

Crazy 1011

Chapter 1011: Fatal Symphony of the Cello

There were four girls in the photo including Wu Fangfang. One of the girls clinging tightly to Wu Fangfang had her face scratched out by a knife. This photo belonged to Wu Fangfang, so she must have been the one who scratched out the girl's face. Thinking about it, it was obvious Wu Fangfang had something against this girl. Tsk, tsk. Recalling his interactions with Wu Fangfang, Zhao Yu realized it'd be stranger if she didn't have conflicts due to how bad her temper was.

To go as far as damaging the photo, Wu Fangfang must really have had a vendetta against this girl! If she didn't want to see the girl in the image, wouldn't it have been easier to just destroy it completely? If someone had flipped through the album, wouldn't it have been awkward?

Zhao Yu flipped through the rest of the album with some doubts hovering in his mind. After looking through a few pages, he discovered many faces had been scratched and defaced with a penknife.

Initially, Zhao Yu thought that Wu Fangfang must be a vengeful person to have so many enemies, but after carefully studying them, he realized all the images where the faces had been defaced showed the same girl!

The girl was of a similar build to Wu Fangfang but her manner of dress suggested much higher standards. In some of the group photos, the girl wore a Hennessy dress with an exquisite jade bangle on her right wrist. Although the photos had no timestamps, judging by their looks, it was clear they took this photo back when they were 17 or 18 years old. Thinking back, the girl whose face had been scratched out was not only rich but dressed rather maturely as well.

Taking another look, Zhao Yu was shocked to find that the girl appeared in Wu Fangfang's family photos and Shi Hai's group photos! Wow! Zhao Yu was covered in goosebumps. This girl and Wu Fangfang... their relationship was something else.

Looking through a few more pages, the girl no longer appeared in photographs after Wu Fangfang began wearing her police uniform. It appeared as though after Wu Fangfang enlisting in the police academy, the two had lost touch.

Zhao Yu examined the scratch marks. They were probably a few years old seeing as they were slightly yellow. These hadn't been damaged by Wu Fangfang recently, which meant that the tension between them should have since exploded! If that was the case, what was their problem with one another?

But... no matter what the conflict between Wu Fangfang and this girl was, it should have no bearing on the case. This seems like just a personal grudge between the two. Zhao Yu thought. Girls... sigh.

Zhao Yu shook his head and laughed as he continued to flip through the photos of Wu Fangfang after her enlistment. He had barely flipped through more when something dawned on him and he hurriedly flipped back. That's right!

Looking at the girl whose face had been scratched out, Zhao Yu realized it might actually be a good thing that there was some sort of conflict between them! After all, someone's statement against an enemy

would definitely be the most truthful! If this girl held a grudge against Wu Fangfang, then the information she gave about her could possibly be more reliable!

If Zhao Yu wanted to know about Wu Fangfang's private life, asking her neighbors and friends might be pointless, as they may have reservations about being completely honest due to her position as a cop. But an enemy... that would be different, right?

That's right! Zhao Yu tapped on the photo. If he could find this girl, perhaps he'd be able to uncover a different side of Wu Fangfang. Thinking about this, he sent a message to Wu Xiumin and requested she see what she could find about this girl.

Almost immediately, Wu Xiumin replied. "Leader Miao, I noticed this previously. It wasn't just their teenage years. The girl had appeared throughout Wu Fangfang's entire childhood. So, I contacted all of Wu Fangfang's friends and classmates to find this girl's information. Give me a second..."

Ten seconds later, Wu Xiumin continued to respond. "That girl is indeed remarkable. She's now a director of one of Gao Lanqi's largest livestock cultivation companies. Her father used to be the best livestock cultivator in Meng Town before he passed away." Zhao Yu nodded. No wonder they were so rich!

"Her name is Cheng Lingfei and she was a year older than Wu Fangfang. The two weren't just close, they were also neighbors at one point. That's why Cheng Lingfei, Wu Fangfang, and Shi Hai were all childhood friends!" Zhao Yu realized that this girl was close to Shi Hai as well!

"Although she was a year older, their parents managed to arrange it so that Cheng Lingfei and Wu Fangfang were classmates. They had been together from elementary school up until middle school! I even asked their classmates and they said that the two were extremely close; practically inseparable. But after growing up, because of some incidents, their relationship went downhill and they stopped hanging out," Wu Xiumin explained.

"What incidents?" Zhao Yu asked.

"Apparently it was because of Shi Hai!" Perhaps it was too much effort to type it out, as Wu Xiumin sent this as a voice message instead. "Shi Hai was handsome, and Wu Fangfang and Cheng Lingfei both liked him. But in the end, he chose Wu Fangfang, so their relationship became complicated."

Ah... as expected, a love triangle. Zhao Yu had already foreseen this... But if Wu Fangfang had won then shouldn't Cheng Lingfei be the one with the grudge? Could there be another reason she hated her... something like Wu Fangfang and Jiang Ke's scandalous photo?

"When I was investigating," Wu Xiumin continued, "one of Wu Fangfang's old classmates told me something. Last year, they organized a mini gathering in the capital. However, because the organizer didn't know about the incident, both Cheng Lingfei and Wu Fangfang attended. In the end, something happened at the dinner table..."

Oh? What happened? Zhao Yu typed quickly.

A few seconds later Wu Xiumin's reply came. "The dinner hadn't even started and they had already begun to fight! Cheng Lingfei mercilessly scolded Wu Fangfang and said Shi Hai's death was her fault. She said if Shi Hai had chosen her, she wouldn't have put Shi Hai in danger. Then the fight escalated. Wu

Fangfang picked up a wine glass and splashed it in Cheng Lingfei's face... the two of them ruined the evening before the dinner even started."

Oh god... Zhao Yu shook his head. Throwing liquids again? Wu Fangfang was demoted to the Gem Protection Squad precisely because she threw water at her previous superior. That woman...

Another text from Wu Xiumin came in. "Leader Miao, I tried to call Cheng Lingfei earlier, but the call didn't go through. I'll send you her details now, it says she's still living in her old house! I have a feeling she knows quite a lot about Wu Fangfang."

"Alright!" Zhao Yu typed. After replying, he quickly called Miao Ying. Putting her on this case was a priority.

"Hello..." Miao Ying picked up the phone. Her voice was quieter than usual, as if she was in the midst of a meeting. In the background, elevator music was playing. Zhao Yu didn't think much of it, telling her about Cheng Lingfei and what he wanted Miao Ying to do.

Surprisingly, Miao Ying started laughing. "Zhao Yu, guess what? I'm already here!"

"Oh?!" Zhao Yu exclaimed. "What do you mean?"

"Did you forget, silly?" Miao Ying laughed. "The computer and my phone are synced. I've been reading the conversation you've been having with Wu Xiumin the whole time. Coincidentally, I was just passing by the neighborhood Wu Fangfang used to live in and, seeing the news about Cheng Lingfei, I decided to come over and have a look!"

"Oh..." Zhao Yu said.

In the brief pause where no one was speaking, the background music became clearer. It seemed to be the sound of a cello. "Okay, I'm ringing the doorbell!" Miao Ying said. "I'll let you know what happens later..."

Zhao Yu heard a creak before the phone call ended. Perhaps someone had opened the door?

But something was amiss. Wait... Zhao Yu thought he noticed something. Why was the sound of the cello so familiar?!

Chapter 1012: Investment Genius

The meaning of autumn,
is heavy as it leaves my heart.

A glass of wine,
a million emotions.

There have been too many farewells,
during this season of falling leaves.

Zhao Yu searched the lyrics on his computer. The title of the song was Late Autumn, it was from the soundtrack of a Sino-Japanese movie. In addition to the original version, there was a concert cello rendition. Zhao Yu played the concert version and mellow notes filled the room.

This was it!

Zhao Yu realized that the music he had heard during his phone call with Miao Ying was this exact melody! What's more, it wasn't a recording. No, it was an actual live performance of the song on a cello! That meant the cellist...

Ho ho. Zhao Yu opened his mouth and tried to take a deep breath but his chest felt tight. He remembered finding a cello CD in Jiang Ke's blackmail files with the song Late Autumn circled. When he had found it, he even played the song on Jiang Ke's CD player. He had remembered the melody to that day.

When the police raided Jiang Ke's hideout, Zhao Yu suspected the CD held some hidden message so he had Li Luoyun send in professionals to analyze it. The analysis returned no results, meaning Late Autumn was merely a song performed on a cello.

But how could there be such a large coincidence? Why would he have heard this song playing through Miao Ying's phone? Miao Ying was standing outside Cheng Lingfei's place waiting for the door to open. Did that mean the song was being played by Cheng Lingfei? Was that a problem...?

Zhao Yu's breathing quickened, his thoughts concentrated on Cheng Lingfei and the cello. At that time, his computer lit up. Wu Xiumin had sent Cheng Lingfei's details to Zhao Yu. Without hesitating, he opened the files and searched through them.

