

Crazy 451

Chapter 451: A Strange Criminal That Turned Himself In

“What are you talking about?” Mao Wei turned around and spoke, as his face grew gloomy. “Here... This is not a place for jokes! Please do not fool around!”

“I am not joking!” the man bit his lip nervously and said, “I killed someone! Not only did I kill someone, I framed someone else, too! I am here to surrender and turn myself in. Ten years ago, the Petroleum Second Franchise’s Flat Murder Case... Mm...” His lips quivered, as he said, “I did it!”

When he said this, the police detectives creased their eyebrows. Since they joined the police detectives job, no one had ever seen anyone turn themselves in and admit that they were murderers! Plus, it was a ten year old case!

Petroleum Second Franchise’s Flat Murder Case?

Ten years ago?

Zhao Yu creased his eyebrows. When he was in the Cold Case Department, he memorized almost all the cases in his head, so he could be sure that there was no such case in the pending cases file!

“That’s not right!” Li Beini responded very quickly, as he said, “Sir, you are at the wrong place. Petroleum Second Franchise doesn’t fall under Rongyang Branch’s jurisdiction! It should be... Mm... It belonged to Moyang Branch! So... Please go over to the Moyang Branch to turn yourself in!”

“Huh?!” Hearing that, the young man’s head was covered in a cold sweat. He said nervously, “How could it be? After the second ring road, isn’t it Rongyang area? And, my house is in Rongyang. This... Could it be done according to the account location?”

“The hell...” Zhang Jingfeng spilled the cup of hot tea that he had just made, as he shouted at the man, “This is about turning yourself in, and it needs to be categorized according to the crime scene, not any principle of going to the nearest branch.”

“Sigh...” the man held his arms before his chest, as his body quivered with emotions. “Why is turning myself in so difficult?!”

“Alright, stop joking around!” Mao Wei was worried that there would be a major incident, so he quickly came before the person and said, “Sir, regardless of whichever police branch is in charge of the case, as you came to turn yourself in, I shall document this case! However, just a friendly reminder, if you were just joking, you will have to be prepared to take legal responsibility!”

“Oh... Alright! As long as I can turn myself in, I’ll take all the responsibility!” Then, he took out his hand phone and opened his camera app, as he pleaded, “Then... can you please help me put on the handcuffs? I need a few photographs!”

What!

When he said that, the entire station was shocked. Who would have expected the criminal, who came to turn himself in, was such a weirdo? He even asked to put on handcuffs, before asking for a photograph? Could he..... Really be here to put on a reality show?

"This..." Mao Wei turned around to look at Zhao Yu. That time, as Miao Ying was not in, the next highest ranking police were the both of them. Encountering such a matter, Mao Wei couldn't decide what to do. He naturally had to ask Zhao Yu's opinion.

"Motherfucker! Did you escape from the mental hospital? Are you trying to make things difficult?" Zhao Yu was not in a good mood, so the moment he heard this man sounding strange, he suddenly got pissed off.

"Hold on!" Suddenly, Zhang Jingfeng came before the man, and took a careful look. He then gawked at him and said, "That's not right? Why does this person look so familiar... Yo!" Zhang Jingfeng slapped his thigh, then pointed at the man, yelling, "Isn't this Teacher Lan? Why... Why would it be you?"

"Zhang, you... Know each other?" Mao Wei opened his eyes wide, confused.

Zhao Yu was also puzzled, so he kept quiet.

"Cough! What!" Zhang Jingfeng laughed. "I'm finally seeing an alive one! I couldn't recognize him earlier! You are Teacher Lan, from television! Lan... Lan..."

"LAN Shuping!" The man nodded. Besides looking a little nervous, he was also a little embarrassed.

"Eh? Really?" Li Beini took a closer look, then said, "In Graduation Season, you acted as the father of the male character! Wow! You look so much younger in real life!"

"And the host of Twelve O'clock Delicacies," Zhang Jingfeng clapped as he spoke, "My wife loves that show! Everyday, she would follow the way you taught, but she never managed to cook anything that tasted like the ones in the TV show!"

"Oh, yeah, I've always seen you in the TV dramas!" Da Fei said. "Why... are you here? To do a police reality show, or to host a TV show?"

"Police officers! Police officers!" Suddenly, Lan Shuping clasped both his hands together in a gesture of pleading. "Please, everyone! I am really here to turn myself in today! I heard that the Rongyang Branch could even solve the Mianling Case. So, I came here to turn myself in!"

"This..."

Then, the police detectives were gawking at each other again, as they were all confused as to what he was trying to do. As a criminal that had just turned himself in, Lan Shuping responded quite unusually!

"If so..." Mao Wei was sitting in for Miao Ying, after all, so he had no choice but to come forward and say, "Are you really here to turn yourself in?"

"Yes! For real!" Lan Shuping raised his hands again. "Please, put on the handcuffs for me first!"

"Then..."

Mao Wei was hesitating, but then, there was a shocking voice that was heard from the corner of the room, "Aiyo, oh god!"

Liang Huan, who had been quiet all along, suddenly stood up and pointed at his computer, saying, "I say, everyone, this Teacher Lan... is not making a joke! I think, we should really put handcuffs on him first!"

"Mm, why?" Everyone still didn't understand.

"Ten years ago, in Qinshan Moyang Petroleum Second Franchise's Flat, there was a woman who died after being stabbed!" Liang Huan read out loud, "On the suspect list, there is the name of Lan Shuping!"

Seriously?

Everyone was shocked, and hemmed in to see.

Li Beini lay on her working table, pressing on Liang Huan's shoulders, "That's not right, this isn't a pending case? Isn't it a closed case? The criminal has already been arrested, so why did you come and turn yourself in?"

"That murderer is innocent!" Lan Shuping bit his lips and said, "I am the true murderer!"

Hearing that, Mao Wei immediately gave Da Fei an eye signal, and Da Fei took out the handcuffs to cuff his hands.

"Please guys, can you please deal with mine first?!" Lan Shuping pleaded, "Please, sentence me!"

"Teacher Lan, even those turning themselves in need to go along with the process," Mao Wei said.

"Don't panic, just explain to us the details of the situation!"

Mao Wei nodded again, as Da Fei quickly gathered a pen and papers to make the confession record.

"Alright! Alright..." Lan Shuping panted as he spoke, "The deceased woman is my college mate, Liu Jiao! What happened was..."

"Liu Jiao and I, and Feng Kuo, we are all from the same college, Yunzhou School of Film and Theatre. During college, the three of us were very close, and we even formed a sibling group to perform short repertoires and dramas. We even joined some commercial shows, and were considered as being quite famous."

"Then, I had been secretly admiring Liu Jiao, but she got together with Feng Kuo in the end! Feng Kuo was better looking than me, and he had a better financial background, and was very cheerful. All in all... He was better than me in all aspects! Although I didn't say much on the surface, regarding the fact that he took Liu Jiao away from me, I took it to heart."

"In the end, after graduation, the three of us joined a film and television production team! Most of the production was based in Qinshan's film and television production base. And, Feng Kuo and I are from Qinshan, so it was quite convenient for us."

"But, Liu Jiao is not from Qinshan, so she arranged to stay in Petroleum Second Franchise's Flat. Every time they were shooting, Feng Kuo would stay over at Liu Jiao's! So, to me, everyday was torturous! One

day, I had some drinks, and I felt extremely upset. So I seized the chance, when Feng Kuo was not around, to find Liu Jiao!”

Lan Shuping spoke with a face of regret, “After I told Liu Jiao everything, I was criticised by her! So, out of anger, I killed her with a knife!”

“Eh?!”

Just when Lan Shuping was telling how he committed the crime, Zhang Yu said “eh”, cutting him off.

“Why, bro? What are you aiyo-ing about?” Li Beini pouted and complained, “It is the crucial moment!”

“No!” Zhao Yu raised his eyebrows and said, “Feng Kuo! Feng Kuo... The name...” Zhao Yu pointed at Lan Shuping and said, “I remember now, this Feng Kuo, isn’t he the prison breaker? The very one that ran away from Yunzhou Prison yesterday?”

Chapter 452: There Is More Than Meets the Eye

Zhao Yu noticed that, when he suddenly mentioned that Feng Kuo was the prisoner who was involved in the jailbreak, Lan Shuping could not help but shiver, and had an awkward expression.

“Yes, it is... It is him!” Lan Shuping said, his voice quiet, and his head bowed low.

“Jailbreak?” Li Beini frowned and said, “What do you mean?”

“You did not watch the news?” Liang Huan said, “There were mobile phone alerts reporting this news too. In the middle of last night, a prisoner from the Yun state escaped from prison, and is still at large!”

“But...” Zhang Jingfeng pondered and said, “This sounds complicated. The prisoner involved in the jailbreak was the murderer of the ‘apartment murder case’. Then... What is the connection with Mr. Lan’s turning himself in?”

At this point, everyone turned their attention to Lan Shuping.

“There is no connection!” Lan Shuping swallowed his saliva and said, with his head bowed. “Turning myself in has no connection to his jailbreak! The real murderer is me!”

“Oh my God, this... This does seem complicated...” Li Beini pressed a few keys on the keyboard and said, “Feng Kuo was sentenced to death, then he was changed to an indefinite imprisonment. As he was talented in carpentry, he was transferred to the prison in the Yun state. With his good behavior, his imprisonment was reduced from an indefinite term to a finite 19 years. Now, after 10 years, there will be 9 more years before he will be released! Why would he want to jailbreak at this time?”

