

Crazy 1191

Chapter 1191: Three Key Issues

There was no reason for Xiong Wendong to reject Zhao Yu's request, given Zhao Yu's rank and identity.

It didn't take long for more than a dozen police vehicles to surround Master Zhang's Daoist temple. Apart from Master Zhang and his wife, the police also arrested all their accomplices in one fell swoop.

What surprised Zhao Yu was that although Master Zhang's gang had not looked like much, he had as many as 14 helpers!

The technology behind his tricks was even more astounding. It would not have lost against a professional magician's operations team!

Watching as the police led Master Zhang away in handcuffs, Zhao Yu instructed the officers to take care of him. He'd come back for Master Zhang if his statement proved to be useful for the case!

Just as they were about to leave, Zhao Yu murmured into Master Zhang's ear, "Master, better change your bad habits! My trick of conjuring a ghost was passed down to me from my ancestors; nobody else knows about it.

"So, make sure to tell your people just to discuss their offenses! Don't say anything about my trick!

"If anybody dares leak it out, hungh hungh..."

Master Zhang shuddered at Zhao Yu's glare. He quickly patted his chest and made an oath.

Zhao Yu wasn't actually worried that they would leak anything. He had already used the Hacker's Command to wipe the CCTV footage so that no one would be able to find anything.

Besides, Master Zhang and company probably assumed that he had relied on some kind of prop to perform the trick.

As for the two beautiful ladies who fainted out of fear, they could say whatever they liked! It wasn't like anyone would believe them.

That's how Master Zhang's gang was eliminated. Zhao Yu felt pretty good about it. At least through this, he had managed to figure out how to go about cracking the case of the hanging coffins.

Therefore, he made a call to Miao Ying immediately, asking her to check whether there were any deceased persons whose birth data corresponded. That way they could see if they had any new discoveries.

Although Miao Ying didn't know about Zhao Yu pretending to be a ghost, she felt that Zhao Yu's suggestion was logical, so she promptly started a new search.

"Sigh!" The policeman who came with Zhao Yu stood at the entrance of the temple, saying, "How unexpected! They turned out to be a bunch of con artists! To think that I'm a police officer! I actually believed them. How embarrassing!"

“Hehe...” Xiong Wendong chuckled next to him. “See? Told ya, right? If Master Zhang were that good, he would have predicted the calamity that befell him today. Do you think he would have waited here like a fool?”

Seeing that Zhao Yu was done with the call and was walking over, Xiong Wendong immediately tried to ingratiate himself with him.

“To think he claimed to be a fortune teller! He didn’t even recognize the master sleuth who cracked the Headless Female Corpses Case and the Beiqian Devil Case! Chey!” Xiong Wendong snickered. “He deserved to be unlucky today!”

“That’s right!” echoed the policeman. “Officer Zhao is indeed experienced and perceptive! He managed to see through their tricks! If it had been me, I would probably be bankrupt by now!”

Zhao Yu felt weary despite the praises being heaped upon him.

Although the Invisible Antidote had neutralized whatever Master Zhang had given him, he had barely gotten any sleep over the last two days. Having reached his physical limits, he wanted nothing more than to crash into bed.

But he couldn’t!

Due to the new leads that had emerged, there were still many loose ends to be tied up. The two of them gave him a lift back to the Wuqing Criminal Investigation Department. He made more than ten calls in the car, already beginning to map out the operation.

The most important task at hand was to find the master who wrote the birth data as soon as possible. As long as they found that person, they would be able to crack the case of the hanging coffins!

On the one hand, he needed someone to follow-up on the list given to him by Master Zhang!

On the other hand, he needed to pay a visit to those wealthy bosses, to get closer to those low-profile fengshui masters.

The former was easier; there was a list, after all. They just had to operate according to standard procedures. Ran Tao could bring a group along with him to investigate the listees one by one.

However, the latter involved privacy concerns. If he simply sent someone to investigate them out of the blue, they would definitely be met with resistance. Worst still, they would risk alerting the enemy.

Therefore, the person in charge of this operation had to be someone who was quick-witted.

Initially, he had planned on doing so himself, but he still had to manage the situation at Mount Wuqing, so that was an issue.

After thinking long and hard, Zhao Yu finally decided that Cui Lizhu would be the best candidate!

After all, she was a skilled burglar, was familiar with the rules of the underworld, was discreet, and was also smart. She would be the best person to deal with the elusive fengshui masters!

The case of the hidden treasure had just concluded not long ago, so Zhao Yu was still somewhat worried about her personal safety. However, he could get the local police to protect her, since this was official business.

Besides, Zhao Yu had previously placed an Emergency Evacuation Ball on Cui Lizhu, so he wasn't too worried.

Having figured things out, Zhao Yu immediately made a call to Cui Lizhu, conveying his instructions and the relevant information.

Upon receiving his command, Cui Lizhu did not show any displeasure; in fact, she was extremely enthusiastic, and assured Zhao Yu that she would do an excellent job at drawing out the elusive fengshui masters!

Phew.

Having made the necessary arrangements, Zhao Yu was finally able to take a short break.

It was a rare night with clear skies where both the moon and the stars were visible. He reviewed the Qian Gen Hexagram in the system, and there was no sign of completion.

Setting aside the Qian Trigram, and solely based on the Gen Trigram, which was tracking the progress of the case, Zhao Yu was reasonably confident that he was getting closer to cracking the case.

Although the case was bizarre and complicated, he believed that it wasn't as convoluted as the Headless Female Corpses Case or the Beiqian Devil Case.

It seemed as though the key to solving the mystery had been in front of him all along! He just hadn't been aware of it!

Or perhaps... it was precisely because the case of the hanging coffins was itself filled with mystery, that he had missed some details?

Having so many things on his mind, Zhao Yu was unable to take a nap.

Instead, he continued to analyze the case facts during the bumpy car ride.

He believed that there were only three key issues, even if it might seem impossible to unravel the case.

As long as he figured them out, he would be able to crack the case.

Firstly, what was the perpetrator's intention in placing the corpses in the hanging coffins?

Secondly, where did the corpses come from?

Thirdly, how were the corpses placed in the coffins?

After what had happened today, they should already have the answer to the first question. It was likely that someone was seeking to prolong their life through the hanging coffins!

Then... how about the two other issues? How would they be resolved?

Chapter 1192: Creepy Discovery

Tourists primarily dominated Wuqing County. Although the county was small, the number of hotels and guesthouses were as abundant as cattle hide. In order to entertain Zhao Yu and his team, the local police station had already arranged the best hotel accommodations for the team.

However, now that various police officers had been dispatched, there would be new information at any time. As the head of the team, Zhao Yu could not go far.

So, he finally decided to stay in the duty room and sleep for a night.

“Huh, these magic sticks...” In the duty room, after Zhao Yu told Miao Ying about the day’s run-in with ghosts, Miao Ying growled, “You were too by the book, you should have dealt with them properly! These people are awful; they can think of many crooked ways to cheat money!”

“These are just some ordinary scammers,” Zhao Yu said, holding Miao Ying’s hands since nobody was in the room. “Those who dared to move the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin are the real powerful people!”

“Using a girl’s body to prolong life? Isn’t that too evil?” Miao Ying sighed, shaking her head. “How can a normal person believe in such a fallacy?”

“I think that the person who wants to go against God’s will must be a wealthy person,” Zhao Yu said. “Otherwise, these professional scammers would not target him, right?”

“Well, we all seem to know it’s fake, but it’s completely different if you look at it from the perspective of a dying person. For this rich man, maybe he really thinks you can exchange money for life!”

“Well, my only hope is that this person can be found soon,” Miao Ying prayed, “So that this case can still be solved successfully!”

“But...” Zhao Yu said lazily and tiredly, lying on the bed and embracing Miao Ying’s waist, “I still don’t understand the source of the body!”

“Indeed! If they intentionally killed those people, then at least they should find the corresponding missing information,” Miao Ying concurred, “But so far, we have only managed to find Geng Yaai!”

“I have asked Zeng Ke to check the police records,” Zhao Yu said, “To see if any other girls are involved in this case. But the locals will be cremated whether or not this case exists, so I can’t figure out how the bodies got there.”

“Uhm...” Miao Ying muttered, embracing Zhao Yu’s shoulder. She said thoughtfully, “Dear, then, my previous proposal... would you consider it again? You know, when you were in the north searching for demons, but it immediately got us amazing results!”

“Since that was the case, why don’t we release information about the female corpses now and let the public identify the corpses for us?”

“No...” Zhao Yu said in a dilemma. “I don’t want to use this method until I have no other alternatives. I’m not worried about the public’s response. I’m just concerned that if we do that, it will cause problems later on...”

“When the middlemen who bought and sold the corpses find out news about the bodies from our release, their first reaction would be to flee or destroy the evidence!”

“In that scenario, we end up losing more than we gain!”

“But...” Miao Ying frowned. “The case of the hanging coffins is no longer a secret. If they wanted to run away, I’m afraid they would already have done so?”