Not only did the files contain Cheng Lingfei's data, but they also included photos. Zhao Yu didn't even bother to look at the words as he was taken aback by the images. Cheng Lingfei had a slim body with pale skin, and although she was pretty, she rarely smiled and instead looked cool and proud. Her icy-cold eyes gave Zhao Yu inexplicable chills.

However, what shocked Zhao Yu wasn't her appearance or disposition, it was the shots of her playing an instrument. In her hands was indeed a cello! There were photos of her performing on stage, some even with an orchestra. What the h*ll!

Zhao Yu's heart began to pound quickly. It was obvious now, the sound of the cello in Miao Ying's background was coming from Cheng Lingfei! Was she practicing just so Miao Ying would hear her?

No... Zhao Yu knew deep down that there was no such thing as a coincidence. Playing the cello was not unusual, but to play Late Autumn of all songs? Now that was suspicious! Could it be? Cheng Lingfei and Jiang Ke?

After Cheng Lingfei and Wu Fangfang fell out, Jiang Ke coincidentally found Wu Fangfang and took her nudes. Could it be that Jiang Ke was lying? Was the reason he knew Wu Fangfang had nudes not because he had been blackmailing her, but because he was hired to take them? Was Cheng Lingfei his employer? No wonder Jiang Ke included himself in the photos! If his intention was purely to blackmail, he wouldn't have shown himself! In that case...

The more Zhao Yu thought about the situation, the more scared he felt. A pair of good friends, their friendship torn apart by a handsome man. A woman who lost control and was capable of anything.

If this was all true, then if Yu Fusheng had obtained those photos, could he have gotten them through Cheng Lingfei? Did Cheng Lingfei know Yu Fusheng? Uhm... tsk tsk... Zhao Yu thought long and hard but realized this was all just conjecture. Without the music, these were simply baseless accusations.

Also, even if Cheng Lingfei, Jiang Ke, and Yu Fusheng were in contact, if she was unwilling to speak, what could he and Miao Ying do? He couldn't possibly use Jiang Ke's CD as evidence, could he? He'd be a laughing stock! Still, Zhao Yu wasn't going to let an opportunity go to waste. He knew what a rare chance it was and wanted to make use of it. But what could he do?

Zhao Yu anxiously tugged at his hair. After contemplating his options for a few seconds, he finally made a decision. He felt that no matter what he tried to do to make Cheng Lingfei tell the truth, he'd have to personally meet with her. He either had to discuss this with Miao Ying or find a way to contact her and have her interrogate Cheng Lingfei on the spot.

Thus, Zhao Yu hurriedly packed his computer, left the house, and ran to the street to hail a taxi. He had no other choice. There was only one car and Miao Ying had already taken it.

As he ran out, he saw a bespectacled young man waiting for a car as a yellow cab began to pull over. This was a great opportunity. Zhao Yu ran towards the man, getting into the cab and closing the door behind him.

"Hey!" The man shouted, frantically trying to pull open the door as he scolded Zhao Yu. If this had been the old Zhao Yu, he would have settled this with force. But now Zhao Yu was a changed man. He threw a couple of hundred-dollar bills out the window.

"God d*mn..." The man who was about to explode with anger saw the bills and hurriedly picked them up, ignoring Zhao Yu.

Hmph! Zhao Yu scoffed, tugging at his collar. "Sir, drive to... uhm..." He was about to tell the driver where to head, but when he looked up the greedy man had actually opened his door and rushed to pick up the money with the young man.

"To h*ll with you!" At that point, Zhao Yu wanted to take over the wheel and drive away. Too bad he was a righteous man. He took a few more hundred-dollar bills and enticed the driver back into the car.

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Vroom...

The old taxi engine roared as it sped through the empty streets, speedily making its way towards Cheng Lingfei's residence. On the road, instead of thinking about what he would do, Zhao Yu looked through Cheng Lingfei's details one more time.

Cheng Lingfei's background was strange beyond Zhao Yu's imagination. Apart from owning the livestock company, she also had investments in construction, logistics, coal, natural gases, insurance, and more. She even held many multinational stocks and a shocking amount of fixed assets like music halls, exhibition halls, luxury hotels, etc. There was a huge variety!

What in the...! The more Zhao Yu looked, the more shocked he became. It was hard to believe that this ice queen was also unbelievably rich. And although he couldn't understand professional corporate reports, just looking at the graphs was enough for him to know that this woman was a genius at investing. Whatever she invested in did not fail to return profits!

Zhao Yu felt a sudden burst of cold sweat. He already knew that whenever Jiang Ke carried out a robbery, it wasn't just some random act but instead was a planned attack. Those attacks seemed to be closely related to the industries Cheng Lingfei had control over!

What the actual f*ck! Zhao Yu's blood pressure shot up. Cheng Lingfei was possibly the big boss behind it all!

Oh no! Zhao Yu suddenly realized. Miao Ying was in danger!

Chapter 1013: A Weapon is Only as Good as It's Wielder

No, no, no... stay calm... Zhao Yu thought to himself. He had initially planned to ask the driver to go faster so he could save Miao Ying. Thinking about it though, the situation was unclear and he might simply have been overthinking everything.

If Cheng Lingfei and Jiang Ke were connected, and she was the mastermind who had used Jiang Ke's robberies to manipulate the market, where was the proof? There wasn't a single piece of evidence!

Zhao Yu had already ransacked Jiang Ke's hideout and, other than the cello, he hadn't been able to find a link between the two. If Cheng Lingfei was indeed behind this, she would have nothing to be afraid of. So why was she so willing to reveal her identity?

All of this was just speculation and he couldn't be completely sure. What if Cheng Lingfei was simply very good at timing the market, or all of those were just family businesses? If he really wanted to link her investments to Jiang Ke's robberies, he would need time to analyze the data!

Calm down, I have to be calm! Zhao Yu reminded himself. The direr the situation, the more important it was that he stayed calm and analyzed the situation accurately to plan his moves accordingly. Thinking about this, he ignored the urge he felt to call Miao Ying and continued looking through Cheng Lingfei's files.

He initially thought that Cheng Lingfei had been born with a silver spoon in her mouth and had merely inherited all of her assets, but she truthfully had led an eventful life. Even more eventful than most dramas!

Cheng Lingfei's father was a big name in the cultivation of Meng Xiang Town. While he was extremely rich, he was also promiscuous. Cheng Lingfei was a child born from her father's mistress. She had two elder brothers and one elder sister, but none of them were related by blood. When Wu Fangfang had scolded Cheng Lingfei for being a b*stard child, she wasn't lying. Since Cheng Lingfei was beautiful and had the disposition of a princess, her father doted on her and she led a good, happy life that continued into her teenage years.

According to the data, not only was Cheng Lingfei pretty, she was smart as well. Her grades had been excellent. She wasn't just your typical good student! From elementary school to high school, she was always at the top of her class and was renowned by the whole of Gao Lanqi. Teachers even recommended that she skip grades, as they believed some classes were a waste of her time.

Back then, everybody believed that with her grades, Cheng Lingfei could apply to any university she wanted. However, because she loved music and had trained under a famous musician since she was young, she ignored everyone's objections and entered the famous Bei Fang Music School. Cheng Lingfei was no ordinary girl. Even in music school her grades far surpassed anyone else's.

Around the time she was in music school, her life was derailed. Her father suddenly fell ill and ultimately passed away. Because his death was so sudden, there was no will set to handle the inheritance. Just like most dramas, an inevitable war over the inheritance broke out and changed her life.

Reality was much crueler than what was shown in dramas. Because she did not have a proper title, Cheng Lingfei and her mother did not inherit anything and she was thrown out of the house by her siblings. They hadn't even allowed her to bring her cello with her! After that, nobody knew what happened to Cheng Lingfei. Everyone thought she would return to school and enter a music-related occupation, living a normal life. But everyone was wrong. It wasn't long before Cheng Lingfei re-emerged, giving up her music career and starting a farm just like her father.

Just like in a fantasy novel, Cheng Lingfei's life had begun coming up roses, starting with her farm. Her business expanded and she was able to buy many more farms. During that time, she even dabbled in investing and made huge profits in multiple industries!

Cheng Lingfei was out for blood. A few years later, she tried acquiring her siblings' businesses and pressured them relentlessly. It wasn't long before they succumbed. Not only did Cheng Lingfei acquire her father's company, she even fought for her father's assets and managed to regain the old house. Of course, this included her favorite cello!

Still, Cheng Lingfei's thirst for revenge wasn't satiated. In that short amount of time, her siblings were forced into bankruptcy and were left at their wits' end. Her eldest brother was forced to leave town, her second brother committed suicide, and her sister became deranged and ended up in a mental hospital. After that, Cheng Lingfei, who had acquired control of the Cheng family, spiraled out of control. Her trades and investments skyrocketed and she became the multi-millionaire that she was today.

Looking at the information on the computer, Zhao Yu did not feel like her story was that far-fetched. On the contrary, he actually felt relieved. He could use this information to his advantage! Zhao Yu's heart began to pound wildly as his excitement grew.

