

THE ANCIENT GODS' WHISPER

Chapter 4 - 2 He's Mentally III_2

Xiao Zhang shrugged his shoulders and muttered, "How could it be the same? Back then, he was still holding onto his last breath. But looking at him today, his mental state seems much more stable than before."

Zhou Ze sat in the back seat of the car, his eyes closed, resting. He sighed and said,

"The boy's parents divorced when he was very young, and he grew up living with your Professor Gu. Who could have imagined something like this would happen? Still, for such a serious car accident, it's a blessing that the kid survived."

From his briefcase, he pulled out a tablet and opened up a photo.

It showed the scene of the highway accident: a collision between a large truck and a car, the latter nearly flattened and billowing with smoke.

He thought for a while and then played a video.

It was of a hospital bed—a pale teenager sitting there like a ghost, his gaze empty.

An investigator sat in front of him and gently asked, "Do you remember what happened that day?"

"That day, Dad had returned from his overseas trip and said he wanted to take me back to our hometown for the New Year."

"And then? What else do you remember?"

"Hmm... Dad seemed to be in a hurry that day, like there was something urgent. I remember we got on the highway."

"And then you collided with that truck, resulting in the accident."

"No, it wasn't an accident."

"Why do you say it wasn't an accident?"

"Because I saw the killer."

"But the surveillance footage shows no one else was involved. The truck driver died on the spot."

"No, there was definitely someone. I'm sure I saw them. You have to believe me—there was another person."

"But..."

"Please believe me! I can profile! I can draw their face!"

The video ended, freezing on the moment the teenager suddenly shouted, resembling a frantic, wild beast.

Zhou Ze had always thought of the boy as courteous, gentle, and calm.

He had never seen him lose composure like this.

Perhaps, when someone loses the most important thing in their life, they all become unrecognizable.

"Since he's willing to come to the security bureau to confirm and sign documents, he's probably already accepted reality, hasn't he? At the time, the doctors said his refusal to believe his father had died was what made him fantasize about a killer," Xiao Zhang said casually while driving.

"Still, I'm a little curious—what exactly did he profile back then? What if it's real?" another investigator remarked.

Xiao Zhang scoffed, "Are you doubting the surveillance footage or our intelligence?"

Zhou Ze pulled a yellowed piece of paper from his pocket and silently unfolded it. "Do you think the so-called killer could be this?"

On the yellowed paper was a twisted, distorted form drawn in crayon.

It wasn't even human—it was a grotesque bird with nine heads, each adorned with a terrifying human face.

Zhou Ze had looked into this later. It came from the "Classic of Mountains and Seas," with names like Ghost Car or Ghost Bird and Nine-headed Bird.

Of course, the proper mythology versions of "Ghost Car" don't have human faces on the bird heads.

Based on this, Zhou Ze could only conclude that the boy must have post-traumatic stress disorder.

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Gu Jianlin didn't like visiting cemeteries like this—they were full of people hiding their true selves.

He held up an umbrella, lugged his suitcase, and brushed past the countless passersby.

The cemetery vanished, replaced by an array of scenarios: a programmer dozing at a desk, a musician sobbing uncontrollably by a piano, a caregiver laughing cheerfully beside an elderly patient's hospital bed.

Some people wore sorrowful expressions but secretly harbored joy; others looked calm but were inwardly shattered.

Profiling was a useful skill, but sometimes seeing too much wasn't necessarily a good thing.

The woman who had been crying her heart out before a tombstone emerged from the restroom at some point with her makeup fully reapplied. On her phone, she cheerfully said, "Darling, I just came back from the funeral of that old fart. Once I get my share of the inheritance, we'll finally have money."

Gu Jianlin glanced at her but quickly looked away.

Since he learned profiling, he had never been wrong, not even once—yet no one believed him.

After the car accident, he woke up two months later. The investigation had wrapped up, the funeral for his father had already been held, but he knew nothing about it.

He had been running around dealing with matters related to his father. He could accept that his father had died—but he needed to know why.

Defying both doctors' and his mother's advice, he had visited the security bureau several times, determined to prove himself right.

Gu Jianlin recalled the accident—his only memory was of pouring rain, a freight truck rushing toward them. His last recollection was of his father unbuckling his seatbelt and hugging him tightly.

With a deafening crash, his world shattered.

The thought of that moment still sent shivers down his spine.

But the memory of his father shielding him brought him a kind of solace.

In the final moments before he lost consciousness, he truly saw someone standing before him.

Later, Gu Jianlin profiled the person's face.

A terrifying, monstrous face.

Yet the incontrovertible evidence was that the surveillance video from the scene did not show a fourth person.

There were only the truck driver, his father, and himself.

In the end, the incident was ruled as a tragic car accident, and the case was closed.

Gu Jianlin's judgments as a newly recognized profiler had been buried alongside his unlucky father.

Now that he had recovered some rationality after emerging from the initial grief of losing a loved one, Gu Jianlin even began doubting his own profiling—perhaps he had made a mistake, given his serious injuries at the time.

In that condition, what he saw really could have been a hallucination.

Back then, people thought Professor Gu's son might genuinely possess some talent for profiling, but the results had been bewildering.

Recently, whispers within the police station had been louder: "What a waste of time!"

Even Gu Jianlin himself felt embarrassed.

What terrible luck.

But that wasn't the worst of it.

Because soon, he'd have to go home. To someone else's home.

Though his parents had divorced when he was very young, his mother still loved him very much.

Gu Jianlin was just months away from turning eighteen. With his father now gone, his mother naturally became his new guardian and took him to live in her new home.

The problem was, five years ago, his mother had already started another family, living a happy, comfortable life.

Gu Jianlin didn't want to ruin his mother's newfound peace, but he couldn't win against her stubbornness. In the end, he lugged his bags to the new home, forced to accept his new family.

The new home was in Southern City. Though it was in the old district, it was near the coast, a prime location where property prices exceeded 60,000 per square meter. A fifty-meter walk would take you to the shoreline, where you could embrace the sea breeze and sunlight.

Notably, his mother's new home was on the ground floor and had a yard.

The yard housed two trees.

One was a jujube tree; the other was also a jujube tree.

More notably, his mother now had two daughters.

One was not biologically hers.

The other wasn't either.

At this moment, Gu Jianlin's phone trembled—a WeChat message had arrived.

Su Youzhu: "After visiting Uncle Gu's grave, come home early. Don't wander around. Mom asked me to make you breakfast—it's in the microwave; heat it for two minutes before eating. Don't forget. I have to head out."

Gu Jianlin paused for a moment, surprised by how effortlessly this girl called his mother "mom."

This was his mother's nominal daughter. The older one was already working, while the younger one went to the same high school as him.

The texter was the younger one.

Gu Jianlin had always been frail, and with the recent car accident and losing his father, in his mother's eyes, he was like an infant again. Her entire family began to treat him like a fragile baby.

He appreciated their care but felt uneasy about it.

Suddenly, his phone rang—a call from Lao Zhang.

That was the staff member at the express delivery station below his old apartment.

Not his new home, but the one he had rented with his father.

"Hello?"

Gu Jianlin answered the call.

"Hello, hello? Xiao Gu?"

Lao Zhang shouted with his booming voice, "Are you still picking up your packages or not?"

Gu Jianlin froze. "What packages?"

Lao Zhang replied, "Your dad's packages. They've been sitting here for months. This time, I gotta charge you, alright?"

Gu Jianlin frowned. As far as he remembered, his dad never did online shopping.