

THE DEMON'S MENU

Chapter 6: Table Manners

The notebook in his hands could not be opened!

From the outside, it was clear that the notebook in his hands comprised pages within it. All he needed to do was lift his hands to flip the pages, then he would be able to read the book.

But instead, Jason, who was holding onto this notebook, felt as though he was holding onto a handicraft that was carved from wood, where those pages were like the works of the virtuosity of a skilled craftsman. And when one was going to actually open up the book, one would immediately meet with merciless mockery.

Jason was not someone who would give up easily.

Huff!

After another deep breath, Jason exerted strength with his hands again. This time, he did not flip through the pages casually. Instead, he was really exerting real effort.

Instantly, on Jason's arms, clear, defined angular lines were seen protruding out of the muscles.

But the notebook remained unmoving.

After a few seconds, Jason, who was continuing to exert force, began to feel his arm muscles trembling.

More importantly, the vague pangs of pain in his chest were telling him that if he did not wish for his injuries to worsen, it was best he stopped.

Thinking of the terrible situation he was in, Jason stopped immediately, but cast a suspicious and uncertain look at the notebook in his hand.

"Is this machine-operated?"

"Or..."

"The mysterious side?!"

Jason speculated.

Thinking of the latter, Jason's face, that was hidden behind the ice-hockey mask, shook momentarily.

He had once spent a long time searching for the mysterious side, but it was to no avail. This had once made him feel that the mysterious side was nothing more than hearsay, or a place that was conjured by some people's imaginations. But at this moment, the sort of mysterious side events that he encountered in succession made Jason understand that he had not met with such mysterious side events before, because he had always been in the 16th District, where he was kept

"safe".

Or, to be precise, he was not up to the mark, thus, there was simply no way he could be involved in mysterious side events.

But now?

Even if he did not wish to encounter such mysterious side events, they would still come to him in rapid succession.

Because he was already in the game.

Jason could not help but sigh as he gently placed the notebook on the wooden box.

Of the mysterious side, other than what he just experienced, he really knew nothing else.

But one would never go wrong in exercising precaution.

Therefore, he avoided the gauze that was stained with his blood,

According to what he knew, back in his hometown, there were legends of the mysterious side that showed how people were able to control the lives and deaths of others by obtaining a little of their blood. Or there were even examples where fresh blood was not required. Just knowing the name of the intended party would suffice.

This made Jason, who had just encountered these mysterious side events, shudder in fright.

Immediately——

"Jason!"

"My name is Jason!"

Jason used this method to warn himself that he already had an unprecedented sense of identity for this name. Then, at the same time, he secretly hid the name,

“Chen Jie” in the deepest part of his heart.

For an average person, he might seem to be making a mountain out of a molehill.

But in such an unfamiliar environment, all of this was actually very normal to Jason, who was almost persecuted into a state of paranoia.

So common, because it was something that he had grown so accustomed to.

The Sleepless City had made him so accustomed to always having to encounter danger.

He once witnessed someone turning into the corner of a street to end up being badly mauled all over. He had also seen someone who just bought some bread from a shop suddenly foaming at the mouth and falling to the ground in convulsions. And this happened when that person was eating the bread he had just bought while walking along the street.

These were all day-to-day events that were normal to Sleepless City.

Then, what about the mysterious side day-to-day events, which were even more bizarre than the normal day-to-day events here?

Huff!

Jason took a deep breath to suppress the fear in his heart. He looked at the display screen, which showed him three figures.

Armed with guns, they alternated covering for each other while heading toward Number 19.

In the 26th District, there was never a lack of two kinds of people.

Those who were as timid as mice.

Those who were bold and reckless.

The latter far exceeded the former.

But under one particular premise, the former would completely transform into the latter.

That was...

To fish in troubled waters!

What could be more suitable than Tur Street at this very moment to fish in troubled waters?

Gunshots, fire, corpses.

All of these made the aborigines of this city swarm in, like vultures hunting for food.

Jason could be sure that this was only the first batch, and that there were more people observing in the dark, including the real target that the VIP was really waiting for, who was also very likely to be among them.

Even worse, these three might just be pawns that the other party had pushed out, to begin with.

"One submachine gun, two pistols."

"Such close cooperation as they moved. There is a high possibility that they have grenades on them!"

"There's no chance of winning in head-on combat."

"I have to lay out some traps!"

"But even if there are traps, given that the other party is very well-trained, these traps would only achieve the greatest effect the very first time..."

Jason frowned behind the cover of his ice-hockey mask while his hands involuntarily gripped the handle of the UZ submachine gun.

The cold handle of the gun could only give him a small sense of security, but the wound on his chest brought pangs of pain that allowed Jason to

understand that the situation at hand was far worse than he had imagined. Just a little carelessness would mean death.

Under the threat of death, Jason's eyes were glued to the monitor, as he thought about how he should deal with his enemy.

He did not see that the notebook on the wooden box was moving, soundlessly.

Slowly, it had moved over to where the blood-stained gauze was.

The blood was rapidly sucked in and absorbed by the notebook.

At this moment, as though he felt something in his heart, Jason suddenly turned around.

When he saw the notebook that was covered by the gauze, he immediately got up and rushed over to it, wanting to flip it open. But, just as his fingers touched the notebook, he suddenly blacked out.