In television dramas, there was nothing better than revenge plots! Zhao Yu couldn't help but begin to connect the dots. He knew how the world worked. There was no way a woman who simply played cello would be capable of all of this without resorting to illegal means. It was true that Cheng Lingfei was clever, and that someone clever could probably start their own business and end up relatively successful. But, becoming this successful in such a short time was next to impossible!

The way Cheng Lingfei treated her siblings, if it hadn't involved underhanded methods, how else would she have achieved it? That meant something was definitely fishy about her! She wasn't just vindictive,

she also harbored a deep-seated resentment because of her love-hate relationship with Wu Fangfang. Most importantly, she was smart! Not just smart, but extraordinarily smart!

Zhao Yu was reminded of what the demon Han Kuan had personally said to him. “Believe me, Officer Zhao. Jiang Ke doesn’t look smart enough to carry out those well-planned robberies. There’s definitely someone else involved,” he had told Zhao Yu.

Jiang Ke... robberies... mastermind... oh my God! As he thought about it, he quickly unlocked his phone and retrieved the information Li Luoyun had sent him. Jiang Ke’s robbery blueprints appeared on his phone screen. That’s right! Zhao Yu couldn’t breathe properly. He had already found the problem earlier, but he hadn’t thought about it properly. Jiang Ke’s blueprints were all photocopied!

The robbery plans were found in Jiang Ke’s files inside the safe. If they were compiled by him, why were they photocopied? Where were the originals? D*mn it... Zhao Yu could feel his blood pressure rising. He remembered the conversation Jiang Ke and Tian Xudong had at the seafood market. Tian Xudong had mentioned that the mystery man used Zhao Yu’s relatives to pressure him. It was too despicable of an act, so he suspected the mystery man was not the typical mafia man. Even though Wu Fusheng was merciless, he wouldn’t go to such lengths.

Also, something about the mystery man sounded suspicious. Jiang Ke had mentioned it before, he realized that the way the mystery man spoke, he sounded like a woman!

Chapter 1014: Where Does the Hatred Begin?

Wan Tai Hao Jing Manor was the most exclusive detached villa in Gao Lanqi and only well renowned or famous people lived here. Cheng Lingfei’s house wasn’t simply located in the area, it was built in the best position. Though the house had already been around for some time, the high-quality renovation work that had been done made the villa look luxurious, like an aristocrat’s building.

The unique interior was in no way stock standard either. In the middle of the hall, there were small bridges and even a miniature river with leafy trees and flowers. The nature elements gave visitors a refreshed feeling. A young boy, around ten years old, sat at a platform lined with flowers in the middle of the hall. He sat in front of a cello, holding a bow and playing Late Autumn. The child’s hands were small and delicate, but his bowing technique was skillful and he played the cello well. He was so immersed in his music that he seemed to be intoxicated by the melody.

“Jiang Er, that’s enough... mom has things to take care of. Take a break or play somewhere else!” came the gentle voice of a woman. The boy obediently put down his bow and cello and silently left the room. The person who had spoken was an elegant lady in a long, white dress – it was Cheng Lingfei!

“Officer, forgive me for being blunt...” Cheng Lingfei said to Miao Ying after the boy left. “I still don’t understand. Wu Fangfang is a police officer, why do you have to ask me about her? Did she make some mistake again?”

“Again?” Miao Ying picked up on Cheng Lingfei’s word choice immediately. “Has she made mistakes in the past?”

“Of course,” Cheng Lingfei said vacantly, “wasn’t she punished for throwing water in her superior’s face?”

Miao Ying did not know how to respond. She watched Cheng Lingfei for a few seconds before saying, “Madam Cheng, you’ve seen my ID yet you’re still suspicious. You’re welcome to check it again! I believe you’re someone who knows how the real world works, so you should know that there’s a reason for me coming here.”

“Alright,” Cheng Lingfei said, her tone still ice cold. “Speak. What do you want to know about Wu Fangfang?”

“Everything!” Miao Ying said. “Tell me everything you know about Wu Fangfang, beginning from when you first met her!”

Hmph! Cheng Lingfei snorted quietly without so much as batting an eyelid. She then gestured for Miao Ying to sit, as she sat down elegantly. “Let’s put it this way. Ah Fang and I really did grow up together.”

Miao Ying noted the gesture and seated herself. “Okay, then let’s start from the beginning,” she said.

“Ha...” the corners of Cheng Lingfei’s mouth rose slightly, seemingly showing a hint of a contemptuous smile. “Where should I even begin? From when we were in kindergarten?” she asked.

“Shi Hai!” Miao Ying stated bluntly. “Start from your relationships with Shi Hai!”

Cheng Lingfei was taken aback by Miao Ying’s boldness and took a moment to respond. She finally said, “Brother Shi Hai is no longer around! He was... he was...” Cheng Lingfei seemed pensive. “Since we were young, both Ah Fang and I fancied brother Shi Hai! He was handsome, righteous, and kind. And when he smiled, he was so good looking!”

“I don’t know if we could be called childhood friends. But in the memories of my childhood, there are only the two of them! If only humans could remain children forever, how wonderful would that be? I really didn’t want to grow up!” Cheng Lingfei said, seemingly lost in her memories. Miao Ying sat patiently, waiting for her to continue.

“It’s a pity, but we all have to grow up eventually,” Cheng Lingfei continued. “When someone matures, they grow further and further away from happiness. Especially in a situation like ours. Love triangles are really painful! Because of brother Shi Hai, Ah Fang and I fought countless times. You should know, Ah Fang is very strong. Each time we fought I would be the loser. In the end, I didn’t dare to fight with her anymore and let her win...”

“But I have to admit, I truly admire Ah Fang’s bullheadedness and courage!” Cheng Lingfei stated. “Brother Shi Hai wanted to be a police officer, and after we grew up, he followed his dreams and enrolled in the Police Academy. Who would have expected that Ah Fang enrolled as well, and they eventually got together...”

Cheng Lingfei continued bitterly. “Officer, when I heard the news, I have to say I was very upset! But thinking about Wu Fangfang and brother Shi Hai in their uniforms, I guess my heart finally accepted it. I knew that this man, who I had always admired, couldn’t be mine anymore.” There was a moment of silence where only the sound of the flowing water from the river could be heard.

“Madam Cheng... from what I gather, your relationship with Wu Fangfang ended on a sour note. I would like to know how this happened, and why? Was it because of Shi Hai?” Miao Ying asked after a brief moment of silence.

Cheng Lingfei paused for a moment before replying. “Actually, from the very beginning, the fallout was just a rumor spread by Wu Fangfang! She was the one who began ignoring me first!”

“Oh? When did this happen?” Miao Ying asked, doubtful.

“Hmm... that’s difficult to say,” Cheng Lingfei replied indifferently. “Because we were friends for so long, we continued fighting and then making up until we finally stopped contacting each other for an extended period! From the time she and brother Shi Hai had gotten together, we began to meet less and less! At that point, I was also starting up my business, so I guess we slowly lost contact.”

“Since Wu Fangfang was the one who began dating Shi Hai, isn’t she the winner in this love triangle? If so, why did Wu Fangfang hate you so much? Honestly, every photo she has with you in it is scratched up!” Miao Ying informed Cheng Lingfei. “Can you tell me why she hated you so much to go to such an extent?”

“Oh... really?” Cheng Lingfei asked calmly. “Some time ago at a gathering, I said some unpleasant things to her. She even splashed red wine on me. Maybe it’s because of that?”

“No, those scratches have been there for a long time,” Miao Ying said, watching Cheng Lingfei closely.

“Really?” Cheng Lingfei maintained her composure. “Then how about you ask her yourself? After brother Shi Hai’s death, she became completely unreasonable! Or... does she think his death is my fault? Isn’t that ridiculous?” she asked.

“No! Those scratches were there even before that!” Miao Ying said, shaking her head.

“Hmph!” Cheng Lingfei sneered. “If it’s even earlier then there’s only one reason I can think of! During one of the times we were having a very bad fight, my second brother committed suicide. Wu Fangfang grilled me and insisted that I was the one who killed him. She scolded me for not caring about my family and for being vicious. That time, I got really mad at her and we got into a huge argument! Anyone can misunderstand me except for her!” Cheng Lingfei answered, agitated. “Officer, you can check. I only used legal means to get back what was rightfully mine! My second brother’s death had nothing to do with me!”

“What happened between you and Wu Fangfang after that?” Miao Ying asked.

“We parted ways! She continued being a policewoman while I continued expanding my business. From then on, we barely met. Even when did, it was just as unpleasant as the last time we had seen each other. But if that’s the only reason she scratched up my photos then she’s way too heartless.”

“Oh...” Miao Ying said, analyzing what Cheng Lingfei had said along with all of her facial expressions. While there had been some abnormalities, what she said was still believable overall.