“It’s different; there are so many corpses!” Zhao Yu said. “Perhaps this is not the first time the person involved has done this. Although I haven’t touched the corpses, it must be similar to the resale of other contraband.

“If I’m an intermediary who sells contraband, would I let my upper and lower lines meet?”

“Oh...” Miao Ying said. “What you mean is that even if the person who sells the corpses knows the case of the hanging coffins, he does not necessarily know that the bodies in the hanging coffins were the ones he had sold?”

“Yeah... but once the body information is made public...” Zhao Yu said, waving his hands. His voice was becoming weaker and weaker, and he closed his eyes wearily.

“I see, I get it! We can only wait until there are no other alternatives before deciding. Uhm, yes!” Miao Ying said. “Today, Dr. Gao from Forensics found orthopedic braces in the mouth of female corpse number two. The corrector was made of unique material and not mass-produced, it’s pretty special!

“So, I’ve already sent someone to the various dental clinics nearby to confirm, maybe... uhm...”

Before Miao Ying could finish talking, she heard Zhao Yu snoring.

Lowering her head, she realized that Zhao Yu had fallen asleep.

“Uhm, have a good rest, dear!” Miao Ying bent over and kissed Zhao Yu’s forehead gently, her eyes showing a certain tenderness.

Zhao Yu had actually not slept for two days, but neither had Miao Ying. But while Zhao Yu could afford to take this break, Miao Ying could not.

So, after helping Zhao Yu lie down properly, she sorted out her clothes and headed back to the office to work again.

...

At eight the next morning, Zhao Yu, who now had his mind cleared, came to the scene of the Seven Stars Hanging Coffins and conducted another onsite inspection.

Until that day, regarding the three questions he had previously brought up, one had basically been resolved while the others were still undergoing extensive investigation.

Therefore, the purpose of returning to the scene today was to solve the third problem. That was, how exactly did the criminals bring the seven bodies up to the hanging coffins?

So far, the technical team had yet to find any traces of scaffolding or mounting fixtures on the cliffs above or below the hanging coffins.

Since it was not possible to descend from top to bottom or climb from bottom to top, could there really be flying equipment involved?

After compiling the various investigations from before, Zhao Yu wandered around the cliff for more than an hour and once again thought about the several possibilities. But in the end, all of them were refuted by himself.

As Zhao Yu was thinking hard, a noise came from under the cliff.

Zhao Yu quickly looked down, only to see a tugboat at the bottom of the cliff. The tugboat stopped about four to five meters away from the cliff and then faced the back of the boat towards the cliff.

Then, a few sailors came off the boat and jumped into the water with a rope in their hands.

This was...

Zhao Yu lay on the ground and watched carefully, but when he saw the river in front of the cliff, just as President Pang Zhihui had said, it was all muddy shoals. When the people jumped into the water, the water didn't even go above their thighs.

"Detective Zhao..." Xiong Wendong began, noticing Zhao Yu's confusion and hurriedly explaining. "They are here to pick up the electrical poles! Municipal companies are really desperate. The poles have already broken in half and they still want to pick them up, haha!"

"Ah... fishing for electrical poles!" Zhao Yu said.

Zhao Yu thought about it seriously while staring at the tugboat below.

Eh?

Suddenly, a surprising thought popped up in his mind. Could it be that the way the criminals had put the bodies in the hanging coffins was somehow related to boats?

Thinking of this, Zhao Yu hurriedly said to Xiong Wendong, "Quick! Take me down there! Hurry up!"

"Oh..."

Seeing Zhao Yu's excitement, Xiong Wendong dared not dally and hurriedly got his men to prepare the car.

The face of the cliff looked very close, but it would take them a long time to reach the bottom.

"Uhm..." Xiong Wendong asked, taking the opportunity after the car began to move, "Detective Zhao, did you find something?"

Just as Zhao Yu was about to answer, the phone rang.

When he opened it, he saw that it was a call from Zeng Ke.

"Leader, leader!" As soon as he answered, Zeng Ke wheezed loudly into the phone. "I found it, I found it!"

"What did you find?" Zhao Yu asked quickly.

"I just checked through WeChat pictures! We found the identity of female corpse number five!" Zeng Ke quickly said. "Her name is Su Lan, and she's a middle school student who lives in Bei Gang City!"

"Really?" Zhao Yu asked eagerly. "What is her specific situation? Is she a missing person?"

"No, no no no, she's not!" Zeng Ke replied.

Zeng Ke began to stutter as he spoke. Zhao Yu could tell that Zeng Ke's stuttering didn't seem to be caused by excitement, but a faint kind of fear.

"Leader!" Zeng Ke answered, trembling. "We just learned through Su Lan's family that Su Lan had depression and committed suicide by burning charcoal years ago. She's already been dead!"

"Oh... already dead..." Zhao Yu said.

"No, no, I haven't gotten to the point," Zeng Ke added quickly. "The point is that her family told us very clearly that Su Lan's body had been cremated. Her parents saw with their very own eyes that she was pushed into the cremator!!"

Chapter 1193: Can't Wait?

10:30am, in the funeral parlor in Bei Gang City.

Zhao Yu had brought Xiong Wendong and the others and arrived on the scene as quickly as they could.

When Zhao Yu found out that female corpse number five had been cremated years ago, he could only draw two conclusions. The first was that Su Lan had been resurrected, or her corpse had not really been cremated and had been swapped.

Of course, the first conclusion was easy to rule out, which meant that only the second possibility remained!

Furthermore, if Su Lan's parents had really seen her body get pushed into the crematorium, then there could only be one place with a problem. That was the funeral parlor!

And to be even more precise, it was the crematorium in the funeral parlor.

The crematorium was part of the funeral parlor, and as the name implied, it was the place where the dead were cremated.

According to the information, there was only one crematorium in Bei Gang City. Because cremation was encouraged locally, the crematorium was very busy.

When Zhao Yu and the others arrived, there was a cremation going on, and there were still people waiting in line behind them.

Zhao Yu wanted to check out the cremator, but there was a fire burning outside, so he had no choice but to wait a while.

"Detective Zhao, detective Zhao! There really is a problem!" Xiong Wendong hurried to report to Zhao Yu and Qian Hui. "The employee in charge of the cremator now is a replacement. He said that Bai Lang, the director of the crematorium, has taken sick leave and hasn't been to work in three days!"

“Three days?” Zhao Yu exhaled. “That was the day when the female bodies in the hanging coffins were found!”

“I... I’ve already informed the Bei Gang Interpol Brigade and got them to arrest him!” Xiong Wendong said quickly. “The mobile phone signal is also being triangulated now!”

“Hmm...” Zhao Yu nodded, but deep down he felt that the chance of catching the suspect was not great. Now that the suspect was aware of them, he probably already escaped. It would take a while to find him.

“If so,” Xiong Wendong said as he pointed at the cremator in the distance, “Then is there still a problem with the cremator? The family of the deceased watched the deceased being pushed forward into the cremator and watched the fire.

“That... that... what about the ashes?” He scratched his head in shock.

“The ashes were buried in the grave,” Zhao Yu said. “The family members of the deceased are now going to the Interpol to identify the corpse. If there is no mistake, then they will open the grave and check the ashes. You must send someone to follow up and accompany them throughout the process!”

“Oh, okay!” Xiong Wendong gestured toward his men and sent someone to get to work on it. After the person left, Xiong Wendong continued. “Detective Zhao, are the ashes fake too...?”

“To make use of the cremator... oh, these criminals are the worst! Oh!” He sighed. “No wonder the female corpses in the coffin had makeup on them. It turns out the makeup had been painted on by the funeral parlor!”

“Leader, leader...!” Just after their discussion, Zeng Ke quickly ran in with a report. “I found it, I found it!” Zeng Ke said. “Except for the last two, the first five female bodies were all cremated in this funeral parlor!”

“And as previously guessed, all of them were already dead!”

As soon as this remark was made, the police officers present were in an uproar. None of them had heard of such a weird thing.

“Five?!” Xiong Wendong exclaimed. “Then there’s still two left. Where did the last two come from?”

“The f*ck!” Upon hearing this, Zhao Yu shouted loudly. “Female corpse number six showed signs of a car accident, while female corpse number seven was choked to death!”

“Isn’t it obvious enough? The condition of the person who wanted to go against God’s will must have worsened and they couldn’t wait to get more dead people, so they had to start making dead people themselves!”

“Ah...” The tone of everyone changed again.

“That’s too... too cruel!” Xiong Wendong said, shuddering with rage. “It’s murder! The two girls were murdered after all!?”

“But...” Zeng Ke seemed anxious. “Leader, according to the data, Ling Mengfan, female corpse number one, committed suicide by cutting her wrists. But she was cremated last September. It’s been almost nine months now, and the body that was placed in the hanging coffin, how... how could that...”

Indeed...