“He was wronged!” Liang Huan pointed to Lan Shuping and said, “Is the real murderer in front of us?”

“I feel...” said Mao Wei. “That is, I mean, let us not make any wild guesses. Let Mr. Lan continue his story.”

Everyone quietened down after this momentary uproar.

"After I committed the murder, I sobered up," Lan Shuping continued, "I thought that, since I had already murdered someone, I should not let Feng Kuo off so easily! So, I took the murder weapon and snuck into Feng Kuo's home, then put the knife in his bedroom drawer."

"Later, after the incident, the first person whom the police suspected was not me!" Lan Shuping said, with a bulging nose and grimly eyes. "When the police found the weapon, it was futile for Feng Kuo to argue. And although the police interrogated me later on, no one suspected me."

"So... Since someone has already admitted to the crime, why do you have to surrender yourself?" Mao Wei asked. "It cannot be because our Rongyang branch solved the 'Mianling kidnapping case', right?"

"No, I was feeling guilty. I felt sorry for Feng Kuo and the dead Liu Jiao!" Lan Shuping said anxiously. "Officers, please quickly convict me!"

"Well!" Mao Wei said, "Convictions are handled by the courts and procuratorates. We only arrest the suspects, provide the evidence, and investigate the truth. Now that you have admitted to the murder, then I need to put you in prison temporarily, and report to the leader. After receiving approval from the leader, the case will then be reopened for investigation again!"

"So... How long will it take?" Lan Shuping looked anxious.

"It is uncertain how long it would take," Mao Wei said. "Your situation is rather complicated. Anywhere from ten days to a half a month would be considered as fast."

"Police officer, I am really the murderer!" Lan Shuping pleaded. "I only want you to speed things up, please?"

"Hey!" Suddenly, Zhao Yu, who had been silent for a long time, spoke up. He cleared his throat and asked Lan Shuping in a clear, loud voice, "Did you wear a glove, when you murdered with the knife?"

"What?" Lan Shuping was stunned, as he did not expect Zhao Yu to ask this question.

"I am asking you a question! Did you leave any fingerprints on the knife? Say it!" Zhao Yu said, his voice intimidating.

"Yes... With gloves... Hmm... No... No gloves!" Lan Shuping quickly changed his story. "After committing the murder, I removed the fingerprints on the knife, but Liu Jiao's blood remained on it. The knife appeared in Feng Kuo's bedroom, so..."

"Tell me more!" Zhao Yu asked again. "You murdered the man with a knife. So, how many times did you stab her, and where did you stab her?"

"Well... This..." Lan Shuping stammered. "My mind was completely blank at the time, and I could not remember anything."

"In which part of the house did you stab her? Was it at the entrance, or was it inside the house?" Zhao Yu asked again.

"Inside the house, uh... The entrance... Uh... Inside..." After answering a series of questions, Lan Shuping's answers appeared to be self-contradictory, and he was now on the verge of an emotional breakdown.

“Enough! You denied that you are a troublemaker!” Zhao Yu stretched his back, as he walked toward Lan Shuping. He asked, “Tell us the truth, Mr Lan! Did Feng Kuo kidnap your wife or... Kidnap your child?”

“Ah?”

Everyone was stunned to hear that question.

In particular, Lan Shuping looked at Zhao Yu, baffled and amazed.

A few moments later, Lan Shuping finally fell on his knees and squatted on the floor.

“Feng... Feng Kuo... Will kill my daughter!” Lan Shuping said with tears in his eyes. “I... I cannot call the police!”

Ah?

Everyone was stunned, as they turned to focus on Zhao Yu.

“Don’t do that, don’t do that!” Zhao Yu proudly said. “If you look at me this way, I will become proud!”

“Senior, you... How did you know?” Li Beini asked.

“Simple, simple! Well, a person who turned himself in should be looking depressed and not anxious!” Zhao Yu said steadily. “This Mr Lan looked as if many things were weighing him down, as he was obviously anxious and restless. Does he look like someone who wishes to turn himself in?”

As Zhao Yu spoke, Mao Wei had already unlocked Lan Shuping’s handcuffs.

“Also, coincidentally, he had to turn himself in after Feng Kuo escaped from prison!” Zhao Yu continued. “To relate the two together, it must be that Feng Kuo had threatened him, which is what made him turn himself in.”

“Senior, come and take a look...” pointing to the file in the computer, Li Beini said. “Liu Jiao died near the entrance of the house. She was stabbed four times on the chest, then fell on her back. This means that the murderer must have murdered her the moment he stepped into the house! And Mr. Lan said that he had a quarrel with Liu Jiao first, before he murdered her, which was obviously not the case!”

“Besides, Feng Kuo’s fingerprints were found on the knife’s handle! And after verification, the knife did come from Feng Kuo’s home. So, Mr. Lan got it all wrong!”

“Sher... Sherlock!” At this time, Lan Shuping was totally convinced of these truths, and said, “It’s no wonder that the major Mianling kidnapping case was solved! You are truly a Sherlock! But...” Lan Shuping frowned worriedly, as he said, “I cannot reveal that my daughter is now in the hands of Feng Kuo. He said that, if... I do not turn myself in, he will kill my daughter. I... I... I... I beg all of you, take me as the real murderer!”

Speaking of this, Lan Shuping actually knelt down to Zhao Yu.

However, Zhao Yu suddenly frowned and said to himself, “Something seems wrong. Feng Kuo escaped from the prison of the Yun state last night. And yet, he somehow managed to kidnap your daughter this morning? How could he have done that, given the distance and short period of time?”

“Theoretically, it is possible,” Li Beini said. “In order to travel from the Yun state to Qinshan, it takes about three hours. Feng Kuo escaped from the prison at 3 a.m., and traveled throughout the night to Qinshan to kidnap Mr. Lan’s daughter. Why wouldn’t it be possible?”

“Ha ha... It is easy to say, but to do it... Would not be so easy!” Zhao Yu shook his head and said, “I bet that even Tom Cruise from Mission Impossible could not accomplish such an earth-shattering feat! Let’s see! This might not turn out as simple as we have first thought...”

“Mr. Lan, this is a kidnapping case!” Mao Wei suddenly realized the seriousness of the matter, and hurried over to pull Mr. Lan up to his feet, saying, “You cannot wait any longer, you have to... Call the police!”

Chapter 453: The Unreasonable Kidnapping Case

“What?” In the office, Mao Wei was asking in shock, “Bureau Chief Luan wants the Key Case Investigation Unit in Rongyang to take charge of the case, but.... It’s out of our coverage area, right?”

“Out of what coverage area?” Li Beini said. “Moyang Branch is already at such a state, it’s not like you don’t know anything about it. It’s a matter of life and death. Do you... Do you want them to take care of this?”

“Because it is a life and death matter, so... The responsibility is heavy!” Mao Wei said nervously. “Plus, the kidnapper was a prison breaker. This... This is too knotty!”

“We have to deal with it, even if it is knotty!” Li Beini said again. “Bureau Chief Luan said that you, Team Lead Mao, have handled quite a number of kidnapping cases, and that you are very experienced, so for the mission this time, you have to act as lead captain. You are the commander-in-chief!”

“Okay, alright!” Mao Wei steadied and said, “As the leaders entrusted us, we have to give it our all! Zhao...” He turned around and spoke to Zhao Yu, “This time, the two of us have to co-operate, and try to save the child!”

“Mm.... Okay, alright!” Zhao Yu nodded in agreement.

Actually, regarding this kind of kidnapping case, he had no experience at all. Hence, he had no objection towards the leader’s arrangements. Mao Wei was more experienced after all.

After receiving the mission, the police detective didn’t even have time to have lunch, but immediately held an emergency meeting with the entire Key Case Investigation Team instead. During the meeting, through collective wisdom and concerted efforts, the police detectives finalized the counter measures regarding the kidnapping case.

Firstly, they segregated the job. As the police detectives from team B were stronger in flexibility, Mao Wei led Team B to run all the fieldwork. On the other hand, Zhao Yu led Team A, tasked with being in charge of investigation and information gathering.

As this situation of the kidnapping case was special, the Key Case Investigation Unit decided that the kidnapping should be kept secret and out of the public, and that all investigating had to be done secretly. They couldn’t let the kidnapper find out that Lan Shuping had lodged a police report.

On the other hand, regarding the special request of the kidnapper, Feng Kuo, the Key Case Investigation Unit decided to go along with the plan, and temporarily treat Lan Shuping as the true murderer in the Flat Murder Case. At necessary times, the police station would even announce the fake news to the public, in order to trick Feng Kuo into dropping his guard.

From Feng Kuo's intentions, the reason why he kidnapped Lan Shuping's daughter, was because he was certain that Lan Shuping was the murderer that had killed Liu Jiao in the past! Once he found out that Lan Shuping had turned himself in, and that his injustice had been redressed, she would have no reason to hurt the hostage.

However, everything couldn't be dealt with so hastily. If one were to announce too quickly, it would make Feng Kuo suspicious. So, the police had to take control strictly, and take action carefully.

After the meeting, the police detectives started working tensely, but orderly. Zhao Yu, as the team lead for team A, was naturally duty bound. He returned to the office and gathered the team for a small meeting.

"Zhang!" Zhang Yu asked someone to pull the whiteboard over, in order to write down all the information, while he ordered Zhang Jingfeng, "I need a complete informational run-down on Feng Kuo now, and be as detailed as possible!"

"No problem, I'll get it done in five minutes!" Zhang Jingfeng agreed quickly. "This person was in prison for ten years, so it is going to be very easy to get his information!"