After remaining silent for a moment, she decided to change the topic. “Madam Cheng, no matter what, Wu Fangfang was still one of your closest friends. Could you tell me more about her private life? Were there any problems there? Especially during the period of the Nong He case.”

Chapter 1015: A Psychotic Moment

“Ah, the village homicide case?” Cheng Lingfei repeated, completely composed. “What a strange question for you to ask! What does her private life have to do with that?”

“I’m asking about it to jog your memory,” Miao Ying explained. “During that period, were you close with Wu Fangfang? Do you know who she was in contact with?”

“Uhm...” Cheng Lingfei thought. “At that time, the relationship between Ah Fang and I was still good, but... I was trying to finish my studies and Ah Fang had been transferred to the Central Investigation Unit to investigate that case. Because of that, I didn’t get to see her for the longest time, so I don’t know who she was in touch with.”

“Were Wu Fangfang and Shi Hai already dating at that point?” Miao Ying asked. “Around that time, Shi Hai wanted to get a promotion at the police academy. As for Wu Fangfang’s private life... hmm... did she like to go to nightclubs or pubs? Did she have friends from those types of places, and did she have alcohol or drug abuse issues?”

“What? Why would you think that?” Cheng Lingfei asked, taken aback. “Even though Ah Fang’s personality isn’t anything to write home about, she definitely wouldn’t have those types of issues! And even if brother Shi Hai wasn’t in Gao Lanqi, they had already confirmed their feelings for each other. She loved him so much, there’s no way she would have intentionally harmed herself like that! Besides, Ah Fang was busy investigating the case. When would she have found time to visit a bar? Don’t talk about drugs, she doesn’t even drink alcohol! She’s an outstanding policewoman!”

“So... who did she hang...” Before Miao Ying could even finish her sentence, Cheng Lingfei cut her off aggressively. “Hey officer, your questions are really weird. Is Ah Fang... in trouble?” she asked. Miao Ying remained silent.

“Officer, please believe me! Ah Fang may have been strong and rash since she was little, but she’s really a good person and wouldn’t do anything against the law! Please investigate thoroughly!” Cheng Lingfei said, clearly emotional.

“Alright,” Miao Ying nodded. “If that’s the case then I’ll take my leave. If you remember anything, please give me a call.” Miao Ying handed Cheng Lingfei a business card.

“Okay, it would be my pleasure to work with the police,” Cheng Lingfei said politely.

Miao Ying didn’t intend to leave so soon. She stood up and took a look around the living room. Her eyes stopped on the cello. “Uhm, Miss Cheng?” Miao Ying asked, hesitating slightly. “By the way, this might be presumptuous of me to say, but you’ve been single until now, right? If that’s the case, the child just now...” Upon hearing this, Cheng Lingfei froze. Her face turned black and a funny look came over her face.

“I’m sorry!” Miao Ying said, pretending to be apologetic. “It’s just a habit that comes with the job. I understand it’s quite rude to ask, but I do hope you can tell me the truth,” she said.

“Right...” Cheng Lingfei took a deep breath and thought about the question for a while before replying coldly, “Officer, I know that since you asked, even if I don’t answer, you guys will find out eventually. I can tell you, but... I do hope you uphold your integrity as a police officer and don’t share my private matters with others. I’m not a celebrity, but this type of dirty laundry shouldn’t be aired in public, you know?”

“Of course, that’s a given!” Miao Ying agreed.

“Alright!” Cheng Lingfei pointed to the second floor, saying, “The child’s dad is upstairs, but he’s... ill! We didn’t have a wedding because of various reasons, so this is our arrangement for now...”

“Oh?” Miao Ying was surprised. “I don’t understand. With all your resources, what could be stopping you?”

“Officer, you must be joking! Even you must have heard of the phrase ‘there are things even money can’t buy’?” At this point, Cheng Lingfei looked like she made an important decision and had been relieved of a huge burden. “Why not come to my bedroom and take a look? You’ll understand!”

“The child’s dad... he’s really sick so he can’t come out to meet guests,” she continued. “Oh, there’s also some old photographs in my bedroom. Some are from the time Ah Fang and I participated in group outings, the ones I told you about. There are quite a few people in the photos, maybe they would be of some help to you?”

“Oh?” Miao Ying’s eyes lit up and she nodded. “If it isn’t too much trouble then, Ms. Cheng.”

“This way please...” Cheng Lingfei walked towards the staircase, gesturing for Miao Ying to go ahead of her. Although Miao Ying didn’t sense any immediate danger, she kept her guard up and held on to her gun holster, ready to pull it out at a moment’s notice. Despite Cheng Lingfei’s gesture, she waited for Cheng Lingfei to take the lead instead.

Cheng Lingfei didn’t show any signs of being suspicious and gracefully led the way. The spiral stairs brought them to the corridor on the second floor. On one side of the corridor, there was a spacious living area, and the other side was lined with rooms. She didn’t walk far before stopping in front of one of the doors, using her fingerprint to unlock it.

When Cheng Lingfei did this, Miao Ying was instantly put on high alert. Why would someone lock a room in her own house? Also, since entering the house, Miao Ying had felt that something was out of place. The house was way too quiet. It was the kind of silence that made you feel uneasy. Although there had been the sound of the cello, the tune sounded way too sad. This greatly disturbed Miao Ying. On top of everything, Cheng Lingfei’s erratic mood swings made Miao Ying uncomfortable. Cheng Lingfei acted normally, but it all felt rehearsed and seemed to carry a deeper meaning.

As the door opened, Miao Ying was discretely holding the handle of her gun in case anything happened. Behind the extravagant metal security door laid a pure white living room. Everything, from the floors to the walls and even the furniture, was white! However, the room was far from neat and tidy. Toys were strewn all over and the dining table was filled with snacks and fruits.

Kyah! Kyah! The sound came from the child from earlier playing a game with his headphones on. He was so engrossed in the game that he didn’t realize someone had opened the door. “Come in!” Cheng Lingfei

said courteously after entering the living room. "Sorry it's so messy, it's the new year and the helpers have all gone home so..." After seeing Cheng Lingfei enter and the child sitting there playing games, Miao Ying let her guard down and entered the house.

"Hubby... hubby! Come down, there's a guest!" After Cheng Lingfei called out, the sound of steps on a ladder could be heard from the living room. Someone was coming down. Wait... Miao Ying wondered. Didn't Cheng Lingfei say her husband was severely ill and couldn't entertain visitors?

The person climbing down had almost completed his descent when Cheng Lingfei suddenly smirked and said, "Officer Miao Ying, you shouldn't have come to Gao Lanqi!"

"What?!" Miao Ying was taken aback by Cheng Lingfei's comment. By now, Cheng Lingfei's husband had come down and was standing in front of her. Miao Ying looked up and saw a bloated man, barefooted in his pajamas. Although his face had swelled immensely, Miao Ying still recognized him almost immediately.

"You?" Miao Ying was shocked. She pointed her gun towards the man as she shouted, "Yang Zebiao??! Don't move!"

Szzt. The minute Miao Ying raised her gun, an EMP exploded near her. Without enough time to react, she fell to the floor.

After Miao Ying fell, Cheng Lingfei stood with a stun gun in one hand and her phone in the other. "Hey..." her icy voice was now filled in an authoritative tone. "Ah Bing! We're exposed, start the preparations, we're moving forward with the plan now!"

Chapter 1016: Encounter With a Living Ghost!

"This... What's happening here?" the swollen-faced Yang Zebiao asked. He pointed curiously at Miao Ying who was on the ground. "Just now... How did this person shine? So magical!" he whispered to Cheng Lingfei. Yang Zebiao clapped his hands as excitedly as a child as he spoke.

Cheng Lingfei's icy exterior began to melt after seeing Yang Zebiao. She pulled on his arms intimately, turning him toward the direction of the gaming console. "It's nothing! Come on hubby! Go and play games with Jiang'er. It's not every day he comes home from abroad. Don't you want to spend some time with him?"

"Sure, sure! Console games are fun! I love playing them!" Yang Zebiao said as he clapped excitedly. He bolted toward the little boy at the gaming console. Like a clumsy penguin, he staggered as he moved quickly across the room. His body was out of sync.

After Yang Zebiao left, Cheng Lingfei bent down and took Miao Ying's pistol and mobile phone. However, Miao Ying's phone was password locked. She tried a few times but was unable to unlock it.

"Sister, sister..." Just then, a bespectacled man flew in from outside. Upon seeing Miao Ying on the ground, his face turned as white as a sheet. "Isn't... isn't that the female cop? How did she manage to find this place?"

“Yes.” Cheng Lingfei handed him Miao Ying’s phone. “Ah Guang, crack this quickly and find out what other information they have. Also, keep a lookout for any signs of movement outside. I have already notified Ah Shui, and we need to leave here now!”

“This... this...” The bespectacled man shuddered, his whole body trembling as he took the phone. “Sister... are we really just going to give up? You’ve put your blood, sweat, and tears into this foundation!”

“What’s the use of hard work?” Cheng Lingfei said nonchalantly. “What’s going to come will eventually come, and what needs to be dealt with has to be dealt with.”

