

THE ANCIENT GODS' WHISPER

Chapter 2 - 1 Profile

"Look, these are all the young agents your dad trained."

He gestured behind him. "You all should know each other by now, right?"

"Xiao Gu is so dutiful. He's been running to the precinct every day for Professor Gu. It's hard not to recognize him."

The two young agents chuckled warmly as they spoke.

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly, which counted as a greeting.

Chief Zhou was the captain at the Peak City Police Department—a man of many responsibilities. Caught up in endless work, it wasn't uncommon for him to go half a month without returning home. Yet today, he had taken the time to come here personally.

"Sorry for troubling you all so much recently."

Gu Jianlin felt a twinge of guilt recalling how often he had been at the precinct these days, disturbing everyone. "If you're really busy, there's no need to come. You're so close with my dad, he wouldn't blame you anyway."

"Come on, it's no trouble at all."

Zhou Ze shrugged, pushed open the car door, and got out, stubbing out his cigarette. "But of course I had to come to check on you. You're his only son. Someone has to look after you properly. Speaking of which, how's that injury of yours healing up?"

Gu Jianlin touched his own forehead and replied, "It's fine. The doctor said I was clear to go when I was discharged."

"Good. When we found you two, your dad was already gone, and you were lying there, head covered in blood, unconscious."

Zhou Ze scrutinized his face closely and appeared somewhat reassured. He sighed, "The doctors said even if your life was saved, there could still be brain trauma. You need to get more rest. Take these next few days off and stay home. Stop running to the security office all the time."

"Got it."

Gu Jianlin thought back to the car accident four months ago and the haze of these past few months.

It felt like a nightmare—a nightmare he had yet to awaken from.

Zhou Ze gave him a comforting pat on the shoulder and said softly, "Come on, let's not just stand here. Let's go see your dad and the others. No need to line up to buy flowers; I had someone bring them for you."

Gu Jianlin pressed his lips together and nodded slightly.

He used to hear older folks lament about the fleeting nature of life—that meetings and partings were always hurried. By the time people met again, everything had already changed, and time flowed away without a sound.

Back then, he didn't think much of it—not at his age.

But now, he understood.

Because no matter how he looked at it, Gu Jianlin never expected that after four months, when he would see his father again, the grass on his grave would already be half a meter tall.

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In the cemetery, five headstones stood in a neat row, from left to right.

Grandpa, Grandma, Second Uncle, Third Uncle, Dad.

The portraits etched onto the headstones all looked serene in death.

Thankfully, his mom was still alive and well. Otherwise, it would've been an orphanage-opening scenario right from the start.

The entire family sent to the heavens, unmatched in divine power.

Gu Jianlin glanced at a small empty plot at the very end, which seemed custom-tailored for him.

Whenever his turn came, he'd bury himself right here.

The whole family, neat and complete.

Gu Jianlin set down his suitcase and began his familiar ritual by memory. He took flowers and offerings from the bag and placed them in front of each headstone, one by one. Then, kneeling on the ground, he clasped his hands together in mourning.

It all felt no different from any previous Tomb-Sweeping Festival.

Except this time, there was one more headstone.

One more bunch of flowers to buy.

One more person to mourn.

Zhou Ze silently lit a cigarette. Losing his closest friend so young left him feeling miserable.

The two young agents were also filled with regret. After all, Professor Gu had been the best profiler in Peak City. Over the years, he had helped solve countless major cases, only to meet such an untimely end.

The one small comfort was that Professor Gu had left behind a dutiful son.

But in the next moment, they suddenly heard the boy muttering under his breath.

"I mean, you're a psychology professor. You had a high-paying job, but you insisted on becoming a profiler for the precinct. The pay was lousy, and you were constantly traveling—where there was a case, there you were. What was the point?"

"In the end, you didn't save much money, and now you're gone. Mom was right about you. Besides being good-looking, you didn't have many redeeming qualities. What I didn't expect, though, is that I'd grow up to be just like you."

"Back then, I told you to buy more insurance because in this line of work, you make enemies easily—it's not good for your later years. At least buy more insurance, so if something happened to you, my life wouldn't be too rough. But nooo, you had to believe that downstairs con artist, Sun Banxian, who claimed you'd live to be eighty. And look what happened—gone at forty."

