

## **Collapse 44**

### Chapter 44: This Number is Not Very Auspicious\_1

They had now figured out the identities of four of the ghosts, but the Knocking Ghost that followed Gu Mian was still an enigma.

"The Knocking Ghost killed Zhao Wen and Zhou Guanglei..."

"Before Zhao Wen was killed, he exhibited signs of paranoia. He suspected that the knocking was caused by humans and thus, constantly kept a close watch at night for anyone who might knock on his door. After his death, he turned into an Evil Ghost, the Peeping ghost that follows Yuwen Hao."

"The other victim, Zhou Guanglei, was also killed by the Knocking Ghost. He too showed signs of paranoia before his death, manically accusing and threatening others on the phone. He also turned into an Evil Ghost after his death, the Telephone ghost that calls Huang Yu."

"Zhao Wen, having become an Evil Ghost, then killed two people he had come into contact with: Li Dongqiang and Wang Erwa."

"Both Li Dongqiang and Wang Erwa had the feeling of being watched before their deaths, confirming they were killed by Zhao Wen, who had turned into an Evil Ghost."

"After his death, Wang Erwa also turned into an Evil Ghost, the Ghost behind that follows Qing Huan."

"Meanwhile, Li Dongqiang, who liked to squeeze into small spaces before his death, ended up dying under a bed. It's very likely that he's the Under-bed ghost we found under Lin Yue'er's bed."

The identities were: Peeping ghost Zhao Wen, Under-bed ghost Li Dongqiang, Ghost behind Wang Erwa, and Telephone ghost Zhou Guanglei. All four had been thoroughly investigated.

As Gu Mian gave a detailed analysis, Yuwen Hao found it hard to believe. "You two managed to unravel the information about three ghosts in one day?"

"They are all interconnected, so following the leads brought us to the truth," Gu Mian explained.

"You move at quite a pace..."

Gu Mian continued, "Our task is to find the source of the curse, so we have to trace it back upwards, layer by layer. Judging from the relationships of the five ghosts we've found so far, the Knocking Ghost is at the top."

It was the Knocking Ghost who killed Zhao Wen and Zhou Guanglei, leading to the subsequent deaths.

However, the origin of the Knocking Ghost remained elusive, with no leads to follow.

Gu Mian knocked on the table. "Both Zhao Wen and Zhou Guanglei, who were killed by the Knocking Ghost, shared a common characteristic: they worked at the same place. We could possibly start from the Mingliang Plastic Factory."

Just as he was saying this, Yuwen Hao cut him off anxiously, "Wait a minute... It's getting late and we need to sort out our accommodations first."

It was already past five in the afternoon, and darkness would soon fall.

This place was quite haunted to begin with, so the players were naturally reluctant to venture out at night.

Yuwen Hao suggested, "We definitely can't return to our individual places. We should stay together tonight. There are several hotels in the vicinity; how about we rent a room there?"

"Whatever suits you," Gu Mian replied indifferently.

Qing Huan turned to Lin Yue'er. "Is that okay with you, Lin Yue'er?"

Being the only girl surrounded by four men might not be ideal.

Lin Yue'er nodded. "Given the circumstances, I don't care about these things. Staying alive matters most."

That settled it.

Yuwen Hao quickly found a hotel and rented a room. The hotel owner shot them curious glances when he saw the odd combination of four men and a woman.

They rented a large room to accommodate five people—a family suite with two bedrooms and a living room.

Not daring to sleep in separate rooms, everyone chose to make makeshift beds in the living room. Gu Mian, however, resolutely chose to sleep in one of the bedrooms.

"Dr. Gu," Qing Huan said, hesitating at the doorway to the bedroom, "you probably shouldn't sleep alone in there."

Typically, in horror movies, those who isolate themselves are the first to die.

Gu Mian seemed unconcerned. He placed his chainsaw beside his bed. "It's alright. I'll leave the door open. You all can keep an eye on me."

In the living room, Yuwen Hao was planning their sleep schedule. The four men were sleep-deprived from the previous night and now had splitting headaches. They knew they had to sleep that night, but they also couldn't allow themselves to fall into a deep slumber.

Yuwen Hao said, "Let's take turns keeping watch. Lin Yue'er, being the only girl, can be excused. The three of us men can rotate. If anything seems off, we'll wake the others up immediately." Naturally, he excluded Gu Mian, who was in the bedroom.

Yuwen Hao continued, "It's almost half past seven now. I know you're all exhausted and will fall asleep the moment you close your eyes.

"Okay, I'll take the first watch, from half past seven to half past eleven—four hours.

"When the time comes, I'll wake Huang Yu. You'll be on watch from half past eleven at night to half past three in the morning—also four hours.

"Finally, it'll be you, Qing Huan. You'll be on watch from half past three in the morning to half past seven—four hours. This way, each of us can sleep for at least eight hours.

"Tomorrow morning, we'll resume investigating the plastic factory."

No one objected.

When Lin Yue'er went to sleep, she deliberately found a spot farthest from the bedroom; she was afraid of the bed in there.

The light in the living room was left on. Although sleeping with the light on could affect their sleep quality, nobody cared about that at the moment—except for Gu Mian.

In the living room, Yuwen Hao sat on the couch, forcing himself to stay alert.

Every now and then, he would look around for any anomalies and occasionally glance at Gu Mian in the bedroom.

Just as Yuwen Hao was looking around, he suddenly noticed Gu Mian stir in the bedroom.

The doctor, clad in his white coat, suddenly got up from the bed. He walked straight to the light switch in the bedroom and, without hesitation, switched it off.

The bedroom was immediately plunged into darkness. Gu Mian climbed back into bed, seemingly satisfied, and went back to sleep.

Yuwen Hao muttered, a shiver running down his spine as he stared at the pitch-black bedroom, "He actually dares to sleep with the lights off."

What the hell is wrong with this player? Come to think of it, the name Gu Mian sounds familiar...

Gu Mian was a heavy sleeper. He could fall asleep the moment he closed his eyes and wouldn't be easily woken up by anything.

Once, in the middle of a night, a fierce thunderstorm hit. A lightning strike even blasted a brick from the wall near his window, but Gu Mian didn't hear a thing and continued to sleep soundly.

So, it didn't take long for him to fall asleep.

He wasn't sure how long he had slept when a rustling sound suddenly woke him. Given that even deafening thunder couldn't rouse him from his deep slumber, this rustling sound must have been quite loud.

When Gu Mian opened his eyes, it was still the middle of the night. The sky outside was pitch black, with the moon hanging high above.

The rustling noise seemed to be coming from right behind his head. Gu Mian was puzzled for a moment before realizing that the sound originated from under the bed.

He rolled over and was met by several frightened faces. The light in the living room was still on; clearly, the others had already sensed something was wrong and were awake. They were sitting on their makeshift beds, eyes wide, staring intently under his bed.

They dared not make a sound, tightly covering their mouths as they stared. When they saw Gu Mian sit up, they desperately shook their heads at him, signaling him not to make a sound.

Yuwen Hao even mouthed to him, "Don't move."

Gu Mian was a bit confused.

The rustling sound grew louder, drawing closer to the edge of the bed, as if whatever was underneath was about to crawl out. At this, the others in the living room looked even more terrified, scrambling backward on their hands and feet.

At that moment, Gu Mian moved. Under everyone's watchful eyes, he gripped the edge of the bed, then suddenly leaned down to look underneath. "What the hell is that?" he asked.