go, but apparently, he had underestimated his own strength.

At that moment, Jason was about to exert more force to pull out the 'food.'

But before he could exert more force, the wrist in his hand disappeared.

Or rather, the whole arm of the woman inside the television vanished.

Like an illusory projection, it just disappeared from Jason's grasp.

The person retracted entirely back into the television.

And moreover, rapidly retreated back.

Just like the first time they met.

However, this time was different.

Jason was already prepared.

Ahh!

He opened his mouth and swallowed the television whole.

[Consumed 'Shadow of the Curse. Fake' (Spelled)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Minor Injury Recovery!]

[Satiety +1]

[Satiety: 719]

...

What does a television taste like?

If it was a second before, Jason wouldn't know.

But now, Jason could tell you, it's... sweet.

Aside from a bit stuck in his teeth.

Including the television case, internal electronic components, and everything else, once they entered his stomach, they were quickly digested.

And Sato, who witnessed all this, finally couldn't bear it and just passed out.

Jason didn't even glance at him; he raised his hand and pressed the recorder.

Click!

The videotape came out.

Jason picked up the videotape, sniffing it carefully.

Apart from the inherent plastic smell of the videotape, there was no other scent.

Jason frowned slightly.

Spelled?

Shadow of the Curse?

The legendary cursed videotape?

Jason turned and walked towards the door.

Shimura Tetsuya had already been subdued.

The pepper-sprayed face of the opponent, now being tied up with a shoelace by Hui Lijing, curled up in the corner of the wall.

Due to the irritation of the pepper spray, Shimura Tetsuya looked quite miserable at this time, not only with tears and snot flowing but also convulsing all over, however, upon seeing Jason pushing the door open, he still struggled to sit up.

"Who are you?"

"Why did you break into my activity room?"

"The school police will be here soon!"

Shimura Tetsuya shouted loudly.

"Shut up!"

"Don't you realize what has happened?"

"Did you create the 'cursed videotape'?"

Hui Lijing berated him.

"What 'cursed videotape'?"

"I only have three tapes for club entrance tests here."

"The first tape is a puzzle, the second is an explanation, the third is for extension, there's absolutely no 'cursed videotape' here!"

Shimura Tetsuya flatly denied.

Hui Lijing was taken aback.

Almost subconsciously, she pointed at Sato who had fainted on the ground.

"Then what's his deal?"

"Don't tell me he just fainted on his own!"

Hui Lijing questioned.

"He could have just fainted on his own, yeah!"

"And... look at your companion!"

"Any normal person would faint from fright seeing him, right?"

Shimura Tetsuya argued confidently.

This...

Hui Lijing turned her head to look at Jason wearing a mask, suddenly feeling that Shimura Tetsuya might have a point.

No, wait!

Jason and I are on the same side!

This guy is actually instigating me!

"Asshole!"

Hui Lijing cursed at him, raising her foot to kick him.

But was stopped by Jason.

Hui Lijing looked surprised at Jason.

Although they had not interacted for long, Hui Lijing thought she understood Jason well enough; he might stay silent most of the time, but that does not mean he just accepts things passively.

On the contrary!

Jason absolutely believes in an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth principle.

Then why stop her?

Hui Lijing looked puzzled at Jason.

Then, Jason stood erect in front of Shimura Tetsuya, looking down at him from a height.

A sense of inexplicable terror arose from the bottom of Shimura Tetsuya's heart.

Just now, he was just trying to confuse Hui Lijing.

Or rather, simply being obstinate.

But why does he feel such fear when he truly sees this mask?

Why?

Shimura Tetsuya asked himself in his mind.

And at that moment, Jason kicked him.

Bang!

Even though the force was controlled, Shimura Tetsuya slid a considerable distance and ultimately, slammed heavily against the wall.

Just watching, Hui Lijing felt an intense pain.

But facing such a heavy blow, Shimura Tetsuya did not feel the pain.

Moreover, that terror seemed to have dispersed.

He burst into loud laughter.

"Impotent rage, is it?"

"Just relying on brute force to make me confess?"

"Do you think I will yield?"

Shimura Tetsuya was arrogantly provocative.

While coughing up blood, he laughed loudly.

He curled up his body, leaning against the wall and sat up.

"I didn't do it, means I didn't do it!"

"Whatever 'cursed videotape', I haven't even heard of it."