"Then, get Lan Shuping's information for me, as well!" Zhang Yu took the opportunity and said, to which Zhang Jingfeng agreed readily.

"Da Fei, Xiao Li!" Zhao Yu continued, "Find out about the case back then. Get all the clues, evidence, witness statements, verbal confessions, anything related to the case. Find them all, and stick them on the whiteboard!"

"Yes!"

"Team Lead..." Listening to Zhao Yu's commands, Liu Xueshan couldn't help but ask, "The case is definitely a little complicated, but it is a kidnapping case after all! Shouldn't we... Head over to the scene, to take a look?"

"Alright, you go then!" Zhang Yu immediately told Liu Xueshan. "You are more experienced in this. Bring a few men along with you, to look for clues at the scene! Remember, be cautious, and do not let anyone know that you are policemen! But... I have a feeling, that it will be difficult to find something there!"

"Why?" Liu Xueshan was surprised.

"Even if the prison break could be done solo, kidnapping the child naturally was planned ahead. So, there shouldn't be too big of a chance for us!" Zhao Yu said, "I dare bet my annual salary that Feng Kuo definitely had a partner-in-crime, and most likely, more than one!"

"Partner?" Zhang Jingfeng said. "True also. Otherwise, right after he escaped from the prison, he could not have so successfully kidnapped a hostage. This would be too difficult!"

“Bei Ni!” Zhao Yu turned around to tell Li Beini, “Then, help me contact Yunzhou Prison, to see if you can ask about Feng Kuo’s situation in the prison!”

“This person had been in the prison for ten years. If he really had a partner, they should be among his prison friends that were recently freed. I understand these people, the friendships formed in prison are way more profound than mere comrades!”

“So, you look along this direction. See who would most likely be among Feng Kuo’s partners.”

“Okay!” Li Beini nodded in agreement.

“Oh yeah!” Zhao Yu quickly exhorted, “Beat around the bush, when you speak. Don’t let Yunzhou police find out that Feng Kuo might have come to Qinshan. That would be unfavourable to us in saving the hostage!”

“Understood!”

“Liang!” Zhang Yu told Liang Huan again, “Look at all the details from the side about Feng Kuo’s prison break. See how this bastard could have escaped from the prison. That is definitely a very difficult topic!”

“Hehe, no problem!” Liang Huan agreed readily.

Then, Zhao Yu snapped his fingers, and everyone went hustling to their assigned tasks. That very moment, there were already people from Mao Wei’s side, who were trying to get to the know situation from Lan Shuping, including discovering how his child had gotten kidnapped, how Feng Kuo had gotten in touch with him to threaten him, and so on.

Although some of the information had yet to be confirmed, to Zhao Yu, he felt that the kidnapping case was very fishy! There seemed to be a lot of unreasonable facets involved!

From Zhao Yu’s standpoint, Feng Kuo was more than willing to take the risk of being imprisoned for life in order to kidnap Lan Shuping’s daughter, and force him to admit his crime This, in his mind, revealed two points:

Firstly, Feng Kuo was most probably wrongly accused. If he were the murderer, he could wait another nine years to return to normal life. Why would he cause more trouble?

Secondly, Feng Kuo found Lan Shuping, which meant that he was very sure that Lan Shuping was the real murderer of Liu Jiao, and had framed himself! But, from Lan Shuping’s actions and response, it looked the total opposite. He didn’t look like the real murderer at all!

Could it be... Lan Shuping was pretending? He intentionally revealed a flaw, so that the police would think that he was irrelevant? If so, this man was indeed cunning!

Tsk tsk...

Zhao Yu subconsciously pouted his lips and thought: The case is quite interesting! A kidnapping case that looked so normal, but involves a prison break and a murder case that happened ten years ago!

Then... What is the truth behind this?

Chapter 454: Who Is the Accomplice?

"I'm almost done with my stuff here!" At lunchtime, Zhang Jingfeng handed over a stack of documents to Zhao Yu and said, "There are four members in Feng Kuo's family. Besides his parents, he has a younger brother, who is two years younger than him. All of them currently live in Qinshan."

"Oh..." Zhao Yu put down his lunchbox, picked up the document, and looked at it. He asked, "Why? Why do they not have the same surname?"

"Well, the mother remarried, bringing Feng Kuo along!" Zhang Jingfeng said, "Feng Kuo follows his mother's surname, and his stepfather and younger brother have the surname 'Xiao'! His mother used to be an actress in films and TV dramas. Later on, because of what happened to Feng Kuo, his mother was deeply affected, and became mentally unstable, thus quitting showbiz! His stepfather runs a furniture factory, so the financial situation at home is pretty good!"

"Oh..."

Next, Zhao Yu looked at Lan Shuping's resume. As opposed to Feng Kuo, ever since the murder case 10 years ago, it had been smooth sailing for Lan Shuping. He had been making a lot of films and TV dramas. He also had joined a Qinshan TV station, acting as a host for many programs.

In addition, this person also seemed to have gotten an earlier start in his life. For example, he got married and had children when he was 22 years old. Now, his daughter is already in grade three. His wife works in television too, but works in editing.

Breathe...

Zhao Yu took a heavy breath, laid down the documents, and nodded at Zhang Jingfeng, beckoning him to hurry and finish his lunch. Because of the urgency of the situation, the detectives had no time to go out to eat, so all of them ordered takeout.

Suddenly, after eating a few mouthfuls from the lunchbox, the person who went to survey the crime scene with Liu Xueshan reported back. His name was Bai Bintao, and his colleagues addressed him as 'Xiao Bai', affectionately.

"Group leader!" Once Xiao Bai came into the room, he said to Zhao Yu immediately. "You are right, Feng Kuo must have an accomplice!"

Zhang Jingfeng took a lunchbox and handed it over to Xiao Bai. He said, "Take a breather, and speak slowly!"

"Uh..." Xiao Bai accepted the lunchbox, still breathing heavily. "Lan Shuping's home is in Qinshan. Is it not summer vacation now? His daughter goes to the art school to learn painting every day, and the art school is just outside the residential area. There is no need to even cross a road. Moreover, the child is already in grade three, so she goes to and from the art school, all by herself."

"Oh?" Zhao Yu gave pondered this, then seemed to suddenly have thought of something.

"When we reached the crime scene, Lan Bo from group B was already secretly investigating there!" Xiao Bai went on to say, "Now, we can be sure that the kidnapping took place on the way to the art school."

“Since it is a residential area, there is no reason that no traces were left behind, right?” Zhang Jingfeng asked.

“Or Feng Kuo could have an accomplice!” Xiao Bai said. “Along the path from the home to the art school, the only place that is not monitored by surveillance cameras is within thirty meters from the entrance of the school! From this, you can see that the kidnapers have prepared well ahead of time for this well-thought-out plan!”

“Then, look up any suspicious characters and vehicles nearby!” Zhang Jingfeng added, “For such a big, living thing to go missing, it cannot just disappear into thin air, all of the sudden, right?”

“Old Liu and his team are investigating!” Xiao Bai frowned and said. “Because we are carrying out the investigation in secret, we cannot alarm anyone. This means that, even the retrieval of the surveillance video, will deem troublesome! Moreover, the art school is particularly popular. At 8 a.m., the art school would have been flooded with people, cars, and tricycles. If you want to check every vehicle that would have been there, it would be very challenging!”

“That is true!” Zhang Jingfeng nodded slightly. “If the investigation was carried out normally, we would definitely check every single car! However, if we were to put up a large scale check, Feng Kuo would likely learn about it.”

“Yes!” Xiao Bai said helplessly. “It is really troublesome. We cannot even question the students and parents! I think that the students should be very familiar with each other, hence, maybe someone might know something!”

“At 8 a.m.... The child is 9 years old...” Zhao Yu frowned and said. “Look, there were so many people at the scene. To kidnap the child so quietly, would... Would it be that easy?”

With Zhao Yu’s question, all the detectives were in deep thought.

“Hey?” Zhang Jingfeng quickly asked Xiao Bai, “Xiao Bai, the location where the hostage was kidnapped, is there any retail store there, and so on?”

“Yes, there are many stationery shops, restaurants, and more!” Xiao Bai asked in surprise, “Old Zhang, what do you mean? Are you implying that the kidnapers are the shop owners? That is... Is it too blatant?”

“That cannot be ruled out!” Zhang Jingfeng agreed with his own opinion.

“No!” Zhao Yu thought and said, “There is... Another possibility!”

“What possibility?” everyone asked.

“A friend!” Zhao Yu said with squinted eyes. “The little girl knew the kidnapper, and was cheated away.”

Ah?

“How could that be?” Xiao Bai was the first in shaking his head. “Isn’t the kidnapper Feng Kuo? Feng Kuo had been locked up in the prison. How could the daughter of Lan Shuping know him? Leader, you make me confused!”

“Although we know that Feng Kuo kidnapped Lan Shuping’s daughter,” Zhao Yu said, “that doesn’t mean that Feng Kuo had to do it himself! After all, he has just recently managed to escape from the prison!”

“So... It was an accomplice?” Xiao Bai said in astonishment. “The accomplice not only helped Feng Kuo escape from prison, but also brought him to Qinshan, then helped him to kidnap Lan Shuping’s daughter. Also... Among the accomplices, there is a friend to Lan Shuping’s daughter?”

“Wow! That is unbelievable!” Zhang Jingfeng sighed. “It is such a well-thought-out plan! I wonder if we will be able to completely solve this case?”