Zhao Yu frowned. He really couldn’t figure out how the body had not rotted. Gao Facai from forensics had examined the body with several experts, and just like with Zhang Peipei, they could not figure out the reason for the bodies not rotting.

Because the corpse would eventually be cremated, the funeral parlor would simply dress up the body without embalming it.

As such, if he wanted to understand why the body had not rotted, he would only find out if he caught the criminal!

“Zeng Ke...” Zhao Yu turned to ask another question. “What is the cause of death?”

“Hmm...” Zeng Ke glanced at the information before replying. “Other than female corpse number two who died of congenital heart disease, the other four girls committed suicide!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu said. “What about female corpse number three, the one who was suspected of having drowned?”

“Suicide as well!” Zeng Ke said with certainty. “The deceased named Liu Yueying jumped into the river to commit suicide. Because she was found pretty early, there was no sign of swelling and bleaching!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu said.

“Oh, right!” Zeng Ke said, hurriedly turning on his mobile phone and pulling up a report. “This is the autopsy report you wanted last night. Forensics have confirmed that other than female corpses number one, two, and four, the other girls were no longer virgins!”

“Ah, they’re not?” Zhao Yu was surprised. Master Zhang had made it clear yesterday that in order to continue living, it was more appropriate to use corpses of pure yin. How could it be these girls were all not virgins?

Unless... they served a different purpose regarding the criminal’s objective?

“Leader, leader!” A subordinate policeman under Xiong Wendong rushed forward at that point to report to Zhao Yu. “We just checked the CCTV footage from earlier. It was too early to see anything, but regarding the situation of female corpse number five, we checked the most obvious question. Come over and take a look!”

After saying that, the policeman immediately led Zhao Yu and the others to the security room of the funeral parlor.

As he walked, he added, “Female corpse number five was cremated three months ago.

“The funeral parlor was understaffed and the CCTV is basically unwatched. Only when something happens will they get someone to check it.

“But the director asked me, ‘what could happen in a funeral parlor?’, so the cameras are usually just there for display...”

While speaking, the crowd had already arrived at the security room. Not only were the police officers of the technical team present, but the director of the funeral parlor was waiting there as well.

Seeing Zhao Yu had arrived, the police hurriedly opened the video for Zhao Yu and the others to watch.

On the screen, you could see that at midnight a man in a white coat snuck out of the cremation room, carrying a huge and heavy woven bag on his shoulders.

“Oh... So, you’re saying that inside the bag is the female corpse?” Xiong Wendong said, slightly nervous. “Like the group of people Zhao Shentan met last night, the guy who burned the corpse performed an illusion in front of the family?”

“That man is Bai Lang!” The director confirmed, pointing at the man in the video. “That night, he should not have been on the night shift. But he intentionally switched shifts with Old Wang...”

“That means that night he was the only one at the funeral parlor?” Zhao Yu asked, turning back.

“Yeah!” The director said quickly. “We are not worried about thieves or anything like that, even on normal days! Therefore, our night shifts are usually done with one eye closed. Some come to clock in at work and just go home to bed, while others don’t even bother to clock in. I never thought...”

“Leader Xiong!” Zhao Yu commanded with a strong voice after hearing this. “Immediately gather all the staff of the funeral parlor! I suspect that there are suspects here in cahoots with Bai Lang!”

Chapter 1194: Who Is the Accomplice?

Half an hour later, in front of the cremation room of the funeral home in Bei Gang City.

A tall man in a blue t-shirt hurriedly walked towards Zhao Yu, saluting. “Fan Kaiyu, leader of the Bei Gang Interpol team, reporting! Awaiting your instructions!”

“Ah, if it isn’t Captain Fang! We spoke on the phone before,” Zhao Yu said, shaking the man’s hands before asking, “How was it? Has there been any progress on the suspect?”

“We have searched Bai Lang’s residence and he has fled! There are signs of packing in the house, and the technical team is currently still investigating the scene...”

Hmm... Zhao Yu nodded silently. He had already predicted that the man had, indeed, run away.

“However, please rest assured,” Fang Kaiyu said. “We have begun to track down and control Bai Lang’s interpersonal relationships. We’ve also issued wanted orders across the province, and we are working our best to capture him!”

“Hmm...” Zhao Yu nodded. “So... could you tell me about this Bai Lang’s background?” he asked.

“Bai Lang is 27 years old, from Guang Dong. He came to work in the provincial capital of Fu Lai province three years ago, working as a courier and a bartender. He suddenly came to work in the funeral parlor in

Bei Gang City two years ago. He is a contract worker and has been working so far. Unmarried, without a girlfriend, he's alone in Bei Gang City!"

"You just used the word suddenly," Zhao Yu said. "It seems that you think there was something odd about that?"

"The director of the funeral home just explained," the young Fang Kaiyu was aggressive and spoke sharply without mincing his words. "He said that the application of Bai Lang was made by a leader of the Civil Affairs Bureau and not by Bai Lang himself!

"So, I have already sent someone to investigate that lead. There will be news soon!"

"Very good, but other than that..." Zhao Yu said steadily, "I also need you to investigate more information on Bai Lang. Especially his movements after obtaining the body. If you can find out who he was in contact with at that time, we will likely be able to find his seller or associates!"

"Understood!" Fang Kaiyu said, nodding and swiftly arranging tasks for his men.

"Detective Zhao!" At that point, Xiong Wendong whispered. "The director of the funeral parlor said that although cremating the body is an important task, one person is enough to complete the operation!

"If that was the case, then Bai Lang was familiar with the procedures. The task of cremating the body was done by him alone for the longest time! But why do you say that he has an accomplice in the funeral parlor?" Xiong Wendong asked curiously.

"Captain!" Before Zhao Yu had time to answer, another police officer in charge of inspecting the cremator waved. "Come and take a look! We found a mezzanine layer in the cremator..."

After hearing the news, Zhao Yu hurried forward to the cremator but saw that the police officer was reaching out to move an iron plate inside. He revealed a dark and deep space behind the iron plate.

"Sir!" the policeman pulling the iron plate said. "The suspect installed this hinge, so after the corpse came in, the hinge would turn, and the corpse would fall into the mezzanine layer. That way, it would not be burned by the fire!"

"Ah?" Xiong Wendong scratched his head. "But... what about the ashes? If the family found that there were no ashes on the crematory board, wouldn't they be suspicious?"

"Not at all," explained the technical police officer. "After the corpse was burned, the collection of ashes is done by the funeral home and the family cannot see it."

"Oh..." Xiong Wendong said, nodding. "So, the suspect can use something similar to ashes and put them in the urn; that way, he would have finished his job? How immoral!

"Isn't he afraid of retribution for deceiving the feelings of the deceased's family members and doing such terrible things?"

"Young man, do you personally feel like you would be able to conceive such a trap?" Zhao Yu asked the police officer of the technical department out of the blue.

“Hmm...” The technical police officer glanced at the incinerator and shook his head. “It’s not easy. You see, a space needs to be cleared inside here. In order to make sure that the high temperatures of the flames do not roast the body, he needs to make a meter and a half long slide to slide the body to the innermost...”

“There is also this kind of rotation axis. When the corpse is sent into the incinerator, the family will be looking on from outside. Manual rotation is naturally not possible; it must be controlled remotely...”

“Oh...” Xiong Wendong said. “Leader Zhao, is this what you meant when you said that someone helped Bai Lang with this?”

“But this accomplice of his may not necessarily be part of the funeral parlor. It might have been someone from outside who came to help him install it.”

“It’s not just the cremator’s problem. There’s also the issue of the surveillance footage!” Zhao Yu said.

“What? The surveillance videos?” Xiong Wendong asked, even more puzzled.

“Have you thought about it...?” Zhao Yu began. “Bai Lang had so much time and the perfect conditions to complete his task perfectly, why not remove the surveillance footage?”

“Since the mechanism of the cremator is so delicate and ingenious, at least he should have turned off the monitoring cameras when he was stealing. So, why did he not turn them off?”

“Hmm...” Xiong Wendong thought about it. “Maybe he was very confident and thought nobody would be able to see through his plan? Or that nobody would go and watch the surveillance footage?”

“Or...” Zhao Yu said, “someone wanted to expose him intentionally so that while the police were busy with Bai Lang, the actual person would be able to get away scot-free!”

“My goodness!” Xiong Wendong said, terrified. “If it’s really as you say, then it’s possible that Bai Lang might be murdered! Rest assured, leave the matters of interrogation to me!”

“We have controlled all the staff of the funeral parlor and will take turns interrogating them, checking each person’s information in detail. If there is really such an accomplice, we will definitely single him out!”

“Okay!” Zhao Yu nodded. “I have transferred Wu Xiumin back. She is an expert in interrogations. From this point, she will be fully under your command!”

“Okay!” Xiong Wendong nodded.

Hoo... Zhao Yu exhaled slowly. Although the case was still a bit rough, the feeling it gave him didn’t allow him to relax.

From all the clues and evidence in front of him, Zhao Yu increasingly felt that this mysterious criminal was much brighter than he had previously thought.