“But...” Ah Guang began as he pointed at Miao Ying, “we’ve wasted so much effort cleaning up all the loose ends. Jiang Ke and Yu Fusheng are both dead. How did these people find this place? Sis, please think carefully! Hasn’t there been a little misunderstanding here? Were you not just a little presumptuous? Perhaps... she only wanted to understand the situation? I don’t understand why you let her see Jiang’er. Why did you even bring her up the stairs? Wouldn’t everything have been fine if you had just found a reason to distract her?”

Cheng Lingfei sighed. “You still don’t get it, do you? It wouldn’t have mattered if it had been any other policeman who had come, but it just had to be Miao Ying. That’s just wrong!”

“Eh... why?” Ah Guang was confused.

“At this point in time, she should not be in Gao Lanqi!”

“What?” Ah Guang still looked completely lost.

“Zhao Yu jumped into the Hong Ming River. Miao Ying is his girlfriend, so unless the police had already found his body there’s no way she would have left Yao Ming!” Cheng Lingfei said confidently.

“Furthermore, seeing as there was an incident on the outskirts of Jin, if Miao Ying really wanted to investigate the truth she should have been there and so would never have come to Gao Lanqi! Not only did she come to Gao Lanqi, but she came straight over to find me. Think about it: how could this be a coincidence?”

“Ah...” Ah Guang finally understood.

“If it was simply to inquire about Wu Fangfang, they could have sent any policeman!” Cheng Lingfei continued. “Miao Ying, the Special Investigation Group leader, surely has more important things to deal with. Was there really any need for her to personally pay me a visit? I had wanted to meet her to test the situation, and I let her see Jiang’er on purpose. She was indeed difficult to handle. No matter how I tried she didn’t let anything slip. But she wasn’t smart enough. If she was, she wouldn’t have asked about the kid. The minute she asked, I knew what had to be done. Since she was already here, I couldn’t let her leave no matter what. If she had left, the situation would not have been within our control any longer. It’s just... She’s very alert and has violent tendencies, I couldn’t take the risk. So, I had to bring her upstairs and keep her controlled using Ah Biao as a distraction...”

“Then what should we do next?” Ah Guang asked, anxiously swallowing his saliva, “should we kill her and make a run for it?”

“No, there’s no need to panic!” Cheng Lingfei said surprisingly confidently. “If you think about this from another perspective, because Miao Ying came here personally it also means that they’ve yet to suspect us! So, we still have time...”

“Big sis! Big sis!” Before Cheng Lingfei could finish her sentence, four to five well-built bodyguards came running to her. These were her subordinates.

“Ah Guang,” Cheng Lingfei commanded calmly, “complete the two tasks I’ve assigned to you but be quick. We have to find out where the police are and understand their force!”

“Okay!” Ah Guang said, staggering as he ran downstairs.

“The rest of you, bring this female cop to the study room and tie her up! When she wakes up I want to question her personally,” Cheng Lingfei said, waving her hand at one group. Facing another group, she continued, “You guys, help my husband and child pack up. We will be executing our escape plan immediately!”

“Understood!” The group of lackeys was used to mindlessly executing all of Cheng Lingfei’s commands.

“Sis! Wait! Bad news!” Just as Cheng Lingfei was finishing giving her orders, Ah Guang came running back in frantically with a tablet in his arms.

“What now?” Cheng Lingfei asked with annoyance. “Can you not make a mountain out of a molehill? When will you learn how to be calm?”

“Sis, I just received news that there is no movement outside and the female cop is, in fact, acting alone!” Ah Guang said while trying to catch his breath.

“Didn’t you say it was bad news?” Cheng Lingfei asked coldly, staring at him intently.

“No!” Ah Guang said, passing her the tablet. “There’s no sign of movement from the police, but look! There’s someone in her car!”

“What?!” Cheng Lingfei was shocked and quickly took the tablet to check. It was as Ah Guang had said: there was someone sitting in Miao Ying’s jeep which was parked outside her house!

“She... wasn’t she acting alone?!” Ah Guang asked, pointing at Miao Ying.

Cheng Lingfei suddenly realized something and quickly zoomed in on the video feed. The person inside Miao Ying’s car had a surgical mask and sunglasses on. The person was also constantly moving and seemed to be searching for something. There was a laptop in his hands.

“There’s a laptop!” Cheng Lingfei immediately looked at one of her lackeys. “Catch that person and bring him here with the laptop!”

“Roger!” The lackeys quickly stopped what they were doing and ran downstairs at full speed.

“Wait a minute...” After everyone ran down the stairs, Cheng Lingfei seemed to have a realization and screamed in panic. Then, she raised her hands and threw Miao Ying’s pistol down. “Xiao Yun, catch!”

One of the lackeys reached out his hand and caught the pistol.

“Remember, capture him alive!” Cheng Lingfei ordered. Everyone rushed towards the door.

Cheng Lingfei placed the tablet in front of her to monitor the situation. All her lackeys were trained professionals, and all of them were carrying guns. It took no effort for them to catch the person inside Miao Ying’s car and retrieve the laptop.

“Let me go, let me go!” A wave of noise came from the living room, and a rough, bull-like voice could be heard. “I am a cop! What right do you f*ckers have to capture me?!”

“Shut up!” said the lackey called Xiao Yun as he punched him in the chest. In a swift motion, he removed the man’s mask and sunglasses.

When Cheng Lingfei and Ah Guang finally saw the person’s face clearly, they felt that karma had come back to bite them in the behind. They collapsed to the floor in shock.

“Living...” Ah Guang said in shock. “It’s like seeing a living ghost! How can it be him?!”

Chapter 1017: Love Hate Killing

10 years ago, the Cheng family mansion.

The Cheng family mansion was a far cry from the modern architecture of today. Instead, it was closer to a colonial style building and felt like a relic from the 20th century.

On that day, Cheng Lingfei had just got back to the mansion and had engaged a famous interior designer to discuss renovation plans for the mansion. Out of nowhere, Wu Fangfang, whom she had not seen for some time, stormed up to the door angrily and, without so much as a care for anyone else, went straight to Cheng Lingfei’s study.

“Ah Fang?” Cheng Lingfei asked. Although visibly surprised, there was a hint of joy in her eyes. “Why are you here? Aren’t you a high-ranking cop now. Why haven’t you gone to the capital?”

“Cheng Lingfei, look at what you’ve done! You still have the nerve to think about renovating? Did you know your second brother has passed away? He took his own life!” Wu Fangfang said, pointing angrily at Cheng Lingfei.

Seeing how angry Wu Fangfang was, Cheng Lingfei understood she had come here to pick a fight and gestured for the designers and helpers to leave.

“What does my second brother’s death have to do with me wanting to renovate the mansion?” Cheng Lingfei asked as soon as the last person had left the room. Her tone became ice cold and frightening, and all the joy that had been present just a few moments ago disappeared into thin air.

“Don’t act stupid!” Wu Fangfang shouted, flying into a rage and pointing at Cheng Lingfei. “Your second brother was forced to choose death by you! Acquiring their company and family assets is one thing, but why did you have to go so far? Your eldest brother was forced away and your third sister was forced to kneel down and apologize! Why? Why don’t you treasure your family more? Lingfei... how did you become like this?!”

“Ha!” Cheng Lingfei snorted, clenching her teeth angrily. “The year they chased me out of here was the year I lost my family! You can ask them yourself! When have they ever treated me like one of them?”

“Lingfei, I know... I know that you suffered a lot that year, so your heart is full of grudges. But despite coming from different mothers, you all had the same father. On account of Uncle Cheng, you shouldn’t be this cruel, right? How do you think Uncle Cheng would feel if he saw this?” Wu Fangfang said persuasively.

“Ha!” Not only did Cheng Lingfei let out a peal of cold laughter, but she also seemed to emanate a dark aura that would cause goosebumps. “You don’t have to worry about that. My second brother’s already there to accompany him!”

“What?! You...” Wu Fangfang retreated a few steps in shock and almost fell down. “Cheng Lingfei, you... In the past you weren’t like this. What happened?!”

“In the past I was too innocent and pure! Don’t come in here acting like you’re better than me! You’re just a hypocrite yourself!” Cheng Lingfei said. “At my lowest point you and brother Shi Hai weren’t even there for me, and now that I’m successful you’re suddenly here again? What do you want? Do you want me to return all the things that rightfully belong to me to them and go back to being a pauper? Will you be satisfied then?”

“Cheng Lingfei, use your conscience when you speak!” Wu Fangfang shouted angrily. “When you were exiled from the family, brother Shi Hai and I searched for you high and low, don’t you remember? You’re the one who didn’t want to see us!”

Cheng Lingfei was becoming agitated. “What did you want to find me for? To let me see what a lovey-dovey couple you two were and remind myself how lonely and pathetic I was? To give you another reason to make me look more pathetic in front of brother Shi Hai? ‘Brother Shi Hai, look at Cheng Lingfei! She has nothing left! Aren’t you glad you chose me instead?’”