“Little Zhao!” At this time, Liang Huan said to Zhao Yu, “Detailed information about Feng Kuo’s prison escape has arrived! That night, Feng Kuo ate something, then developed some allergic symptoms to the meal in the prison, causing him to foam at the mouth and go into shock!”

“The prison guards were worried, and sent him to the hospital in the Yun state overnight for treatment! After the doctor’s urgent treatment, Feng Kuo’s condition was slightly stabilized, but he still had to be observed for 24 hours.”

“There were two prison guards in charge of monitoring Feng Kuo that night, one in the room and the other at the door. Moreover, according to the procedures, Feng Kuo’s right hand was handcuffed to the sickbed.”

“Feng Kuo’s behavior in the prison was good, and so he had a good relationship with the guards. Thus, the two guards were not too uptight about their vigils, and hence, fell asleep that night.”

“Unexpectedly, at three o’clock, Feng Kuo not only unlocked his handcuffs, but also escaped, without a trace!”

“Wow!” Zhang Jingfeng exclaimed. “This plot is really catching up with Mission Impossible!”

“According to the post investigations, the prison guard watching Feng Kuo in the room had signs showing that he had been placed under mild anesthesia,” Liang Huan said. “According to the experts, it could have been from a spray-like anesthesia!”

“Also, according to video surveillance, Feng Kuo should have escaped from the window,” Liang Huan said solemnly. “The window had a security net. But... When Feng Kuo fled, the three crossbars of the security net were broken! It should have been broken ahead of time! Moreover, according to the final surveillance video, Feng Kuo had changed his clothes when he left the hospital.”

“Oh my God!” Hearing this, everyone could not help exclaiming.

Looking at the details of Feng Kuo’s prison escape, this was indeed a well-thought-out plan!

“So...” Zhao Yu turned to Li Beini and asked, “Beini, how are you doing there?”

“That is weird! So weird!” Li Beini said with a worried face. “Senior, I have already investigated Feng Kuo’s situation in the Yun state prison. But... Because of his outstanding carpentry skills, he had been living in a mechanic workshop cell, without any contact with the other common criminals. Besides, I have checked on the prisoners who were living with him in the same area. For so many years, only two people have been released from that prison: one is 85 years old, and the other is suffering from an advanced stage of liver cancer.”

“Senior, I think...” Li Beini shook head and said, “Feng Kuo’s accomplice does not seem to be his prison friend.”

“Tsk tsk...” Zhao Yu had not expected such a result. He frowned and said, “If it was not a prison friend, who else could it be?”

Chapter 455: Being Framed?

“Zhang,” Zhao Yu said, “Go and investigate again! Feng Kuo’s friends, relatives and family, and pull out their old connections, one by one! If his partner in crime is not one of his prison friends, then we have to try to find out who it is, among these people!”

“Okay! No problem!” Zhang Jing Feng threw the empty rice box into the dustbin, and quickly returned to his working desk.

“Beini!” Zhao Yu said, “Feng Kuo is a prisoner, after all. If he had partners, he had to always keep in touch with him! So, try the investigation from prison again. See who visited him at the prison, and who kept in touch with him the most!”

“Alright!” Li Beini cleared her rice box and started working.

After a short break, Zhao Yu had adapted to his role as a team lead with extreme speed. The commanding work was clear and fast, just like being a general.

Although it hadn’t been long since Zhao Yu had joined the Key Case Investigation Unit, as he was nurtured by Qi Ping and Miao Ying continuously, he had been able to adapt to his job very well. He wasn’t that arrogant gangster that he used to be anymore!

Although he was young and inexperienced, he had resolved so many significant cases, that all of the police detectives in the team were utterly convinced of his capacity to lead. Regarding his orders, they followed all of them, and never delayed.

After delegating the task, the whiteboard, which was covered with related information to the case, was almost fully added onto by all of the police detectives! Through the middle region of the whiteboard, people could easily understand the apartment murder case that had happened ten years ago, with just one, clarifying glance.

Ten years ago, in Qinshan Petroleum Second Franchise’s Flat, there was a murder case. A female, who was a fresh graduate named Liu Jiao, was stabbed to death in the flat with a knife. Fresh blood was all over the ground, and it was a tragic scene.

After verification by a forensic scientist, it was understood that the victim had died between nine thirty to ten at night. The person who had discovered the dead body, and then lodged a police report, was determined to be the murderer, Feng Kuo!

According to Feng Kuo’s verbal confession, on the night that Liu Jiao was killed, he was working at the film set, shooting a scene until nine thirty, due to a last minute add-on clip by the production team.

After work, he had returned to his house, in order to shower and then head over to the Petroleum Second Franchise's Flat to look for Liu Jiao. Back then, the two of them were in a relationship, and Feng Kuo would stay over at Liu Jiao's every night.

But, after he got to the flat, he saw that Liu Jiao's residence door was open. When he entered, he was shocked, as Liu Jiao was there, lying in a pool of blood on the ground!

Feng Kuo was shocked, and immediately called 120, before then lodging a police report. But, by then, Liu Jiao had already lost all signs of life.

After received the report, the detective team naturally seized ahold of Feng Kuo, and verified the actual facts, according to his confession. In the end, when the detectives arrived at Feng Kuo's residence the very next day, they found a dagger that had blood stains on it in his bedroom.

After the DNA test, it was deciphered that there was Liu Jiao's blood found on the blade, as well as Feng Kuo's fingerprint on the handle. Due to the appearance of this evidence, Feng Kuo naturally became listed as the top suspect! Later on, after the police authorities obtained more evidence, and were finally able to send Feng Kuo behind bars, he was sentenced to death with reprieve.

According to the information, Feng Kuo did not admit his wrongdoing. After being imprisoned, he complained many times, but there wasn't any new evidence or clues, so his appeals always failed.

However, besides Feng Kuo, Lan Shuping was also listed as a suspect. There was a complete record of the corresponding file on him. It clearly stated that Lan Shuping was drinking in a restaurant during the crime, and that he had even called one of his friends to join in the drinking. Also, he had only left the pub at about eleven that night.

Although the pub was located within the Petroleum Second Franchise, due to the fact that Lan Shuping had a completely solid alibi, in the end, he was eliminated as a suspect entirely. Besides these, the police couldn't find any other suspects. As the fingerprint, footprint, hair and that sort, which were found at the crime scene, were all Feng Kuo's, the police confirmed that Feng Kuo had to be the murderer.

"Tsk tsk... this is so weird!" Zhao Yu pouted, as he told the police detectives next to him, "Feng Kuo might really have been wrongly imprisoned! Look, when he was realised Liu Jiao was stabbed, he called 120 first, then only 110. In other words, he wanted to save her. Subconsciously, he thought Liu Jiao could be saved. This is a very normal reaction, when someone comes across such a situation!"

"If Feng Kuo called 110 first, but didn't call 120, it means that there was something fishy! Plus, the case was closed so miserably!" Zhao Yu pointed at the whiteboard and continued, "There are many things that don't make sense at all! Try to imagine, if Feng Kuo was really a murderer, and if he killed her, why did he stay at the scene? Plus, it would be absolutely silly to hide the weapon in his drawer in his bedroom! Wouldn't he instead be better off randomly digging a hole and burying it?"

"Really..." Liang Huan pondered, "Feng Kuo and Liu Jiao stayed together, and he entered the crime scene after the crime, when he apparently found her. So, if there were his fingerprint, footprint, and hair found at the scene, it's natural."

“True that!” Xiao Bai supported. “After committing a murder, first hide the weapon at home, and then return to the scene to call the ambulance and...All of this... This isn’t stupid, this is just psychotic! From what I see, he was definitely framed!”

“Framed?” Da Fei objected and said, “but, if he was framed, how do you explain the fingerprint on the dagger? Plus, the dagger was from Feng Kuo’s house! Would he be framed by his own family?”

“Correct as well!” Xiao Bai creased eyebrows and pondered aloud, “If the murderer intended to frame him, he could have wiped off his fingerprint from the handle after the murder. But... there was Feng Kuo’s fingerprint on the weapon. That’s hard to explain away!”

“The most unexplainable evidence was....” Zhao Yu creased his eyebrows and said, “I mean...if there was really someone that wanted to frame Feng Kuo, why didn’t he just leave the weapon at the scene? Think about it, if the weapon was at the scene, and it had Feng Kuo’s fingerprint, isn’t that even more convincing?”

“Eh? True...” Xiao Bai shook his head and said, “Why did they try to show that the murderer was in Feng Kuo’s house? Isn’t that a little too ‘extra’?”

“And another important point!” Liang Huan said, “Motives? If Feng Kuo wanted to kill Liu Jiao, there must be a motive, right? The two of them were still in their honeymoon period! Feng Kuo would have to be completely mentally ill, to have wanted to kill his own girlfriend!”

“Nope.... No....” Li Beini was working on her task, while she reminded, “Look at the middle part of the report, it is clearly written there! It says that, although the two of them were in a relationship, they were not quite stable. Apparently, they always fought, and even were seen having a row at the production scene before!”

“Is it?” Liang Huan quickly read through the record and shook his head. “Impossible! It says that, due to the two of them having different opinions, Feng Kuo wanted to develop his career in the bigger film production company in the capital, and get married later! But, Liu Jiao wanted to settle down at the current company, and get married first, before moving forward in her career!”

“So, to kill someone for that difference....” Liang Huan shook his head, “that’s such a joke!”

“Exactly!” Xiao Bai supported. “The victim was killed with the knife in Feng Kuo’s house. In other words, her death was pre-planned! Those who have conflict, normally kill by accident, mostly by seizing one’s throat, or knocking into something, or that sort of thing! So, Feng Kuo must really have been framed!”