"Later, I went to confront Sun Banxian and asked him for a refund. He said he's just a 'half-immortal'—his readings are only half accurate. I asked him which half he got right. He said he nailed half your predicted lifespan, so if he refunded money, it'd only be half."

"If you really can show some ghostly tricks or whatever, drag that Sun Banxian downstairs into the afterlife with you. I even made a deal with his son to buy some hefty insurance on him. When he joins you down there, we'll split the payout fifty-fifty."

"You're such a superstitious guy—don't tell me you'd want your spirit to wander with no one burning offerings for you?"

When Gu Jianlin presented the offerings, he carefully followed the proper shares for everyone. But when it came to his dad's share, it was completely different.

He pulled out an apple, took a bite, then set it down.

Next, he grabbed a loaf of bread, bit off half, and tossed the rest on top.

Finally, there was a grilled fish; after stripping it down to just the bones, he added the remnants onto the altar.

The agents stared blankly at the boy, who seemed intent on devouring his dad's offerings right there at the grave. Such filial piety could kill.

Zhou Ze couldn't hold back his retort. "Xiao Gu, seriously. Same Tomb-Sweeping Festival, but somehow your style is completely different from everyone else's?"

Gu Jianlin looked up. Before he realized it, it was already past eight, and a few other groups had trickled into the cemetery.

All around him, he heard sobbing—silent faces and grieving expressions wherever he turned.

At first glance, everyone seemed to be carrying heavy sorrow.

"What would count as normal then?"

Gu Jianlin glanced at a woman kneeling at a headstone, her sobs echoing out as she hugged the grave marker. "Like that?"

Zhou Ze followed his gaze and sighed, "Crying like that. Every family has its own struggles."

It was a headstone shaped like an ornamental rock formation. In front of it knelt a striking young woman, wild with grief as she clutched a portrait, bawling her heart out. Her family stood silently behind her, their expressions a mix of numbness and sorrow—each different.

"Grieving?"

Gu Jianlin spoke calmly, "But she looks to me like she's smiling."

Zhou Ze froze. "Smiling? When did she smile?"

It was, after all, the Tomb-Sweeping Festival. No sane person would smile at someone else's grave—unless they wanted trouble.

"My dad always said not to take things at face value. Even sadness can be faked."

Gu Jianlin glanced over at her again and shook his head. "That man in the grave was her husband. Born in the '70s, fifty-two this year. But that woman? She's, at most, twenty-four. She came to visit his grave, but dressed to the

nines, wearing heavy makeup, and head-to-toe in designer gear. Her bag alone is worth eighty thousand."

He paused. "The dead man was rich and married a young wife. She didn't love him. Him dying is the best thing that could've happened to her."

Because now, she could inherit a fortune.

Zhou Ze was stunned, then laughed, "So you're still studying your dad's profiling, huh? Profiling requires a wealth of life experience and knowledge. It's not something you can learn overnight. And your reasoning here is off. Who's to say she's not his daughter?"

Gu Jianlin didn't respond. He had plenty of reasons to back his conclusion.

For instance, the men standing behind her all addressed the deceased as "Dad" in front of the headstone—they were clearly his sons.

Yet that woman bore no resemblance to any of them.

Moreover, the looks those men gave her were filled with resentment and disdain, clearly a poor relationship.

There was a mark on her ring finger from a wedding band, but today, she wasn't wearing her ring.

The smell of her perfume in the wind, the brands of her clothes and bag, her gait when walking, her seductive demeanor...

Of course, none of these details were definitive or irrefutable.

But the reason Gu Jianlin said she was smiling was because he had truly seen it.

In his eyes, this woman hugging the headstone was trembling, and her lips were curving upward. She was repressing an exultant grin, laughing so hard she was nearly doubling over. Despite her attractive face, her laugh transformed her into something ghoulish, like a female ghost with a savage, grinning visage.

"Ha."

"Hahaha!"

"Hahahaha... hahahahaha!"

The laugh was piercing and grating.

Logically speaking, laughing like a maniac should've drawn the attention of those around her long ago.

Yet in reality, neither her family behind her nor anyone else in the vicinity seemed to notice anything unusual.

Over time, Gu Jianlin had grown accustomed to it.

Of course, they couldn't see it.

Because what he saw was the scene his profiling had reconstructed.