



# Monster Society

A Full English translation is available.

怪物社會

**Author:** Xuan Lee **Illustrator:** Xuan Lee **Publisher:** Dyna Books

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260 pages | 14.8 x 21 cm **Volume:** 1

**Rights sold:** French

**BFT 2.0 Translator:** Christina Ng

In this debut surreal mystery comic by Xuan Lee, Zhou Ting, a beautiful young woman, and Wang Ji, who is perpetually dressed in a mascot costume, are caught in an unexpected accident.

When they open their eyes, they discover that the world has transformed—everyone has become a monster. Bird-men do calisthenics in the park, man-eating plants stand guard outside office buildings, and hybrid creatures roam the streets, all while society continues to function as if nothing were amiss.

Rendered in a finely observed, realistic style that only heightens its sense of absurdity, this is a world where monsters have become the norm. Only by finding the remaining humans can the clues behind this social mutation be pieced together. Zhou Ting and Wang Ji set out on a journey in search of answers, confronting a fundamental question along the way: in this transformed reality, are you a monster—or are you still human?



Author **Xuan Lee**

An animation and comics creator primarily active online, Xuan Lee believes in the existence of mysterious phenomena and enjoys imagining strange, unconventional stories.

# Who Is the Real Monster? A Darkly Funny Debut Comic That Portrays Loneliness, Exclusion, and the Search for Belonging

by Wen-Chien Hsu

If one day you woke up to find that everyone around you had turned into monsters, while only you and a handful of others remained human, who would truly be the monster—them, or you? In *Monster Society*, creator Xuan Lee uses absurdity laced with dark humor to portray those who are lonely, socially excluded, and uncertain of where they belong. The story's protagonist has no name. He survives on odd jobs and is bullied even by others in the same working class.

One day, he is unexpectedly assigned to wear a mascot costume. For the first time, he experiences what it feels like to be loved and appreciated. That fleeting warmth becomes irresistible. He vows never to return to his former life and escapes while still wearing the costume.

The heroine, Zhou Ting, seems like an ordinary office worker, but she carries a heavy secret. While attempting to reclaim company property, she chases after the runaway mascot. During their struggle, both fall into the water—and when they climb ashore, the world has changed. Everyone has turned into grotesque, hideous monsters.

Thus begins the story of *Monster Society*. Together, they search for the reason behind humanity's transformation. They soon discover that, despite their bizarre appearances and inability to communicate, the monsters still maintain the basic order of human society: they pay for goods when shopping, and trespassers are still chased away by security guards. Within this strange new order, the two

continue their daily lives while seeking the truth behind the transformation.

On their journey, they meet others who have also retained human form. One is a young girl who was once abducted and assaulted; another is a boy who could never outrun his peers. Both carry resentment and pain toward the world, yet in the company of the protagonists, they begin to feel understood and safe. Before long, however, they too turn into monsters.

Gradually, the protagonists realize that people have not actually become monsters. Rather, everyone harbors hidden wounds and untold stories that cause them to perceive others as monstrous—and to be seen the same way in return. The “monsters” in this story are not aliens from a sci-fi movie, but metaphors for society's outsiders and the wounded. Only by confronting inner trauma and loosening the knots in one's heart can one truly “return to human form”—or, more precisely, reconnect with society and learn to see others as human again.

In the end, the protagonist—still

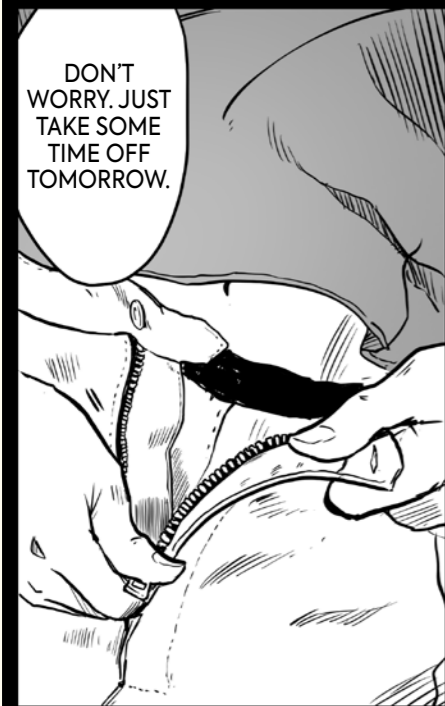
wearing his mascot costume—helps Zhou Ting face the secret that has haunted her for years. She finally releases her guilt over believing she had killed her abusive father. While she regains her freedom, the protagonist chooses to remain in the costume, running through a world full of monsters.

Every person carries their own shame, guilt, fear, and pain. These emotions quietly isolate us, eroding our ability to communicate or empathize. Such a life is like living in a society of monsters—everyone may appear human, yet remain alien to one another. *Monster Society* suggests that, in the prospect of spending our lives lonely, we open our hearts, acknowledge our imperfections, and face what lies within. In doing so we begin to reconnect with the world.

*Wen-Chien Hsu possesses a free-spirited soul. She has worked at LGBTQ+ organizations, the 113 Domestic Violence Hotline, and works as an editor of Books from Taiwan 2.0. She is dedicated to bringing Taiwanese comics and picture books to a global audience.*



EH? WHAT PLACE IS THIS?



DON'T WORRY. JUST TAKE SOME TIME OFF TOMORROW.



SORRY TO WAKE YOU UP. DID YOU SLEEP WELL?