Bai Lang had disappeared. If Bai Lang himself couldn’t be found, or his associates or sellers, then everything was back to square one!

And so...

Qian Gen wouldn't have appeared without reason. At that point, he couldn't sit idly by. He had to strike while the iron was hot and solve this mystery!

Chapter 1195: High Classed Liar

"Alright, just nice since all of you are here," Zhao Yu said to the many criminal detectives that were in the cremation room. "I'll ask you something. Is there a boat that can be lifted like an elevator high up into the air?"

"I feel like I've seen this on TV!"

"Uhm... that..." The police officers couldn't keep up with Zhao Yu's thoughts, and only after a long pause did someone understand what he meant and said, "Leader, I know a kind of modified ship with functionality just as you described! This ship comes with a lift and a mechanical arm, which is used to construct or erect a bridge!"

"Oh? That's exactly what I meant!" Zhao Yu said, clapping. "What are you still doing? Quickly go check on that!" he instructed.

"Understood!" The police officer quickly unlocked his phone and looked it up.

"Oh, oh!" Xiong Wendong finally realized what Zhao Yu meant and hurriedly said, "Leader Zhao, do you mean that the criminals might have used these boats to put the bodies in the hanging coffins?"

"No wonder we couldn't find any traces on the cliff!"

"I've been wondering..." Zhao Yu said. "The criminal opened all seven hanging coffins without any mistake and put in the seven corpses. It was all in the dark of night. He must have used a method that was both safe and fast. This is probably it!"

"But..." Xiong Wendong frowned suddenly. "The highest hanging coffin is 40 meters up. What kind of elevator can be raised that high?"

"It can definitely be reached!" At that moment, the police officer responsible for checking the information said with his phone in hand, "Leader, look! Hypothetically, with a lift boat, they can reach a maximum height of 60 meters!"

Zhao Yu took a quick look at the phone, but when he saw the picture, he couldn't help but shake his head.

"No, this isn't it..." Zhao Yu said, pointing to the picture. "This kind of boat is too big, right?"

It was true. That type of professional lifting boat was not usually equipped with collapsible stairs, but with large lifting towers that had four columns.

"Yes!" Xiong Wendong said. "Check it once again. This is obviously a ship for the sea! How wide is the Bai Sha River? Such a big ship can't enter!"

“Leader!” At that moment, the former Captain Fang Kaiyu suddenly came over and reported to Zhao Yu. “The official from the Civil Affairs Bureau has already explained. He said that he did indeed receive Bai Lang’s money before agreeing to let him work at the funeral parlor!

“But he did not know anything about Bai Lang’s past!

“He said, because of the inherent nature of the funeral parlor, they will always have a shortage of staff. And since this young man didn’t mind the low pay and still brought gifts, he was hired!”

“What the f*ck. That’s too irresponsible, right? But...” Xiong Wendong began scratching his head. “I guess he’s right. It’s very easy to burn out in this kind of job, and few people are really willing to do it. And... who would have expected someone would harbor such intentions to the dead!”

“That is not the key of the issue!” Zhao Yu said, breaking up the conversation. “The fact that Bai Lang applied for the job means he had already planned to do this!

“Don’t forget, he came over here two years ago! So...” Zhao Yu frowned deeply. “This whole Seven Stars Hanging Coffin conspiracy was probably planned two years ago!

“One man, for the sake of getting his hand on the corpses, worked in a funeral parlor for two years...” Zhao Yu grinned. “I guess the returns from stealing the corpse is definitely pretty big!”

“That’s probably true...” Xiong Wendong said. “The last two corpses are proof that to achieve their goals, they would even dare to commit murder!”

“Yup, so I can draw two conclusions from this,” Zhao Yu said, holding up two fingers. “First, Bai Lang was one of the members of the organization that operated the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin and not a temporary worker paid by the criminal syndicate!

“And second, Bai Lang is not a trafficker who sells corpses! From the beginning, his purpose was clear. He was always targeting the bodies of the young girls who died. He could rely on those corpses to make huge profits!

“I think the general idea is clear,” Zhao Yu said, feeling egotistic. “A super-rich person who is seriously ill and is about to die, but he doesn’t want to just go like that and wants to defy the will of God!

“At this point, a team of scammers got the news and under the pretense of geomancy, made use of the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin to draw his attention, claiming it would help him attain his wish!

“In order to make the performance look grand, they also made up the idea of the female corpses. This is the perfect conspiracy designed to make use of the crematorium to obtain the corpses, and then putting them in the Seven Stars Hanging Coffins.

“However, by the end of this fiasco, the condition of the super-rich person had deteriorated, and they were no longer able to wait!

“Thus, the team of scammers changed their tactics and used homicide to obtain the corpses and complete their show,” Zhao Yu said, suddenly opening his eyes wide. “So, in addition to Bai Lang, we have to find this team of scammers and that super-rich person!”

After Zhao Yu finished talking, the scene fell quiet and everyone was beginning to digest what Zhao Yu had said.

“Hmm...” After listening to Zhao Yu’s guess, Fang Kaiyu, who was usually straight-headed, couldn’t help but say, “Leader, what you said doesn’t seem to be wrong at all!

“But there is one important question I think you missed!” he said, spreading his hands. “If the team of scammers really were out to cheat this rich person, it would mean that the rich man’s life would ultimately not be saved, right?”

“If he can’t be saved, then he would not pay them, so... how can this group of people still make money? At that point, isn’t it using a wicker basket to scoop water? They will receive nothing in the end!”

“That...” That sentence had Zhao Yu at a loss for words. Up to then, he had concentrated all his energy on the cause of this case. He had forgotten the most basic of questions.

“Yeah...” Xiong Wendong echoed. “There are contradictions in this assumption! Shouldn’t it be them making a profit from the selling of the corpses? If one corpse is worth two million dollars, then they could at least make 14 million from the sales?”

“Or, uhm...” Xiong Wendong said, pinching his nose. “Can the practice of the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin really prolong the life of the rich person?”

“No, no...”

Suddenly, Zhao Yu remembered the experience of Master Zhang’s act the night before. He recalled that those people had used a broken fire pit to deceive the trust of a family of four.

Also, Master Zhang had told him that some people had hired up to 300 mass actors just for fraud.

More than 300 mass actors...

Could it be...

Keeping that in mind, Zhao Yu held his breath and said seriously, “It seems that there might be another possibility!

“There is no doubt that the people who designed the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin are the most advanced of con artists.

“So, they might have provided this super-rich person with a fake diagnosis!” Zhao Yu said, his eyes widened. “Since they dare to set up such a big plan, then buying over doctors, nurses, and even the hospital is not out of the question!”

“Ah, I see!” Xiong Wendong said, suddenly realizing what Zhao Yu was suggesting. “What you mean is that this super-rich person’s terminal illness was probably fake from the get-go! In such a scenario, when all seven female corpses are put into the hanging coffins, then the rich person’s illness will also naturally be cured! That way, they would make a lot of money!”

“Tsch!” When Zhao Yu heard that, he pouted and shook his head, rejecting his own hypothesis. “Isn’t there still something wrong?”

“Uhm, officer Zhao, what else is wrong?” Xiong Wendong asked quickly.

“If the corpses had indeed been gathered up, and the money is already in their hands, then Bai Lang would have slipped away, right?” Zhao Yu said with doubt in his voice. “Why wait until three days ago? Are we still missing something?”

“That...” The police officers were also suspicious and confused.

“It seems...” Zhao Yu said, returning the mobile phone with the picture of the liftboat to the police officer, “That we should solve the criminal’s method of moving the bodies before we consider this!

“I have a hunch that as long as we understand how they did it, the key to unraveling the mystery won’t be far behind!!”

Chapter 1196: A Special Type of Boat

By the time Zhao Yu left Bei Gang City and returned to the Seven Stars Hanging Coffins, it was already well after three in the afternoon.

Control over the arrest of the suspect, Bai Lang, had been handed over to Leader Fang Kaiyu to deal with. As for the interrogation of the funeral parlor staff to find Bai Lang’s associates, that issue was entrusted to Wu Xiumin.

Therefore, at the present moment, Xiong Wendong and his team of police officers were accompanying Zhao Yu back to the cliff under the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin.

Based on a prior arrangement, when Zhao Yu and the others arrived, there were already several local boatmen who often operated boats, as well as professional ship engineers waiting on site.

Although the exact method was still unclear, Zhao Yu was now more inclined to believe that the criminals had used ships to put the corpses into the hanging coffins.

He believed that the criminals were most likely able to modify an ordinary ship, and then install a set of lifting mechanisms in the cabin. Or they had simply placed the elevation lift on the boat to achieve the lifting.

However, in order to verify this possibility, he still brought in local boatmen and professional ship engineers to discuss with them and get a second opinion.

The section of the Bai Sha River below the Seven Stars Hanging Coffins was more than 30 meters wide, and although there was sediment on both sides of the river, the middle part still had sufficient depth.

