

Crazy 1001

Chapter 1001: An Unexpected Origin

“Shame on you!” Miao Ying said, rolling her eyes at Zhao Yu. “I’ve spoken to the Gao Lanqi police and they will keep me updated on the investigation into the fire. Also, because this turned out to be such a huge incident, they will be sending another unit in to assist with the investigations. They’re sending in Gao Facai’s team!”

“That’s great!” Zhao Yu said, nodding. “There probably isn’t much left after such an intense fire. If it’s Forensics Gao, I’m sure he can handle it though!”

“One more thing...” Miao Ying said, flipping her phone open and opening a file. “On the way to Gao Lanqi, I confirmed something new. You’ll never guess, but it turns out that there was actually something between Wu Fangfang and Yu Fusheng!”

“What?!” Zhao Yu was shocked. “There’s something between Yu Fusheng and Wu Fangfang? This... this woman was not simple! She’s linked to mafia bosses?”

“It’s not what you think!” Miao Ying said, passing her phone to Zhao Yu. “When Wu Fangfang first entered the Special Investigation Unit, Yu Fusheng’s son, Yu Shuai, was shot dead by the police. The officer in charge of the incident was afraid Yu Fusheng would come for revenge, so they sent Wu Fangfang’s team in as back up.”

“At that time, Wu Fangfang excelled in everything she did and had thwarted Yu Fusheng’s plans time and time again. She even came really close to catching him! Due to her outstanding performance, Wu Fangfang gained a stable position in the Special Investigation Unit and eventually became their team leader,” she continued

“But last year, when Leader Qu Ping met with an accident, Wu Fangfang was assigned to the Gem Theft Case. It was only after Zhao Qing, Wu Shuang, and their crew were rounded up by you that the police realize that Yu Fusheng had surfaced again. Because she was more familiar with him, Wu Fangfang was tasked with capturing Yu Fusheng! But this time, Wu Fangfang failed, and Yu Fusheng escaped overseas without a trace. So, Wu Fangfang was once again demoted back to investigating the Gem Theft Case,” she explained.

“What the heck!” Zhao Yu shook his head and sighed. “That’s so confusing!”

“From the Qu Ping incident, it seems like Yu Fusheng bore some deep grudges!” Miao Ying said. “So, we can’t rule out that he’s the murderer or that he had plotted to kill Wu Fangfang!”

“What the flying f*ck!” Zhao Yu’s eyes widened. “Who would have thought that Qu Ping and Wu Fangfang could possibly have been killed by the same person...”

“Zhao Yu, that’s not the point! I found some of Yu Fusheng’s details. His real name is Yu Dahai and he is from Linshe, Zhaoyun. When he was young, he followed his mother when she remarried to Meng Xiang Province and grew up in Gao Lanqi!”

“Oh god, Gao Lanqi again...” Zhao Yu was stumped.

"The most surprising thing is," Miao Ying continued, "a long time ago, Yu Fusheng was only a local tyrant, but in 2005 he expanded overseas and became an international crime lord! And Zhao Yu, get this! The Rural Cooperatives Homicide Case happened the exact same year, so..." Miao Ying nodded. "This is too big of a coincidence. We have to reinvestigate!"

"C... could it be? Don't tell me Yu Fusheng was behind the Rural Cooperatives Homicide Case!" Zhao Yu frowned as he listened to Miao Ying's reasoning.

"If we look at it from another perspective..." Miao Ying was deep in thought. "Maybe the reason the case went unsolved was that the perpetrator fled overseas...?"

"Don't forget, Yang Zebiao is involved in this as well!" Zhao Yu pondered. "Don't tell me that both Yang Zebiao and Yu Fusheng fled the country together?!"

"It's possible! If not, how could a criminal remain at large for 13 years while remaining anonymous?" she replied.

"If he was doing such a good job at hiding, why would he come back?" Zhao Yu asked.

"Zhao Yu, do you remember chief Ma Runkui from Foreign Affairs?" Miao Ying asked all of a sudden. "I asked him before, and because our country is now so big, our foreign affairs are completely different. After Qu Ping's incident, we had used our contacts overseas to pass on a wanted order in multiple countries, effectively freezing all his bank accounts. Since we cornered him, he couldn't stay overseas any longer and had no choice but to come back!"

"Or maybe..." Zhao Yu said, "when he was being chased last year, he never left and merely made everyone think that he did! But... although he came back, why did he have to go find Wu Fangfang for revenge? After all, she was the Special Investigation Group's leader, didn't this b*stard consider the consequences?"

"That's not impossible to imagine!" Miao Ying concluded. "For one, he could have been so consumed by hatred over his son being killed that it made him irrational. Secondly, he was confident he would get away scot-free. On the day of Wu Fangfang's murder, the crime scene had been cleaned so well that we originally couldn't find a single lead!"

"That..." Zhao Yu frowned. He couldn't deny that what Miao Ying said made sense.

"One more thing. If we were to follow this train of thought we could also account for Yang Zebiao!" Miao Ying was so engrossed in the discussion she didn't even blink. "Yang Zebiao must be in cahoots with Yu Fusheng! So, him appearing at the scene or leaving his DNA behind is not surprising... Zhao Yu, back in the barn, did you see anyone besides Yu Fusheng?"

"Not a soul!" Zhao Yu said, shaking his head. "Apart from Yu Fusheng, who almost seemed dead before the fire, I didn't see anyone else. The flames were simply too ferocious!"

"That also means the other two people didn't know there would be a fire...?" she asked.

"Probably not! Those two men were focused on saving Yu Fusheng, they didn't seem to notice anything else!" Zhao Yu felt like saying even he did not react.

“It was to silence them! The fire would have burnt away all traces, so it was meant to silence people. If everything was burnt, they would never find out Yu Fusheng was the mystery man who coerced you into breaking Jiang Ke out of prison! Or... could it be that the arsonist is the real mystery man?” Miao Ying wondered.

Zhao Yu remained silent. Even he was completely baffled.

“Wait...” Miao Ying said as a thought came to her. “Darling, you... do you think this fire was prepared by Yu Fusheng himself? Maybe he contracted a terminal disease and knew that his end was near, so he decided to kill Wu Fangfang to avenge his son and then commit suicide with his subordinates...? Since his son was dead and he no longer had any money, even if it wasn’t a terminal illness and simply depression, it would still seem plausible!”

“That’s impossible!” Zhao Yu said firmly. “If he was insane and suicidal, he wouldn’t have gone to such great lengths. It simply doesn’t make sense! Also, before the fire, Yu Fusheng was already unconscious. If he really wanted to commit suicide, then he would have personally set the fire to be safe. And... if it was really for revenge, then he wouldn’t have killed Wu Fangfang, but rather the officer who shot his son! Oh sh*t, Miaomiao, check to see if that officer is ok!”

“I’ve checked!” Miao Ying said, helplessly shaking her head.

“It cannot be... he’s really dead?” Zhao Yu was in shock.

“We can’t track him!” Miao Ying answered. “The officer is named Luo Xiaohu. Because the police were protecting him so well, Yu Fusheng couldn’t find any way to get to him and attacked Qu Ping first. After the Qu Ping incident, the police changed his identity and the Special Investigation Team doesn’t have access to that information. We have to apply via the Secret Department in order to obtain it. But I don’t think there should be any problems. If Luo Xiaohu was killed, the Special Investigation Team would have noticed!”

“If that’s the case, why didn’t you say that earlier?” Zhao Yu pointed at Miao Ying’s car. “Did you bring the whiteboard? I think we have to start this case from scratch!”

Chapter 1002: Already Used to It

After her short meeting with Zhao Yu, Miao Ying drove towards the Gao Lanqi police station to investigate the case. She would return to the cottage that night.

Taking advantage of the free time, Zhao Yu finally used some the points he had earned and transferred the recordings from his Invisible Recorder to his laptop. Those recordings could be used as evidence to bring the investors to court. Not only had they benefitted from Jiang Ke’s crimes, but some were even involved in murder, amongst other illegal activities. Those people were the scum of society and had to be locked away.

To reduce the chance of implicating himself, Zhao Yu erased parts of the recording containing things he had said when he was imitating Jiang Ke. If Jiang Ke woke up, he would definitely not admit to what happened in the night club and the words ‘he’ had said. As such, Zhao Yu tried to cut those parts of the audio out.

