

Revival 1371

Chapter 1371: Familiar Egg Fried Rice

"I never thought we'd have a second chance for a class reunion. I always thought after the last reunion, we might never meet again in this lifetime. Unfortunately, I had some matters and couldn't attend the last reunion. Let me first apologize to everyone here, I hope you don't mind."

At the reunion, Liu Qi spoke with a hint of reflection.

"I tell you, Liu Qi, you're lucky to have left quickly. If you'd stayed in Dachang City, for sure there'd be danger. You have no idea how perilous it got there after that reunion. Even someone as capable and excellent as me almost didn't make it."

Zhang Wei also complained about his past experiences.

Back then, several paranormal events stirred panic in Dachang City, Zhang Wei himself went through them.

If it weren't for Yang Jian, many of them would already be dead.

"With paranormal events occurring frequently, it wasn't easy for anyone. Just being alive is quite fortunate. I also faced danger last time, but fortunately, Yang Jian saved me," Miao Xiaoshan empathized.

Everyone present had encountered ghosts and experienced the supernatural.

"The most unfortunate was Zhao Lei, unknowingly he went to Yang Jian's house, and ended up encountering an evil ghost instead, dying in a muddle-headed way."

Zhang Wei sighed, "But Sun Ren is really no good. He actually tricked me, locked me up to extort Yang Jian, and took away one of Yang Jian's ghosts."

"Later, after becoming a ghost handler, that damn thing came again to make trouble, wanting to deal with us."

Liu Qi asked, "So what was the final outcome?"

"He kicked the bucket, Yang Jian got rid of him."

Zhang Wei grumbled, "He deserved to die. He spent all day harming classmates. Back in school he was never anything good, and on the day of the incident he was mingling with Fang Jing. If we hadn't been kind enough to save him, he'd have been gone long ago."

Even someone who typically didn't hold grudges like him hated Sun Ren enough to gnash his teeth, you can imagine how bad Sun Ren was.

"Ah Wei, the past is gone now, and the person is dead. Let's change the topic and talk about something happy," Miao Xiaoshan suggested.

"Something happy? There is indeed one thing recently," Zhang Wei rubbed his chin and said, "My dad and Auntie Huang got exposed and my mom found out, now they argue at home every day."

"..." The others looked at him strangely.

How is this a happy matter? Isn't it a scandal?

Never mind, better not to ask him, what good can come out of Zhang Wei's mouth.

"Yang Jian, you're now the Enforcement Captain at headquarters, currently the leader in the domestic paranormal circle. What plans do you have for the future?" Liu Qi changed the subject.

Yang Jian calmly replied, "The paranormal circle changes rapidly, I don't have any long-term plans, I'm just trying to survive."

"What do you think the future situation will be like?" Liu Qi continued to ask.

Yang Jian sipped on a cola and slowly said, "For now it's relatively stable, but the balance will soon break. The twelve captains at headquarters can't live forever, and when our batch of captains starts to

decline, that's when paranormal events will completely erupt out of control, and this point in time will come quicker than imagined."

"Aren't there still many excellent captain candidates?" Liu Qi asked.

Yang Jian shook his head, "You can feel it, the up-and-comers in the paranormal circle are increasingly mediocre. The reason is clear, it's because paranormal incidents erupt so quickly that newcomers suffer too much loss without any time for growth. You can roughly understand, just how many ghost handlers we've lost this past year; even I know of quite a few."

Liu Qi showed a solemn expression and nodded slightly in agreement.

Currently, the decision-makers in the paranormal circle are the people accumulated from the early stages of ghost revivals. It's not that there are no ghost handlers following up, but the numbers are few, losses are great, and they can't nurture top-tier figures through natural selection.

"What are you standing there for? Trying to eavesdrop? Get back to playing music and dancing."

At that moment Zhang Wei glanced over and saw the stage with those celebrity beauties, all quiet, watching and eavesdropping on the conversation between Yang Jian and Liu Qi hoping to gather important information.

"There's someone behind them, or else why do you think these people would give up high-income jobs and join our company for just tens of thousands? Take that beauty singing with the mic, her dress costs as much as her yearly salary here," Yang Jian glanced over, speaking calmly.

"What? Are you saying they're all traitors?" Zhang Wei's eyes widened.

"Damn, I, Ah Wei, hate traitors more than anything. I'll fire them all later."