Many ships passed by that stretch of the Bai Sha River, although most of them were cargo ships carrying goods.

In order to get a clearer vantage point, the local police had arranged for a few simple wooden boats. Zhao Yu and the others had taken those wooden boats to arrive at the bottom of the cliff.

While observing the hanging coffins on the cliff, he discussed the methods of transporting the corpses.

Looking up from below, the 70-meter high cliff looked even more majestic.

Because the cliff was tilted inwards from top to bottom, it felt oppressive, and the tilt would make people dizzy.

“Police officer...” At that point, a bespectacled young engineer spoke up. “I have calculated it according to your thoughts from earlier, and it seems very difficult to use such a lifting mechanism!”

“Oh,” Xiong Wendong said to Zhao Yu as soon as he saw the engineer. “This is our engineer, Wang Rong, of Song Zhou Shipping Company!”

Zhao Yu nodded, considering it as a greeting.

“Police officer,” engineer Wang continued to elaborate his theory, pointing at the river under his feet. “The main difficulty is due to the heavy weight.

“Look, this side of the river close to the cliff is full of muddy shoals. Boats in the middle of the river must stay far away. If we were to make scientific assumptions, we, just as an example, must use at least the highest, which is 40 meters.

“With such a great height, even with modern lifting equipment, a scissor lift, or lifting platform like the one used in street lighting, it would be impossible.

“All that’s left would be a hydraulic lift or the ladder in the fire truck of the fire brigade.”

Oh...

Listening to engineer Wang’s explanation, Zhao Yu couldn’t help but admire him. He seemed to deserve his education as an engineer. The way he spoke was logical and clear.

“Let’s talk about the hydraulic lift first. It relies on hydraulic cantilevers to achieve high capacity!

“As far as I know, even the most advanced lifts can only reach a height of about 30 meters,” engineer Wang continued. “And the extension of the cantilever is strong. Even if the boat were to stop in the middle of the river, it would still be able to reach the cliff.

“In this way, the boat wouldn’t need to worry about being too close to the edge of the cliff wall, causing it to run around.

“But... taking a lift of this class is not only bulky, but it also weighs about 20 tons. And that’s not including the weight of the hull itself. Sailing is simply impossible!”

“Yeah, Bai Sha River is only that big...” one of the boatmen echoed immediately. “The area around Kong Jia Bend is particularly shallow, and such a large boat can’t sail through at all!”

“Yeah, Bai Sha River is nothing like those bigger rivers out there,” said another boatman. “The sand and earth materials our company loads are limited to only about ten tons!”

“So... what about the fire ladder?” Zhao Yu asked.

“Yes, I was about to come to that...” engineer Wang said. “The ladder that the fire trucks use to save people is more collapsible due to it having a different purpose and functionality.

“As far as I know, the highest aerial ladder fire truck in the world is produced in Finland and can be raised to 110 meters!

“Most mainstream equipment of fire brigades in big cities can easily reach more than 50 meters!” Engineer Wang said. “Moreover, the ladder is extendable, so it can also reach the hanging coffins without being too close to the cliff.”

“Oh... in that case... doesn’t that solve the entire mystery about the coffins?” Xiong Wendong said. “The criminal put the body in the hanging coffins using a fire ladder?”

“But...” Engineer Wang frowned and said abashedly, “There are two difficult problems that still exist if we were to look at this objectively.

“First, there is still the problem of weight! A ladder can rise to about 50 meters, and although it would weigh less than a hydraulic lift, at the minimum, it would still be about 15 tons.

“Such a weight can barely be moved during Bai Sha River’s high tide,” he said, waving, “And this period is usually only from July to August every year. The timeframe is very short!”

“Hmm,” Zhao Yu began, nodding. “These coffin cases happened after September last year, so this inference can’t be valid. What about the second problem?”

“Secondly,” engineer Wang replied. “The ladders that fire trucks use are all custom-made, and their prices are prohibitive! Take the ladder that can be raised to about 50 meters. The cost of such a ladder would easily be about 10 million yuan!

“Also, since such ladders only serve one purpose, nobody other than the fire brigade will pay for it!”

“Then...” Xiong Wendong interjected quickly, “Could it be possible they rented it from the fire brigade? I’ll... I’ll call and ask!”

As he said this, Xiong Wendong hurried to the back of the boat and made a call.

“I feel,” engineer Wang continued, “Whether it is Song Zhou or Bei Gang, there should not be a fire truck that can extend this far. These two places don’t have any skyscrapers either!”

“Also...” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head, “The fire brigade wouldn’t rent something like this out, and the criminal wouldn’t dare borrow it either.”

“The key is...” Wang Rong said, “Even if a ladder can be obtained, the problem of a heavy ship still cannot be solved!”

“Officer Zhao!” Xiong Wendong shouted from the back of the boat. “I asked, and our fire brigade doesn’t have such impressive equipment at all!

“They told me that in the entire Fu Lai Province, only Xia Kou City and the provincial capital Fu Lai City would have it. There are not many, so there is no chance the fire brigade would have lent it out!”

Wang Rong glanced at Zhao Yu as if to say, ‘See? Isn’t that the same as what I just said?’

“But...” Zhao Yu said, not looking discouraged in the slightest. “Regardless of whether or not the hull is heavy, or what kind of equipment they used...

“There is one thing, and it is for sure! If they used a ship to place the corpses, then the ship must be very large and different, right?”

“Oh, yes! You’re absolutely right,” Wang Rong said hurriedly, immediately understanding what Zhao Yu meant. “Pan Jiawan Bridge and Song Zhou Pier have monitoring cameras overlooking the Bai Sha River!”

“We’ve also figured out the approximate time they placed the corpses in the coffins,” Zhao Yu said, nodding to Wang Rong. “Engineer Wang, at this time, I have to trouble you for your help! Help us with this special ship and find it!!”

Chapter 1197: Was It an Accident?

“I have another question...” Zhao Yu suddenly asked the boatman, who was familiar with Bai Sha River, just as everyone was rowing their boats back to the shore. “On this river, do many cargo ships pass by? Especially late into the night around midnight?”

“I’m thinking...” Zhao Yu said in earnest. “If the criminal had really modified a big ship, then that night, they must have docked the big boat somewhere in the middle of the river!”

“If that was the case, then once another ship passed by, wouldn’t it obstruct the way of others? Then wouldn’t their business be discovered?”

“Well...” the boatman replied, “It’s hard to say, really. There are no passenger ships in Bai Sha River, but the occasional cruise company will pass by. But those are usually during the day. As for cargo ships, there are a lot of them!”

“Yeah!” Another boatman added. “As some of the bay areas have very shallow waters, even if it’s an urgent case, they are not very willing to leave at night. But... it’s tough to say. If there is an urgent delivery service, or they encountered delays in other areas, and sometimes there might even be night cruises!”

“Yup, I have operated an overnight ship before,” the first boatman replied. “Although there are not many night ships on the Bai Sha River, it cannot be said that there are none!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu nodded. “It seems like if you intended to use a ship to transport the corpses, it’s not as simple as one would imagine...”

...

An hour later, Zhao Yu had returned to the police station and began arranging new investigation tasks.

Zhao Yu sent Xiong Wendong to the Bai Sha River near the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin to retrieve all the surveillance footage. He then let Wang Rong and the other ship experts screen the boats in the Bai Sha River one by one to see if there were any suspicious ships.

At the same time, he also arranged for the boatmen to inquire and see if there were any clues between them.

At that point, the people on the special investigation team had also been sent out for their respective missions.

Xi Ran Tao had been sent to Xia Kou to investigate Master Zhang's list of names.

Cui Lizhu went to the provincial capital, Fu Lai City, to investigate the fengshui masters in secret.

Wu Xiumin and Zeng Ke remained in the north harbor. Wu Xiumin would interrogate the suspect, and Zeng Ke was responsible for collecting information about the deceased.

In addition to Captain Fang Kaiyu, who had captured Bai Lang, as well as Gao Facai's team, who were still patiently examining the corpses in the autopsy room, the entire team had been deployed by Zhao Yu, and everything was proceeding in a structured and orderly manner.

Through training in the special investigations team, Zhao Yu's experience with handling cases was becoming richer and richer and had improved drastically.

He had transformed from his old ways of working solo into a leader who could command the overall situation and had become more and more mature.

Naturally, as the team leader, he wasn't sitting around idly either. As the investigation of the hanging coffin case became more and more extensive, Zhao Yu had sent someone to get him several whiteboards. Since returning, he had begun to fill in all the information.

Some whiteboards were used to record the detailed information of the victims, while others were used to record information about Bai Lang. Others still were used to analyze the various clues of the ships and lifting machines.

Just like that, on that hectic day, the sun was soon setting.

Today, Zhao Yu had basically not eaten much, but he had had a set of local pancakes in the car at noon. When he finished writing the information on the whiteboard, he realized he was hungry when he heard his stomach growling.