“How could you think of it like that?!” Wu Fangfang teared up. “We sincerely wanted to help you!”

“Help me?!” Cheng Lingfei said coldly. “Ask yourself how many times you’ve badmouthed me in front of brother Shi Hai! I had lost everything at that point. Wouldn’t that have been the perfect chance for a killing blow?!”

“You idiot!” Wu Fangfang cried, her whole body trembling. “We grew up together, Lingfei, I beg you! Please turn over a new leaf. Don’t continue down this path. Although I didn’t badmouth you, I really was envious of you!”

“Cut the crap! Why not admit your wrongdoings to brother Shi Hai and return him to me! Would you agree to that?” Cheng Lingfei remained emotionless.

“Don’t push it!” At this point, Wu Fangfang had reached her limit. She furiously banged on the table, pointing at Cheng Lingfei and shouting, “Cheng Lingfei, don’t force me! Don’t think I don’t know about your shady dealings! If not, how could you have done so many mergers and regained your family assets?

Don’t forget, I’m a cop! I’m an official member of the Special Investigation Group! If you still don’t repent, then don’t blame me when I’m forced to investigate you. When that happens, we’ll keep such a close eye on you that if you so much as break one tiny law, we won’t show mercy!”

With one last bang on the table, Wu Fangfang turned her head and prepared to leave.

“Wu Fangfang...” Cheng Lingfei said, clenching her teeth. “I think the one who’s going overboard is you!”

“Oh? Is that so?” Wu Fangfang asked, her eyes red. “I’m going overboard? You better hope I don’t get a hold of you! If not, I will go even further!”

“Wu Fangfang...” Cheng Lingfei’s once dark face had now become contorted from anger. “No matter what happens, bear this in mind. You were the one who started this!” She opened her drawer and took out a photo, throwing it onto the table violently.

Taken aback, Wu Fangfang quickly took a closer look at the photo only to become even more shocked. It was unbecoming photos of her and Jiang Ke in bed!

“You... you...” Wu Fangfang was so angry her whole body trembled. In a daze, she flipped through the photographs while shouting, “Impossible! Impossible!”

“Wu Fangfang!” Cheng Lingfei said coldly. “These photographs were obtained by my subordinates by happenstance. If I hadn’t helped you to hide this, you would have lost your reputation! What can I say about you? You’re way too rash! Do you think you’re still worthy of brother Shi Hai after doing all this behind his back?”

“No... no!” Wu Fangfang was so frightened that her face had turned pale. “I did not, I did not do it! How could this be? I really don’t even know who that person is!”

Agitated, she grabbed the photograph in her hands and tore it to shreds. Only when she had torn the last piece did she finally regained her composure. She glared at Cheng Lingfei, shouting, “It was you? It was you who framed me?!”

“You stupid woman!” Cheng Lingfei replied viciously. “Originally I was planning to quietly destroy these photos, but you forced me to bring them out! Alright, I’ll let you in on a little secret, I have a ton of these photographs!”

“What?” Wu Fangfang was so shocked she fell onto a chair. “What do you mean?!”

“What do I mean?” Cheng Lingfei continued viciously. “Wu Fangfang, from this moment forth we’ll go our separate ways. I don’t want to see you ever again! Aren’t you a high-ranking cop? Then go and be one and be lovey-dovey with brother Shi Hai but don’t ever come back here!”

“You...” Wu Fangfang felt exhausted.

“I warn you for the last time, I’ve not done anything that violates any laws and I’m not afraid of you investigating me. But,” Cheng Lingfei said, “be careful not to trigger me. If you dare to lay a finger on me, brother Shi Hai will be the first person who sees these photos. Not only will you lose brother Shi Hai, but I’ll also make sure life becomes a living hell for you!”

Chapter 1018: Counterplotting

Back in the present, in the room of Cheng Lingfei and Wu Fangfang’s showdown.

Miao Ying slowly woke up from her daze. She saw Zhao Yu tied up as well, but she couldn't say anything.

Cheng Lingfei entered quickly. She looked as if she was still recovering from the shock of seeing Zhao Yu alive and seeing him only made it worse.

"Wow, what a beauty!" Zhao Yu said, complimenting the Cheng Lingfei's captivating beauty before proceeding to fake surprise. "I must say, Ms. Cheng, could this all be one huge misunderstanding? Don't you know we're both from the police; indeed, we're from the Special Investigation Group. What you're doing is actually illegal!"

Cheng Lingfei did not reply. Instead, she stared intently at Zhao Yu. It seemed like she was planning something.

"Sis," Ah Guang whispered softly into Cheng Lingfei's ears, "I've browsed through the records on their computer and phone. We've been tricked! They didn't discover anything and were merely coming here to investigate the scratched photo from Wu Fangfang! And you're right, they've yet to report anything to their chiefs. There's only the two of them at the moment. If we got quietly got rid of them, then maybe there wouldn't be any need to leave anymore?"

"Hmph!" Cheng Lingfei sighed coldly and walked towards Zhao Yu slowly. "Zhao Yu, how are you not dead?"

"Wow!" Zhao Yu faked surprise. "How did you know my name?"

"Yu," Miao Ying uttered under her breath, "Cheng Lingfei is the mastermind behind everything. Yang Zebiao is right here..."

"What?!" This time the surprise was genuine.

Zhao Yu had had his fair share of difficulties and only came here personally because he had no other choice. Firstly, he was unable to confirm that his conjectures were accurate. Even though all the evidence pointed to Cheng Lingfei there was no way to confirm it.

Secondly, upon reaching Cheng Lingfei's doorstep, he couldn't confirm what had happened to Miao Ying. However, he felt that in such uncertain situations, even if Cheng Lingfei was indeed the mastermind, Miao Ying wouldn't act recklessly and had believed she would be fine.

Finally, Zhao Yu was in a precarious situation. He couldn't act rashly, nor could he report this to the police. He also couldn't blindly barge into Cheng Lingfei's house.

He had initially planned on using the invisibility cloak to sneak into Chen Jiahao's house and observe the situation. Then his instinctive detective skills had alerted him to the fact that Chen Jiahao's house was filled with security devices. There were even infrared rays! Even if Zhao Yu was invisible, he wouldn't be able to sneak past all that security. Of course, he would have been able to use his various tools, but even then, there was the risk of being discovered.

After careful consideration, he figured the best course of action was to wait inside Miao Ying's jeep and analyze the data on his laptop. That way he would not draw unnecessary attention to himself. Zhao Yu figured that if he waited a while for Miao Ying to return, he would then be able to call for reinforcements and suppress Cheng Lingfei before deciding on what to do next. If Miao Ying didn't

return, he would use her name to call for reinforcements and personally take the lead by relying on his tools.

What surprised Zhao Yu the most was that upon entering the jeep and turning on his laptop, he was surrounded by a group of men in black suits. It was then he understood his suspicions of Cheng Lingfei were on the money.

Although he had his tools and could have resisted, he knew that Miao Ying was in a dangerous situation and resisting might put her in danger. So, he had no choice but to go with the flow and cooperate. He would act accordingly afterward.

At such a juncture, there was no point in hiding his identity. That was why when they took off his shades and mask, he didn't bother hiding his face.

Upon seeing the shocked looks on the faces of Cheng Lingfei and her lackeys, Zhao Yu once again got confirmation that Cheng Lingfei was the mystery person who had planned Jiang Ke's prison break and the series of baffling cases that followed.

Upon seeing that Miao Ying was conscious and able to speak, Zhao Yu felt slightly more at ease. Initially, Zhao Yu had planned to make use of the situation and wring out some evidence from them. But when Zhao Yu couldn't help but feel astonished when he heard from Miao Ying that Yang Zebiao was with Cheng Lingfei.

That can't be right...

Cheng Lingfei was very smart and cunning. What Zhao Yu couldn't understand was why she would kill Yu Fusheng and Jiang Ke but leave the most important person, Yang Zebiao, alive.

"Sis..." Ah Guang, who was holding the tablet, started to speak. Zhao Yu recognized him. He was the high-level assassin Liu Guangxin, one of the police's most-wanted criminals. "There were actually outsiders who came to the scene of the fire, and some of them were even experts," Ah Guang whispered softly into Cheng Lingfei's ear. "So it seems that they didn't treat it as a run-of-the-mill fire!"

Upon hearing this, Cheng Lingfei nodded slightly and took Miao Ying's handgun from her lackey Ah Yun. She pointed it at the space between Miao Ying's eyebrows.

"Zhao Yu!" Cheng Lingfei said threateningly, pulling back the bolt of the gun. "I don't care whether you're human or a living ghost, tell me what you know right now! If you dare to lie, I'll put a bullet through your precious girl's head!"

"Don't, don't, don't..." Zhao Yu shook his head frantically. "Don't shoot! Do. Not. Shoot! Go ahead and ask me what you want to know. I'll tell you everything!"