Wang Shanshan on the side said coldly, "No need, even if you recruit others it's the same, no matter with clean backgrounds they get infiltrated eventually, it's inevitable unless Yang Jian doesn't hire living people. You don't need to bother; as long as Yang Jian is here, these people can only obediently work."

"And the company always has Yang Jian's teammates on duty, even if Yang Jian isn't there, it won't get chaotic."

The people singing and dancing on stage suddenly showed embarrassed faces, while their hearts grew more anxious, worrying about causing any trouble.

"Seems like being too famous isn't necessarily a good thing," Miao Xiaoshan said with a smile.

Liu Qi said, "Currently there's only one Enforcement Captain domestically, every time Yang Jian makes a move, who knows how many satellites are monitoring him. Now, when he stomps his foot, the entire paranormal circle shakes."

"Are you flattering me?" Yang Jian asked.

"No, just stating the truth," Liu Qi shrugged, showing a hint of a smile.

Zhang Wei rubbed his chin, "Brother Tui is so powerful now? Why didn't I realize it? I just feel Brother Tui's life doesn't seem that happy."

"Let's have a toast, hoping we can gather again like this next year," Miao Xiaoshan suggested.

"No problem."

Yang Jian, Zhang Wei, Liu Qi, Miao Xiaoshan, and Wang Shanshan raised their glasses and clinked them, signaling an end to the past and a new beginning.

Despite many experiences this year, at least everyone could still gather.

"Will I still be alive next year?" Liu Qi thought at the moment of clinking glasses.

Ghost handlers have short lives; lasting a year is already quite good. Surviving two years means resolving the problem of ghost resurgence and becoming an anomaly, possessing Captain Level strength.

But there are only twelve captains in the domestic paranormal circle, such a small number, Liu Qi doesn't have much confidence in becoming one of those twelve, he's already fought hard to be where he is today.

Yet after following Yang Jian to Baishui Town, he deeply understood how terrifying the paranormal events faced by Captain Level figures were.

As the reunion continued.

Everyone's mood gradually brightened, no longer as heavy as before, they shared stories of their experiences over the past year, but most of these stories weren't pleasant, filled with terrifying paranormal events or tragic pasts.

Though each person's achievements weren't bad, life was a mess.

Perhaps this is the impact of the supernatural; since surviving the No. 7 Middle School's incident, no one has had good luck.

But these experiences didn't defeat them, gathering today, everyone remains hopeful for the future, becoming more and more determined, not as weak as before.

Zhang Wei became eager, rushed onto the stage, and drove the singing star away to sing himself, causing many to headache.

But Wang Shanshan couldn't bear it, pushed him off the stage, and decided to perform a dance, expressing gratitude for Yang Jian's help throughout the year.

Her slender, graceful figure combined with beautiful dance steps made Wang Shanshan's performance mesmerizing, leaving people amazed.

"If it weren't for the paranormal events, her artistic achievements would certainly be high," Yang Jian commented.

He was qualified to comment because he had a lot of professional knowledge in his mind concerning this field.

Miao Xiaoshan watched with envy, but sadly she had no such talents, so she could only applaud and cheer.

"If I learned to sing, my artistic achievement would definitely be high too. Look at my throat, it vibrates when singing, it has the potential of the God of Songs," Zhang Wei shamelessly pointed at his protruding Adam's apple.

"I haven't danced in a long time, so I'm a bit rusty," Wang Shanshan walked off the stage, still with a cold demeanor.

Liu Qi said, "Really amazed me, who would've thought Wang Shanshan hid such talents."

Just as everyone gathered harmoniously.

A server pushed a dining cart over, placing a plate of egg fried rice in front of everyone, "Your order of egg fried rice is ready, please enjoy."

"Egg fried rice? Are you kidding, serving just one plate for so many of us? If the stars next door see, they'd think I, Ah Wei, can't afford it. Quickly go make several more plates, one per person, got it?" Zhang Wei said.

"Certainly, very sorry." The server quickly apologized.

Zhang Wei pursed his lips in dissatisfaction.

"Who ordered this egg fried rice?" Yang Jian seriously asked, staring at the plate of egg fried rice in front of Zhang Wei.

"Brother Tui, you know me, I don't like egg fried rice," Zhang Wei said.

Miao Xiaoshan said, "Aren't we having a buffet? We shouldn't need to order separately."

"I didn't order either," Wang Shanshan added.