When he sent the final recording to Li Luoyun, Jiang Ke's hideout and the investor's case would finally come to an end. He could finally concentrate on the barn fire. The fire was so frightening! It not only burned a large part of the evidence, but it also destroyed Zhao Yu's train of thought. To make matters worse, Yu Fusheng's appearance, and then death, complicated everything. Zhao Yu's head was filled with suspicion and doubts.

Bad things happened all the time, but Wu Fangfang's case was a beast of its own. Zhao Yu even suspected that these were the doings of the Kun Qian hexagram, and he had not stopped wondering that if he had not transformed into Jiang Ke, would the Kun Qian hexagram have ended and stopped this mess?

No! He was quick to answer himself. Even though the hexagram might have played a part, these crimes were inevitable. There must be an underlying reason!

Thinking about what had happened in the past few days, Zhao Yu realized that becoming Jiang Ke was not a mistake. Logically speaking, the fire had been pre-planned and thus unavoidable. If he hadn't become Jiang Ke, then he wouldn't even know if Yu Fusheng had survived. Furthermore, if he hadn't been in the fire and escaped, no matter how big the fire had been, it would have been labeled as an ordinary case. From that point forward, the answer would have been a mystery.

Also, if Zhao Yu had not become Jiang Ke, then he wouldn't have been able to enter the thieves' den and gather so much evidence. Even if the evidence was unrelated to the mystery man, it would still prove useful for future cases.

Based on everything combined, Zhao Yu did not regret his actions. It had all been extreme measures for extreme situations, as things often happened that he was not expecting, and he had been a little unlucky!

Zhao Yu felt traumatized after the Kun Qian hexagram ended. He had yet to start a new hexagram. But this was a critical time and he knew he had to open one. The mystery man had overlooked two important things. Firstly, he didn't know Zhao Yu was alive. The second thing was that he didn't know if Jiang Ke was dead! This made it the best time to work the case. If he could properly make use of it these points, then the case might be solved soon!

Thinking about it, Zhao Yu finally opened the system with the plan to open a hexagram. But, when he was about to press the button, he suddenly realized the whole hexagram area was covered in a layer of grey and was visibly duller than the other areas. After clicking on it, a system message appeared saying that it had been frozen and required 70 hours for recovery!

What the h*ll... This was the first time Zhao Yu encountered a situation like this. Had the system been manipulated by the Kun Qian hexagram? How could it be frozen? And 70 hours?! The case would turn cold by the time that was done.

Zhao Yu felt depressed and unfulfilled. First, there was no backup, now even the hexagram screen wouldn't open. Fortunately, he had gone through h*llish training to get here and had built up a ton of self-confidence. Even without the system, he felt that he was closer to the truth! Thus, after sending the audio, Zhao Yu brought out the whiteboard that Miao Ying brought and began to jot down a detailed case analysis, recording all the new leads he had gained.

Besides Wu Fangfang, Shi Hai, Yang Zebiao, and Jiang Ke, there was a new name: Yu Fusheng. An additional suspect meant more data and more work, but Zhao Yu was used to this. While waiting for Miao Ying to return from the station, he had already filled the entire whiteboard! When he no longer had space, he resorted to using a blackboard he found. This house had originally been a classroom, so there were blackboards and chalk lying around in the storeroom.

“Darling, come! Gao Lanqi’s nightlife is not fantastic so I had to get these from the supermarket. Let’s eat!” Miao Ying said as she rushed into the house with a big bag of food. It was already 10:00 pm and Zhao Yu had barely eaten anything the whole day. Even so, he didn’t feel hungry. He was more concerned about the new developments in the case. Without even reaching for the plastic bag, he asked, “Miaomiao, how was it? Did you find anything?”

“Darling, eat first! Don’t go hungry!” Miao Ying said, shoving the plastic bag into his hands. “Now regarding the case...” She let out a sigh.

“Ah?” Zhao Yu was shocked by her response and placed the plastic bag down. “Why, what did you find?”

“Don’t rush! There are too many things to cover in just a few sentences!” Miao Ying gestured for Zhao Yu to take a seat and took out her phone. “Listen to this first...” With that, Miao Ying played an audio clip. A low husky voice could be heard.

“Oh, f*ck!” Zhao Yu was just about to sit down but bolted up upon hearing the voice. His face was full of shock. “This... this... this is the mystery man’s voice! I wouldn’t forget it even if I died! The voice that I spoke with... how did you get this Miaomiao?”

“This audio clip was from the time you fought with the Red 8 troops in the boiler room beside the cake shop!” Miao Ying said calmly, seemingly having anticipated his reaction.

“Oh... then this is Yu Fusheng himself?” he asked.

“Yes!” Miao Ying replied. “Wu Shuang has already proved it. When Leader Qu was harmed, Yu Fusheng was always in contact with them, so they couldn’t have heard incorrectly. And Red 8 heard that Yu Fusheng had many secret hideouts across Meng County, but nobody knew the exact locations.”

“If what you say is true, that... that makes Yu Fusheng the mystery man?” Zhao Yu wondered.

Miao Ying turned the audio off and showed him some photos. “Look at these. As you would say, ‘we’re in the big leagues now!’” she said.

Zhao Yu calmed down. “That’s fine, I’m already used to it!”

Chapter 1003: House of Criminals

“This is the lab report from the forensics office,” Miao Ying said, passing her phone to Zhao Yu. She opened the bag and broke off a piece of chocolate for him. “Apart from traces of alcohol in the fire, there was also potassium permanganate and oxyacid compounds. These two compounds cannot be burnt directly, but under high temperatures, they produce a large amount of oxygen, which would have made the fire stronger! Forensics said that during the 1970s and 1980s, people used this method in crematoriums, but it was phased out as technology advanced.”

“Holy sh*t, crematoriums?!” Zhao Yu was shocked. “It’s obvious someone wanted to burn everything to ashes! No wonder the fire was so strong!”

“That’s not all,” Miao Ying said. She fed Zhao Yu the chocolate and pointed at her phone. “During the fire, there were large amounts of alcohol placed everywhere. Forensics said there were at least six spots that had been doused with a high alcohol percentage liquor. At those kind of temperatures, these liquors explode like what you saw!”

Oh... it was liquor... It was no wonder there were mini explosions at the scene. Since it was liquor, Zhao Yu’s searching device wouldn’t have picked it up, which is why there were no warnings.

“The extent of the explosions was enough to damage the corpses and make sure the fire wouldn’t be able to be extinguished!” Miao Ying said, taking a bite of the chocolate. “So, no matter who this arsonist was, he was an expert. A normal person wouldn’t have been able to pull this off, much less come up with the idea!”

“So, there was nothing left from the fire?” Zhao Yu asked as he swallowed the piece of chocolate.

“Yes and no!” Miao Ying said.

“What do you mean?” Zhao Yu asked.

“At the location of the largest fire, which is also where you said the secret hideout was, everything was burnt to a crisp! The explosions, along with the fire, destroyed everything, and even the forensics office couldn’t accurately determine the death count.”

“But...?” Zhao Yu was only interested in the ‘but’ that was inevitably coming.

“But...” Miao Ying smiled. “Apart from the secret place, there were spots that were not entirely burnt. Like the garage and the boiler rooms.”

“Oh!” Zhao Yu’s eyes sparkled with expectation.

“The boiler room had the most evidence!” Miao Ying opened the photo app on her phone. “The boiler room was big, and there was even a large truck used to transport cows. Even though it caught fire, the firefighters arrived just in time to put it out, and there was minimal damage. Look!”

Zhao Yu saw a motorbike sitting on top of a huge semi that had been burnt black. “This bike...” Zhao Yu said. It looked familiar.

“That’s right! It’s an electric bike, the same model as the one caught on CCTV at the scene where Wu Fangfang was killed!” she answered.

“The motorbike was found on the semi, which also means that when the motorcyclist disappeared it was probably because the semi fetched him. And if there were cows on the truck... who would have expected this?!” Zhao Yu said, eyes widening. He suddenly felt giddy. It occurred to him that while he was impersonating Jiang Ke, he had escaped on a truck that was ferrying lambs. Little did he know that the suspect had escaped using this same method. Was it a coincidence?

"It's possible! I have sent Zeng Ke to reinvestigate the footage. It was the seventh day of the new year and there weren't many cars on the road, so we can confirm all of this as long as we find it! But this isn't the biggest piece of the puzzle we found. Scroll down, the important things are at the bottom!"

