

Guardian Chapter: 3

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It was one of Dragon City University's small back doors.

Dragon City University was a famous school with a long history.

It was almost the start of the school year, but there weren't a lot of people on campus as the main campus had long since been moved to the suburbs, and the old campus that remained was rarely used by students, although it was sometimes visited by tourists.

Zhao Yunlan, carrying the black cat, was waiting at the entrance of a residential hall. Guo Changcheng finally arrived.

Only then did Zhao Yunlan realize that the intern was rather shabby-looking; hunched forward, always as if shamefully looking down. His fringe almost covered both his eyes, and he was dressed in all black as if going to a funeral.

As Guo Changcheng approached, Zhao Yunlan asked the cat in his arms, "Will this kid be alright? What do you think Wang Zheng said to him? He looks devastated."

The black cat yawned in disinterest, "You're too worrisome, mama Zhao."

Guo Changcheng sheepishly stumbled forward, saying, "I'm here..."

Zhao Yunlan teased him, "Who told you to come along? And why can't you speak up a little?"

Guo Changcheng trembled and began muttering inaudibly, sounding almost like a moaning puppy.

"Meow," said Da Qing the cat.

Zhao Yunlan was a bit disappointed. He'd never noticed that this newcomer was the type who couldn't even speak properly.

"You roughly know what happened, right? This is where the victim lived. Let's go inside."

Zhao Yunlan headed in, only to soon realize that no one was following him. He turned back to find Guo Changcheng in an awkward staring contest with a mean looking security guard.

Trying not to get mad, he called out to Guo Changcheng as if calling a dog, "Come on, let's go! She knows who we are, just come on in."

Zhao Yunlan's first impression of Guo Changcheng could be summarised in two words; "This idiot."

Room 202 was a standard student apartment for two.

The black cat, bouncing off of Zhao Yunlan, began to thoroughly scavenge under the bed, under the closet, and the window sill. Suddenly, it smelled something by the window and sneezed heavily.

After the big scare he received the night before, Guo Changcheng closely examined big Chief Zhao, and much to his relief, he realized that the handsome boss indeed had a shadow, and from his exhausted and messy look after working overtime, confirmed that he was certainly human. And so, Guo Changcheng eagerly followed behind the Chief.

Zhao Yunlan took out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, put one in his mouth and swiftly lit it up. He leaned forward and gave the cat a pat on the butt so it would step aside. Finally, he blew a cloud of smoke onto the window sill.

"Look," Zhao Yunlan said.

Guo Changcheng looked towards the window sill, and to his amazement, a handprint appeared where there was nothing just a moment ago.

Zhao Yunlan calmly gave the window sill a sniff.

"It's not particularly stinky. Only a cat like you can pick up this smell."

The black cat replied, "It's not that?"

Guo Changcheng, frozen in terror, stared at the talking cat and quivered helplessly.

Zhao Yunlan shook his head thoughtfully, "I'm afraid not, lethal things can't have this smell."

He opened the window and turned back to see the stupefied Guo Changcheng, visibly horrified. Zhao Yunlan rather enjoyed torturing him, "Hey kid, you go up there and see what's outside the window."

Guo Changcheng's only reply was an "Aa..."

"Come on, young man. Wise up and get up there!"

Guo Changcheng nervously gulped and helplessly stared at the window. It was too high off the ground for him. But it takes just as much courage to turn around and tell the Chief that he couldn't do it.

In a difficult dilemma, this poor kid could only reluctantly climb onto the window sill, tightly clutching the window frame as hard as he could.

He moved his head around with great difficulty, cautiously looking out the window.

Suddenly, seeing a reflection on the open window, the hair on his entire body stood upright in fear. To his astonishment, alongside the reflection of his own figure on the window... there was another shadow!

A human skeleton could be seen in the reflection, inexplicably laying right beside him, arm extending through his ankle and on to the window sill where there was a hand mark, looking into the apartment...

Guo Changcheng looked at the window sill, but there was nothing!

He couldn't believe his eyes. His chest froze in pain and he began struggling to breathe.

The skeleton then turned its head towards him and looked right at him through the reflection. There seemed to be a person in the hollow eyeholes of the skull.

The person was covered in a black cloak, mysteriously shrouded in a cloud of black mist, and holding some strange object...