Beside them, Liu Qi also shook his head and looked at Yang Jian, his expression gradually becoming serious because he hadn't ordered either. He could confirm that during the gathering, no one had ordered separately.

"I thought you guys ordered it. Looks like it was delivered to the wrong place," Zhang Wei stood up and shouted towards the rest area, "Hey, who ordered the egg fried rice? It got delivered to me, come and take it."

In the rest area sat the stars invited this time and their accompanying staff.

"President Zhang, it wasn't us who ordered it. We have our own work meals," someone immediately replied.

Yang Jian frowned slightly, "It wasn't delivered to the wrong place; it was delivered to the right place. This isn't just ordinary egg fried rice. No one would use a porcelain plate from the Republic era to serve contemporary egg fried rice."

"Then is there a problem with the waiter?" Liu Qi abruptly stood up, "I'll go grab the person and get to the bottom of it."

With that, he immediately took action and dashed out.

The others also sensed that something was amiss.

If it were just a plate of ordinary egg fried rice, it wouldn't have prompted Yang Jian to inquire multiple times, nor would it have driven Liu Qi to apprehend the waiter to ask about the situation.

Very soon.

Liu Qi returned, dragging someone with him, but his face was gloomy as he tossed the person forward.

The waiter's body was twisted, heavy, and silent as it hit the ground.

"He died just now. Yang Jian, your intuition was correct; there is indeed a problem."

Yang Jian remained unfazed, "It seems the ghost has found me. Most likely, the ghost is already in the hotel. This bowl of egg fried rice is a signal. I thought that thing wouldn't show up until the last day, but it's here. We might have to end today's gathering. I'll see you all out first and handle things here myself."

He remembered that during his first transaction with the Ghost Cabinet, he asked for a bowl of egg fried rice.

"What's there to fear? It's just a ghost, not like we haven't seen one before. Let it come, and I'll chop it with my axe," Zhang Wei immediately pulled a red axe from under the table.

Liu Qi said, "Yang Jian, don't blame me for speaking out, but this ghost is unusual. If you send them away and the ghost targets them, what then? I suggest they stay here, where we can keep an eye out. If it's not safe with you, it's definitely not safe elsewhere."

"Makes sense," Yang Jian pondered for a moment and nodded.

"So what do we do now?" Wang Shanshan asked.

Yang Jian said, "Obviously, we handle this matter. I'm responsible for Dachang City, after all. Don't worry, stay here for now and see how things develop."

"I'm not worried. It's just a little paranormal activity, nothing major," Wang Shanshan said calmly.

"You sure are optimistic."

Miao Xiaoshan said, "But someone has already died."

Wang Shanshan said, "Death is common in supernatural events, nothing to be shocked about. We've been through this."

"This matter is a lingering issue left by the previous person in charge of Dachang City, Zhao Kaiming. But now it seems it might be linked to the Ghost Cabinet that has been cursing me," Yang Jian said.

If the Ghost Cabinet's transactions continue, the ghost will surely appear before him before midnight today.

Or maybe.

The ghost has already appeared before him, and he just hasn't noticed.

Yang Jian's eyes shifted, looking towards others in the rest area.

The ghostly eye moved, effortlessly seeing through these people's bodies without supernatural interference.

This indicated that they hadn't been supernaturally possessed; they were normal humans.

However, Yang Jian wasn't assured, for he was dealing with both the Wishing Ghost and the Ghost Cabinet.

Both have the ability to fulfill people's wishes, and evading the ghostly eye's detection isn't impossible.

"All of you, come over here," Yang Jian said.

Those people looked over, and hearing Yang Jian's command, they nervously came forward.

"President Yang, what's the matter?" a cautious young woman asked.

"A ghost has appeared, possibly right here. I want to confirm your situation to see if any of you have been possessed by the ghost," Yang Jian said.

At these words, everyone's faces changed, and those who were timid lost their balance and fell when their legs went weak, despite attempts to hold them up.

"Wh-what should we do?" asked the trembling young woman.

Yang Jian replied, "Do nothing, just stand still. If anything has blended in among you, a little fire will reveal it."

With that, his gaze swept around, and pale green ghost fires appeared out of thin air.

"My fire doesn't burn living people. As long as you're fine, it won't harm you. Anyone attempting to escape will be treated as a vicious ghost without hesitation."

"We understand."

As soon as he finished speaking, the ghost fire enveloped and swallowed the people in front of him.