“Then... Who framed him?” Da Fei said. “Would it be... could it really be Teacher Lan?”

Chapter 456: Two Strokes of a Chinese Character Written With Blood

“How can that be? Mr. Lan?” Xiao Bai scratched his head and said, “He looks like a gentleman. How can he be the murderer?”

“We cannot be sure. You can’t judge a person by his looks!” Liang Huan said. “Don’t forget what his profession is. An actor. Mr. Lan is so good at acting. Was he acting, when he came to turn himself in? If so, we would have been fooled!”

“But... If it was him, how do you explain his alibi? Da Fei shook his head. “And... Why did he kill Liu Jiao? And how could he enter the bedroom of Feng Kuo so easily? It does not make sense!”

“He was jealous of Feng Kuo, so he killed Liu Jiao, Feng Kuo’s most precious!” Someone guessed, “They had a close relationship before. Hence, it would not be difficult at all for Lan Shuping to secretly make a duplicate of the key.”

“Hey, I said, are we straying from the problem?” Xiao Li said. “We are investigating the kidnapping case now! After all, it is more important to save the hostage! I feel that the most important thing to do now, is to find out where Feng Kuo has hidden the child. Why do we keep harping on the 10 year old murder case?”

“Why does it not matter?” Liang Huan retorted. “If we can find out the truth of what happened 10 years ago, it will certainly help in the kidnapping case! If Lan Shuping really did commit the murder, the kidnapping case would be readily solved!”

“But...”

“Hey? What is this?” Suddenly, when everyone was discussing intensely, Zhao Yu noticed something from a picture on the whiteboard, and asked, “Here... What is being drawn here?”

Liang Huan stretched his neck and looked over. He realized that Zhao Yu was referring to a photograph taken from the crime scene back then. He quickly looked down at the file, then told Zhao Yu, “Leader, that’s another clue that was left on the crime scene! According to the report, after the deceased was stabbed, she did not die immediately. Before dying, she wrote a ‘丿’ pattern with her blood-stained fingers! However, only those two strokes were written. Since it was the last thing that the deceased had written, it would naturally be referring to the real murderer!”

“Two strokes?” Xiao Bai used his hand to virtually draw two strokes in the air, then suddenly said with great frustration, “Oh no, oh no! Feng Kuo’s surname is Feng, containing two strokes. Does that mean he is the murderer? It was no wonder the police were so sure that Feng Kuo was the murderer. After much investigation, it seems that we have wasted our efforts and time, only to find out that he is truly the murderer, after all.”

“No, it might not be true...” Zhao Yu also stretched out his hand to virtually draw two strokes, as he said, “Two strokes does not necessarily have to refer to Feng Kuo!”

After Zhao Yu’s reminder, everyone stretched out their hands to join in the virtual drawing of two strokes.

The fastest to respond was none other than Liang Huan, who suddenly straightened up, surprised, and said, “Oh my God, if we were to write the two strokes vertically, isn’t that part of the Chinese character ‘Lan’?”

“Gosh!” Everyone gasped, amazed. “Don’t tell me that... Lan Shuping is really the murderer of the case?”

“I am beginning to understand...” Zhao Yu said, still pondering, “the reason why Feng Kuo is so sure that Lan Shuping is the murderer! That’s right!”

Zhao Yu asked Da Fei again, "Do you have any more detailed information? For example... What position was the deceased in, when she wrote these two strokes? If we could find out the position of her arm, we might be able to understand whether these two strokes refer to the Chinese character 'Feng' or 'Lan'".

"I... We will look up the information again!" Da Fei quickly patted Xiao Li, and the two of them immediately left for further investigation.

This is... Interesting!

Zhao Yu's eyes were fixed on the two strokes on the photo. He had a feeling that these two strokes, written in blood and left behind by Liu Jiao, would likely become the key to solve the case!

So... Is the murderer's surname Feng, or Lan?

The investigation task, this time, was very special. In order not to attract the attention of Feng Kuo, the police chose to investigate secretly, rather than conducting a high-profile investigation.

Group A's main task was to collect data. However, the group could only work within its own office. Also, all the information they obtained could only be accessed and investigated through a surveying of the existing data, not through the questioning of the public.

Of course, Mao Wei's side was no better. In order to get the videos from the cameras near the scene of the kidnapping, they did everything they could.

Then, although they managed to retrieve the videos, after an initial investigation, nothing suspicious was found to have happened during the period that the hostage was kidnapped. Therefore, they expanded the time range, and started to search for other videos. Due to the heavy workload, no concrete results had been found yet.

In addition, Mao Wei and others also questioned the students from the art school, along with the help of the school teachers. However, no one noticed anything out of the ordinary with the daughter of Lan Shuping that day.

Just as Zhao Yu said, it was difficult to find clues at the scene of the kidnapping. Feng Kuo and his accomplices had been well-prepared ahead of time, and were unlikely to have left behind any obvious clues.

On the other hand, the detective in charge of interrogation had finished questioning Lan Shuping, who had said that he had to record a show that morning of the kidnapping, and so went to the TV station at 5 a.m., with his phone turned off. According to him, he did not know that Feng Kuo had escaped from the prison, nor did he know that his daughter was in danger.

The school teacher did not see his daughter coming to school. This alarmed her, so then called him, but the phone could not get through, so the teacher left a message on his WeChat.

After he finished recording the first part of the show, he turned on his mobile phone and received a short message. The message read:

"If you want your daughter to live, you need to do two things. First, do not let the police know about the kidnapping. Second, turn yourself in to the police, and reveal to the public the crimes that you

committed 10 years ago! As long as you do the above two things, I will release your daughter. Make a choice, and exchange your salvation for your daughter's life! Or, continue to bury your sins, and let your daughter atone for those sins! You know who I am!"

At first, Lan Shuping thought that someone was playing a prank on him, or figured that it was a scam, and so, did not take it seriously. However, when he opened his WeChat again, and saw the teacher's message, he realized that the situation was indeed serious.

He hurried to call his wife and school to verify the information. He learned that, not only had his daughter been kidnapped, but that Feng Kuo had also escaped from the prison. All of the sudden, Lan Shuping felt as if he had been struck by lightning, and his mind went blank.

Subsequently, Lan Shuping and his wife went to the vicinity around the art school in order to search for themselves. They also consulted their relatives for advice. Finally, Lan Shuping had no choice but to come to the Rongyang branch office in order to turn himself in and plead guilty.

Needless to say, the only incident that had to do with him 10 years ago was the one and only current "big" case. Since Feng Kuo had escaped from the prison, he must be the one who kidnapped his daughter. All Feng Kuo asked for, was for him to admit that he had murdered Liu Jiao.

During interrogation, Lan Shuping emphasized again and again that he did not murder Liu Jiao! Years ago, he was secretly admiring Liu Jiao. Had he really murdered someone out of jealousy, it would have been Feng Kuo that he murdered, not Liu Jiao!

However, Lan Shuping also said to save his daughter, and that he would take the rap for Feng Kuo's murder charge. For the sake of his daughter, even if Feng Kuo had wanted his life, he would have readily agreed!

Although the detectives knew that Lan Shuping was good at acting, everything he said was very touching and sincere, which impressed them. It is precisely because of this, after Mao Wei's application, which ordered the rescue of the hostage earlier, the police decided to act upon their original plan, ahead of schedule.

The higher-ups requested that Lan Shuping plead guilty that very night, and to admit that he is the murderer who killed Liu Jiao. This news would then be broadcast to the public, in order to attract the attention of Feng Kuo, so that he would then let his guard down.

In order to make it look real, the key case investigation unit had to combine the case details from 10 years ago to create a fake confession report, which Lan Shuping had to memorize. All of this was so that the public did not see through the plan...

Chapter 457: Bentley

"Hello, the number you have dialed is out of the coverage area..."

"Are you serious?"

Zhao Yu cursed in distress, and had no choice but to hang up.

It was the sixth time he had called Miao Ying, but the phone was out of the coverage area. Zhao Yu calculated the time, and came up with a conclusion to comfort himself: Miao Ying might be on the plane!

It seemed like Miao Ying's hometown was extremely far away, so could it be... She might have even gone overseas?

Zhao Yu wanted to express to her that he missed her presence, but he also wanted to discuss with Miao Ying about the kidnapping case, to if she had any other countermeasures in mind. However, it seemed that this hope would be difficult to be realized.

At that very moment, it was already 11:50 pm. Zhao Yu was still on duty in the office. Although there wasn't any emergency currently in the case, as a team lead, he had to stay put in the headquarters.

Although the hot summer days had passed, and the weather was getting more cool, the office still had the air conditioner on, mostly to alleviate the impatience of the police detectives, and to calm them down. As usual, Zhao Yu was standing before the white board. He was looking at the information on the it, while he tried to find new clues within its framework.

From what Zhao Yu saw, the case before him was different from the major pending cases that he had encountered thus far. Maybe this was due to the fact that he had never come into contact with a kidnapping case before. In his mind, he had constantly kept thinking about the murder case, ever since ten years ago. And, as he thought of it, he would often get distracted from the present topic.

Tsk tsk...

However, in actuality, he was still very well aware. He knew that, at that time, the most urgent thing was to save Lan Shuping's daughter.

But... what should I do to find the girl? Where would Feng Kuo hide her? Who is his partner in crime? And, most perplexing, how did they avoid the surveillance camera, when they kidnapped the girl?