Guo Changcheng had yet to figure out what that strange object was when he was disrupted by a man below, "Hey student, what are you doing up there?"

Startled, Guo Changcheng slipped on some lichen on the window sill and fell victim to gravity.

With quick reflexes, Zhao Yunlan rushed forward to grab him but was a split second too late and only managed to grab his hair. Out of pain, Guo Changcheng wriggled causing Zhao Yunlan's hand to slip, and down he fell.

The black cat, calmly sitting on the window sill, sluggishly wagged its tail. "Meow..."

"Shit!" Zhao Yunlan rushed out of the room and dashed downstairs, "This knucklehead."

Fortunately, the man standing below gave Guo Changcheng a hand, who barely survived the fall.

The man was tall and lean, dressed very formally in a white, long-sleeved shirt and pants even in the height of summer. With rimless glasses, along with the textbooks he carried in his hand, it gave him a cultured and pristine image.

“Are you alright? Do you know how dangerous that was!?”

Instead of replying, Guo Changcheng looked back up at the window sill to confirm that there was indeed no skeleton.

Guo Changcheng sat on the ground, dumbfounded.

“Your legs are shaking, huh? Be more careful next time.” The spectacled man slightly bent forward and patiently said, “The university forbids climbing. So if you get caught, your grades will be deducted.”

Guo Changcheng’s head lifelessly drooped down, thinking that he might be naturally retarded after all. If there had been no one for him to sponge off of, there probably would not have been any hope for him. It was his first day at work and he was already on the verge of insanity.

Zhao Yunlan hurriedly arrived and picked Guo Changcheng up by the back of his collar as if picking up a small chick.

If it wasn’t for him keeping his image as the calm and reserved Chief Zhao, he would’ve smacked this idiot on the head with his shoe.

Zhao Yunlan forced himself to turn away. One more look at this moron and he swore...

“Hi,” he offered the spectacled gentleman a handshake, “The name’s Zhao. We’re from the MPS, and you are?”

In just a split second, the spectacled man seemed astonished but he rapidly adjusted himself as if nothing had happened and returned the handshake, “It’s Shen, Shen Wei. I’m a professor here. My apologies, I thought he was a student.”

Shen Wei’s hand felt almost icy, like that of a dead corpse straight out of a refrigerator. Zhao Yunlan hesitated and curiously looked up at Shen Wei, who happened to be looking the same way.

Although he quickly turned away, Zhao Yunlan found his gaze rather suspicious... Inexplicably so, as though this was not the first time they’d meet each other.

As a criminal investigation officer, albeit the unorthodox type, Zhao Yunlan had to be skilled at memorizing faces, even those who he’d only briefly glanced at.

And he was certain that he had never seen this person before.

At this instance, the ball of black fur wiggled its butt and crawled towards the professor. It gave Shen Wei's feet a thorough sniff, circled his leg a few times, and softly purred at him.

Master Da Qing usually kept his cool and looked down upon all pathetic homo sapiens with disinterest and disdain. Shen Wei, though, seemed to be an exception.

Zhao Yunlan was stunned at the cat's abnormal behaviour. It was inexplicably friendly and cute towards Shen Wei, and even stood on two hind legs, asking for a hug.

Shen Wei picked up the cat, who gently meowed in comfort; its emerald eyes gazing at the spectacled man.

Zhao Yunlan noticed a seemingly bewildering connection.

Quite a while later, Shen Wei reluctantly returned the cat to Zhao Yunlan, giving it a pat on the head. While doing so, he asked, "This cat is very smart. What's its name?"

"Da Qing." And Zhao Yunlan carelessly added, "Nickname Fatty, also known as Dat Fat Fuq."

The black cat howled and instantly turned evil. Its fur stood upright and its claws assaulted Zhao Yunlan.

"Haha, he is mad," Shen Wei laughed gently and held one of its paws in his hand. The cat retracted its claws and eagerly let him pat it on the head.

"I heard about the incident," spoke Shen Wei. "So the victim is from our school?"

The Chief glanced at Guo Changcheng, who sheepishly took out a photograph and a student card of a female student and handed them to Shen Wei with trembling hands, "Pro... Professor Shen, plea... pleased to meet you. Will you take a look and... see if you recognize this person?"