"Oh?" Zhao Yu pushed whatever he was thinking about to the back of his mind and listened attentively.

"The forensics team found hair on the motorbike, and after running it through the database..." Miao Ying swiped to the next page. "It belongs to a lady named He Yubing!"

"He Yubing?" Zhao Yu shook his head. He had never heard of this woman before.

"This woman is also a famous fugitive. She's been charged in at least three murder cases and is a demonic femme fatale! Apparently, she had interacted with Yu Fusheng a long time ago, but who knew they were still in cahoots!"

"Oh..." Zhao Yu couldn't help but nod. The truth was out. "Looking at this, could the person who killed Wu Fangfang be this He Yubing woman? And was He Yubing working under Yu Fusheng's orders?"

"And..." Miao Ying continued. "Apart from He Yubing's hair, the forensics team also found other interesting things in the boiler room. Through this, they have found multiple other people that may be involved. If it wasn't for the results, it wouldn't have taken me so long to return. Look at this, it's a house of criminals!"

"The f*ck..." Zhao Yu only saw the first person, but he immediately recognized him. "This is Zhu Sunfeng! He's the one who killed Jiang Ke... uh... the one who wanted to abduct Jiang Ke! I followed him to the barn!"

"His surname isn't Zhu, but Yu! Yu Sunfeng is Yu Fusheng's nephew. He's followed Yu Fusheng since he was young and has committed many crimes. But according to our records, this guy is already dead. Are you sure he's the person you saw?"

Zhao Yu nodded, his face pale. It was clear that the police records weren't accurate. Because he had mistakenly keyed in Zhu Sunfeng, he had found fake news about him being a merchant.

"If that's the case... then he pretended to be dead." Miao Ying said, nodding. "These people sure are sly!"

Zhao Yu quickly swiped through to find a photo of Buzzcut. "This guy and Zhu... Yu Sunfeng went together. He was driving the car and didn't like to talk!"

"Uhm..." Miao Ying raised her eyebrow. "It's not that he doesn't like to talk. He's actually mute..."

"Mute? I heard the people extinguishing the fire talking about some mute guy, don't tell me it's him...?" Zhao Yu asked.

"That's correct! The mute is called Tu Lekai, and he is in charge of the barn. He was once in jail and since his release, he's been working feeding cows. Does this mean he was also burnt to death?"

"Yes!" Zhao Yu nodded. "Oh, no wonder he was so familiar with the barn! He was the one who had the keys to the door, and the big yellow dog stopped barking after seeing him. Tu Lekai... right. I actually heard it with my own ears. Yu Sunfeng shouted his name before the fire!"

“Yes, and at the back... is Liu Guangxin! He’s an expert hacker and computer engineer. He has been sued over the many types of fraud he has committed. This is Yao Wenming, he’s notorious for being an expert with bombs. There are a few others we couldn’t pull up matches for. But one thing is for sure, there’s no Yang Zebiao or Jiang Ke!”

“What the hell!” Zhao Yu sighed. “Miaomiao, Yu Fusheng’s place is not only a house of criminals but a club of evildoers!”

Chapter 1004: Detective in the Shadows

Even though the entire case seemed like a mess, Zhao Yu and Miao Ying were able to start piecing together what had happened as the various leads came in. Excluding the fire at Gao Lanqi, the thieves’ den on the outskirts of Jin, or the various investors, it was clear that everything centered around one key person; Yu Fusheng! The way things had come together, Zhao Yu could not help but conclude that Yu Fusheng was the mystery man who had helped Jiang Ke break out of prison.

First and foremost, the voice of the mystery man and the voice of Yu Fusheng was exactly the same. The person who had threatened Zhao Yu through the phone was also definitely him! This fact was easy for anyone to see. Secondly, during the phone call, the mystery man had mentioned that he was enemies with Zhao Yu, but Zhao Yu couldn’t identify his voice. This also pointed to the same conclusion, as Zhao Yu knew Yu Fusheng but had never met him before.

In the Qu Ping case, Zhao Yu had fought the Red 8 troops and ruined Yu Fusheng’s plans of revenge. It was only natural that Yu Fusheng would have held a grudge against Zhao Yu and sought revenge.

Also, since Yu Fusheng was closely linked to the cow crimes, he was fully capable of breaking out of prison! When Zhao Yu was kidnapped by Yu Sunfeng and the mute Tu Lekai, he had tested what they knew. Yu Sunfeng had already admitted to helping with breaking Jiang Ke out of prison, and the person who had driven the van with the bomb to the escape location was most likely Tu Lekai.

According to this theory, the video recording of Jiang Xiaoqing getting threatened, the installation of the bomb in the van, and the manipulation of the police officer’s phone all seemed to be part of Yu Fusheng’s plans. On top of this, on the way to the hideout, Yu Sunfeng had called Yu Fusheng boss. It was evident that Yu Fusheng was the ringleader.

When everything was looked at together, it was obvious that Yu Fusheng was the one who had helped Jiang Ke escape prison. The mystery man was Yu Fusheng! Once this question had been answered, all the messy leads began to make sense and connect with ease.

Zhao Yu remembered the mystery man once saying: “Zhao Yu, I have given you so many clues, but you always fall into my traps!” He had also said: “Zhao Yu you are indeed smart. The minute Wu Fangfang died you sent all of your family into hiding...”

Remembering what the mystery man had said, it was obvious that he and Wu Fangfang’s death were linked. On top of that, the motorbike found in the barn and the hair from the femme fatale He Yubing gave Zhao Yu good reason to suspect that Wu Fangfang had been killed by Yu Fusheng and his gang! Yu Fusheng was the mastermind behind the murder, and He Yubing was the killer.

There was a good reason to believe that Yu Fusheng killed Wu Fangfang. Firstly, Yu Fusheng had held a grudge towards Wu Fangfang and could have used this as an opportunity for revenge. Secondly, he then was able to use Wu Fangfang's death to lure Zhao Yu into his trap. The bomb in the van most likely meant that Yu Fusheng wanted Zhao Yu dead. If so, why did he come up with such an elaborate plan to kill Zhao Yu? Was it because Zhao Yu had figured everything out back at the Hong Ming Jiang bridge?!

Maybe Yu Fusheng took the opportunity to kill Zhao Yu because he was afraid that Zhao Yu would find out the truth about the Rural Homicide case. Maybe it was not just because he had something against Zhao Yu! He had wanted to get rid of any potential threats! That meant that the Rural Homicide case must have been carried out by Yu Fusheng!

Zhao Yu had not jumped to this conclusion without reason. Yang Zebiao's DNA had been found at Wu Fangfang's murder scene. This meant that Yu Fusheng and Yang Zebiao were linked. Next, Yu Fusheng had spent time overseas, which coincided with the period of the Rural Homicide case. Also, what were the odds of it only being a coincidence that Yu Fusheng hid in Gao Lanqi of all places?

If his hunch was correct, then this whole case had just become a lot easier. Yu Fusheng could be the mastermind behind the whole case! But... the sudden fire had changed everything and brought about a whole bunch of new questions.

Zhao Yu remembered that just before the fire, Yu Fusheng was already unconscious. This also meant that the arsonist was not just an arsonist, but also a murderer! The arsonist had killed him first, then set the whole place on fire. But why did they burn the place?

Was it because of internal strife? Triad revenge? Or was it to silence someone? Out of these three possibilities, Zhao Yu felt like the last was the most likely. He thought that because internal strife or triad revenge wouldn't have called for such a complicated case of arson. The fire had been planned very meticulously!

Could it be that Yu Fusheng was the mystery man behind this case, but wasn't the actual mastermind? Was there someone more vicious behind this? If so, then who was it?

"Zhao Yu..." Right as Zhao Yu was deep in thought, Miao Ying's voice rang through the house. "Listen to me, if Yu Fusheng is really the mystery man, then you can finally breathe easy and not be so uptight! If you remain this uptight, you'll break soon!"

"Relax, love," Zhao Yu said, flashing her a comforting smile. "I know my limits."

"Back to what we were talking about!" Miao Ying hugged Zhao Yu from behind and gently said, "Jiang Ke has come into the spotlight again! I think you should report this to the higher-ups. As long as you fill them in on the details, I'm sure they'll understand your situation! After all, you found the people working with Jiang Ke and Yu Fusheng. If you confess, at least you'll have a chance to atone for your mistakes!"

