

Global Collapse

Chapter 8: Chapter 8: I am truly a brave, fearless, witty and handsome author_1

"Aaaah—"

A scream echoed throughout the dormitory building.

Even Chu Changge and Fatty, from the next room, rushed over upon hearing it.

"What happened?" Fatty looked at Xun Li, who was curled up into a ball on the bed.
"Weren't you acting quite confident during the day?"

Chu Changge looked at Gu Mian, questioning with his eyes.

Gu Mian explained, "Nothing much, just saw a face."

As he spoke, he pointed towards the window, which was now empty, devoid of anything else.

Gu Mian lowered his voice, "You'd better be careful, they..."

They've always been here.

The door, left slightly ajar, swayed a bit. Gu Mian saw a shadow in the gap.

"Just be careful," Gu Mian warned.

Both of them nodded slightly.

Xun Li couldn't fall asleep. Despite being in an instance, the experience felt very real. He felt sleepy, but not sleeping wouldn't kill him.

He curled up like a large goose, looking around in all directions.

Sometimes he would ask Gu Mian to check under his bed; other times he'd ask Gu Mian to draw the curtains tighter.

Having nothing better to do, Gu Mian agreed to all his requests.

But by the latter part of the night, Xun Li's mood had worsened.

Seeing Gu Mian get up to leave, Xun Li hurriedly asked, "Are you going out?"

Gu Mian turned his head to look at him. "Yes."

It's suicide! Who would dare to stay alone in this school full of vengeful spirits in the middle of the night?

Xun Li quickly dissuaded him, "What are you going out for? It's too dangerous outside. It's safer to stay with me."

"No," Gu Mian turned him down flatly. "You had a point before. I feel like I need to go out to hone my courage."

He didn't give Xun Li another opportunity to speak and directly opened the door and left, leaving Xun Li alone on the bed in a daze.

Gu Mian had arranged with Chu Changge and Fatty to take action in the latter part of the night.

But when he went to knock on their door, there wasn't a sound from within.

Gu Mian frowned slightly and pushed open the door.

The light was still on, but the room was empty.

"Strange..."

Gu Mian looked at the narrow, dim corridor again. The light from the ceiling lamp was very faint, and the far end of the corridor was shrouded in gloom, its end invisible.

The doors to the two female players' rooms were tightly closed, with light seeping out from within. However, Gu Mian didn't intend to invite them.

There was no mobile signal, and the Friend System wasn't activated. There was no way to know where the two had gone.

Could they have encountered something?

Gu Mian walked towards room 102, which had Zhang Ping's name on it, thinking to himself. There was no need to hurry; as long as they were still here, they were bound to meet.

He had initially thought of forcing the lock, but he found the dormitory door was already open, even ajar with a slight crack.

The inside was pitch black.

Gu Mian directly pushed open the door.

The light switch was next to the door. He pressed it a few times, but the light overhead didn't respond. It seemed the circuit in this room was damaged.

Having no other option, Gu Mian had to turn on his phone's flashlight.

This was a single room, very sparsely furnished—so sparse that anything unusual would stand out at a glance.

Gu Mian immediately noticed a notebook on the bed.

A diary?

He picked up the heavy notebook lying flat on the bed. It was similar in size to a political science textbook and half as thick as a brick, quite hefty.

However, there was a bookmark in it. Gu Mian easily flipped to a useful-looking page.

The bookmark in this notebook was a photo, showing one page of another book. The page bore a talisman similar to those seen in TV dramas—overall, it looked like a ghost-drawn symbol.

There were a few lines of text in the photo, seemingly recording the talisman's details.

"Fiendish Ghost Nurturing Soul Spell."

"The stronger the resentment at the time of death, the more powerful the Evil Ghost will become. By affixing this talisman to its corpse, the Evil Ghost's power can be suppressed, and it will also be prevented from moving more than a certain distance from the corpse."

"Beware! After ten years, this talisman will..."

There should have been another half page, but someone had torn it off.

Gu Mian took out the photo and flipped through the notebook. It was almost empty; only a single sentence was written on the first page.

"The spring silkworm exhausts its silk only at death; the candle's tears dry only when it has burned to ash?"

Beyond this sentence, nothing else was written in it.

"Strange," Gu Mian stroked his chin. *Why would Zhang Ping have a photo of this talisman?*

To use this talisman on someone, one must possess their corpse, and the corpses of those who burned to death should have been taken away for cremation.

After all, the police were involved; there's no way any bodies would have been left behind.

So in this school, the only one who could be imprisoned by this talisman might be Lin Yanan.

She was killed, the talisman placed on her, and her spirit imprisoned in this school forever.

Did Zhang Ping, after her own death, place the talisman on Lin Yanan's corpse? Was it to take revenge on Lin Yanan for burning her?

As Gu Mian pondered, he looked again at the only sentence in the notebook—"The spring silkworm exhausts its silk only at death; the candle's tears dry only when it has burned to ash?"

Things weren't as simple as he thought.

Gu Mian didn't intend to stay here for too long. He tore out the page with the writing, shoved it together with the photo into his lab coat.

Before leaving, he took another look at this dormitory.

Other than the boy in uniform in the mirror, the ghastly face visible under the bed, and the bruised, purplish hand clinging tightly to the balcony door frame, there was nothing else out of the ordinary.

Before leaving, Gu Mian took the opportunity to kick the face under the bed.

The corridor was still dim and deep, utterly deserted.

The windows at both ends of the corridor were cracked open, letting in drafts of cold wind.

There was still no one in Chu Changge and Fatty's room; not a trace of them remained.

"Let's check out the fourth floor," Gu Mian said to himself, looking at the narrow corridor.

The entire class of students who died had lived on the fourth floor, which was also the top floor. He might be able to find some clues in their dormitories.

As he was contemplating, he arrived at the staircase. He was about to step onto it when a pair of feet suddenly appeared in his peripheral vision.

They were feet in sneakers, treading on the somewhat dirty stairs. They were ahead of Gu Mian, quickly ascending to the second floor before disappearing from view.

They were an adult's feet, in worn-out women's sneakers; the other two female players weren't wearing sneakers.

Is it Zhang Ping?

Witnessing this, Gu Mian abandoned his idea of going to the fourth floor and stopped directly on the second floor.

The corridor on the second floor was equally dim and narrow. The person who had run up earlier had already disappeared. Gu Mian, using the moonlight, looked towards the nearest dormitory.

The doors were all unlocked.

Xun Li, still in his first-floor dorm room, was huddled under his blanket, shivering.

The lights were on, but he didn't dare expose even a single strand of hair, keeping himself completely covered by the blanket.

Just then, through the blanket, he heard the heavy sound of a door being pushed open.

Xun Li felt a surge of excitement and immediately threw back the blanket, "Gu Mian, you finally..."

But he had only lifted it halfway when peculiar footsteps made him swallow the rest of his words.

THUMP.

THUMP.

THUMP.

Stiff, heavy footsteps were coming straight towards him.

The sound stopped right at the head of his bed. Earlier, Xun Li had lifted the blanket, creating a large gap.

If he tilted his head even slightly, he would see whatever was staring at him from the side.

His whole body began to shake. His scalp tingled, and he lay frozen on the bed, not daring to move, let alone pull the blanket back over the gap.

As Xun Li trembled, rigid with fear, he suddenly felt the hairs on the back of his neck prickle slightly, as if someone were right there under the blanket with him, staring.

Then, a faint rustling sound came from right behind his head.