"You... How are you alive?" Cheng Lingfei asked, furrowing her brows. "Hong Mingjiang Bridge is 50 meters high and you jumped from the middle of it. The chance of survival is only 1%!"

"It's not dumb luck. It's definitely not dumb luck!" Zhao Yu answered immediately, still in a panicked state. "You can check my records! I was the swimming champion back in school and could hold my breath underwater for ten minutes! Also, even though 50m might seem very high, if you control the

angle of the dive, the chances of survival are still good! That so-called 1% you speak of is nothing more than a computer-generated number!”

Cheng Lingfei shook the handgun slightly, still pointing it at Miao Ying. She was seemingly considering whether Zhao Yu had told the truth. She had clearly seen Zhao Yu fall into the river with her own eyes. In the end, she decided that such a thing could have happened.

“Hmph! You’re pretty sly,” Cheng Lingfei remarked. “You survived, yet you didn’t show your face and basically became invisible so that you could continue to investigate this case. Good job! I’ll give you that.”

“What else were you expecting, big sis?” Zhao Yu asked, grinning from ear to ear. “I helped Jiang Ke break out of prison, so I’m basically a criminal myself!”

Cheng Lingfei nodded, evidently satisfied by Zhao Yu’s answer.

“Then let me ask you,” she began, pausing for a moment before continuing, “what happened with Jiang Ke? Did you all tamper with something? Did you let him off deliberately so you could catch him again? Is this all part of some elaborate scheme?”

“Hmm,” Zhao Yu replied without even batting an eyelid. “Yes, yes, yes! You really are smart! We planted a GPS chip on Jiang Ke’s scalp in advance. This is a new invention by the police so it’s still in preliminary testing. It utilizes a fixed time activation model, so it’s not easily discovered by scanners! Also, normally you don’t scan the head! Jiang Ke kept whining about wanting to break out of prison, so on my insistence, as the great detective, we installed it in advance!” Zhao Yu said smugly. “How’s that? Don’t I have great foresight!”

Cheng Lingfei narrowed her eyes, seemingly having a hard time understanding what Zhao Yu was saying. “So that’s how it is. Now it all makes sense! That’s how you guys tracked him to the outskirts of Jin and captured his accomplice, the gold owner. That’s also how Jiang Ke was able to escape from the nightclub that was surrounded by police. It’s no wonder you could get all the way to Gao Lanqi and discover the fire!”

“Oh my god!” Ah Guang said with astonishment. “Luckily, big sis factored this in beforehand! If not, we would have been caught by the police back at the cowshed! But such fancy technology... how have I not heard about it before?”

No sh*t! Zhao Yu scolded in his heart. That was all nonsense I made up. Of course you’ve never heard about it!

Chapter 1019: Is there, or is there not?

So that’s how it was! Through Liu Guangxin’s words, Zhao Yu understood that although Cheng Lingfei didn’t factor in Zhao Yu impersonating Jiang Ke, she had realized there was a possibility that Jiang Ke could have been followed.

So she started the fire at the barn to kill Jiang Ke and burn any evidence down to a cinder. Before this, Cheng Lingfei had genuinely wanted to save Jiang Ke, which meant that if the meeting with the investors that led to their arrest didn't happen, there wouldn't have been a fire!

You couldn't blame Zhao Yu for this. At that time, he thought the investors were the perpetrators, and as his tools had a limit, he had no choice.

"Then tell me," Cheng Lingfei said. "What did you find in the fire?"

"Everything was badly burnt, but we discovered Cao Sifen's skull. It wasn't completely reduced to ashes, and it appeared a bullet had gone through it," Zhao Yu exclaimed. "We also found a motorbike in the boiler room and from that bike we retrieved the female killer He Yubing's DNA. Because we saw that bike at the scene of Wu Fangfang's murder, we suspected Wu Fangfang must have killed He Yubing!"

"Zhao Yu..." Listening to Zhao Yu answer so truthfully, Miao Ying decided to warn him.

Cheng Lingfei fiddled with the gun, clearly trying to keep the pressure up.

"It's fine, it's fine!" Zhao Yu said. He had carefully planned out what to say. "Since we're already at this point, what more is there to hide?"

"Anything else?" Cheng Lingfei asked again.

Zhao Yu had planned to keep Yu Fusheng a secret but after seeing how persistent Cheng Lingfei was, he began to worry that she would lose patience. "Apart from He Yubing and Cao Siwen," he said, "we also found DNA belonging to Yu Fusheng, Liu Guangxin, Yao Wenming, Yu Sunfeng, and the barn chief Tu Leikai. There was nothing else. We only know those people were there, but whether they were burnt to death or not is a mystery!"

After Zhao Yu finished, the room fell silent. It was obvious Cheng Lingfei was disappointed at the outcome. They had probably intended to use the fire to make it look like an accident, but the police still found something suspicious.

"Okay," Cheng Lingfei said, "this is the last question. How did the two of you find me? What traces did I leave behind? Who else knows about you guys coming here to investigate me?"

"Sis, isn't that three questions?" Zhao Yu said softly. "Bespectacled Sun was right. We merely looked at the damaged photos and came! We didn't expect this to be the true nest either!"

"That's impossible!" Cheng Lingfei said, fiddling with the gun again. She seemed like she was threatening to pull the gun at any moment. "So you expect me to believe that instead of investigating the fire or chasing Yu Fusheng, you guys decided to investigate damaged photos? Do you think I'm stupid?"

"Eh... sis, it's not just one photo, it's all of them! Wu Fangfang scratched every photo with you in it! How would that not raise suspicions in a brilliant detective such as myself? And also, saying something about your intelligence... Why does that sound like something Jiang Ke would say?"

"Indeed..." Miao Ying sighed. "Having a stun gun up her sleeves is exactly what Jiang Ke would have done!"

“Don’t change the subject! I taught Jiang Ke everything he knows!” Cheng Lingfei aimed the gun at Miao Ying. “Zhao Yu, I will count to five! If I’m unsatisfied with your answer you can say goodbye to your beloved!”

“Okay, okay, I’ll speak...” Zhao Yu nodded anxiously. “At first... at first I thought the person on the phone who asked me to help Jiang Ke break out of prison was a man, but the way he spoke sounded like a woman!”

“What?” Cheng Lingfei frowned, and loudly shouted, “FIVE!”

“And,” Zhao Yu said frantically, “when he was speaking, the voice sounded muffled, it was obvious he used a voice changer to fake it!”

“FOUR!”

“No!” Zhao Yu said in panic. “When Jiang Ke’s hideout was cleared out, we found some of his robbery plans, and they were photocopied so it was obvious someone else was behind this...”

“THREE!”

“Tsk tsk tsk!” Zhao Yu’s face turned red. “When I found out about the scratched photos, we investigated your background and found the companies you had control of were linked to Jiang Ke’s past robberies. We also found that your companies profited from his robberies!”

“TWO!” Cheng Lingfei was still unsatisfied.

“I asked your classmates and found out that you and Wu Fangfang both liked Shi Hai!” Zhao Yu said trembling. “I was suspicious about how you got your family inheritance. It must have been done illegally because it wasn’t plausible for you to have taken back both the inheritance and have taken ownership of that many companies in such a short time...”

“ONE!” Cheng Lingfei glared at Zhao Yu and aimed at Miao Ying’s temple. “Say goodbye to your lover!”

“Late Autumn! Late Autumn!” Zhao Yu suddenly shouted just as Cheng Lingfei was about to pull the trigger. After hearing those words, Cheng Lingfei froze, her eyes uncertain.

“What did you just say?” She trembled slightly, unable to shoot.

“Late Autumn, cello!” Zhao Yu shouted agitatedly. “We found a disc in Jiang Ke’s safe and that song was circled on the album cover. We even got professionals to check, but there weren’t any hidden messages on the CD. It was just a regular CD, which meant that the song was meaningful to him!”

“Then...?” Cheng Lingfei’s face turned solemn.

“Then...” Zhao Yu used his chin to nudge in her direction. “I heard this song from your house being played by a cello. You see if you were in my shoes, wouldn’t you think this was a coincidence?”

“Useless! What useless trash!” Cheng Lingfei screamed in hatred. “Jiang Ke, how many times must I tell you! Complete utter trash!”

After Cheng Lingfei finished screaming, she smiled creepily and slowly lowered the gun. “Who would have thought that I, Cheng Lingfei, who spent all these years surviving on my wits, would be outsmarted by a scratched photo and a piece of music...”

“Eh... didn’t I already say there was more than one photo?” Zhao Yu reminded her innocently.

“Indeed... hmph!” Cheng Lingfei laughed. Her laughter caused goosebumps. “Zhao Yu, you are indeed a genius detective! I have never underestimated you, but to think I’d still lose to you...”

“Stop, you’re making me blush!” Zhao Yu said shamelessly.

“Okay!” Cheng Lingfei continued, raising her gun once again, only this time she aimed it at Zhao Yu. “Tell me, does anybody else know you’re here?”

“Yes!”