"I did think of that..." Zhao Yu said, holding Miao Ying's hands. "But this is all just speculation, I..."

"If you don't say anything you'll be in trouble!" Miao Ying warned. "You should at least greet Chief Jiao and continue on in secret. Think of it this way, if you were the leader, how would you feel? You were

forced into cooperating with criminals. They'll understand! But if you withhold this information and don't report it, then you're at fault!"

"Furthermore," she continued saying, "you know that breaking Jiang Ke out of prison was a crime. Once they start the proper proceedings it'll be too late. At that point, not only will you be unable to stay on the team, you may even be charged!"

"I know all that!" Zhao Yu said sullenly. "But... Miaomiao, I have my own concerns. I don't even know how strong our opponent is. I will not dare to take a risk like this with my family and friends!"

"Then what are we to do? You can't possibly hide like this forever. You are the Special Investigations team leader!" she replied.

"Relax! I feel like the truth is about to be uncovered! Once we crack this case and reveal everything then I can completely relax. I'll put it this way, give me a bit more time and let me be a detective in the shadows!"

Chapter 1005: Key Person

It was another sleepless night. Cold air blew outside, but warm air from the fireplace was filling the house. If anyone spoke, a vapor would be visible coming from their mouths.

While waiting for Miao Ying, Zhao Yu had taken a good nap, so he wasn't especially tired. The thoughtful Ms. Miao had also bought him a warm and comfortable down jacket so he wouldn't be affected by the cold.

"This time, I've tasked Zeng Ke with working on Wu Fangfang's case from Chang Ming's police station," Miao Ying said sleepily as she burrowed under the thick quilts. "I'm worried Wu Fangfang's understudy won't handle the case well or will make some mistake, so I've sent Wu Xiumin to her hometown in Jing Hai. And Ran Tao... is in Yao Ming attempting to find you! Everyone's so worried!"

"We can't let them know yet..." Zhao Yu said, erasing and changing some information on the whiteboard. "The more people that know, the more the plan changes. It's not that I don't believe in our people, but I'm afraid our mysterious enemy is simply too strong! If they can use people to put that much pressure on me, they can surely do the same to others!"

"Right, okay! Anyway, there are still a few things I haven't told you," Miao Ying said. "Before Gao Facai's team came to Gao Lanqi they had already finished preliminary investigations. Apparently, the photographs and envelopes had been placed in Wu Fangfang's drawer only recently!"

"Oh..." Zhao Yu said. He seemed to have expected this to be the case.

"Still, the items may have been newly placed, but the photographs themselves were indeed old. So, we still can't eliminate the possibility that Wu Fangfang was the one who placed them there," she said.

"No," Zhao Yu said firmly. "They did this to lead me into Jiang Ke's trap, it was definitely Yu Fusheng who placed them! Wu Fangfang might not even have known!"

“Oh...” Miao Ying nodded. “Also, over in Yao Ming, Ran Tao and I checked into some things that I haven’t told you about. When we saw you get pushed over the bridge, we were all a mess and all we could think about was finding your corpse! Who would have the heart to keep investigating under those conditions?”

“What was it?” Zhao Yu stopped writing and turned to her.

“You know... back when you were helping Jiang Ke escape from prison, when you rushed out of the detention center, why didn’t the police catch you?” Miao Ying asked. She then proceeded to answer her own question. “When you ditched the police, they used GPS to track you but realized you had thrown your phone away! Then, they tried to find the prison guard, but his SIM card had been swapped out, so the whole time they were running in circles!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu realized. “No wonder there weren’t any obstacles after we changed cars. I was wondering why the police weren’t chasing us. It was because they had already swapped out the SIMs! They were really thorough...”

As he was talking about being thorough, Zhao Yu felt something else was off. Something just didn’t feel right every time he tried to connect Yu Fusheng to the mysterious person.

“Another thing I just found out today...” Miao Ying said, not noticing Zhao Yu’s confused expression. “Tian Xu’s seafood market may have exploded, but not everyone died! Ran Tao went to question some of the people today.”

“Oh? And what did he find?” Zhao Yu asked, getting excited.

“Those people were Cao Sifen’s lackeys!” Miao Ying said. “The whole timeline isn’t that complicated after all. Cao Sifen received information from his men beforehand and he sent them to Yao Ming on standby. But we don’t know what happened that day. They were following Cao Sifen’s orders and took control of the van, only to realize that the driver was not Jiang Ke!”

“They had no choice but to interrogate the driver to find out where Jiang Ke was,” she continued. “But, when they were at the seafood market and tried to sneak in, the driver named A Rong suddenly fought back and crashed the car right into the market. Now that their plan to sneak in was ruined, they could only go in openly. Who would have thought the van would explode...”

Zhao Yu finally understood what had happened at the seafood supermarket. It was just a cascading chain of accidents. The crash happened because the driver resisted, while the explosion happened because Jiang Ke’s stun gun caught fire and detonated the bomb beneath the car! This meant that the seafood market incident wasn’t in the mysterious person’s original plans, rather, it had actually ruined them!

“Cao Sifen’s lackey admitted that the mission given to them by Cao Sifen was to catch Jiang Ke alive and bring him back, not to kill him,” Miao Ying said. That made sense! From the start, Zhao Yu had felt like the mysterious person didn’t want to kill Jiang Ke.

“I get it. The mysterious person’s original plan was to let Jiang Ke drive the van away and destroy it after I jumped into the river! But Jiang Ke is cunning, and he was worried something was up, so he ran away in

advance and sent A Rong to settle the rest. If he hadn't, he would have been caught by Cao Sifen!" Zhao Yu exclaimed.

"When I followed him to the seafood supermarket, Jiang Ke was already wearing the police officer's uniform. From the looks of it, the uniform was not prepared by the mysterious person, but instead Jiang Ke prepared it for himself in advance! Haha! This means that Jiang Ke's prison break can be explained!" Zhao Yu said, clapping.

"Oh? Really?" Miao Ying squinted at Zhao Yu. "Then tell me, after jumping off of the bridge, how did you follow Jiang Ke to the seafood market?"

"This, uhm... hehe. Guess I'll tell you. I had to steal a car! And hey, guess what! That car belonged to an acting troupe, so there were tons of costumes in the back. Since my clothes were wet, I borrowed one of their dope-*ss costumes. If you had seen it, I'm sure you would have laughed so hard you'd have rolled around on the floor!" Zhao Yu explained.

After seeing Miao Ying's intense face, Zhao Yu wiped cold sweat off of his forehead. "What if I told you I attached a tracking device to Jiang Ke beforehand, would you believe me?" he asked.

"Bullsh*t! If there was really a tracking device, then why didn't you contact the police? Were you cosplaying some hero?" she asked angrily.

"There was really a tracker! I was afraid that you wouldn't believe me if I told you, but before going to Yao Ming, I already felt that something was amiss and attached both a tracker and an eavesdropping device to him. If not, I wouldn't have been able to track him to the seafood market, hear Jiang Ke and Tian Xudong's conversation, and track him to the outskirts of Jian, right?" he asked.

"And it's not that I want to be a hero, but in that situation, I was already a fugitive. If I didn't catch Jiang Ke I'd be done for!" Zhao Yu said. His ability to feign innocence was second to none. "But I didn't expect to be in such a pit, I was totally buried in it! Miaomiao, I didn't mean it, I was just going with the flow."

Miao Ying was not entirely convinced, but Zhao Yu had lied without even flinching, which caused her to believe about half of what he said. "How... how can you be so reckless? What if the tracker failed or if Jiang Ke had seen it?" she asked him.

"Miaomiao, do you think I cared about that at the time?" Zhao Yu said, throwing the question back at her. It seemed to work since she didn't answer. Taking advantage of the opportunity, he turned his head back and focused on the case. Based on the information she had provided, he started to circle someone's name, pressing the marker into it. As the case became clearer, he felt more and more certain that this would be the key person to crack the case!

Chapter 1006: Who is the Arsonist?

Assuming Yu Fusheng was indeed the mystery person, nearly everything could be explained other than two of the incidents. The first was Wu Fangfang and Jiang Ke's scandalous photos. Those photos were an obvious set up used by the mystery person to bait Zhao Yu into visiting Jiang Ke. But where did Yu Fusheng get those photos?