On the photo, he could see that Lan Shuping's daughter had black, long hair, and looked cute. As the child was suddenly kidnapped, Lan Shuping's family was definitely anxious for her swift, and safe, return.

If there was something wrong with the child, their family wouldn't be able to live anymore.....

Then, according to the orders from the higher ups in the Key Case Investigation Unit, they already spread the news of Lan Shuping's having turned himself in. As Lan Shuping was a famous figure in Qinshan, the news quickly caused a vigorous response. It was spread widely, exploding across the internet and on WeChat.

The police thought that, if Feng Kuo was paying attention about it, he should already have gotten the news. But, Zhao Yu thought that Feng Kuo wouldn't let go of the hostage so quickly. He would wait until Lan Shuping was sentenced, and after the police redress his grievance, then he would consider releasing his daughter!

Hence, the time would be dragged out much longer, and the longer it took, the more variables there would be! So, the police's strategy was to stabilize Feng Kuo. If they wanted to quickly rescue the hostage, they needed to take a different approach.

But, until this was accomplished, the police had yet to find their breakthrough point. In this kidnapping, which was different from those that asked for ransom, the kidnapper only sent one message, then vanished into thin air.

Such a kidnapping method brought the police authority a huge obstacle. Besides, Zhang Yu even considered a more profound layer to this puzzle: Who was the real murderer that killed Li Jiao back then? Although this was definitely more of a secondary question in the case, Zhao Yu felt that, if they could reveal the truth of that, then the kidnap case could also be solved easily!

Plus, from the signs present, Feng Kuo was most likely framed! The reason why he would take such a huge risk, was because he wanted to prove his innocence.

So, if the real murderer wasn't Feng Kuo, who could it be? If Lan Shuping was the murderer, how could the police let him wander about freely?

Hence, Zhao Yu needed to do two things, the first was to save the hostage, the second was to find the truth of the apartment murder case. Just when Zhao Yu was pondering all of this solemnly, the system in his mind suddenly sent an ending notification.

Zhao Yu had only gotten a completion rate of eighty two percent, so he had only received a signal enhancer device. He analyzed this rate, and realized that he had gotten a "Gen Li" hexagram, but only "Gen" was fulfilled, while the "Li" hexagram, that represented friendship, wasn't. Hence, for the entire day, he didn't come across any so-called friends.

Oh...

Zhao Yu finally understood. The main reason why he didn't meet any friends, was because he didn't leave the office, but had instead stayed in for the entire day. He only gave commands in the office, but didn't visit the crime scene.

Tsk tsk...

Zhao Yu walked back and forth in the office, while he pondered. It seemed that, if he wanted to increase the miracle completion rate and solve the case, he couldn't just sit in the command tent and devise strategies!

The next day, he had to take a different approach, and venture out to investigate at the scene. After making this decision, Zhao Yu returned to his working desk to make a plan for the investigation the next day.

After he was done with planning, it was already past midnight, so he was able to get another hexagram. In the end, happy news was heard. He had gotten a "Gen Dui" hexagram.

Every time there was a case, what Zhao Yu looked forward to the most was the friendly "Gen" hexagram. With that hexagram, it meant that the investigation approach was correct!

Of course, as he had gotten the hexagram, Zhao Yu quickly resolved upon the chosen side quest. With his past experience, he could resolve the hexagram smoothly. With only ten minutes, he had found the miracle location and time.

In the end, when he was referring to the map, he realized something interesting: The location of the side quest was at the entrance of the Rongyang Branch, about thirty meters away. The time was 7:53 am, and the height was zero.

Interestingly, Zhao Yu shook his head faintly. He wondered what would he would encounter. Would it be helping an old grandma to cross the road again?

Later on, he pondered about the case again, standing before the whiteboard until he felt weary. After he had reached his limit, he pulled three chairs together and slept.

The night was silent. Then, on this second day, after finishing his shift, Zhao Yu went towards his first stop of the day, the entrance of the police station.

In the end, the miracle encounter location that he wanted to look for, was the pedestrian street by the road. He looked at his watch, seeing that it was already 7:50, meaning that he had to wait another three minutes.

Zhang Yu stood there, and looked around. With only a glance, he immediately noticed something out of the ordinary: On the road across from the police station, there was a black car driving slowly. On the logo of the car was an eye-catching letter B.

Bentley?!

Zhao Yu was curious, and he looked at it carefully. The Bentley was the Mulsanne model that Miao Ying had talked about before. Its pricing was around six to seven million dollars!

The position of car photo was empty, and it should be a newly collected car. Just as Zhao Yu was looking at it, the Bentley drove into the bicycle lane, and slowly stopped right in front of him.

Before the door opened, Zhao Yu heard a sharp laughter coming from inside.

“Hehehe...”

Then, the door from the back seat opened, and a middle aged man with a moustache exited from the car. The person was wearing a tailor made suit, which looked very westernized.

“Hehehe...” the person opened the door himself, still laughing as he got out of the car. He smiled at Zhao Yu, and extended his hand, saying, “You are police office Zhao Yu, right? Hello, nice to meet you! Hehe...”

“You are...” Zhao Yu tried to recall his face, but he was certain that he didn’t know this person.

“Let me introduce myself, the man with the moustache nodded faintly. “I am the general manager from Bai Shi Li Shoe Enterprise, Li Chen, but you can also call me Charlie!”

“Bai Shi Li Shoe Enterprise?” Zhao Yu creased his eyebrows. “What do I have to do with shoes?”

“Hehehe..... actually,” the man with the moustache smiled and replied, “I came to look for you, because I have a deal to make with you!”

“Shoes? A deal?” Zhao Yu pondered his words, then suddenly spoke out, loud and clear, “Oh... I understand now! You... want to look for me to be an ambassador?”

Chapter 458: Personal Bodyguard

At first, Zhao Yu was harboring wishful thoughts. He felt that today's duplicate adventure was quite plausible. He did not expect that someone would be driving a Bentley to discuss business with him so early in the morning!

Is it true that he was really a celebrity now? If he was able to clinch the endorsement, he would be able to bag a good profit. Ha ha. Today's hexagram was "Dui" hexagram, a representation of fortunes...

However, after he listened to what the general manager said, he was momentarily dumbfounded.

"Ha ha ha... Officer Zhao, you have misunderstood!" Li Chen said with a smile. "It is not an endorsement, but an employment contract! Our chairman said that, as long as you are willing to sign the contract, your annual salary would be two million dollars. It also includes five insurance funds and one housing fund! You will be rewarded with a car at the end of the year, too!"

"What? Employment? Two million dollars?" Zhao Yu was puzzled.

"Here..." As Li Chen spoke, he opened his mobile phone and showed Zhao Yu a picture. He said, "The situation is as such... Our chairman's precious daughter needs a personal bodyguard. After several rounds of selection, our chairman settled on seeking out specially a man well-versed in both literature and military affairs, like you Officer Zhao! Thus, he sent me here to sincerely invite you... Ha ha ha..."

When Li Chen was laughing, his moustache moved up and down. It looked funny.

Personal bodyguard?

"Gosh!" Zhao Yu immediately said. "Your boss is not afraid that I might mess with his precious daughter? He wants me as a bodyguard?!"

As he spoke, he took a glance at the photo of the lady, and... He immediately knew what was going on! The photo of the chairman's daughter revealed none other than the lady with the green lipstick. Clearly, it was the same Ferrari lady, who had attempted to jump off the carpark a few days ago!

Needless to say, the lady must have taken a fancy to him, thus persuading her father to find ways to court him! If Zhao Yu was as he had been in his previous life, he would not miss such a good chance to get into a wealthy family!

But now, Zhao Yu was already a slightly rich man. So, why would he be tempted with an annual salary of two million dollars?

Besides, he already had the goddess, so naturally would have no intention to be involved with the lady with green lipstick. What's more, the lady with green lipstick was so perverse and willful. If he was to become her personal bodyguard, he might be the one committing suicide, under the tremendous pressure!

So, Zhao Yu turned down Li Chen's invitation immediately. Li Chen was very surprised, and hurriedly attempted to persuade Zhao Yu, saying that the salary was negotiable. He also added that this job would definitely be better than Zhao Yu's current police post. And, by a stroke of luck, that Zhao Yu could

possibly become the tycoon's son-in-law too. However, Zhao Yu, still not convinced, turned his back and walked away!

After all, Zhao Yu still had an important case to solve. Where would he find the time to wrangle with such a thing?

Li Chen did not expect that Zhao Yu would be so quick to refuse, and took some time to regain his composure. Standing in the strong wind, beside the Bentley, he watched Zhao Yu walk away.

When Zhao Yu returned to the police station and started his car, his brain sent out a response. He had only received one point for this adventure.

Come on?

One point?

Zhao Yu said to the system in disbelief, "Oh, do I have to agree to court the lady with green lipstick to improve my score for this adventure? This is utterly incomprehensible!"

Holy sh*t!

After the car started, Zhao Yu quickly put the duplicate adventure behind him, and began to concentrate his energy and devote himself to solving the case. Zhao Yu's next stop would be to take a look at the scene of the kidnapping. Although many colleagues had made a trip there yesterday, and even managed to retrieve the surveillance videos, Zhao Yu still wanted to see it in person.

Qinshan's residential area fell within the jurisdiction of the Rongyang area. It was located right at the border between the Rongyang and the Moyang areas. It was a relatively upscale residential area in Qinshan city.

The art school, where Lan Shuping's daughter learns painting, was only separated by a wall from the residential area. However, to get to the art school, one needed to make a big detour outside the gate of the residential area.

