

GUARDIAN

Chapter: 95

The sky had just brightened and the little ghosts at No. 4 Bright Avenue had just gotten off work. Da Qing wobbled his fat body and ran anxiously over to Zhao Yunlan's house. He first jumped onto the windowsill in the corridor and then, with a fierce lunge like a cat capturing food, flew through the air and accurately shot towards Zhao Yunlan's front door, his paw pressing the doorbell.

Then he became a flat cat pancake and slid down from the doorbell.

The doorbell rang.

At times when Zhao Yunlan was cooped up at home, he would play his video games with his earphones in. In order for him to not miss the doorbell when someone rang, his doorbell was piercingly loud. Like awakening the dead, the sound of the bell could be heard even from outside the door. When it's pressed, an entirety of a national anthem could play.

However, it sang for awhile yet no one answered.

Da Qing wasn't like Chu Shuzhi, nonstop calling Zhao Yunlan's phone. He thought that Zhao Yunlan wasn't at home.

The black cat walked anxiously back and forth in front of the door. Subconsciously he started chasing his own tail and very quickly became a whirl of black wind.

He didn't give up and decided to try again. Just as he jumped in place and landed on the corridor windowsill with two paws, his back leg struggling in the air towards the door, the door opened with a quiet "click" sound from inside. The black cat was startled and his two paws loosened, messily landing with his butt onto the ground.

He rolled on the ground and looked over with his wide round eyes. The paws that had just found a foothold slipped on the slippery corridor and his thick chin shook three times.

Then, Da Qing retracted his claws with extreme reserve, sat up seriously, and quietly meowed: "Your Honor" as he stuck out his chest and sucked in his stomach.

Shen Wei flicked a finger and Zhao Yunlan's endlessly noisy doorbell immediately fell silent. Da Qing instinctively stiffened his neck and made a difficult swallowing motion. At the same time, his vision unconsciously landed on the clothes that Shen Wei was wearing—

he could ascertain that that shirt belonged to Zhao Yunlan! Zhao Yunlan, the freak, liked to roll up his sleeves. Every time, he would ridiculously ask the dry cleaners to iron his shirts with the sleeves rolled up so that they were folded neatly.

A series of images impulsively appeared in Da Qing's head. For example, they took off their own clothes and then...and then...

Da Qing lowered his round head and felt that he needed to adjust his mental state.

"What's wrong?" Shen Wei asked.

“Oh...I just came to see if Chief Zhao came back or not. That day he suddenly jumped into Huang Quan, we were all pretty worried.”

“He’s back but he’s resting right now. If you need anything you can leave a message. When he wakes up I will pass it on to him.” Shen Wei said quietly.

Da Qing immediately saw the overall picture and made the right decision to back away quickly with his short stubby legs: “Ah...ah then I won’t bother you anymore. It’s nothing important, just reminding our leader to not forget to write new work arrangements for the new year’s in the next two days and prepare a new year’s speech for our department. It’s nothing, it’s nothing. You’re busy, I’ll leave first.”

“Ah, wait a moment,” Shen Wei smiled in embarrassment and politely said: “There’s something that I might have to trouble you for...”

Da Qing immediately sensibly scuttled back. Lifting his head, he said: “Please speak.”

Ten minutes later, the unreasonably fat cat pushed open the door to the breakfast shop downstairs with his head. His cat face was so round that his eyes were almost squeezed out by his fat; it gave

him a virtually malicious look. However, dumb humans didn't know that what was displayed was the black cat's actual mood.

The waitress almost accidentally tripped over him and immediately called out: "Ai! How did a cat get in here? Get it out, get it out quickly!"

The big black cat raised his head and glanced at her with contempt. Then, he jumped onto the service desk and knocked the table with his front paw. Under the cashier's stupefied gaze, he spat out the paper he had in his mouth.

The cashier opened the piece of paper with trembling hands only to see neatly written: "One jin of soymilk (total 500 grams), one tray of buns, three sticks of youtiao. Please put them in a sturdier bag. The money is around the cat's neck, please take it yourself. If there's change, please put it back in there. Thank you."

The cashier raised his head and tried to pinpoint where the cat's neck was. The black cat rolled his eyes and raised his head, revealing a collar under his double chin. Within the thick black fur, the cashier found 30 yuan folded into it.

The cashier projected his voice: "Aiyou! Everybody quickly come look! Incredible, cats can even buy things now!"

Da Qing, who was surrounded by a crowd of onlookers, was ashamed and resentful to death—you bunch of stupid humans!

Zhao Yunlan was startled by the sound of the door opening and closing. He opened his eyes briefly: "Who is it?"

“Your cat.” Shen Wei shut the door, “He came to see you. I entrusted him with buying breakfast. Sleep a bit more.”

As he said this, he gently pressed Zhao Yunlan back into the blankets, stuffed his hand back underneath, and then bent down to land a kiss on his forehead. A finger reached out to smooth away Zhao Yunlan’s furrowed brows as a result of being abruptly awakened.

After he waited for Zhao Yunlan’s breathing to even out again, Shen Wei walked to the window and looked down at the plant on the windowsill. It had withered from neglect. He reached out and cupped the flower pot, a milky white light radiating from his palm. Like a good rain after a long drought, the withered plant quickly became radiant again and straightened out its stalk. It wasn’t long before it was standing upright.