Just to be sure, Gao Facai from Forensics had reexamined the photographs and determined their authenticity. With current technology, if the photographs were fake, it may not have been easy to tell. But, the photo of Wu Fangfang was ancient and printed on old paper, so it was definitely verifiable!

At the seafood market, Jiang Ke had mentioned the photographs were used as extortion and he hadn't known that Wu Fangfang was a police officer, so he never followed up. Even though he had been vague about the whereabouts of the photographs, there was no doubt they were with Wu Fangfang.

If that was the case, then how did Yu Fusheng get his hands on them?

The second thing Zhao Yu couldn't figure out was whether Yu Fusheng and Jiang Ke were related, and if they were, what sort of relationship did they have? From the beginning of the prison break, their relationship had been vague, and there was no concrete evidence proving the two crime lords knew each other. Judging by Jiang Ke's reaction, Yu Fusheng was a complete stranger to him. The name Yu Fusheng had never appeared in Jiang Ke's records, either.

This led to one big question – what did the mystery person want with Jiang Ke?

From helping Jiang Ke break out of prison, to telling Cao Sifen to kidnap him alive, and then sending Zhu Sunfeng to the outskirts of Jin to pick Jiang Ke up, the mystery person didn't seem to want Jiang Ke dead. But in the end, the barn fire was definitely intended to burn Jiang Ke to ashes! This contradiction was seemingly impossible to understand.

But, if you really thought about it, the whole situation wasn't that complicated. It just meant that the mystery person and the arsonist were two different people. Yu Fusheng, the mystery person, never intended to kill Jiang Ke, but the arsonist did! When Zhao Yu was pretending to be Jiang Ke, he could tell from Yu Fusheng's tone that he only intended to meet with Jiang Ke. So, the one who wanted Jiang Ke dead was probably the arsonist!

Zhao Yu wrote down Jiang Ke's name with a marker. From this angle, Jiang Ke was integral to the case. Yu Fusheng wanted to see him, the arsonist wanted him dead, then... could it be that Jiang Ke knew something? Yu Fusheng wanted to see him, the arsonist wanted him dead, so... Jiang Ke refused to say what he knew?

In the end, the arsonist knew that Jiang Ke was picked up by Yu Fusheng and the two were about to meet, so the arsonist planned to kill them all, preparing the fire so they would all be burnt together...?

Further following this train of thought, the arsonist seemed to be the key to everything! And Jiang Ke was the most effective way to find this key! But, even after disguising himself as Jiang Ke, he had found nothing. Could it be that Jiang Ke himself was being ignored? And for what reason?

Fortunately, Jiang Ke had not burnt to death, and as long as he was awake, perhaps everything would be revealed in time. Unfortunately, nobody knew when he would wake up. Waiting indefinitely was not an option.

Zhao Yu made space on the whiteboard and filled in everything they knew about Jiang Ke. This was not a complicated task. After graduating from Yao Ming, he was assigned back to his original workplace in a petrochemical refinery in Guang An. Due to his eccentric nature, he heavily injured someone in his first month of work, was fired from the factory, and became wanted by the police.

From that point forward, Jiang Ke was constantly on the wanted list. He slowly became a small-time criminal before eventually becoming the mega-criminal he was today.

But, because of his elusive nature, there was very little information on him and if it wasn't for Zhao Yu disguising himself and Jiang Ke being in prison, his hideout would have been even harder to find. Luckily, from eavesdropping at the seafood market, it became clear that Jiang Ke had been in Gao Lanqi in the year of the Rural Homicide Case. Jiang Ke even explained to Tian Xudong that he had no relation to the case. If he did, he wouldn't have attempted to blackmail Wu Fangfang with the scandalous photographs! This meant Jiang Ke was definitely in Gao Lanqi during the Rural Homicide Case.

If that was true, and since Jiang Ke and Wu Fangfang had relations, could it be that he had some past with Yu Fusheng and the others as well? And regarding Wu Fangfang's photographs, how did Yu Fusheng get his hands on them? Was it because of this that Yu Fusheng was trying so hard to meet Jiang Ke? Was the mysterious arsonist also part of it?

God d*mn it! Zhao Yu hoped Jiang Ke would wake up soon so he could tell him about everything that had happened in Gao Lanqi and reveal the truth. Yu Fusheng was burnt to ashes, Jiang Ke was still unconscious, and Zhao Yu himself had become a detective unable to be seen.

Zhao Yu looked back at Miao Ying for a moment. The tired Ms. Miao was already fast asleep in bed. She had rushed around the entire day upon arriving in Gao Lanqi without a single break. She must be exhausted.

Sigh... Zhao Yu heaved a big sigh and pulled out a bottle of ointment, applying it on his burned arm. Even though he had worn the suit, the fire was simply too hot and there were multiple burn marks on his body. When he had forced the door open, he had gotten badly burnt on his hand, and the back of his hands had started to blister. Afraid that Miao Ying would see, he had hidden the injuries with the large sleeve cuffs of his down jacket.

Seeing Miao Ying fast asleep, he didn't want to disturb her, so he drank a cup of warm water and continued brainstorming about the case. After thinking more, he suspected that Yang Zebiao could have been the mystery arsonist.

From the information gathered, Yang Zebiao was an honest person. Maybe he had been used by Yu Fusheng during the Rural Homicide Case. Based on the current information, Yu Fusheng had probably used him to kill Wu Fangfang and pushed him over the edge, making him decide to kill them all.

But that fire was professionally done. Would Yang Zebiao have known how to control it? And if Yang Zebiao had truly been used, with Yu Fusheng's personality, wouldn't he have killed him a long time ago?

In addition, some uncertainties troubled Zhao Yu. Assuming Yu Fusheng was really someone the police wanted for his crimes, if the Rural Homicide Case was really done by him then wouldn't he worry about being exposed?

With all the evil acts he had committed, he would have received the death sentence at least ten times. Wouldn't he have been worried about Zhao Yu, who was a known master of unsolved crimes? Why did he have to kill Zhao Yu in the explosion? Was it solely to get revenge for Zhao Qing and Wu Shuang? Or was it because the Rural Homicide Case was not actually done by Yu Fusheng?

His mind had become a tangled mess and he knew he had to stop. His thoughts were all over the place and there was no point in continuing. Making sure the fireplace was settled he wrapped himself with a coat, gently laid down beside Miao Ying, and fell asleep.

Chapter 1007: Returning to the Scene of the Fire

In the past, whenever Zhao Yu had overexerted his brain, he would have weird nightmares. This time it was different. He had only one dream the entire night, and that dream was of him disappearing from the system. The system vanished without even bidding him goodbye...

In his dream, Zhao Yu couldn't tell what exactly he was feeling. Was he feeling reluctance over parting, heartache, numbness, or indifference? It was only after the dream ended that he hurriedly shouted, "Would you let me crack this case first?"

"Zhao Yu, Zhao Yu... are you okay?" Zhao Yu could hear Miao Ying calling out to him and he slowly opened his eyes. The sun was already up and he was covered in sweat.

"Are you not feeling well?" Miao Ying asked, tenderly touching Zhao Yu's forehead. "It's my fault, I was too tired yesterday and didn't take good care of you! But it's so cold, why are you not under the blankets? This isn't like you!"

"Eh?" Zhao Yu rubbed his eyes. "You were sleeping so soundly. I couldn't bear to wake you. Besides, I'm an upstanding guy! Haha!"

"Idiot!" Miao Ying said, wiping the cold sweat off of Zhao Yu's forehead. She saw the burns on his hands and jumped. "Why are you burnt so badly?!"

Her eyes were faster than his attempt to cover himself up.

"Aren't you super capable? Why didn't you tell me this happened?" Miao Ying asked, visibly worried after seeing the burns. "You have to go to the doctor and get this fixed!"

"It's okay, it's just a slight burn!" Zhao Yu said indifferently. "I've already applied some ointment to them."

"You..." Miao Ying suddenly understood something and quickly peeled off Zhao Yu's clothes, revealing more burns. He was in pain. "No wonder you didn't want to go to bed!" Miao Ying said, tearing up. "How could you bear this pain? Quick, take off your clothes!"