As though the back of his head had been dealt with a heavy blow, Jason staggered back a step or two. He clenched his teeth as he struggled to brace himself and not fall to the ground. But, the dizziness was simply unstoppable and instantly drowned Jason within.

The next moment, Jason fell backward, but he did not fall to the ground.

He fell into a metal vessel!

And when he braced himself once again and got to his feet, he realized that the metal vessel beneath his feet was...

A plate!

A silver plate!

And on either side of the plate, there was a fork and a knife, both made out from the same silver metal as the plate.

"I'm being placed on a plate?"

"A meal served on a plate?!"

This sudden scene brought an inexplicable fear to Jason. Subconsciously, he wanted to get off the plate. But there was an intangible force binding him to the plate. Then, that dark-brown notebook floated over to appear before him.

Just a while ago, there was no way he could open the notebook, and no one knew just when it had been flipped open.

Just flipping over the cover would reveal the title-page.

This page was filled with words...

"Did you see me laughing?"

"Actually, I opened my mouth so wide just because I was hungry."

Remember, table manners.

These were not wordings that Jason was familiar with. But he could understand what they meant.

The next thing that happened was the notebook, that was flipped open, flying up above Jason's head, somewhere which was out of Jason's line of vision.

After losing the shelter from the notebook, a high-backed chair appeared within Jason's field of vision.

It did not have any additional carving. But, with it just being there, one could feel a sense of primitive simplicity.

At the same time, a figure that was composed completely out of the darkness began to appear on the high-backed chair.

The sound of swallowing saliva echoed in Jason's ears.

That dark shadow reached out both hands to take the knife and fork.

"I am really going to become food!"

The truth of the situation before him made Jason struggle violently. Though he was still unable to move at all, his subconsciousness was not bound. His soul was shouting out.

"I don't want to die!"

"Live!"

"I want to live!"

"I don't want to be treated as food!"

That incessant, high-pitched voice resounded within that special soul.

Buzz!

Buzz! Buzz!

Time and again, the resounding echoes caused buzzing sounds to appear within Jason's mind.

It was the deepest resonance that was imprinted within the soul!

The talent named

"Predator" appeared on Jason's retina. It beat violently, glowing and flashing like brilliant starlight.

Under the starlight, images started to appear. They connected and merged as one, as if the entire Milky Way was rising up into the sky!

That was...

Large crowds of people were gathering. Donned in animal skin, they were shouting and chasing a monster that was extremely big. It was really no exaggeration to compare its size to that of the distance between Heaven and Earth.

Everyone was smaller than the toes of this monster.

But no one flinched.

They wanted to live!

For the sake of survival!

They had to...

Eat!

Blazing flames appeared when the rocks collided. That tall and burly leader raised ignited kindling that illuminated the darkness. The flames collided with the monster, and an unprecedented fragrance pervaded the battlefield.

Roars of the ancient times were heard as the people shouted.

Eat!

Eat! Eat!

The roaring sounds went from high and loud to low and soft.

Then, from low and soft, it became mere murmurs and whispers.

Those whispering sounds came from Jason's mouth.

"Eat! Eat! Eat!"

The burning hunger started to spread from his stomach.

Hungry!

So hungry!

"I want to eat!"

"I want to eat!"

Gurgle!

Gurgle!

Gurgle!

The growls of his stomach covered the sounds of the dark shadow swallowing its saliva. Once, twice, and then thrice. When the growls of this hunger converged into one, the resulting sound was just like thunder. The dark shadow, which was just about to hold up the fork and knife, suddenly stopped.

In the first place, it had always been the rule that hunger would determine the positions of both sides. At this moment, this mode of formality was completely reversed.

"No!"

Amidst its despairing howls, the dark shadow directly crumbled and disintegrated. Within an instant, it was sucked into that dark-brown notebook.

The next moment, that dark-brown notebook that was floating atop Jason's head suddenly stopped.

The book snapped close all of a sudden with a slam.

Then, it just fell from where it was and landed directly in Jason's arms.

A great power caused Jason to fall.

However, he did not fall right into the middle of the plate.

But onto the chair!

He was sitting on that simple, unsophisticated high-backed chair.

Within his field of vision, a round and equally primitively simple table, with a dark-colored table cloth and silver cutlery, appeared.

What was seen in the previous scene was completely reversed at this moment!

The prey had become the predator.

The dark-brown notebook that had fallen into his arms rose up and floated in front of him, again.

And this time, beneath the original text, lines of text gradually emerged.

[Isn't the beauty of hunting due to its ability to interchange, no matter what or when?]

[This is table manners!]

[You have to bear this in mind!]

[Also, for at least once... Teach!]

At this point, there was a pause. Then, even more text began to emerge.

[Background: During the night, patrol officers were dying, one after another. The entire street had fallen into a state of panic! The sheriff had no choice but to seek the help of a night watchman. And you, as a night watchman, happen to be in Rhode. Without hesitation, you accepted this mission. Now, it was nightfall, and you are walking along Cross Street...]

[Main mission: Spend seven days on Cross Street, 0/7]

[Temporary language obtained. Automatic recovery upon leaving the replica.]

[Temporary change of clothing, appearance, and equipment. Automatic recovery upon leaving the replica.]

[Inspection of firearms, inconsistency in the age of grenades, power reduced by 50%, firing interval of MF91 and UZ is +0.5 seconds, reloading speed is +2 seconds]

(Hint: This is your “etiquette lesson”.)