A few days ago, because Xiong Wendong had been there, there would at least be somebody to deliver his meals to him. But now that Xiong Wendong was away and most of his men had been dispatched, who else would bother with such matters?

At that moment, Miao Ying opened the door and walked in. When she saw Zhao Yu, she hurriedly took out a stack of information she wanted to report to him.

However, Zhao Yu grabbed her and said, "Miao Miao, I noticed a few days ago that they seem to be selling spicy crayfish right next to the police station. Let's go have a bite and we'll talk as we eat!"

"Uhm..." she said.

Miao Ying had initially wanted to reject him, but in fact, she herself had not had any proper meals that day either. So, the two went out together and quickly found the restaurant that Zhao Yu had mentioned.

It turned out that the restaurant not only had spicy crayfish, but many other local snacks from Wuqing. Zhao Yu went ahead and ordered most of the dishes on the menu, regardless of whether or not he could finish them.

The restaurant itself was not very big, but it seemed to be very popular. The two of them had to wait for some time before they were served.

Wuqing was exposed to direct sunlight during the day and the temperature could get pretty high. However, at night, winds blew over from the mountains, which caused a stark difference between the temperatures.

At that moment, Zhao Yu felt refreshed after eating delicious food and drinking a few glasses of cold beer.

“How...” Miao Ying didn’t drink but poured a glass of cold sour plum soup. While eating crayfish, she asked Zhao Yu, “Has this case drained your energy? I said this before, but once the murderer saw that the corpses had been found, he would escape immediately!

“So, you didn’t have to be too anxious. People who are supposed to be caught can never truly escape!”

“That’s true to a certain extent, but...” Zhao Yu said as he drank another glass of beer. “After all, there were two murderers involved with the seven female corpses, so the truth of the matter must be ascertained as soon as possible!”

“Understood!” Miao Ying said, smiling as she began to talk about the case. “You asked me to investigate the list of people who had recently died and to find people who matched the eight characters. I managed to find a few, but the family conditions of these people are very common. I’m afraid they won’t match the one we had wanted to find!

“Uhm, but I’ve also sent someone to follow up, so we will just have to wait for the news!”

“Okay, wow!” Zhao Yu said, fanning his mouth. “This crayfish is really spicy! There’s enough of a spicy kick, it feels great! Haha...”

As he said this, he tilted his neck again and gulped down a large glass of beer.

“I heard that you are looking for a ship?” Miao Ying said. “I do not deny your speculations, but wouldn’t it be too eye-catching if the criminal had really used a fire truck’s ladder? And... it shouldn’t be that difficult to check that out, right?”

“Whether if it’s easy or difficult, we still have to cover our bases! I’ve already asked Zeng Ke to do it!” Zhao Yu said, holding up two fingers. “There are only two manufacturers in the whole of China that can produce this kind of extension ladder!”

“But...” Miao Ying asked curiously. “Would the criminals really spend this much? Wouldn’t it be way too obvious to buy a fire truck ladder that was worth over 10 million yuan?”

“News from Xia Kou and Fu Lai came back,” Zhao Yu said, taking a bite of the crayfish. “Their fire brigade does indeed have that kind of large ladder equipped to their fire truck, but they guaranteed that since the purchase of their truck, other than for a drill, they have never used it!”

“So...” Miao Ying said. “The criminals went to buy one because of that? That’s insane! Dear, I think that we can’t just drop everything we’re doing and focus on the fire trucks. Maybe there are other ways to place the bodies in the hanging coffins...”

“Actually, speaking of this,” Zhao Yu said, putting down his beer glass. “One thing is for sure. These people must be familiar with the method of opening the hanging coffins!

“It’s a pity that President Pang Zhihui said that the cultural relic bureau had compiled an article about the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin and that the opening of the coffins was also made public. Thus, people who knew about the mystery of the hanging coffins were also in the minority and could no longer be traced.”

While talking, Zhao Yu’s cellphone rang.

The call was from Zeng Ke, but the speaker on the phone was Captain Fang Kaiyu.

“Leader, through the footage we obtained, we have discovered the movement of Bai Lang after stealing Su Lan’s body! He is driving a white van from an unknown origin and has been driving southeast!

“But after the car drove out of the city, it suddenly disappeared in a place called Bai Ping Town. The car never appeared again. We suspect that he might have changed his car...”

“Ah? Bai Ping Town?!” When they heard this, Zhao Yu and Miao Ying were stunned. Zhao Yu hurriedly said, “Bai Ping Town? Isn’t that the place where female corpse number six lived? Don’t tell me...”

“Yes, yes!” Miao Ying said excitedly. “It was the exact same day! The day when Su Lan’s body was stolen coincided with the day Geng Yaai disappeared! That means to say...”

“Geng Yaai’s car accident...” Zhao Yu said in surprise. “It was caused by Bai Lang?! Is this all a coincidence?”

Chapter 1198: The Expert of Relationships

“The car could not be found, so we think they may have destroyed it!” Captain Fang Kaiyu said over the phone. “We think that if you wanted to destroy the car in such a short time, the only option would be to push it into the nearby river!

“So, we are currently organizing manpower, and we will start searching tomorrow morning!”

“Alright, good work!” Zhao Yu said, hanging up.

“Maybe Geng Yaai was killed by Bai Lang, but it was also possible that she was killed by a colleague who was related to Bai Lang!” Miao Ying said. “Or maybe, they drove too fast and accidentally hit her! Or perhaps, when they were worried about the corpses, they suddenly saw Geng Yaai, who had run away from home, and decided to kill her!”

“Don’t overthink this!” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head. “Previously, I too made many assumptions and only ended up shooting myself in the foot.

“So, let’s just wait until the suspect has been caught. Come...” Zhao Yu poured a glass of beer for Miao Ying. “Relieve yourself, dear, you’ve been exhausted these days! Tonight, you will head back to the hotel for a good night of sleep. Maybe by the time you wake up tomorrow morning, I will be able to show you the truth!”

“Alright!” Miao Ying said, raising her glass with a smile. “In that case, I would like to congratulate Detective Zhao in advance!”

The two clinked their glasses and smiled at each other.

At that moment, several tourist buses passed by in front of the hotel and parked in the back of the hotel parking lot. The doors opened, and tourists from all over the world who had been out enjoying the day could be seen walking into the hotel with their own luggage.

“Hmm...” Miao Ying said as she looked at the tourists. “My dear, when this case is over, let’s go have some fun in the mountains! I heard that the scenery in Wuqing is pretty good!”

“Alright, no problem!” Zhao Yu said, waving his hand. “If the hanging coffin case is solved, then we can also be considered as having paid our dues to Wu Qing Shan. We should be exempt from having to pay for the tickets, right?”

“Tsch! I’ve gotten so much money from my dad and you can still be this stingy!” Miao Ying said. She liked to banter with Zhao Yu. As they joked, she could feel the fatigue she had accumulated over the past few days slowly disappear.

The two also had a great appetite, and despite having ordered many dishes, there was nothing left. Even the waiter was surprised.

“Well, Zhao Yu...” Miao Ying said, leaning her head on Zhao Yu’s shoulder and pulling on his arm affectionally after the fulfilling meal. “How far do you think Wuqing is from Hua Yun?”

“What?” Zhao Yu asked as he stroked his bulging belly. “What? The hanging coffin case is not over yet, but you’re already thinking about Hua Yun?”

“No, I was just thinking...” Miao Ying said abashedly. “When we solve Hua Yun’s case as well, will there be a sense of... disappointment?”

“Think about it, the five great cases would all be over! Won’t you feel a little empty in your heart?”

“I don’t know!” Zhao Yu said, laughing half-heartedly. Suddenly remembering his adventurous personality, he said, “But I feel that even if the yellow notebook is done and dusted, won’t there be new cases too?”

“With me, Zhao Yu, anything can happen!”

“Yeah!” Miao Ying said, snuggling up close to Zhao Yu. “I don’t know why... but every time I work with you, I tend to look anxious about solving the case. But, deep down in my heart, I secretly think how nice it would be if the case weren’t solved too quickly!”

“Oh, Miao Miao, you sound so profound!” Zhao Yu said, pouting. “Why can’t I understand anything you just said?”

“Because...” Miao Ying whispered as she buried her head in Zhao Yu’s arms. “You are an asshole who is only serious when it comes to solving cases...”

“Really?” Zhao Yu scratched his head and asked in earnest. “Was I ever serious? How come I don’t know about this?”

...

About half an hour later, Zhao Yu had walked Miao Ying back to the hotel and asked her to take a good rest.

Then, he drove back to the police station and continued to analyze the case.

Unexpectedly, at that moment, Zeng Ke had returned to the police station and was looking for information in front of the computer.

“Oh? You’re back?” Zhao Yu asked, surprised. “Didn’t I ask you to stay at the north harbor? Why...”

“Oh, team leader!” Zeng Ke replied, quickly rising from his seat. “My equipment is all here, so it’s more convenient for me. So, so, when I came back...”