"There's no need, really!" Zhao Yu said, attempting to wave her off. But Ms. Miao was not willing to back down and quickly took his top off. Half an hour later, Miao Ying had carefully treated all the wounds on Zhao Yu's body with ointment, antiseptic cream, and bandages. There were a lot of wounds but other than the one on his arms, the rest weren't as serious, so Miao Ying didn't insist on sending him to the hospital.

"You're such an idiot! Why didn't you say anything last night? Do you think you're some hero?" Miao Ying grumbled while helping Zhao Yu put his clothes on. "What if they get infected? I beg you, next time something like this happens, please let me know..."

Although his wounds were aching, hearing Miao Ying's concern filled Zhao Yu's heart with happiness. He grabbed her and kissed her on the cheeks. "Miaomiao, it's so nice to be with you! I'm so blessed!"

"Ha! I'm glad you know how lucky you are!" Miao Ying said, pouting. "Next time you want to play with your life, please think about my feelings..."

"Speaking of feelings..." Zhao Yu said shamelessly. "How about you and me go to bed and make up for the passion we missed last night— ouch!" Before he could finish his sentence, Miao Ying knocked Zhao Yu on his head.

"Don't you know what time it is? I have to go to the scene of the fire. I'll make you some soup in the afternoon, okay?" Miao Ying said, putting on her coat and pointing towards the window.

"No need," Zhao Yu said, putting on the mask and sunglasses he had prepared in advance. He covered his head with the hood of his coat. "I have to go with you today. I was thinking about it last night, and the fire may have affected my judgment. I need to go back and find inspiration!"

"You can't be serious!" Miao Ying put her hands on her waist and pouted. "Don't you know your so-called inspiration might land me in jail? You're a fugitive now, if you're seen..."

"Stop! Let's not waste any more time. You've already gone to bed with a fugitive, so whatever you say now is useless..." Zhao Yu headed for the car after packing up his things, not caring whether Miao Ying agreed. Helpless to stop him, she could only follow him and drive.

Even if Zhao Yu could not be seen in public, he was not at the point where he had to stay hidden completely. Furthermore, when he had jumped off the Hong Ming bridge, no one had known if he was alive or dead, so the criminal department hadn't called for an investigation. As long as he was not seen by his acquaintances, he wouldn't have to hide.

On the way to the crime scene, he was even in the mood for a bowl of mixed mutton soup. Nothing beats that soup on a cold day. After eating, Zhao Yu felt full of energy. The past few days, he had been tortured by the Kun Qian hexagram daily, making life torturous. But now, although the case was still ongoing, the pressure had been significantly lifted. Moreover, with Miao Ying beside him, he felt more confident than ever.

The barn was close to where Zhao Yu was staying and within a few minutes, they arrived on the scene. As the case had caught the attention of the police, there were a few staff on site despite the early hour. He couldn't risk exposing himself in such a situation and exited the Jeep a bit earlier, walking to the other side of the crime scene. He blended into the crowd of bystanders and observed.

The huge fire had turned the entire barn into a flatland. The buildings had collapsed and nothing had survived the flames. At the center of the fire was where Yu Fusheng and the others had built their secret hideout. It was burnt completely to ashes. From Zhao Yu's angle, he could only see black soot. In a situation like this, evidence would be hard to retrieve.

There was always a small chance, and the staff collecting evidence was not giving up. Dressed in white, several of them were looking for any evidence they could find. Zhao Yu saw Miao Ying walk over and speak to the local officer-in-charge as well as Gao from Forensics. She was probably asking for updates.

Zhao Yu decided to stop watching and shifted his attention to the environment instead. He had risked coming to the scene because he had an idea. While the fire was burning, the arsonist would have been in the vicinity! For such an important fire, the arsonist would definitely have wanted to ensure that there were no survivors before leaving.

With his invisible detectors, he had learned that the CCTVs in the barn were all switched off, which meant the only way for the arsonist to watch the situation was to secretly do so at the location. If that was the case, was he amongst the crowd of bystanders?

No... Thinking about it, being able to get rid of Yu Fusheng meant this was not an ordinary arsonist. He must know it would not be wise to stay at the scene of the crime. On the other hand, the arsonist wouldn't feel satisfied without personally waiting for the fire, right? If that was the case...

Zhao Yu scanned the surrounding environment and noticed a mound in the distance. The mound stood higher than the other land and faced the barn. With a pair of binoculars, the arsonist would safely be able to observe the situation!

Zhao Yu concentrated on visualizing the scene.

When Yu Sunfeng and the mute Tu Lekai brought Zhao Yu, who was pretending to be Jiang Ke, to the barn, the arsonist was standing on the mound. He had been watching them with his binoculars as they entered the trap. When the fire started burning, a smug grin spread across his face...

Chapter 1008: The Bullet in the Bone

1:00 pm, a private room in a hotpot restaurant located in Gao Lanqi.

"It's best not to eat so much mutton with your injuries!" Miao Ying nagged Zhao Yu. She held a bunch of information she received from forensics.

"Are you kidding? It's a waste to be in Gao Lanqi and not eat mutton shabu-shabu!" Zhao Yu said, helping Miao Ying arrange her dinner set. "It's just a small injury. Even when I had surgery in Yao Ming, I still ate normally!"

"Fine, whatever floats your boat," Miao Ying said without raising her head. "Zhao Yu, regarding the mound at the barn... Gao from Forensics sent a request for the best footprint analyzer available, but the situation is a little complicated."

"Oh?" Hearing Miao Ying talk about the main issue at hand, Zhao Yu immediately turned his attention to her.

"Because it's currently the lunar new year, and the mound is located near a playground where children usually play and light firecrackers, all the trace evidence is a mess! If only we had gotten there a day earlier..." she explained.

"Oh..." Zhao Yu felt a tinge of regret. If it wasn't for the fire, he would have noticed the situation. If he had the Night Vision Goggles, he probably would have found the arsonist as well.

“But they found some new footprints!” Miao Ying continued. “They’ve already brought those back for analysis, but let’s not expect too much...”

“Were there any CCTVs in the area?” Zhao Yu asked.

“That’s even less likely,” Miao Ying said, shaking her head. “Apart from the town center, the other areas either had no cameras, or the cameras were faulty. Especially the roads near the barn, that whole area is a blind spot! There are too many roads leading to and from the barn, making it impossible to properly trace anything.”

“Zhao Yu, Yu Fusheng and these infamous criminals chose a really strategic location!” Miao Ying sighed as she pointed at the documents she was reading. “The location is remote but still relatively developed. Gao Lanqi and the central plains are nearby, and Meng Xiang is only slightly further away!”

“So... is there any hope of finding the arsonist?” Zhao Yu asked, shaking his head in disappointment.

“The situation doesn’t look too hopeful,” Miao Ying answered. “Like you said, if they wanted to transport anything, they could do so with the large truck. Tu Lekai had a whole slew of legal assistants so even the highway was open to them!”

Tsk tsk... Zhao Yu thought. He had experienced that fact personally.

“The most unfortunate thing now is that the fire was so destructive. Besides Yu Fusheng, Yu Sunfeng, and Tu Lekai, we don’t know if any others died at the scene. You know, like those we were talking about earlier. He Yubing, Liu Guangxin, Yao Wenming, Yang Zebiao...”

“Just to be clear...” Zhao Yu said as he picked up a piece of cooked mutton, placing it in Miao Ying’s bowl. “It’s all ashes now?”

“Yeah! These people are vicious criminals. If they really wanted to run away, they’re probably better off being burnt to death. Still... hey, Zhao Yu, do you think that Yang Zebiao could be the arsonist? What kind of issue did he and Yu Fusheng have that caused him to kill Yu Fusheng?”

“I actually thought about that last night,” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head. “But the way the fire had been designed was so meticulous that I don’t think it’s possible. According to our reports, Yang Zebiao is an honest man.”

“But it’s been thirteen years, who knows what sort of person he’s become? Han Kuang was also a man of integrity, but he’s a demon now!” Miao Ying said, giving Zhao Yu a piece of mutton. “I talked with the police officers in Gao Lanqi and checked the remaining investigation protocols. All that’s left is to hope Gao from Forensics has some new information. If not, we can only follow general procedures and start a wide search.”

“Tsch!” Zhao Yu frowned. “Miaomiao, look, it was exactly because the arsonist didn’t want to leave any traces behind that he bothered to cause such an elaborate fire. If it weren’t for me, nobody would have known about the people who had been burnt to death! Shouldn’t we be ramping up the investigations?”