"But, the harm you did to me is real!"

"I will definitely call the police to arrest you!"

Chapter 999: Effortless Speaking (2)

Shimura Tetsuya's face was smeared with fresh blood, his eyes flashing an inexplicably fierce glint, just like a stray dog on the street, baring his teeth at Jason.

This scene was enough to make Hui Lijing's teeth itch with anger.

The female detective raised her hand, wanting to slap him,

But Jason was quicker.

Slap!

Jason's foot struck the other's face.

Shimura Tetsuya tumbled through the air several times before slamming into the wall once more.

Bang!

After the dull thud came more wild laughter.

"Hahaha!"

"The harder you hit, the better!"

"You all will definitely get a heavy sentence!"

"I am an innocent person!"

"To think you'd bring up some legendary 'cursed videotape,' do you think the police are idiots?"

"If you've got the guts, find that videotape!"

"If you've got the guts, go look for it..."

Shimura Tetsuya taunted.

But the next moment, his voice abruptly stopped.

His eyes widened as he watched Jason walk to the other end of the corridor.

How could this be?!

Shimura Tetsuya's eyes bulged roundly.

That was where he had hidden the 'cursed videotape.'

But how could Jason possibly know?

Impossible!

It must be a coincidence!

He's bluffing me!

With that thought, Shimura Tetsuya's abruptly silenced voice continued.

"Do you think your charade will work on me?"

"Too naive!"

Shimura Tetsuya continued to rant.

Then, he watched as Jason bent down, removed a brick from the wall, and revealed a black plastic bag hidden inside, with an item wrapped in brown paper.

Of course, he knew what it was.

'The cursed videotape'!

He was the one who put it there himself!

He was sure no one knew!

But now it was being taken out by someone else!

Shimura Tetsuya's heart raced with panic, but his mouth moved quickly.

"How can you frame and set me up when you can't find any evidence?"

"Come on!"

"The police will uncover the truth!"

"The law protects the weak!"

Although he spoke at lightning speed, his enunciation was extremely clear.

"The law has been corrupted by bastards like you!"

Hui Lijing lashed out in anger once again.

She raised her foot and fiercely kicked at Shimura Tetsuya.

"You hit me too!"

"You can't run away!"

"I'll wait to see you in prison!"

Shimura Tetsuya glared at the woman who seemed to have no brains at all, sneering repeatedly.

However, deep down, he felt an inexplicable panic.

Because Jason was slowly walking back.

Through the mask, he looked into Jason's eyes.

His heart was tinged with unease and tumult.

Because, from beginning to end, those eyes were so serene, so calm.

As if nothing mattered.

As if everything was under control.

Shimura Tetsuya hated Jason's demeanor immensely.

Because it should be him who had everything under control.

That's right!

It should be him!

When preparing to take out Sato (brother), Sakurako, Saiko, and Fujiwara, he had anticipated all possible scenarios, including police interrogations and the like. After all, it seemed strange that his surrounding friends had died yet he was unharmed.

He believed his plan was flawless.

No!

It was flawless!

Would the police believe in the 'cursed videotape'?

No!

Moreover, he had already hidden the 'cursed videotape.'

Even though it had been found now.

But he still had an excuse.

It wasn't him who hid it, but rather he was being framed by the person in front of him.

He was innocent!

He didn't know what had happened at all!

Such pretexts would be enough to bluff his way through.

Only...

Why did the unease and panic at the bottom of his heart intensify as this guy approached?

Shimura Tetsuya's breathing became slightly erratic.

Jason, however, walked back in front of the other man, looking down from above as before.

"What's it to me if you call the police?"

"You're just a young boy who chose to commit suicide because he couldn't take the hit after a string of accidental deaths among his friends."

"Classmates around you can testify, after the successive deaths of your friends, you've become increasingly withdrawn and isolated, spending long periods alone, refusing to communicate with anyone."

"So, what's so strange about someone like you choosing to leap to your death from a tall building?"

Jason's deep voice emerged from behind the mask.

Shimura Tetsuya's pupils shrank.

And Jason's words continued.

"Moreover, do you think the world you see is the real world?"

"Do you think you're the only one with special powers in this world?"

"How naïve and ludicrous."

"The composition of this world isn't as simple as you think—ordinary police handle ordinary criminals, while people like us deal with trash like you."