The enveloped people didn't feel any heat or pain but rather an icy chill that made them shiver.

They thought everyone would be safe, but soon something unexpected happened.

A female assistant suddenly screamed sharply and painfully as her skin melted and her body charred.

"Damn it, there was a problem. You all stay put and let me handle it. It's time for Ah Wei to step up," Zhang Wei exclaimed in shock as he hurriedly grabbed the axe and walked over to the screaming woman, chopping down with the axe.

As the axe fell, the screaming abruptly stopped, and the charred body lay motionless on the floor.

Had a ghost really blended in with them?

The people nearby broke out in a cold sweat.

"That axe..."

As an amateur considers the spectacle, a professional understands the skill. Liu Qi was shocked eyeing Zhang Wei's red axe.

A simple swing indeed cut down that eerie woman.

Very soon.

The ghost fire extinguished, and Yang Jian, staring at the charred corpse, had a gradually heavy-hearted expression because the ghost had perfectly evaded the ghostly eye's detection. Without this flame, he wouldn't have realized the ghost had infiltrated right beside him.

If that's the case, then in this city right now, anyone who hasn't been burned by the ghost fire could be possessed by the ghost.

"The appearance of egg fried rice signifies the paranormal recovery of the Ghost Cabinet, but the Ghost Cabinet merely wants to transact with me and is unlikely to invade living people. It would target me, the transactor. This situation seems more like the Wishing Ghost's tactics, not existing in reality but affecting normal people with its supernatural influence. However, the Wishing Ghost can only affect its host, not outsiders. Now both appear simultaneously, breaking their respective rules, and acting unusually."

"Then there's only one possibility left: the Wishing Ghost has harnessed the Ghost Cabinet, breaking free from Zhao Xiaoya's control through its supernatural means."

In Yang Jian's mind appeared the most dire hypothesis.

If that's the case, then this ghost will become incredibly terrifying and unpredictable in its killings.

The only certainty is that the ghost ultimately will target him, but its actions and intentions in the interim are unforeseeable."

"Brother Tui, no need to look so grim, I just dealt with that thing, didn't I?" Zhang Wei said casually.

Liu Qi explained, "You can't call this resolved; she was merely infected and eroded by a supernatural force. Perhaps she didn't even know she was being controlled by a fierce ghost. You dealt with at most a Ghost Slave; the real ghost is still out there."

"Is that so, but it's alright. With me here, there will be no problem. I'm no longer the Ah Wei of the past. Now, I'm very powerful," Zhang Wei said.

Chapter 1372: The Third Bowl

Facing some supernatural phenomena at the gathering, everyone remained very calm. They were no longer the same as they were a year ago; their mindset had long changed after experiencing so many things.

So no one was afraid. Zhang Wei even seemed eager to chop down the ghost with an axe.

"I think this supernatural incident is more unusual than any previous ones. In the past, any supernatural event would inevitably trigger the ghost's killing rule, but today you'll find that the ghost never initiated the killing from start to finish."

Yang Jian said solemnly at this moment, glancing at the corpse on the ground: "This waiter was alive earlier, but after delivering the fried rice, we noticed something was off with this person, and then he immediately died. This does not fit the style of a ghost. If it were any other supernatural incident, this waiter would have been dead before delivering the fried rice."

"Moreover, his death doesn't seem like a warning, but rather a timely severance; severing the connection between him and the ghost."

Liu Qi pondered for a moment, then said, "Analyzing it this way, that's indeed the case. The ghost wasn't trying to kill but rather used some methods, some reminders to connect with us. We just sensed it early and took the initiative to act against the ghost. Conversely, you could also say the ghost knew we would act and hence appeared around us in this manner."

"If that's really the case, then this thing isn't a ghost but a person." Wang Shanshan said coldly, "Such behavior already possesses human thinking."

"A ghost with a living human's thought pattern?"

Yang Jian pondered for a moment, then continued, "This possibility isn't non-existent. In the supernatural circle, there indeed exists such a ghost. Rather than calling them ghosts, it would be more accurate to say they are people whose consciousness has been eroded by ghosts. Although they have human thoughts, their behavior is like ghosts. However, such beings are rare because when a person dies, awareness perishes, though there are exceptions. If an entity controlling a ghost encounters an

accident during the transformation process, lacks dominance over the ghost, and instead is led by the ghost's instincts, then an aberration inclined towards a ghost appears."