Seeing Zeng Ke panic, Zhao Yu figured out the reason almost immediately. Pointing to the door, he said, “You rascal, you came back because of Zhang Peipei!”

“No no no, no no no...” Zeng Ke said, hurriedly waving to dismiss the claim.

“Who are you trying to lie to? Don’t you know what I specialize in?” Zhao Yu asked curiously. “I see that you’re frowning, you seem to have problems with your relationships. What’s the problem? Have you been bickering with your lover?”

“Ah, leader! You... you are too great! You could even see through that?” Zeng Ke touched his head subconsciously and said with a discouraged tone, “You’re right. I came back at night because I just wanted to take a look at her, as not many people are around at this time.

“But... she has already gone back to the hotel to rest!” Zeng Ke said, pulling out a box of exquisite small cakes. “I bought these for nothing! Leader, are you hungry?”

“I’m not hungry!” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head and grabbing Zeng Ke. “Tell me about the situation and let me analyze it!”

“It... it was good!” Zeng Ke said. “When we were in Qu Liang, we got along well and even had seafood together!

“I really like her, and she... I think she likes me too, y’know!” Zeng Ke said, not sure how to express himself. He paused for a long time before continuing. “Afterwards, while working on the devil case, the development between us went really well! We also held hands!”

“D*mn,” Zhao Yu said, pursing his lips. “I was working my a** off to solve the crime, and you still had time to date?”

“It happened while we were working!” Zeng Ke explained. “But I don’t know what happened. She has been cold to me ever since we separated up north.

“I tried to meet her many times, but she refused my advances and said she was busy because of work. Later, at Gao Lanqi, we finally met again.

“But she was still neutral towards me. We ate twice, but it was somewhat normal, like we were friends. Then before long, her task ended, and she left early.

“After that, there were even fewer WeChat messages and phone calls, leader... Is this an indication that she’s lost interest in me?” Zeng Ke said in frustration.

“No, no!” Zhao Yu said. “You can rest assured, as a love expert, I have no reason not to help you!

“Come, you have to tell me clearly now,” Zhao Yu said, wrapping his arms around Zeng Ke’s shoulders. “Do you really like Zhang Peipei?”

“Yes, very sure! I’ve been thinking crazily about her!” Zeng Ke said, nodding. His eyes lit up with hope.

“That’s good!” Zhao Yu said confidently. “Just you wait and see how I help you with this, hahaha!”

Chapter 1199: The Unknown

Late into the night, the Interpol squad stood outside the autopsy room.

Zhao Yu came into the autopsy room at that point, which made him feel a little guilty. Not one police officer on duty could be seen in the building. The surroundings were strangely quiet, and it made the atmosphere a little weird.

The door of the autopsy room was closed, and it was uncertain if there was anyone inside. Zhao Yu leaned his ear in against the door and listened. While listening, he thought to himself. If Zhang Peipei had already returned to the hotel to rest, then there should be at least another forensic doctor on duty in the autopsy room, right?

In the midst of him thinking about what to do, the door of the autopsy room suddenly opened. From the inside came a person with a thin body wearing a white coat.

“Oops!” This person did not expect anyone to be outside and gasped, holding his chest in shock when he saw Zhao Yu.

“Oh my god!” he said.

Zhao Yu was not paying attention either and was a little stunned. After seeing clearly who it was, he quickly explained.

“Old Gao! Old Gao! It’s me, don’t get so worked up!” Zhao Yu said.

“Oh, you scared me!” Gao Facai held his chest and took off his mask, saying to Zhao Yu, “Zhao Yu, what are you up to? You know my wife had to undergo heart surgery, right? Do you want me to follow in her footsteps?”

“Sorry, sorry!” Zhao Yu answered.

Zhao Yu scurried to comfort him by pressing gently on his chest but was quickly pushed away by Dr. Gao.

“I’m just here to check out the situation!” Zhao Yu explained again. “How would I know that you would come out at the exact moment I was going to knock?”

“Dr. Gao... are you alright?” someone inquired from inside the autopsy room.

“It’s okay, go on, go on!” Gao Facai said, taking a few breaths to regain his composure. Then he said to Zhao Yu, “I haven’t seen you for a day. I actually wanted to talk to you! Uhm...” He took out a cigarette and pointed to the corridor. “Come, let’s talk over here!”

“Huh, so a forensic doctor like yourself smokes too?” Zhao Yu hurriedly helped him to hold the lighter and light the cigarette in order to express his apology.

The two moved further into the corridor. Gao Facai smoked a few puffs of the cigarette before saying, “No choice, as you can see. This job is really taxing! Sigh! When you age, you can only take a few puffs...”

“Just now you said that you were looking for me? How is it? Are there any new findings?” Zhao Yu asked quickly.

“Hmm, Zhang Peipei’s analysis was good!” Gao Facai said seriously. “The corpses did not breed bacteria, so they have yet to decay!”

“Oh, so it’s clear now? Did someone treat the corpses with preservatives?” Zhao Yu asked.

“I can’t tell...” Gao Facai said, sighing. “After we dissected it, a waxy substance was found in the visceral organs and the lower layers of the skin. After testing it, it turns out to be a saponified fat, something we often call corpse wax!”

“Corpse wax?” Zhao Yu asked, puzzled. “Is there anything particular about this?”

“Most process of corpse wax occurs from corpses being immersed into water, or corpses buried in soil with sufficient moisture. In theory, corpse waxes cannot be generated through dry environments like the hanging coffins!” Gao Facai explained. “So, we can only draw two conclusions at this moment.

“One, the corpse has been subjected to some unknown anti-corrosion treatment. Or two, there was an unknown anti-corrosion substance placed inside the corpses of the hanging coffins that can suppress the growth of bacteria, resulting in a perfectly preserved body.”

“You used the word unknown twice!” Zhao Yu said, shaking his head. “I didn’t expect that a top expert like you would use the word unknown!”

“Zhao Yu, there are always so many things in this world that cannot be thoroughly studied by science at the moment!” Gao Facai explained. “Take the hanging coffins as an example. We have not been able to explain precisely how the ancient people managed to place heavy coffins on the cliff and keep them like that for thousands of years.

“Sometimes, the wisdom of the ancient people exceeds our imagination!”

“Since you emphasize so heavily on the wisdom of the ancient people,” Zhao Yu said. “So that means that the first possibility has already been ruled out, and the criminals did not treat the corpse with preservatives?”

“Yes!” Gao Facai admitted honestly. “The most obvious point is that the moment the corpse left the hanging coffin, there was a noticeable change in the bodies. If it were an artificially processed corpse, such a phenomenon would not occur.

“Besides, the body has no traces of artificial treatment. As far as I know, even the current most advanced anti-corrosion technology in the world would not be able to achieve this effect that we see!

“I guess you shouldn’t be unfamiliar with this, right? It was you who caught Li Fei in the headless corpse case!”

“Uhm, indeed...” Zhao Yu remembered that Li Fei had used a very complicated technique to keep the corpse intact.

“Oh, right!” Gao Facai said. “Not every corpse developed corpse wax. The wax is completely absent from female corpses number five and six; there is even less wax in female corpses number one and four. Female corpse number seven has the most wax!”

“The more wax there is, the earlier the corpse was placed in the coffin?” Zhao Yu asked.

“In theory, that is the case, but... because our research on the hanging coffins is nothing but a blank piece of paper, it cannot be a guaranteed 100%!” Gao Facai replied.

“Okay, I get it!” Zhao Yu said after digesting Gao Facai’s words and thinking for a moment. Then he shifted the topic, saying to him, “Well, old Gao, there is one more thing that I have to ask you. How is it going with the matter of Zhang Peipei and Zeng Ke?”

It turned out that Zhao Yu had been concerned with Zeng Ke’s matter and had asked Gao Facai about it a long time ago. Therefore, he knew for a long time why Zhang Peipei was acting coldly towards Zeng Ke.

“Hmm,” Gao Facai said. “I have not done it yet. Did I not just say? The love of my life had heart surgery...”

“Oh, I’m so sorry. Is she alright?” Zhao Yu asked quickly.

“Yeah, the operation went well!” Gao Facai took a deep draw of his cigarette and said, “However, I can’t really stay with her, so my heart is not at ease!”

“Well, it’s still good to hear she’s okay! When I’ve returned to the capital, I will make sure to take good care of both of you, haha...” Zhao Yu said.

“Actually, Peipei is okay...” Gao Facai said. “She told me that she has good feelings towards Zeng Ke. However, her parents reacted very strongly against it! They despise him for not being from the capital, and his family’s condition is not very good either. The two are polar opposites, and they have different customs, etcetera.

“Peipei is an only child. Her parents gave her a name that means ‘to accompany.’ Is that not obvious enough?”

“But Zeng Ke often follows the special investigations team and travels around the country. So, you understand, right? If it was your daughter, what would you think about that?” Gao Facai asked.

“I would at least respect my daughter’s choice!” Zhao Yu said without missing a beat. “In fact, such objective questions are nonsense. The key is that the two of them like each other!”