The path from the gate of the residential area to the art school was being closely monitored by the surveillance cameras, except for one particular blind spot. This blind spot was about 30 meters long, and was situated at the front entrance of the art school. It was also at this exact blind spot, where Lan Shuping's daughter went missing.

When Zhao Yu arrived, the passageway was crowded with many people, as it was the peak hour for students to arrive at school. Zhao Yu turned the car, stopping at the side of the road. To Zhao Yu's surprise, the broad passageway was not a dead end to the school. Rather, there were several narrow alleys, in addition to many shops, which flanked both sides of the passageway.

Some of the alleys led to the main roads outside, with no surveillance cameras installed in the alley. That is to say, the kidnapper may have taken away the hostage from any one of these alleys!

But...

Zhao Yu walked into one of the alleys. While looking deep into the corridor, he thought to himself, "If the child was kidnapped in the alley, it is very likely that the child walked into the alley herself."

Could it be... The child and the kidnapers, really did know each other?

With doubts in his mind, Zhao Yu examined the place very carefully. In order to find out the monitoring situation more thoroughly, and to see if there was any loophole within it, he immediately used an invisible detector.

Through the accurate detection of the invisible detector, Zhao Yu quickly found that, although there were many shops selling stationery and snacks, there were none that had surveillance cameras outfitted outside their entrances. The surveillance cameras were all installed inside the shops, thus, they were unable to capture any happenings outside.

Tsk tsk...

Standing in the middle of the passageway, looking at the children and parents passing by, Zhao Yu's thoughts were brought back to the morning when the little girl had disappeared. He was thinking hard, surmising that, if he was the kidnapper, how could he escape the attention of so many people, and thus, quietly kidnap the child away?

Although there were many alleys nearby, the child had come to the art school to study, and hence, would not casually follow a stranger into an alley. Moreover, although there was no surveillance camera in the alleys, the main roads that the alleys all led to were indeed within the surveillance zone.

If the kidnapers were to have made use of the alleys for their kidnapping, it would have definitely aroused the suspicion of the police.

The kidnapers... How did they do that?

In order not to lose any hint of clues, Zhao Yu went around every alley, and even wandered around the entire art school. Though, in the end, he still did not fully understand how the kidnapers succeeded in the kidnapping. However, he was more certain that the person, who had kidnapped the child from the scene, was not Feng Kuo himself!

Think about it: A criminal, who had escaped from a prison a few hundred kilometers away, how could he stay unflustered, while kidnapping a nine year old child, without leaving any trace? Zhao Yu believed that Feng Kuo's accomplice, who was the one that actually planned the kidnapping and the jailbreak, must be a master!

Prior to this, Li Beini had checked Feng Kuo's prison visiting records. In the past 10 years, many people had visited him, including his family members, relatives, and friends. Therefore, within a short time, it was not clear which one among these was the accomplice of Feng Kuo. More time would be needed in order to look deeper into the records.

Thus, it remained unknown, just who this master was...

Chapter 459: Youthhood Gone Bad

From the arts school, Zhao Yu didn't drive, but instead walked toward Lan Shuping's house, along the route where Lan Shuping's daughter usually headed for school. On the way, Zhao Yu looked at the situation nearby carefully.

He felt that the mysterious kidnapper could have kidnapped her successfully, because he had first done his homework well. He obviously had trailed and observes her, at the very least. So, with this in mind, if they were to rewatch the surveillance video again, they might be able to find a new clue.

He immediately called Mao Wei to remind him about that angle. But, Mao Wei told Zhao Yu that they had already gotten all the surveillance videos, including the ones within the housing area, and that they were already checking them.

After putting down the phone, Zhao Yu decided to visit Lan Shuping's residency. Even if he couldn't find clues about the kidnapping case there, he could at least do a background check on Lan Shuping, to see if he could possibly be linked to the apartment murder case.

Lan Shuping's residence was the two story building located right in the middle of the housing estate, which was the best location in the entire area. When Zhao Yu arrived, Zhang Yaohui and Lan Bo were there!

In order to not cause a scene, the two of them were stationed there, assuming the undercover identities of Lan Shuping's sworn brothers. They had set up audio monitoring equipment, just in case the kidnapper called, and they were also there to protect Lan Shuping's family, in secret, of course.

Lan Shuping's house was a four-bedroom luxurious residency, about two hundred square meters large. And, although there were many relatives living there, it wasn't crowded.

Knowing their child had been kidnapped, the whole family was naturally anxious and worried. The relatives were waiting anxiously, while they were taking care of Lan Shuping's wife and parents.

Zhao Yu had just entered, and he could already feel that the atmosphere at the scene was odd. Almost no one spoke, and everyone hung their heads and shoulders low. It was a quite depressing and lethargic setting.

Very quickly, Zhao Yu understood. As it turned out, as the police wanted to detain a high level of confidentiality, they didn't tell them the truth, specifically, that Lan Shuping's turning himself in was just for show. So, when they found out that Lan Shuping was a murderer, they naturally felt double the damage, resulting in their current states of sagging morale.

Among all of them, only Lan Shuping's wife, Gao Ting, knew of these covert insights. But, in order to save her daughter, she could only keep this secret from her relatives, at least for now.

Under Zhang Yaohui's guidance, Zhao Yu finally saw Gao Ting in her child's bedroom. After opening the bedroom door, he saw that Gao Ting was sitting by her child's bed, wiping her tears, and carrying her child's watch in her hand.

Zhang Yaohui introduced Zhao Yu to Gao Ting softly, then quickly left the room. Gao Ting was beautiful and decently dressed. She looked very proper, and was a very elegant lady.

"Leader, thank you for your hard work!" As she saw Zhao Yu's arrival, Gao Ting quickly stood up to greet him. But, due to her long period of oppression, she stood up rather wobbly.

"Take a seat, and please sit while we talk! Mm..." Zhao Yu looked down at the child's watch in Gao Ting's hands. He was wondering if he should ask the questions that he had prepared.

“Oh...” Gao Ting thought that Zhao Yu was referring to the watch, and so she quickly explained, “My daughter is clumsy. She forgot to wear her phone watch yesterday, when she went for class! The watch has a GPS function. It’d be great... if she had just been wearing it...”

Then, Gao Ting’s tears fell uncontrollably.

“Mm...” Zhao Yu creased his eyebrows, and stopped when he was going to speak. He looked around and asked, “Is this your daughter’s room? There are so many drawings...”

The walls in the bedroom were covered with many of her child’s drawings, and also her certificates. Those drawings were all innocent and freehand. Although the strokes were simple, they were filled with childish delight.

“Yeah!” Gao Ting explained. “My daughter really likes drawing. She would draw whatever she thought about. Sometimes, even when she was eating, she would be constantly drawing! So, her bedroom has always looked like this. It’s just like her little workshop!”

Zhao Yu looked at the drawings on the wall, and complemented sincerely, “The drawings look great!”

“Mm...” Gao Ting finally calmed down, as she asked Zhao Yu, “Leader, I wonder..... since you came today, do you have any updates?”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu saw that the timing of the situation was right, and he quickly got down to business, saying, “I’m here because I have some questions to ask you!”

“Go ahead!” Gao Ting said, waiting sincerely.

“I’d like to know...” Zhao Yu said solemnly, “Did Lan Shuping tell you about Liu Jiao, in the past?”

“Oh! About this!” Gao Ting had her eyebrows tightly knit, as she answered, “He brought her up a few times, but not many! He only told me about the three of them forming a group that was amazing, and if it hadn’t been for Liu Jiao’s accident, the three of them would’ve achieved a great result!”

“Then..... How about their relationship?” Zhao Yu asked again, “Has your husband mentioned anything to you? Feng Kuo and Liu Jiao were a couple, so why would Feng Kuo want to kill Liu Jiao?”

“About this...” Gao Ting recalled, “he didn’t say much directly! But, there was once, when he had too much to drink, that he cried, and called for Liu Jiao! I feel that my husband might have liked Liu Jiao before!”

She continued, admitting, “Of course, I was upset. But I can’t be jealous of a dead woman, right? So, I didn’t bring it up again, after that.”

“How about Feng Kuo?” Zhao Yu asked again.

“I’m not sure,” Gao Ting said. “I’m guessing that my husband might be holding grudges against this person!”

“Oh...” Zhao Yu thought and asked, “Then... can you show me Teacher Lan’s photos from the past? During his university days, perhaps? And, did he keep anything, like a diary or that sort, that could reflect what happened in his youth?”

"This..." Gao Ting creased her eyebrows, and suddenly realized something. She asked solemnly in a hurry, "Police officer, why do you need all these things? I know my husband's temperament the best out of anyone, and he wouldn't carry out a murder! Although he is an extrovert, he is very timid. It's impossible that it's him!"

"That's not what I meant," Zhao Yu assured her. "I just want to understand the situation of the three of them better through the photos!"

Zhao Yu explained, as best he could, that there might be another person who was the murderer. If there was, it must be someone that was involved with them!

"No!" Gao Ting said sadly, after hearing his logic. "Police officer, there aren't any of such things! Ever since Lan and I were married, I have never seen his photos from university! I reckon that, because of Liu Jiao's death, his university memories and youthhood have left a bad taste in his mouth. So, he didn't want to keep the memories! Those memories only brought pain! Why would he keep the photos?"

"Then... okay!" Zhao Yu looked around the room and told Gao Ting, "If you find anything related to ten tears back, please inform me. Don't belittle these things, as they might be the keys to getting your daughter home safe, earlier!"

