

Collapse 181

Chapter 181 The Clown _1

"Do you remember what I hosted?" Mr. Green dashed over, grabbed the female ghost's sleeve, but directed his words at Gu Mian.

The female ghost was exceptionally tall, towering over most women. Mr. Green, under 1.6 meters tall, stood beside her. Gu Mian recalled an essay he'd studied in middle school titled "The Tall Woman and Her Short Husband." And now, Mr. Green was a real-life example from that essay, though it didn't seem they were a married couple.

Gu Mian was in a hurry to get the lantern. He glanced around the room before striding forward. "I remember," he said. "You hosted Crazy Guessing Words, right? That instance vanished not long after you appeared."

Seeing this, Mr. Green quickly pulled the female ghost along to keep up, seemingly having forgotten why that instance had collapsed. The female ghost remained silent from beginning to end, quietly allowing Mr. Green to lead her.

Mr. Green adjusted his hat with his other hand. "Right! You two are old acquaintances! She was support staff in that instance. You've met her; she crawled into your cage."

At Mr. Green's words, Fatty immediately remembered. He vaguely recalled that instance being a team competition where the losing team's word-guesser would face punishment from an Evil Ghost. The ghost had originally intended to crawl into Gu Mian's cage to deliver the punishment, but after it lifted the hair covering its face and saw the situation wasn't right, it turned and fled.

"After that instance shut down, my support staff also lost their jobs... I knew they'd be reassigned to other instances, but I never expected them to be assigned here." Mr. Green, pulling the female ghost, hurried after Gu Mian on his short legs.

By then, Gu Mian was already close to the lantern he sought. The place had an ancient charm; they were walking alongside a vermilion palace wall. Fatty's sharp eyes spotted figures flickering past from time to time, darting away like startled rabbits. The female ghost trailing them was truly conspicuous; a mere glimpse from afar was enough to scare the soul out of anyone. No one dared approach to investigate, so Gu Mian's group encountered very few players along the way.

Gu Mian reached the lantern he'd been looking for without any trouble. It was still there, untouched. He looked at the riddle on it: "In an empty house, a clear mirror. Extinguish all light sources, face away from the mirror for one minute. What will you see when you turn back?"

Actually, one could probably guess "ghost" blindly and get it right. Gu Mian had initially wanted to try a wild guess, but he was afraid of causing some irreversible consequence, so he didn't say anything rash.

Meanwhile, Mr. Green was still muttering something behind Gu Mian. "It can't go back, and it's not right to just leave it here either... Anyway, I plan to take it back to an instance through this event, so I'll bring it along..."

Gu Mian glanced back at the female ghost. "Isn't there another mirror here for her to crawl back into?" he asked. Dragging such a tall female ghost around was too conspicuous.

Mr. Green shook his head. "No. Of course, if you're willing to dig three feet down, you might unearth one."

Gu Mian felt a headache coming on. He looked at the female ghost, then at the lantern in front of him. I should answer this lantern riddle first...

"Extinguish all light sources, face away from the mirror for one minute, then turn back. What will you see?"

Gu Mian's description was very detailed. "A tall, thin female ghost, wearing dirty white clothes, with greasy hair and a grimy face."

Fatty, listening beside him, felt his scalp tingle. Should he really be saying 'greasy hair and grimy face' right in front of her? He nervously glanced at the female ghost nearby. The female ghost seemed deaf, showing no reaction whatsoever. And I suspect it's not just deaf, but mute too.

It turned out that a detailed description was indeed effective. The lantern overhead flickered, its light growing dim. Then, with a POP, it exploded, startling Fatty so much he jumped aside. When he landed, he saw the previous lantern was gone, and Gu Mian seemed to be holding something new.

Gu Mian stared at the object in his hand, lost in thought for a moment.

[Penguin Brand Cough Syrup (Disposable)]

[Introduction: "Why are you chasing me?" / "Because you have Penguin Brand Cough Syrup!"]

[Function: Taking out and carrying this item will significantly attract aggro. If pursued, throwing this item at the pursuer will cause them to pause for thirty seconds.]

Fatty's mouth fell slightly agape. "Doesn't the introduction for this thing sound a bit familiar?"

Gu Mian thrust the Cough Syrup into Fatty's hand. "It's quite familiar," he said. "I've seen it many times in ads before."

Fatty was dumbfounded. "Why are you giving it to me?"

"I can't hold this," Gu Mian stated frankly. "Taking out and carrying this item significantly attracts aggro. I don't have an inventory, which means as long as it's in my hand, it's considered 'taken out.'"

Although Gu Mian had been blessed by fate since childhood, he'd never been short on attracting aggro. Still, carrying this thing around would be quite unsettling.

"Alright," Fatty reluctantly accepted the Cough Syrup and readjusted the pot on his back. "From now on, I'm the team's tank—a taunting tank."

Mr. Green, beside them, was still talking, "We'll only follow you for a few hours. You can't just ditch us!" It seemed he was determined to take his support staff female ghost back to an instance.

Chu Changge pushed up his glasses. "It might not necessarily be just a few hours," he said.

Mr. Green paused, taking a moment to process this before exclaiming, "Don't say such things..." If this event ended prematurely, poor Mr. Green would have to continue wandering here with his support staff.

While Mr. Green was still reeling, Gu Mian asked from the side, "What's that?"

Fatty, hearing this, paused for a second, then followed Gu Mian's gaze. Not far off, in a building resembling a private villa, a window was open a crack, about a palm's width. A rather horrifying face was squeezed into the gap. It was a kaleidoscope of colors—white, red, green, and black all crammed onto it. The face stared unblinkingly in their direction, making Fatty flinch. Then, the face vanished from the window.

Fatty finally registered what he'd seen. "That thing just now... I feel like I've seen it somewhere before?"

Gu Mian rubbed his chin. "It's a clown."