“No!”

Zhao Yu and Miao Ying answered together, but with different replies.

Miao Ying couldn’t understand why Zhao Yu had said no. She had said yes so Cheng Lingfei would think twice. If Cheng Lingfei thought they had some backup, she would treat them as hostages, and there would still be room for discussion. If not, Cheng Lingfei would have no reservations about shooting them now!

“What the f*ck!” Liu Guangxin shouted. “Do you think you guys are in a drama? Is there someone who knows you are here or is there not?”

“There is!” Miao Ying exclaimed.

“For god’s sake, don’t you think that at this point, lying is kind of meaningless?” Zhao Yu said, blaming Miao Ying. “Sis, don’t listen to her. Even though I realized there was something suspicious about the cello, I couldn’t be sure you were the mastermind, could I? And since I couldn’t be seen in public, I asked Miao Ying to come here first. Who would have thought you’d have acted so quickly? I was completely unprepared!”

“Zhao Yu... you...” Miao Ying muttered, gritting her teeth.

“Good!” Cheng Lingfei laughed, pointing the gun at Zhao Yu and miming a shot. “Since it’s like this, then there’s no point keeping you alive!”

“Hahaha!” Now at gunpoint, Zhao Yu began to laugh uncontrollably. Upon hearing his laughter, Cheng Lingfei hesitated.

“What are you laughing at?” Liu Guangxin asked in place of Cheng Lingfei.

“Oh!” Zhao Yu shook his head in laughter. “Haven’t you seen those gory films? If someone talked this much rubbish the main character would definitely have something up his sleeve! So if you want to shoot, make it quick, okay?”

“I... you...” Liu Guangxin was furious.

Cheng Lingfei was so angry that her eyelids were twitching as she raised her arms, ready to pull the trigger.

“Wait!” Just then, Zhao Yu seemed to regret what he had said. “Cheng Lingfei, there is something I have to discuss with you!”

“You... what are you up to this time?” Zhao Yu had many tricks up his sleeve, which made Cheng Lingfei suspicious. She kept her arm raised without pulling the trigger.

“Do you know why I’ve been so honest with you?” Zhao Yu asked seriously. “It’s because I know that there was no way we would walk out of here alive, so, uhm how should I say this... since we can’t escape, we might as well make our deaths quick, right? But since I’ve been so honest with you, why not return the favor? How about that? I, Zhao Yu, genius detective, would like to know the truth before I die. That is if you dare to tell me!”

Chapter 1020: The Princess of the Dark

“Didn’t you just say you were a self-proclaimed genius?” Cheng Lingfei snorted coldly. “What is it that you could possibly not know?”

“Sis!” Liu Guangxin said anxiously. “Don’t waste your breath on them! This guy is cunning, and he’s obviously playing for time! Maybe they really do have backup on the way!”

“There’s so much I don’t know!” Zhao Yu interrupted Liu Guangxin. “If I knew everything, would I be in this situation now? Our roles would be reversed, wouldn’t they?” he said sincerely. “Please, you should understand that as detectives we are all a little paranoid. So please tell me truth! I promise if you tell me the truth, I won’t haunt you after I die!” Zhao Yu nodded.

“Seriously...” Miao Ying rolled her eyes at Zhao Yu.

Surprisingly, Cheng Lingfei actually laughed. “Zhao Yu, as a detective who’s cracked so many huge cases, I wouldn’t have pegged you as someone capable of telling jokes!”

“I think this teasing is more accurate. Sis, let’s not waste any more time talking nonsense with him. If you’re afraid of getting your hands dirty, you can pass me the gun,” Liu Guangxin said.

“Miss Cheng, you have established a criminal empire without the police noticing,” Zhao Yu continued. “If you tell me how you did it, I might be able to learn something and use it in my next life! Are Jiang Ke, Yu Fusheng, and Cao Sifen your younger brothers? Also, you coordinated Jiang Ke’s prison break so expertly that we still haven’t been able to solve the case yet!”

“Is that so?” Cheng Lingfei smiled smugly again. “Don’t tell me you didn’t notice! Your goddaughter didn’t actually start school that day...”

“Sis!” Liu Guangxin jumped in anxiously. “Are you kidding me? This policeman is obviously trying to fool you! Don’t fall for it!”

“Ah Guang! You should be following the plan!” Cheng Lingfei ordered, putting pressure on Liu Guangxin and her other lackeys.

“But...” Liu Guangxin frowned, but upon seeing Cheng Lingfei’s serious face, decided it’d be better to follow her orders. The other lackeys didn’t dare speak up either and followed Liu Guangxin to begin their evacuation preparations.

Zhao Yu saw a glimmer of hope, and his eyes lit up. He wanted to continue talking. But before he could say anything, Cheng Lingfei spoke. “It’s a special kind of fate to meet a brilliant detective who’s cracked cases such as the Headless Female Corpses Case and the Devil Case. In that case, let’s talk. I counted five seconds just now, so I’ll let you have five questions. Ask away!”

As she spoke, she continued fiddling with Miao Ying’s pistol, letting Zhao Yu know that she would shoot after the five questions.

“Jiang Ke!” Zhao Yu said immediately. “The relationship between you and Jiang Ke!”

“Alright, that’s question one!” Like a princess from a fairytale, Cheng Lingfei stood in front of Zhao Yu in a white dress that complemented her regal disposition. However, in the eyes of Zhao Yu and Miao Ying, she seemed to be more of an evil princess!

“In the early days of my career, I got Jiang Ke in as my fighter,” Cheng Lingfei said. “I investigated him and found out that he had a criminal record from assaulting someone. Hence, I hired him to help me with my business. I found he was smarter than a regular fighter. He was a good catch, so I focused my efforts on training him and letting him discover his potential while secretly controlling him.”

“Not long after, my business got bigger and bigger, so I needed Jiang Ke to go out and clear the paths for me!” Cheng Lingfei said softly. “You know what happened after that. Thanks to his crimes, I managed to build my empire. All those so-called investors were merely pawns in our plan. If the police ever caught on, we could use them as scapegoats!”

“And you were right, all his plans came from me. I was the mastermind behind everything! I love a challenge. After every case, watching the police scramble around like sheep made me feel exceptionally satisfied!”

“Oh...” This time it was Miao Ying who replied.

“So strictly speaking, Jiang Ke is my apprentice!” Cheng Lingfei said, intoxicated by her own brilliance. “I taught him everything!”

“I don’t understand. Jiang Ke might not be as smart as you but he’s definitely not stupid!” Zhao Yu said.

“What are you using against him as leverage?”

“Oh?” Cheng Lingfei said with a smile. “Can I consider this the second question?”

“Ah... nevermind, forget I asked,” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head hurriedly. “In fact, if I think about it, you and Jiang Ke are almost the same. You both have a common interest and it’s mutually beneficial. In addition, he likes ‘Late Autumn’, so it’s obvious that he likes you! Who would have thought...”

Zhao Yu had initially wanted to say that in the end, she had still wanted to kill Jiang Ke, but on second thoughts, he realized it was better to not say anything. Whether or not Jiang Ke had burned to death was something even Miao Ying didn’t need to know. He quickly changed the subject.

“Time for question two! This time, it’s Yu Fusheng!”

“Well...” Cheng Lingfei had wanted to say something, but hearing Zhao Yu’s question she decided to go with the flow instead. “Yu Fusheng was even simpler! He was a contact I arranged many years ago overseas!”

“Really? Zhao Yu was genuinely surprised.

“In fact, he and Jiang Ke were always running parallel to each other. There’s hardly any overlap. They don’t know each other exists, nor do they know about each other’s relationship with me!” Cheng Lingfei said smugly.

“A long time ago, Yu Fusheng was a local triad member in Gao Lanqi. As part of my revenge plan, he even helped me a little. But unfortunately, he was subsequently involved in a lawsuit and was arrested by the police. As I was afraid he would rat me out, I gave him some money to flee the country!”

“From then on, I continued wiring money to him and helped him establish his own empire overseas. Through this, my own business was able to expand internationally. But he is a very different person to Jiang Ke. He has a toxic personality and is greedy, so I have no choice but to control him through his family in Gao Lanqi!”

At this point, Cheng Lingfei let out a sigh. “I didn’t expect that it would lead to an accident. There was a mole in Yu Fusheng’s team and although he was lucky enough to escape, his son was killed by the police!”

Oh! Zhao Yu and Miao Ying both knew that the mole was the father of Qu Ping’s team leader.

“So, from that moment on, Yu Fusheng gradually spiraled. He had only one son and became consumed with thoughts of revenge, even to the point of wanting to take revenge on the police. This caused a great deal of trouble!”

“Finally, if it wasn’t for my help in getting a fake substitute to lead the police on a chase, he would be a goner!” Cheng Lingfei shook her head. “Since then, Yu Fusheng has been hiding out at the cattle farm and lost all his purpose. So...”

Seeing how Cheng Lingfei was looking at him, Zhao Yu said, “I guess it’s time for question three?”