“Logically speaking that makes sense! But look at the current situation. The Crime Department has sent out a new intelligence team, Forensic Gao’s team and the government experts are all here! How could

this look like a normal fire? If the arsonist had paid just a bit more attention, wouldn't he have known that his plan had been exposed?" she answered.

"That's true as well!" Zhao Yu said, nodding. "Actually, that works too. If the arsonist realized that the fire didn't cover up the truth about Yu Fusheng he would be despondent!"

"Besides, if the fire was caused by a large group of people, then this knowledge would cause internal conflict!" Miao Ying said confidently. "So, whatever we do has to be bigger than them so they'll expose themselves. But these things are no longer our responsibility... Our mission is still Wu Fangfang's murder! The arson case has been handed over to team 063!"

"Actually, it's better this way," Zhao Yu said seriously. "Let them pressure the arsonist, and we can focus on checking into the others. I don't know about you, but I think the truth is right under our noses! All we need to do is find it!"

"That's easier said than done... after all, the fire destroyed so much evidence. It was a huge loss. And, based on the investigating we've already done, nothing adds up!" Miao Ying's phone began to ring as she spoke.

"It's Gao from Forensics..." Miao Ying told Zhao Yu as she answered the call. Not long into the conversation, her expression completely changed.

"What's wrong?" Zhao Yu asked hurriedly as she hung up. "Did something happen?"

"No!" Miao Ying said, annoyed. "Gao told me that last night they found a burnt skull in the ashes with a bullet in it!"

"Last night... bullet... could it be?" Zhao Yu thought, his eyes glistened with hope.

"Yeah, they managed to retrieve a bit of DNA and after comparing, they found that the bones belonged to Cao Sifen!"

"What?! Cao Sifen?" Zhao Yu's eyes widened with shock.

"Because the skull was lodged into the metal, it wasn't burnt!" Miao Ying said. "The bullet in the skull shows that Cao Sifen's death wasn't related to the fire!"

"No wonder the police have been having no luck with their leads!" Zhao Yu exclaimed. "I can't believe he died in that den of thieves. Cao Sifen, Yu Fusheng, Yu Sunfeng, and the mute Tu Lekai... isn't that already four?"

"It's not just that," Miao Ying said. "Gao also told me that he managed to retrieve some trace DNA and tissue using new technology. It takes some time and doesn't have a 100% success rate. They also found two pistols, but because they have been severely burnt, they can't analyze the ballistics!"

Zhao Yu remembered that Yu Sunfeng had a gun, and there had been another in the flowerpot. The guns probably weren't completely destroyed because they were made of metal.

Wait... gun, bullet, skull... Cao Sifen was shot through the head? The deceased in the Rural Homicide case was also shot through the head! That meant... the person who killed Cao Sifen was also the murderer in the Rural Homicide Case?

Chapter 1009: Neglected Thoughts

Time was passing quickly and within the blink of an eye the sky had turned dark. Zhao Yu was on the phone with someone inside his small bungalow.

“Hello... why doesn’t this work anymore?” Zhao Yu was poking at the stove with one hand letting the flames grow larger, while the other held the phone he was speaking to Li Luoyun on. “Leader Li, why not try slapping him in the face? If that doesn’t work, stab him with needles!”

“Stop joking around!” Li Luoyun said. “The doctor said that Jiang Ke’s head had withstood a heavy blow. Although there’s no need for a craniotomy, he’s definitely unconscious and not faking it. The doctor also said that his body was covered in wounds that were in line with those of an explosion. Detective Zhao, it seems that there was some kind of explosion at the nightclub the other day. Do you know what happened?”

“I thought I told you!” Zhao Yu said. “The explosion wasn’t at the nightclub; it was at the seafood market! I guess he was injured there, although he didn’t feel the effects until he got to the nightclub and fainted.”

“Ah, now that you mention it...” Li Luoyun agreed. “From the CCTV, we indeed saw Jiang Ke surrounded by lackeys. He was jumping up and down and took quite a beating! I guess the trauma triggered the injuries in his head? Anyway, Detective Zhao, don’t be too worried. The doctor said that based on the results, it won’t be long before Jiang Ke wakes up. Rest assured, the moment there is news I’ll let you know!”

“Alright...” Zhao Yu said. “Interrogate the investors and Jiang Ke’s subordinates again! Remember to contact me if there are any changes!”

The only reason Zhao Yu was being this cooperative was that Yu Sunfeng had mentioned that they were able to kidnap Jiang Ke because they received news beforehand. Therefore, the informant was most likely linked to Yu Sunfeng’s crime organization.

After hanging up with Li Luoyun, Zhao Yu gave Ma Laodan a call and asked if he had any connections in Gao Lanqi to listen for any news. However, Ma Laodan was just a local bully and wasn’t really that involved, so he could only promise Zhao Yu that he would try.

Gao Lanqi’s police had actually already set up that sort of underground channel. For an area like this with so many connections to high-level crimes, it wouldn’t be good if word got out. That’s why local police had taken this very seriously and had adjusted the investigation level accordingly. However, there were still no leads. The arsonist and the group of criminals had all disappeared without a trace.

It wasn’t just the barn fire but also Wu Fangfang’s murder, the Rural Homicide case, and Jiang Ke’s prison break. All of those complex cases seemed to have died with the fire.

Other than Zhao Yu caring for his wounds, nothing else had happened that afternoon. The information from Ran Tao from Yao Ming, Cheng Ke from Chang Ming, Wu Xiu from Jing Hai, Li Luoyun from Pu Bian, and Miao Ying from Gao Lanqi had all been summarized for Zhao Yu. Even with all of that information, there were no useful leads. They were effectively back at square one. Having had experience with such

unsolvable cases in the past, Zhao Yu had perfected the art of staying calm. Unlike the past when he had always been hasty.

At that moment, he stood in front of numerous whiteboards where he had sorted all of the information, removing anything unrelated. Then, he tried to begin a new train of thought regarding the case. But there had been too many questions and too many accidents. Whenever Zhao Yu tried thinking about the case from a different angle, it quickly reached a dead end. He could only go back and start again.

Just like that, he started again and again. He spent countless hours writing his trains of thought related to the case only to erase them and start over. The noodles Miao Ying had cooked for him had long gone cold. Although it was difficult, Zhao Yu got more and more excited as he wrote. He felt closer to the truth than ever. In his gut he felt that the truth was within his grasp, he just hadn't reached it yet!

The clock struck midnight and Zhao Yu's fountain pen had found a new name. It wasn't Jiang Ke, but Wu Fangfang! "Dear, you've found a new lead? Quick, tell me!" Miao Ying said. Zhao Yu had so many breakthroughs in the past that Miao Ying had almost expected this.

"I have decided!" Zhao Yu said, pointing at Wu Fangfang's name. "Let us start from the beginning!" Upon hearing this, Miao Ying almost fell down.

"Since all the cases are somehow linked to Wu Fangfang, why not start investigating her? Didn't she grow up in Gao Lanqi?" Zhao Yu asked excitedly.

"Zhao Yu..." Miao Ying said with a defeated tone, grabbing him by the shoulders. "It's not that I want to be a Debbie Downer. If it was any other situation I wouldn't even mind if you started from the time Wu Fangfang was still in her mother's womb! But we're running out of time!"

"Listen to me," she told him. "First thing tomorrow we're going down to the office to explain the situation! We still have to get engaged in June! You can't possibly expect me to exchange engagement rings with a fugitive, right?"

"Uhm..." Zhao Yu sighed, frowning. "You've thought this through! But Miaomiao, haven't you realized? From Wu Fangfang to Jiang Ke to Yu Fusheng, including all those criminals and Cao Sifen, all of the cases they're involved with are related to Gao Lanqi! Don't you think that's some sort of hint?"

"What hint?" Miao Ying shrugged. "Do you think the arsonist is still in Gao Lanqi? Or..."

"I don't know," Zhao Yu said, shaking his head. "Anyway, give me some time! Two days, just two days! If I can't find anything in two days then we'll head down to the office."

"This..." Miao Ying seemed hesitant.

"You see," Zhao Yu pointed at the names on the whiteboard. "Since these people are all related to Gao Lanqi, we should properly investigate their activities here and see who they've been in contact with, where they've been seen, that sort of thing!"

"I don't need you to tell me that! Do you think I'm stupid?" she asked.