Jason's words were probing at Shimura Tetsuya's nerves.

The usually very cunning Shimura Tetsuya now had panic showing on his face.

"Impossible!"

"I'm the one and only!"

"I am..."

"Alright, everyone is unique, and nobody said they were plain or unremarkable."

"New assistant, show him the 'Murder License.'"

"Then, send him on his way."

"We don't have time to waste here with him!"

Jason spoke to Hui Lijing with a touch of impatience.

Hui Lijing quickly pulled out a badge from her coat, covered half of it with her finger, and flashed it in front of Shimura Tetsuya.

Then, from a sealed plastic bag, she pulled out a white handkerchief.

The damp white color made Shimura Tetsuya feel ominous.

What was that?

Ether?

Or some other potion to put me to sleep?

And then, while I'm passed out, they'll throw me off a tall building?

Or simply run me over with a heavy truck into a pile of flesh?

The thought of his own death turned Shimura Tetsuya's previous anxiety into roaring.

"It's them who are wrong!"

"Not me!"

"They're the ones who've been laughing at me!"

"Calling me a gloomy spirit!"

"Calling me a toad!"

"What's wrong with me liking Sakurako?"

"What's wrong with approaching Saiko after being rejected?"

"Why does everyone reject me?"

"Why?"

"I am clearly so good!"

After a series of roars, Shimura Tetsuya was gasping for breath.

Then, this student whose psyche was already twisted continued to yell.

"It was just a joke at the start!"

"Who would've known the 'Cursed Videotape' was real!"

"I was the first one to watch it!"

"I don't want to die!"

"Of course, I had to find a scapegoat!"

"What's wrong with wanting to survive?"

"It's not me who's wrong, it's the world!"

"Look at what this world is like?"

"The handsome can do whatever they want, the rich can do whatever they want, why can't I?"

"I want to live at my own whim too!"

"I possess strength that ordinary people don't have!"

"Why can't I?"

With such roaring, Shimura Tetsuya surprisingly stood up.

Jason glanced at Shimura Tetsuya, who had stood back up, turned his head to Hui Lijing and asked, "Did you get it on tape?"

"Recorded!"

"The sound is very clear!"

"It's enough for conviction!"

Hui Lijing took out the portable recorder she carried with her.

As a detective, carrying some fake IDs and a small recorder was quite normal.

But, Shimura Tetsuya was stunned.

"You're lying to me!"

The next moment, Shimura Tetsuya roared and rushed towards Jason.

Killing intent flashed in his eyes.

He wanted to kill Jason right in front of him.

How dare he deceive him!

And then—

Bang!

Jason lifted a foot and kicked squarely in Shimura Tetsuya's chest.

Instantly, Shimura Tetsuya flew back even faster than he had come.

And this time, Shimura Tetsuya, gasping for breath in fury, passed out on the spot.

"Call the police!"

Jason said to Hui Lijing, and then ripped open the black plastic bag in his hand, revealing a videotape.

For Jason, even if such an item carrying the scent of 'food' was hidden more cunningly, it was easy to unearth.

However, at this moment, holding the videotape in his hands, Jason's eyes were full of intrigue.

A 'Cursed Videotape' capable of murder had fallen into the hands of someone literate.

And this person's psyche was twisted, full of resentment.

Wasn't that too coincidental?

Chapter 1000: Jason: Someone gave me an offer to compete that I couldn't refuse

Is it a coincidence?

Probably not.

It must be artificially arranged.

But... why would the other party do this?

Murder?

The 'Cursed Videotape' is indeed a lethal weapon for murder, and can even be said to kill invisibly, and it's highly likely to kill even the ordinary people from the 'Mystical Side' if they come across it unintentionally.

But, the 'Cursed Videotape' also has various restrictions.

Not to mention other things, just the need to see the 'picture' severely limits what can be done.

Unless it's someone like Shimura Tetsuya who murders his own friends, and moreover, these friends are very interested in 'ghost stories', 'urban legends', but are not really from the 'Mystical Side'.

And the person who 'gave' Shimura Tetsuya the 'Cursed Videotape' must be from the 'Mystical Side'.

The person they want to kill would naturally also be from the 'Mystical Side'.

But is this useful?

Isn't this a bit of a roundabout way?

What if the person you want to kill is an ordinary person?

Then there is even less need.