Liu Qi immediately said, "I encountered a similar supernatural case. It was a new entity controller who hadn't experienced the revival of the ghost, but his behavior was bizarre. He liked wandering the city at night, attacking pedestrians he saw, and biting off their ears. Later, I captured him and interrogated why he acted that way, and he insisted his behavior was normal, not problematic."

"It was only afterward that I realized the things he liked doing were things enjoyed by the ghost within him. Because the ghost in his body liked biting off pedestrians' ears, and those who lost their ears would soon die, untreatable. In the end, to completely resolve the issue, I took down that newcomer."

"So that's how it is." Miao Xiaoshan nodded, understanding.

Wang Shanshan said, "So you think today's ghost might very well possess the intention of a living person? Hence it didn't kill but used the living as a medium to contact you, but why is the ghost trying to contact you?"

"Because of a transaction."

Yang Jian calmly said, "I require the ghost to appear before me by midnight tonight. If the ghost manages to do so, then after midnight it can propose a demand I must fulfill."

"The ghost making demands of you? What if you refuse?" Miao Xiaoshan hurriedly asked.

Yang Jian said, "Then the ghost will launch unlimited attacks on me."

"Sounds like a game, so what if the ghost doesn't appear before you by midnight, Brother Tui?" Zhang Wei stroked his chin.

Hearing this, Yang Jian's gaze immediately sharpened: "I hadn't considered that issue yet."

The transaction rule of the Ghost Cabinet is mandatory. The ghost has agreed to the request, and according to the rules, it must appear before Yang Jian by midnight. If the ghost fails, it translates to an unfulfilled transaction.

The ghost agreed yet didn't complete the deal.

This implies a rule conflict, by then the ghost would certainly be troubled, possibly even shutting down.

"As long as the ghost hasn't appeared before me by midnight, it certainly benefits me," Yang Jian said.

"In that case, why not hide so the ghost doesn't see you? Once midnight strikes, it would all be over," Zhang Wei, unusually thoughtful, suggested.

Liu Qi said, "This time, I think Ah Wei makes sense. The ghost has someone deliver fried rice and inadvertently invades the accompanying assistant, indicating it is trying to find ways to get close to you. However, the ghost is also wary of being captured the moment it appears before you, hence it's continually seeking opportunities."

"Suppose the origin of this matter is the Wishing Ghost near Zhao Xiaoya, then its purpose is definitely not that simple," Yang Jian slightly shook his head.

Back when Zhao Kaiming got his entire family killed by the Wishing Ghost, it was evident how terrifying and insidious that ghost was.

Such a ghost isn't likely to make so many moves just to cautiously approach Yang Jian and complete a transaction.

While a few people were analyzing and discussing.

Suddenly.

Yang Jian paused his words, then turned his gaze again toward the entrance.

The ghostly eye peered, already seeing the situation outside.

Soon.

The door was opened, a female waiter pushed a dining cart slowly in, a dish placed on the cart, but it was covered, hiding the contents.

"Another bowl of fried rice." Yang Jian's ghost eye moved, revealing everything on the cart.

Others also noticed the incoming waitress, but they remained silent, merely watching her, making the scene somewhat silent.

The female waitress acted as if she didn't notice the gazes, merely pushing the cart slowly by herself.

"This person is suspicious."

Liu Qi thought to himself, taking a look at Yang Jian, and seeing him remain still, he also calmed down, not acting impulsively like before.

But as soon as the female server stepped in, the door behind her closed with a bang.

Zhang Wei couldn't hold back at the moment, lifting an axe preparing to charge, but Yang Jian stopped him: "Don't be hasty, let her come over."

Zhang Wei abandoned the idea of taking action this time.

But at this moment, under such a quiet and tense atmosphere, everyone's nerves were taut.

Because anyone with functional eyesight could see the problem with this person pushing the dining cart, the same problem as with the first waiter, likely manipulated by the ghost, or perhaps this waitress was the ghost.

Accompanied by the resounding noise of the cart moving.

This waitress was getting closer to Yang Jian, without stopping her steps, smiling as if a regular food delivery service, indistinguishable from a normal waitress.

Yang Jian did not stop her because he didn't sense danger, allowing the waitress to push the cart closer.

Soon.

The waitress, watched by all eyes, reached the table and placed the plate of fried rice on the table.

This bowl of fried rice was identical to before, still steaming as if freshly made.