"Okay... Okay..." bringing up her daughter, Gao Ting's eyes again welled up with tears...

...

After leaving Lan Shuping's house, Zhao Yu walked towards where he had parked his car. He thought about the conversation earlier with Gao Ting.

From Gao Ting's angle, Lan Shuping didn't look like a murderer. If he couldn't let go of Liu Jiao for so many years, there wasn't any reason for him to kill her back then!

Just like his wife had said, even if he were to kill someone, he would kill Feng Kuo, but not Liu Jiao, who he deeply loved.

It's not Feng Kuo, and not Lan Shuping...

So, who would it be...

Was there really someone else who was the murderer?"

Tsk tsk.....

Zhao Yu thought about it, and when he got to his car, he suddenly remembered, if I can't find Lan Shuping's information and photos from back then, why not take another angle?

Besides Lan Shuping, there's another place that I can find it, right?

Chapter 460: Ill-Fated Woman

“Leader!” Da Fei was on the line, reporting the findings to Zhao Yu in a serious tone. “We looked up all of the photographs of the crime scene. Neither the exact location of the deceased, nor the two strokes written in blood were clear!”

“Later, we had an idea, and thought of a different way.”

“It turns out that the forensic doctor, who was in charge of this case, was Hu Bin’s teacher. We got in touch with him through the help of Hu Bin! Although the old man has since retired, he could still recall the scene at that time. He said that he remembered that the two strokes written in blood was right in front of the deceased’s body.”

“That is to say, the two strokes represent the top of a Chinese character, not the side of the character!”

“Oh?” Zhao Yu asked, “Is it not ‘Feng’ but ‘Lan’?”

“The old forensic doctor told us,” said Da Fei, “they had done gravity pressure analysis on the words written in blood. It was proven that the two strokes were written by the deceased, before she died, not written by the murderer.”

“Oh?”

“If someone had held her hand to write, it would be more uniform in the distribution of gravity, but the gravitational pressure of the words written on the crime scene was unstable. Also, when the last stroke was written, the gravitational pressure was weakened drastically, most likely because she wrote it as she gave up her last breath!” Da Fei added, “So, team leader, we think we have to check on Lan Shuping thoroughly. He must have hidden some truth from us!”

“Sure!” Zhao Yu nodded. “I will do that! However, Da Fei, you tell Zhang Jingfeng, to hasten to pass me the information of Feng Kuo’s family, as I have an urgent need for it!”

“Oh, sure! Then...” Da Fei asked, “Where are you now, group leader?”

“Less nonsense and questioning, hasten to investigate the case!” Zhao Yu finished his sentence, then hung up the phone immediately.

At this moment, he was standing at the entrance of a two-story villa, which was Feng Kuo’s home! When Zhao Yu left Lan Shuping’s house, he had thought of Feng Kuo’s home instinctively!

Feng Kuo’s home was also in Qinshan, belonging to the jurisdiction of the Moyang area. Zhao Yu wanted to visit, to see if he would be able to find anything helpful to the case there.

Before his arrival, Zhao Yu had surveyed the situation beforehand. Due to the sudden escape of Feng Kuo, his family was now feeling very nervous!

Detectives from the provincial capital had already set up an escape-proof net, just in case Feng Kuo returned home. In order to cooperate with the provincial detectives, the Qinshan police also sent detectives from the Moyang branch in order to assist in the investigation.

Unable to let the provincial police know about the kidnapping case, Zhao Yu could only conduct his investigation in secret. But, if he were to investigate Feng Kuo’s family, it would surely attract their attention.

What should he do?

Zhao Yu racked his brain, while he thought through a lot of plans that made no sense. He eventually discarded these plans. Those detectives from the provinces were very sharp-eyed. Even if Zhao Yu pretended to be a handyman for gas or electric meters, he would still not escape the notice of their prying eyes.

But Zhao Yu suddenly had an epiphany!

Yes, that's right!

Since conducting a secret investigation was not feasible, Zhao Yu thought to go through the formal channel, with honesty! With this thought, Zhao Yu immediately phoned Bureau chief Luan Xiaoxiao, explained the situation to her, then asked Bureau chief Luan to think of a justifiable reason for him to enter Feng Kuo's home for an investigation!

After Bureau chief Luan heard Zhao Yu's idea, without a second thought, she told him that she would immediately contact the head of the Moyang branch and give him an official identity: Detective of the Moyang key case investigation unit!

With this identity, Zhao Yu could intervene in the Feng Kuo's jailbreak case.

Because of the death of Fu Jianxing and others, there was a manpower shortage in the Moyang key case investigation unit. Hence, it was a perfectly logical reason to send Zhao Yu to assist in the investigation.

It only took Zhao Yu five minutes to get everything done. After he pressed the doorbell of Feng Kuo's home, a detective from the Moyang branch opened the door and greeted him warmly. A total of five detectives were stationed in Feng Kuo's house, three detectives from the provincial capital and two detectives from the Moyang branch.

Although Zhao Yu belonged to the Rongyang branch, his current identity was as a representative for the Moyang branch. Therefore, the two lowly-ranked detectives of the Moyang branch were very hospitable to Zhao Yu, telling Zhao Yu how much they admired him, and introducing him to the provincial detectives.

The three investigators had important matters to attend to, so they simply greeted each other, then went on their ways. Although the probability of Feng Kuo returning home was very low, they could not afford the slightest carelessness.

After meeting the provincial detectives, the two colleagues led Zhao Yu to meet Feng Kuo's family. As Feng Kuo's escape from the prison was not a trivial matter, his family was on high alert.

When Zhao Yu went into the living room, the first person he saw was Feng Kuo's stepfather, Xiao Guofeng. Xiao Guofeng owned a carpentry factory, which not only made high-grade furniture, but also produced many works of art that were related to wood. Over the years, the family had become rich and wealthy via this trade.

After the introduction, Xiao Guofeng hurriedly poured tea for Zhao Yu and greeted him. Just as Zhao Yu picked up the teacup, he saw a middle-aged woman wearing an apron. She was wheeling a woman in a wheelchair into the living room.

Looking at the attire of the woman who was wheeling the wheelchair, he could tell that she was the family's nanny. The woman in the wheelchair looked aged, her eyes dull and numb. After being pushed over in her wheelchair, she looked at Zhao Yu and Xiao Guofeng in a daze, not saying a word.

"Senior, this is Feng Kuo's mother!" a detective standing on the side introduced.

"Oh... Hello!"

Zhao Yu hurried to nod at the woman, but the woman did not respond.

Through prior investigation, Zhao Yu already knew about Feng Kuo's mother's situation. Her name was Feng Lin, and Feng Kuo's surname came from her.

When she was young, Feng Lin was a famous film and television actress. Not only did she act in films and TV dramas, but she had also bagged a lot of advertising endorsements. Hence, she was a household name in Qinshan.

However, her marriage was unfortunate. She divorced her ex husband, after being married for a couple of years and having a few children. Later on, she got to know Xiao Guofeng. At that time, Xiao Guofeng was also a divorcee, who had a child from a previous marriage. The two of them fell in love with each other, and started a new family, together.

Xiao Guofeng had a son named Xiao Zhen, who is only one year younger than Feng Kuo. Now, he works in Xiao Guofeng's carpentry factory. Because he was busy with work at the factory today, he was not at home.

Feng Lin's life following her second marriage had been quite peaceful, and her career was not affected by the nuptials. But later, as Feng Kuo was arrested by the police and sentenced to death after his murder conviction, Feng Lin's life obviously had changed dramatically!

At the very beginning, she and Xiao Guofeng went around to appeal the sentence. However, after several of these appeals were dismissed, they could not continue, as they had exhausted their savings. Only then, did they manage to change Feng Kuo's murder sentence to life imprisonment.

Later, it was learned that the provincial prisons recruited skillful prisoners, and invested a great deal of money in doing so, and Feng Kuo was transferred from the poorly equipped Qinshan prison to the well-equipped prison in the Yun state.

Over the past few years, Feng Lin had become mentally unstable, due to her son's imprisonment. She was now both exhausted and ill.

Even more serious complications arose for her three years ago, when Feng Lin had a sudden brain hemorrhage and almost died. Fortunately, the rescue was timely, and she was saved!

However, the cerebral haemorrhage was very serious, leaving her now unable to speak or move. Although she had not yet succumb to a completely vegetative state, she was still unable to take care of herself!

According to Xiao Guofeng, although Feng Lin was in such a sad situation, she still had a clear mind, and could hear everything. Therefore, Xiao Guofeng reminded the detectives not to let her know that Feng

Kuo had escaped from the prison. Feng Lin had been looking forward to the day when her son would be released from the prison. If she was to hear about the news, it would be even worse for her illness.

Therefore, once Xiao Guofeng saw his wife, he reminded the detectives not to let her know that Feng Kuo had escaped from the prison. He wheeled his wife, Feng Lin, into her bedroom.

“Sigh!” Looking at the three people leaving, a lowly-ranked detective said to Zhao Yu, “This is tough! When I was young, I saw her acting. What a beautiful beauty! But now...”

“Yes!” Another sighed, “The body is a man’s capital. Without his body, he has nothing.” Speaking of this, the man lowered his voice to Zhao Yu and said, “Senior, we checked. This Xiao Guofeng has had many mistresses. Miss Feng is really ill-fated. After she fell, her family and husband were gone. Now, even her son is irritating... Sigh...”

Listening to the two men’s speech, Zhao Yu was lost in his thoughts, and during this momentary trance, he seemed to have found out something important...