For a person from the 'Mystical Side' to kill an ordinary person, it's no harder than an ordinary person stepping on an ant.

"Why so?"

"To do this other than letting more ordinary people die... To kill more people?"

"To harvest souls?"

"To create panic?"

Jason's brow furrowed slightly, but his eyes lit up.

It seemed he had found what the other party wanted to do.

However, more information is needed as support.

And that senior monk from Tongshou Temple is a great choice.

But that's for later.

Now?

Jason looked at the 'Cursed Videotape' in his hand, then opened his mouth and ate it.

Crunch, crunch.

Crispy.

Slightly salty.

Somewhat like seaweed.

[Consumed 'Cursed Videotape' (Copy)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Wounds significantly recovered!]

[Satiety +30]

[Satiety: 749]

...

"A copy, 30 satiety points?"

"Not bad!"

Jason made such an assessment, and couldn't help but curl the corner of his mouth.

A single copy provided 30 satiety points.

How many would the original have?

Would it bring the Excitement of Feast?

And!

How many copies would there be?

Just thinking about the existence of these foods, Jason couldn't help but feel happy.

At this time, Hui Lijing, who had gone to report the incident, came back.

Ryosuke and Urashima also returned with her.

"Lord Jason."

"Jas... Achoo!"

The young Officer Urashima was still somewhat normal, but it seemed Ryosuke was not doing as well, with a nasally voice and sniffing, and sneezing the moment he opened his mouth.

Was there no doubt he had caught a cold?

Was the mountain wind that cold?

Jason thought.

While wiping his nose with a handkerchief, Ryosuke looked sheepishly at Jason and Hui Lijing, who had stepped back a bit.

"Sorry."

The middle-aged officer apologized for his sneeze.

"Officer Ryosuke caught a cold on the mountain last night. When I arrived, the whole person was almost huddled by the side of the road..."

"Enough, shut up."

"Let's get to the point."

Ryosuke cut off his Assistant's words.

Doesn't he have any face left?

Rather than care about his pride and honor, choosing to leave and then... catching a cold.

It may not be nice to say, but it gives the impression that his dignity and honor are worth less than a cold.

Ryosuke found it difficult to accept.

Even though that was the truth.

Do middle-aged men have less worth than a dog?

Ryosuke murmured to himself, and then took the micro-recorder handed over by Hui Lijing.

"All the evidence is in here."

"You can listen."

Hui Lijing said.

Ryosuke immediately pressed the play button.

Instantly, Shimura Tetsuya's words started to play.

"This bastard!"

"To kill his own friends!"

The young Urashima cursed, wanting to give the unconscious Shimura Tetsuya a kick to vent his anger, but refrained when he thought of his status as a policeman.

"A wretch who blames the heavens and others."

Ryosuke commented nonchalantly.

With many years of experience in the police force, Ryosuke had seen too many people who thought highly of themselves or who went to extremes due to feeling unrecognized.

Shimura Tetsuya was not the first, nor would he be the last.

But, Shimura Tetsuya was a bit special.

This bastard didn't think himself extraordinary.

Rather, he really was 'extraordinary'.

"Does he have some kind of special ability?"

Ryosuke asked Jason.

"Hmm."

"Something similar to psychography."

"Most of the time, it's useless, but with some items for support, it can become a real nuisance."

Jason nodded, explaining.

"That 'Cursed Videotape', then?"

Ryosuke asked, his expression grave.

As a veteran policeman, he was all too aware of the consequences if something like that were to spread on the market.

A slight carelessness could lead to disaster.

"I've 'purified' it."

Jason said.

"Purified? Good, good."

Ryosuke breathed a sigh of relief.

Professional matters should be left to professionals.

Ryosuke had known and believed in this saying for over a decade.

So, although he was steeply in debt, he still managed to live.

"Jason, I have something I'd like to discuss with you."

Ryosuke lowered his voice.

"Okay."

Jason did not refuse.

Moreover, he had guessed what had probably happened.

Ryosuke had come into contact with the 'Mystical Side' of the world he had never encountered before, and as an official, the authorities would naturally make arrangements.

Indeed, that was the case.

"I got promoted from Investigation Section 1 to Investigation Section 0 this morning after I returned to the police station, and I'm starting to tackle some cases that ordinary police officers cannot handle—they think I'm capable of handling such matters."