STAY A BIT LONGER! SINCE WE'RE ALREADY HERE...

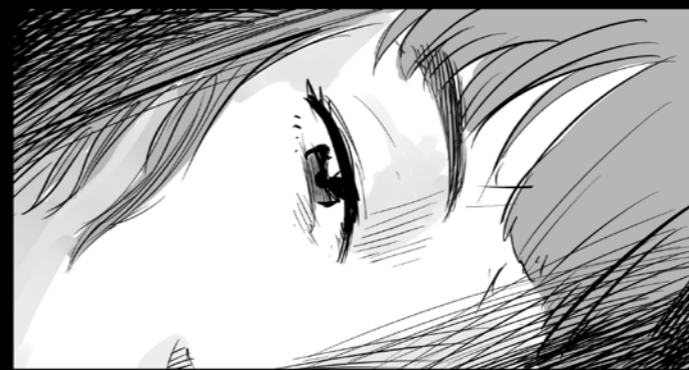
I... I WANT TO GO!



IT WAS POURING THAT DAY.

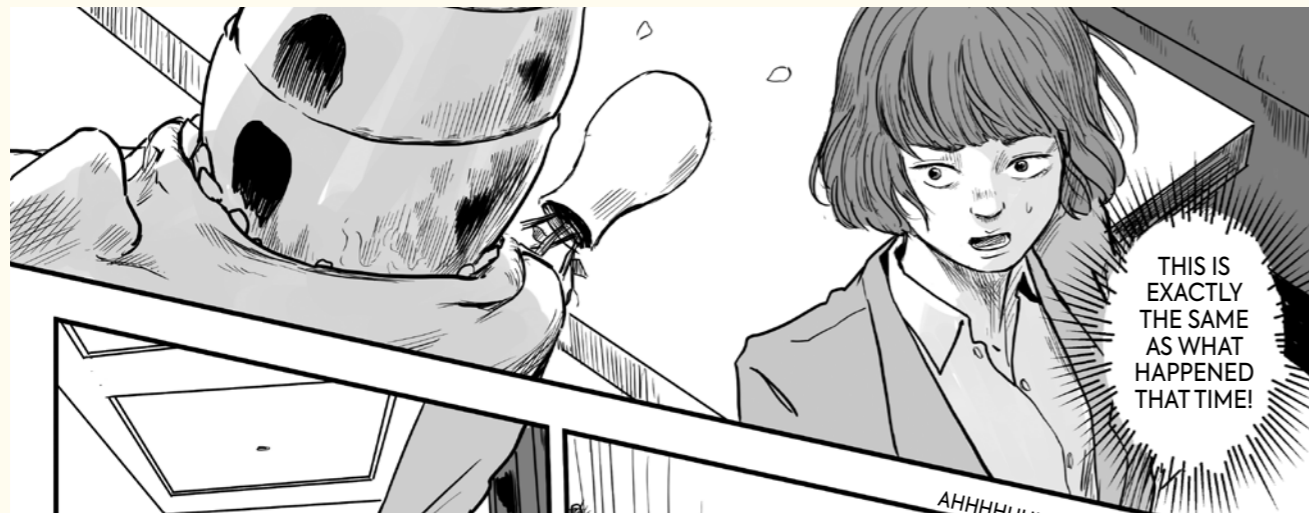


MY TROUBLES WERE MUFFLED BY THE SOUND OF THE RAIN.



I FELL ASLEEP IN MY TEACHER'S CAR.





THIS IS EXACTLY THE SAME AS WHAT HAPPENED THAT TIME!



OUCH!



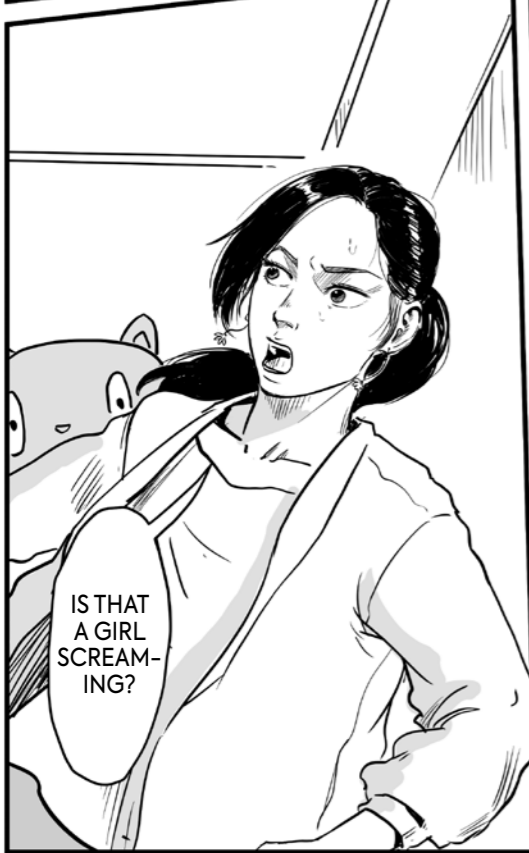
JUST AS I'VE EXPECTED, NO ONE CAN BE TRUSTED. NOT EVEN A TEACHER...



AHHHHHHH!



039  
039  
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IS THAT A GIRL SCREAMING?



YOU WERE THE ONE WHO CAME LOOKING FOR ME?

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?



ISN'T IT YOUR... GULP GULP... OWN... DOING...

