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Chapter 184 Alternative Lantern Riddles_1

The lanterns in this event were not low; they were over three meters high, so most people couldn't reach them at all.

Also, no one would think of doing anything with the lanterns above their heads.

Evil Ghosts were parasitic inside the lanterns and would wander out every fifteen minutes if players couldn't solve the lantern riddle within that time.

So, if anyone did decide to carry a lantern around, a ghost would crawl out of it when the time was up.

Just thinking about that scene was terrifying, Fatty shivered at the thought.

At this point, Gu Mian had already found a pole.

This place was Hengdian, a popular filming location for many TV shows. People had left in a hurry when the global game started, leaving behind many props.

Gu Mian was now holding something similar to a red-tasseled spear, poking at the seemingly dangerous lantern above his head.

"Holy moly!" Fatty hurriedly intervened. "Wait a second!"

"What for?" Gu Mian stopped and looked at him.

Fatty nearly choked. "What do you mean, 'what for'? I don't think the lanterns in this event are hung up there for you to poke them with a red-tasseled spear, are they?"

Gu Mian replied matter-of-factly, "Well, I don't think the event rules said I *can't* poke them with a red-tasseled spear."

Besides, this lantern looks pretty sturdy, he thought. It probably won't break from a poke.

Fatty's face twitched as he glanced in Mr. Green's direction.

Sure enough, Mr. Green's head was already poking out of a window. His face was tense as he watched them, lips slightly parted as if he was about to try and stop something.

Fatty looked at Mr. Green, then back at Gu Mian. "Could you please try to act like a normal person?"

Gu Mian gripped the red-tasseled spear tighter. "I think I'm acting perfectly normal."

Fatty pursed his lips, his expression somewhat perplexed. "But I really don't think you are."

"Anyway, the event didn't say players can't poke them with a pole, right?" Gu Mian retorted cunningly. "You have to understand, games like this usually have multiple solutions. This event must have more flexible ways to play too."

"I don't know if other players have more flexible methods, but I know the 'flexible method' you're talking about definitely isn't a *genuinely* flexible method," Fatty said, still feeling the lingering fear.

He looked at Gu Mian and continued, "Doctor, this is an event zone, but it's the real world! If we die here, we're really dead! And that's not even the worst part. If the ghosts from this event are released, then this whole world is doomed!"

Fatty clutched his chest. "And Doctor, look how many people are participating in this event. You haven't seen anyone else waving a red-tasseled spear around, trying to knock these lanterns down, have you?"

Just as Fatty was trying to dissuade Gu Mian, they suddenly heard a strange noise from behind them.

"What is it now?" Gu Mian turned to look.

He noticed that Chu Changge had already turned toward the direction of the sound.

Gu Mian followed Chu Changge's gaze. It was the direction where Bai Wuchang had departed earlier. But now, the man named Xie Bi'an was gone, replaced by another, somewhat unfamiliar player.

Fatty looked curiously at the timid girl who had appeared behind them. The girl looked to be in her early twenties. If this were the normal world, she'd probably be a college student, Fatty mused.

She was now hesitantly peeking in their direction.

She was at least three meters away, because Gu Mian found he couldn't access her player information.

The girl had short hair and a baby face, and she looked quite well-behaved.

Fatty seemed about to ask her something, but the girl spoke first, "Wh-what are you doing?"

Shouldn't we be the ones asking you that? Gu Mian wondered. What is she doing, sneaking up behind us like that?

The girl looked nervous, as if she had just remembered something terrifying.

Before Gu Mian or the others could speak, she continued, "You absolutely must not touch these lanterns!"

Terror was etched on her face, as if she had personally witnessed the fate of players who had tampered with them.

There weren't a huge number of players participating in this event, but there definitely weren't few.

Among them, there were undoubtedly skilled individuals with strong hands-on abilities and vivid imaginations. Judging by the girl's expression, she must have encountered such individuals.

Fatty apparently realized this too, his mouth falling slightly agape in astonishment. Could there actually be players who managed to take down a lantern and keep it with them?

"I... a little while ago..." The girl began to stutter, "I saw someone, just like you guys... he was carrying a lantern with him... When the fifteen minutes were up, he put the lantern down nearby and then tried to find a place to hide..."

"I was in the house across from him. I saw him put the lantern far away from the house, but it was no use..."

"I secretly crept to the window and peered outside. I saw that after the Evil Ghost came out of the lantern... it seemed to know exactly where that man was. Without any hesitation, it went straight into the house where he was hiding..."

"That house was very well hidden; it was a small, inconspicuous house among a cluster of other houses. But the Evil Ghost didn't hesitate at all; it went straight into that specific house."

"Later, I heard the man's screams coming from inside the house... then, there was no sound at all..."

"I... I think he must be dead... If you take down a lantern, the Evil Ghost inside will latch onto you! Even if you throw the lantern away, it's useless!"

"So, you absolutely mustn't touch these lanterns!"

Just as the girl was speaking, a gust of wind suddenly blew one of the lanterns above their heads, and it dropped down.

This pale white lantern even rolled several times on the ground, coming to a stop right at Gu Mian's feet.

Fatty's mouth fell slightly open as he stared at the lantern on the ground. "We didn't touch it, did we?"

"No," Gu Mian replied. "I just took the opportunity to poke it a few times with the pole earlier."

Seeing a pale white lantern fall, the girl opposite them instantly turned deathly pale. She staggered back several steps, then whirled around and fled, as if terrified of being latched onto by the Evil Ghost from the lantern.

Gu Mian even saw her collide with another player approaching their direction as she fled. She frantically said something to this player, and then the number of people scrambling to escape became two.

Gu Mian: "..."

The girl hadn't been close to them to begin with, and once she turned and ran, she vanished in an instant.

Fatty was left standing there, staring blankly. "Doctor, do you think we can still make a run for it?"

Gu Mian squatted down. "I went to a lot of trouble to get it down. Of course, I can't just run away now."

Fatty nervously watched Gu Mian as he crouched and fiddled with the lantern.

Nearby, Chu Changge remained expressionless, still gazing in the direction the girl had fled. Gu Mian noticed he seemed particularly fond of staring after people as they left today.

Not paying much attention to the other two, Gu Mian reached out, picked up the lantern, and began reading the text on it.

But just then, he froze, his expression becoming indescribable.

Fatty leaned closer to Gu Mian, whose face had suddenly changed. "What's wrong, Doctor?"

Gu Mian looked up. "But... this doesn't seem to be the lantern I chose..."

Fatty also looked at the riddle on the lantern in astonishment.

[There is a unique green cottage in this area. Inside the cottage is a 'terrifying little girl'. After you help the little girl tie her hair into pigtails, how will she thank you?]

While Fatty was still processing the phrase "terrifying little girl," he heard Gu Mian exclaim, "Oh, crap!"

"What's wrong, Doctor?" Fatty looked hesitantly at Gu Mian. Is he thinking the 'terrifying little girl' is just too terrifying? This riddle does sound a bit scary. It's common knowledge that many horror movies feature little girls as ghosts.

Fatty thought that if the Doctor didn't want to solve this riddle, they could still turn and run.

At that moment, Gu Mian was staring at the lantern with a grave expression. "I don't know how to tie braids."

Fatty: "..."

Gu Mian felt this really wasn't his fault, he mused. After all, no one had ever taught him how to tie braids growing up. And he certainly hadn't expected to encounter such a riddle today.