Shen Wei quietly cleaned the spray bottle and then carefully sprinkled the water onto the leaves.

At this time, most people had started their workday and the roads were already teeming with cars. Shen Wei glanced outside through the cracks in the curtains. At the busy end of the world, far away on the horizon, a trace of black gas rose from underground and flew towards the sky.

However, Shen Wei only glanced at it fleetingly. Then, as if turning a blind eye, he lowered his gaze back to the task at hand. There was a strange sense of peace and tranquility in his heart and la

ziness enveloped his whole being. He almost felt as if it would be of no consequence even if he died in this moment.

It was almost noon by the time Zhao Yunlan was aroused by the delicious smell of the hot cup of soymilk Shen Wei had set at the bedside table near the head of the bed.

He stared at the milky white soymilk for a long time, and then suddenly turned over and sat up: "What did you say this morning? What did you have Da Qing do?"

Shen Wei was wearing glasses and reading a handwritten lesson plan. He calmly said: "Buy breakfast."

Zhao Yunlan sat for a moment, lost in thought and wearing an indescribable expression. Who knew if he was making up a scene of "The Saga of the Fat Vagabond Cat" in his mind. He then shook his head hard, propped his elbow on his knee, pressed his forehead, and laughed abruptly.

Shen Wei: "What's wrong?"

"I was just thinking I was a Casanova for half of my life but was at last pressed down by you. Comrade Shen Wei, you are too skilled."

Zhao Yunlan's tone in actuality contained sarcasm. It was unclear who he was trying to ridicule. Either way, Shen Wei pretended that he didn't hear it and only smiled at him with a face full of virtue and chastity.

“Aiyou baby, I beg you, let’s stop pretending. Even if you pretend, don’t pretend to be this way. I have a hard time bearing it in my heart.” Looking at his virtuous and chaste expression gave Zhao Yunlan a toothache. Pressing his waist like an old ox pulling a cart, he went to the bathroom to wash up, slamming the door behind him.

Just as Zhao Yunlan decided to eat his gloom away, he received a phone call from Zhu Hong.

“Hello, Chief Zhao? Da Qing said you came back. You alright?”

“En,” Zhao Yunlan had half a youtiao in his mouth and asked, “What’s going on?”

“I need to talk to you about something. The train ticket Lin Jing bought was to return to Dragon City yesterday night. I wanted to call him in the early morning to confirm but he didn’t have service. I had originally thought that it was because there were many mountain caves on his route and he lost signal after passing through them, but he still hasn’t returned even now. I gave him a call just now and it still came up as ‘out of network’.”

Zhao Yunlan’s chewing slowed down: “Has Lin Jing reached out to the office?”

“No.”

“Hmm...” Zhao Yunlan furrowed his eyebrows.

The SID had a stipulation that no matter if it’s identifying the type of cases or actually starting to handle them, there could be no less than two people on duty at a time. Of course, Da Qing could also be counted.

If, on occasional special circumstances, a case required a person to act alone, they were still required to call No. 4 Bright Avenue at least twice a day to inform others of their location, progress, and to report on if there were dangers in their surroundings.

Lin Jing wasn't reliable in following small matters but he seldom neglected the big ones. He wouldn't ignore this rule and go missing without a cause.

Zhao Yunlan hung up with Zhu Hong and tried to dial Lin Jing's number. Sure enough, it came up as not in a service area. He took out a Guardian Order from his pocket, dipped his chopsticks in soymilk, and wrote Lin Jing's name on it.

The Guardian Order was like a compass. First it shook to the left and right, then it gently turned a direction. A fine red line rose from Lin Jing's name, slowly stretching out. However, the more it stretched the darker the color became. By the time it extended to underneath the table, the string was almost gray.

Then it broke.

"Hello, Chief Zhao? Da Qing said you came back. You alright?"

"En," Zhao Yunlan had half a youtiao in his mouth and asked, "What's going on?"

"I need to talk to you about something. The train ticket Lin Jing bought was to return to Dragon City yesterday night. I wanted to call him in the early morning to confirm but he didn't have service

e. I had originally thought that it was because there were many mountain caves on his route and he lost signal after passing through them, but he still hasn't returned even now. I gave him a call just now and it still came up as 'out of network'."

Zhao Yunlan's chewing slowed down: "Has Lin Jing reached out to the office?"

"No."

"Hmm..." Zhao Yunlan furrowed his eyebrows.

The SID had a stipulation that no matter if it's identifying the type of cases or actually starting to handle them, there could be no less than two people on duty at a time. Of course, Da Qing could also be counted.

If, on occasional special circumstances, a case required a person to act alone, they were still required to call No. 4 Bright Avenue at least twice a day to inform others of their location, progress, and to report on if there were dangers in their surroundings.

Lin Jing wasn't reliable in following small matters but he seldom neglected the big ones. He wouldn't ignore this rule and go missing without a cause.

Zhao Yunlan hung up with Zhu Hong and tried to dial Lin Jing's number. Sure enough, it came up as not in a service area. He took out a Guardian Order from his pocket, dipped his chopsticks in soymilk, and wrote Lin Jing's name on it.

The Guardian Order was like a compass. First it shook to the left and right, then it gently turned a direction. A fine red line rose from Lin Jing's name, slowly stretching out. However, the more it

stretched the darker the color became. By the time it extended to underneath the table, the string was almost gray.

Then it broke.