“Alright, alright, don’t get so worked up!” Gao Facai said, putting out his cigarette. “In fact, her parents are still very reasonable people. Give me some more time and I’ll talk to them.”

Zhao Yu wanted to continue the conversation, but his cellphone rang. He opened it. It was a call from leader Xiong Wendong.

“Hello, officer Zhao, are you in the Interpol office yet?” Xiong Wendong asked hastily. “Some news has just arrived from the boatmen. I think we may have found the suspicious ship!”

Chapter 1200: It Finally Appeared

“Oh, I was wondering why it sounded so near!” Zhao Yu said.

Zhao Yu was still talking to Xiong Wendong through the phone, but Xiong Wendong suddenly appeared at the other end of the corridor, beckoning towards Zhao Yu.

It turned out that the Wuqing County Criminal Police Office was only a two-story building, and the autopsy room was located on the first floor. So, when Xiong Wendong came back, he immediately saw Zhao Yu and Gao Facai.

Thus, he quickly put down the phone and ran to the two of them, and said excitedly, “Officer Zhao, the problem indeed lies with the ship!

“There was news from the boatman just now. A ship captain was claiming that one night more than half a month ago, a cargo ship they were driving was stopped by the marine patrol officers around the Bai Sha River in Pan Jiawan District!

“The officer on patrol suspected that they had contraband on board, so he detained them and searched for more than two hours before they were allowed to be released!”

“Oh? The marine patrol?” Zhao Yu frowned.

“Yeah,” Xiong Wendong said. “Isn’t that a little weird? I checked, and when the police intercepted the ship, it was the same night that Bai Lang stole Su Lan’s body!”

“That...” Zhao Yu felt like he could grasp something but could not fully understand what it was. Gao Facai, on the other hand, was completely confused.

“If there is an anti-drug mission, a search is usually carried out at the pier. It is unlikely that a group of marine police would appear in the middle of the river, so something smells fishy!” Xiong Wendong said, patting his chest proudly. “I’m not tooting my own horn, but I have the most friends within the Wuqing Shan police!

“I have already made an inquiry. There have been no special inspection missions ordered by the narcotics bureau recently, so this group must have been fake!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu finally understood. “In other words, we have finally figured out why the criminals in the coffin case weren’t worried about being discovered by the cargo ships that passed by. They had already made arrangements with both of the rivers around the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin!”

“Yes, Pan Jiawan is not far from the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin,” Xiong Wendong said. “Those fake marine police must be in cahoots with the criminals in the hanging coffin case!”

“Also,” Zhao Yu said, nodding and sighing, “They even dared to use the Seven Stars Hanging Coffin. So, they must be a big deal. So... it is not surprising for them to send someone to pose as a police officer!”

“That...” Dr. Gao, at that point, also realized something and added quickly, “In that case, the criminal must have used the cargo ship to put the bodies into the hanging coffin. Then... the ship? Did you manage to find it?”

“I found it!” Xiong Wendong answered quickly, nodding. “Of course I found it. Not only did I find it, I found it just as it was!”

“Oh, then what are you waiting for? Tell us quickly!” Zhao Yu urged.

“The boss of the ship that was intercepted by the fake police said that their ship was going up against the current,” Xiong Wendong said. “After the police released them, they continued to sail north along the river. As soon as they came out, they came across a cargo ship from Yun Hai Company and passed by them!”

“Yun Hai Company?” Zhao Yu repeated the words, feeling a sense of déjà vu.

“Ship? What kind of ship?” Dr. Gao asked, suddenly becoming interested.

“I have photos here...” Xiong Wendong said, turning on his phone and opening a photo. “The boss of the boat had a camera installed, and this is the screenshot of the video footage from that time!”

“It is as we guessed. There must be something wrong with this ship!”

“Is this the ship?” Zhao Yu asked, looking at the photo. It looked like a very ordinary cargo ship and it was smaller than he imagined. “This ship has no sign or anything. How do you know that this belongs to Yun Hai Company?”

“Huh? Yun Hai Company?” Xiong Wendong scratched his head. Seeming to have recalled something, he quickly said, “Oh, sorry! My bad! It’s not Yun Hai Company, but Yun Hai Group!”

“Officer Zhao!” he said, pointing at the cargo ship in the picture. “You are from the north, so you might not be aware of this, but everyone in Fu Lai Province knows about the Yun Hai group!”

“Yes, I’ve heard of them!” Dr. Gao echoed. “It seems like... they specialize in shipping? I think I might have seen their advertisements somewhere before!”

“Yes,” Xiong Wendong said, frowning. “But before that, Yun Hai Group started with domestic freight shipping!”

“Their peak was in the 1990s. At that time, the shipping activities in these major rivers in Fu Lai Province were all contracted to their company, and they made a ton of money!”

“Later on, due to the development of the expressway, the demand for inland shipping gradually declined. So, Yun Hai Group set its sights on the broader maritime shipping and has steadily become the largest sea shipping company in southeast China today!”

“Moreover, it’s not just shipping and maritime transportation. They also operate several real estate companies and some other different types of industries. They are well-known in the Fu Lai Province!

“So, although there is no signage on their ship, the boss of the ship that passed by them operates the ship regularly and can recognize their boats in a glance!” He pointed at the photo again. “He said yes, this is definitely a boat that belongs to Yun Hai Group!”

“Yun Hai Group...” Zhao Yu murmured. “We had previously predicted that in this case, there would be someone who was super rich involved. Don’t tell me...”

“By the way, did Engineer Wang look for you earlier?” Xiong Wendong said again. “I have shown him the video of the boat. He said that there are obvious signs of modification on the side of the ship. He suspects that they may be using some kind of inflatable device underneath the boat that enables them to control the excessive weight load!

“Look again,” he said, pointing to the photo. “You can see that in the middle and rear parts of the boat, there are big bulges covered with canvas...”

“Engineer Wang believes that under the canvas, there should be that fire truck’s extendable ladder that we were discussing earlier!”

“What? Extendable ladder?” Dr. Gao said in shock. “How is that possible? The ladder can rise to up to 40 meters, how can it be this small?”

“Oh?” Zhao Yu seemed to be quite taken aback. “You seem to know quite a lot about ladders, Dr. Gao,” he said.

“I wouldn’t say I know a lot!” Gao Facai said seriously. “But if I am a criminal, there is no way I would choose to use a fire truck’s extendable ladder!”

“Oh, why not?” Zhao Yu asked.

“Because in comparison, there are far more practical tools!” Gao Facai said carefully. “Those types of extendable ladders are used for high-altitude rescue cases. Due to the nature of the work, its cost is very high, and it is not easily obtainable either. Even if you have money, you can’t buy it!

“However, it would be much simpler if it was an extension ladder truck used by a moving company!”

“Huh? Extension ladder truck?” Zhao Yu and Xiong Wendong were stunned.

“Yeah, why? Have you guys never engaged a moving company before?” Gao Facai asked. “The buildings in the big cities are designed like pigeon nests. The elevators are too small, and there are many large household items. You can’t enter through the elevator or the door, so the moving company will use this kind of ladder to move things into the house!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu and Xiong Wendong nodded simultaneously. “It seems that people living in big cities are just different!”

Qin Shan, where Zhao Yu was located, and Wuqing, where Xiong Wendong lived, didn’t have many high-rise buildings. So naturally, they had not seen such advanced tools.

“Fast, convenient, and cheap!” Gao Facai explained. “A couple hundred-thousand can buy you an extension ladder truck that can be raised up to 28 meters!”

“Twenty-eight meters? That’s not enough...” Xiong Wendong said, shaking his head. “The highest hanging coffin is 41 meters high, isn’t that too big a difference?”

“Hmm...” Gao Facai nodded. “Then it has to be ordered directly from the manufacturer! For every one meter added, the cost of the truck will also increase!

“Leader Zhao, there are not many manufacturers around. Such special orders must be pretty easy to check!”

“Understood, I’ll get Zeng Ke to look into it!” Zhao Yu said, picking up the phone and wanting to call Zeng Ke. Suddenly, he remembered he had a question and quickly asked Xiong Wendong, “Oh, right, the head of Yun Hai Group... who is it?”

“Lin... Lin something? Look at my forgetful brain... why can’t I remember...” Xiong Wendong said, grasping at his hairs. “In any case, it’s a woman!”

“Oh, a woman?” Zhao Yu asked.

Zhao Yu already had his phone out so he simply went ahead to search for it on the net.

In the end, the information was obtained through a simple search. The current chairman of the group was indeed a woman who was named Lin Chaofeng!

“Oh my god!” he said.

It wasn’t the name that caught Zhao Yu by surprise, but the age of the person. When he saw it, he exclaimed in shock and almost dropped his phone.

“Born on February 15, 1952!” Zhao Yu said. “That’s January 20 of the lunar calendar of that year! Haha! You can’t escape now! The person represented by the eight characters on the yellow paper has finally shown herself!”