"But..." Zhao Yu pointed at Wu Fangfang's name. "Was she actually here?"

“About that... Wu Fangfang and the arsonist had nothing connecting them, so of course we didn’t check her out!” Miao Ying answered.

“Which is exactly why we will check!” Zhao Yu said seriously. “Didn’t I say just now, we have to start from the beginning! The whole case began with Wu Fangfang’s murder. Since we are already here in Gao Lanqi, why don’t we take a break from everything else and just investigate Wu Fangfang’s background? See what happened when she was in Gao Lanqi two years ago? For example... for example...” As Zhao Yu was saying this, he was making a rectangle with his hands.

“Oh...” It was only after that gesture that Miao Ying understood. “You mean the photograph of Wu Fangfang and Jiang Ke?”

“That’s right! At the moment we can only confirm the photo was taken in Gao Lanqi. If we can find out the story behind it, then we may be on to something!”

“Right...” Miao Ying nodded while thinking. “I almost forgot, since the photograph was placed by the murderer, if we can find out where it came from then we have a really good lead to follow! D*mn...”

Chapter 1010: The Scratched Photo

Three days later, Zhao Yu checked the system in his head and attempted to press the unlock button. As expected, the system kept true to its word and wouldn’t budge. It seemed Zhao Yu would have to wait until the suspension period was over before he could unlock it.

Alright, if that’s the case then forget it. Ever since the Demon Case, Zhao Yu felt like he had become a lot less reliant on the system. Whether or not it unlocked, he would follow his gut.

Glancing over at the sleeping Miao Ying, Zhao Yu felt weird. It was unlike him to not have argued with her the night before. Thinking back, after Zhao Yu and Miao Ying had agreed on the next steps to take in the investigation, they had put their issues aside to focus on Wu Fangfang.

Right up until three in the morning, they were busy tidying and sorting out Wu Fangfang’s life in Gao Lanqi. Alas, they were too tired to continue and immediately fell asleep, not even changing out of their clothes. For Zhao Yu, sleeping was also difficult considering his burns were still fairly fresh.

Miao Ying had woken up from her sleep and went to hug Zhao Yu, kissing his neck. Eyes still half-closed, she slowly got out of bed and began preparing to head out.

After last night’s session, they had compiled a list of Wu Fangfang’s teachers and classmates from her school days. They also found her neighbors, relatives, and some colleagues. Everything was set for the day’s investigation. Because Wu Fangfang and her fiancé, Shi Hai, were childhood friends, they decided to also use the information they had on Shi Hai’s time in Gao Lanqi, and investigate them simultaneously.

Needless to say, with that many people to investigate, they were unable to go door-to-door and speak with each person individually. They had to prioritize who they considered to be the most important people. Eventually, they decided they would personally visit those they deemed a priority, while the lower priority would be left to Wu Xiumei, who could question them over the phone.

The duo's objective was clear: investigate every lead relating to Wu Fangfang and Jiang Ke's photo. During the process of figuring out whether or not Yu Fusheng was the mystery person, the photos were the only piece of evidence that could not be explained. So, if they uncovered the secret behind the photos, it might lead to more clues.

Based on what he had previously learned from Jiang Ke, Zhao Yu also knew that the photograph was taken after the Rural Cooperatives Homicide Case. At that time, Wu Fangfang was in her 20s. Not only was she a student at the police academy, but her exceptional grades got her transferred onto the Special Investigation Team where they were tasked with investigating the Rural Homicide case.

Although the case hit a dead end, Wu Fangfang's work had attracted the attention of the higher-ups. After graduating from the academy, she was assigned to Gao Lanqi's criminal police team. Not long after her arrival, she succeeded in her attempt to become a member of the criminal office and left Gao Lanqi.

That meant the pictures were probably taken between the time of the Rural Homicide case and when she took her test to become a member of the criminal office. That was a duration of no more than two years.

Zhao Yu and Miao Ying felt that the main focus of the investigation should be Wu Fangfang's colleagues and friends from that time period. They might know if she had any secrets.

Jiang Ke mentioned that when the photo was taken, Wu Fangfang was not only drunk but had also consumed drugs. That meant that he probably approached her at a bar or a nightclub. The location where the actual photos were taken could have been a hotel. Determining the location was also part of the duo's investigative goals.

"Dear," Miao Ying said, quickly changing her clothes. "It's still early, rest a bit more! You haven't been sleeping well these past few nights. I have to report to the police station to see if there's anything new. After that, I'll investigate Wu Fangfang. Don't worry, I'll handle Wu Xiumei. I won't leave out anything important!"

"Ah, okay!" Zhao Yu said from the bed. "Take extra care, let me know immediately if anything happens!"

"Alright..." Miao Ying said, taking her belongings. "If everything goes well, I should be back by noon. Should I bring back some western food?"

"Okay!" Zhao Yu said, blowing a kiss towards Miao Ying as she left the house.

Once the doors closed, Zhao Yu felt a sense of disappointment and frustration. He wanted badly to go out and investigate the case with Miao Ying. Unfortunately, even if he wasn't officially a fugitive, he still couldn't go out and openly investigate. That meant the investigation had to be done by Miao Ying alone. Zhao Yu had reminded Miao Ying to record every single visit so he could analyze them all himself.

Argh! Zhao Yu felt like going back to sleep, but his stubborn nature had reached the point of paranoia. He eventually got up and changed into his suit, washing his face and taking a seat at his work desk to look through the information. Since Miao Ying was working, he couldn't just sit around, no matter how tired he was!

Even though Zhao Yu had been a hooligan in his past life, he was a very stubborn one. This dog-eat-dog world had made him a person who wouldn't stop until his objectives were met. Whether he was a hooligan or a police officer, he had to finish what he started. No matter the cost, it had to be done.

Although he had given Miao Ying a deadline of two days, it had been a guise. He had long planned that if nothing came out of investigating Wu Fangfang and Shi Hai, the next step would be to investigate Jiang Ke's past movements in Gao Lanqi. After that, it would be Yu Fusheng, followed by Cao Sifen, until eventually, they could find a lead.

Last night, Zhao Yu had already flipped through all of the data they had on Wu Fangfang and Shi Hai. Still, he wanted to take another more detailed look at it. Looking through the data, Zhao Yu learned that Wu Fangfang had taken the photo with Jiang Ke while Shi Hai was training at the prefecture's police academy. He wasn't anywhere near Wu Fangfang, which gave Jiang Ke the opportunity he needed.

Jiang Ke once said that his original intention was to blackmail Wu Fangfang with the photos because her appearance gave him the impression that she was rich. Unfortunately for him, he found out she was a police officer so he gave up on his plan.

But, those photos... why would they be in her drawers? Also, did Wu Fangfang know about his plan? If not... A thought popped into his mind. He wanted to take a look at Wu Fangfang's photos to see if he could find anything. If her eyes showed signs of depression, then it might mean that she knew about the photos. Due to Wu Fangfang's hot-tempered personality, anything was possible!

The more he thought it over, the more confident he felt. It wasn't difficult to view the photos since Wu Xiumei was investigating around the Jing Hai area where Wu Fangfang lived.

Realizing this, Zhao Yu turned on his computer and used Miao Ying's credentials to log in to the Special Investigation Team's intranet. He used Miao Ying's name to give orders to Wu Xiumei. He asked her to hurry to Wu Fangfang's house and get him the photos in her albums.

To his surprise, Wu Xiumei replied immediately, saying that she was already at Wu Fangfang's house investigating! Wu Fangfang was a narcissistic person and had five to six photo albums full of pictures. She said she would immediately take photos of the albums and send them over.

That's great! Zhao Yu thought. He quickly told Wu Xiumei to send photos of when Wu Fangfang was in her 20s. Wu Xiumei was efficient and, within a few seconds, the pictures she had taken were transferred onto Zhao Yu's computer.

Zhao Yu quickly opened the photos to check but realized that he was wasting his time. Wu Fangfang was full of life in them. There were all types of poses, from silly to sad to sexy. None of the photos had dates so he didn't know when they were taken.

Zhao Yu shook his head. It seemed like this was a dead end. Unless... What if he were to check the backgrounds of the people they were questioning and see if they could be related to the case? What if the location of the photo where she was in bed with Jiang Ke could be found?

As he looked through the photos one by one, he realized something odd. In some of Wu Fangfang's photos, there were scratch marks over someone's face!