"Your order of egg-fried rice has arrived, please enjoy." The waitress spoke at that moment, and after saying this, she turned and left while pushing the dining cart.

There wasn't any supernatural attack, nor did anything unusual occur.

"Stop." Wang Shanshan called out coldly.

However, the waitress seemed not to hear and continued pushing the cart away.

"Brother Tui, let me take action and chop it with an axe." Zhang Wei said, "This thing definitely has a problem, we can't let it leave just like that."

Yang Jian merely frowned, looking at the two plates of identical egg-fried rice on the table, feeling something was off.

If a ghost were testing him, there's no need to send two bowls of egg-fried rice in a row, just one would suffice.

"Let this person go, if we act now, this waitress will surely die, and since the ghost isn't her, there's no need to waste an ordinary person's life," Yang Jian said.

Amidst a quiet, solemn atmosphere, everyone could only watch as the waitress left.

"What does this mean by the ghost? Afraid we're hungry and sending us food? If it's sending, it shouldn't keep sending egg-fried rice; I'm not hungry anyway," Zhang Wei complained.

Yang Jian said nothing, his ghostly eye peering, staring at the direction where the waitress left.

After leaving about twenty meters away, the waitress suddenly regained her senses, her expression somewhat confused, looking around before hurriedly pushing the dining cart away, not realizing that she had been supernaturally manipulated just moments before, only thinking she had delivered the meal and momentarily spaced out.

"Yang Jian, what about setting fire to this restaurant to drive the ghost out and also see if anyone was influenced by the supernatural?" Liu Qi suggested.

Yang Jian calmly replied, "Earlier my ghostly eye scanned this hotel at least three times, found no ghost, and saw nothing unusual; even if ghost flame truly brought out some anomaly, it definitely won't burn out the fierce ghost. This ghost hides very deeply, not easily found."

He encountered the Wishing Ghost before.

The Wishing Ghost does not exist in reality, the five-layer Ghost Domain can barely see an outline, and ghost flame can only burn supernatural below the five-layer Ghost Domain, hiding too deep, ghost flame can't reach it.

Furthermore, the current Wishing Ghost is suspected to have mastered the Ghost Cabinet, and the Ghost Cabinet is a curse, something akin to a subjective existence.

If so, then the Wishing Ghost's current state is a five-layer Ghost Domain plus subjective existence.

As long as the ghost doesn't emerge, no one can find it.

"The key to dealing with the fierce ghost is that it still follows transaction rules, it will appear before me before midnight, and that's my only chance to act," Yang Jian said.

"Yang Jian, you say the ghost will meet you before midnight, suppose the ghost succeeds, and we couldn't deal with it, wouldn't the ghost propose a request after midnight, and might that be the very goal the ghost wants to achieve?" Wang Shanshan asked.

"I can play tricks, not fulfill the ghost's transaction, I am not bound by the rules of transaction," Yang Jian said.

Wang Shanshan said again: "But what if that's one of the ghost's purposes?"

"Hmm? Do you mean the ghost hopes I play tricks, not complete the transaction?" Yang Jian looked at Wang Shanshan.

Wang Shanshan nodded, replying earnestly: "You mentioned before that if you don't complete the transaction, the ghost would launch unlimited attacks on you; unlimited means without any restriction, indicating the ghost is no longer bound by transaction rules? As for the attacks, that could allow for significant manipulation; if the ghost truly has human consciousness, it would certainly define the attack in its minimal form to achieve unlimited freedom."

On hearing this analysis, Yang Jian was somewhat surprised.

Wang Shanshan surprisingly could analyze so much from his and Liu Qi's conversation.

Indeed, supernatural events often cause great growth in a person.

Wang Shanshan has truly transformed since she left Baishui Town; though not controlling supernatural power, she possesses the mindset of a ghost rider.

"You've deduced that the ghost wants, by completing this transaction, to propose a demand I cannot fulfill, then get me to cheat, thereby triggering the rule of unlimited attacks, then using this rule to escape the transaction rule, granting this unique ghost freedom?"

"I'm merely speculating; do you think it's possible," Wang Shanshan asked.

"Yes," Yang Jian replied with certainty.

"Using rule conflict to gain freedom, it's wholly possible."

Liu Qi remarked with shock, "If that's true, it's really troubling. A ghost with human consciousness will now be free from the constraints of ghost action rules; doesn't this mean this ghost can do whatever it wants henceforth? That's extremely dangerous."

Miao Xiaoshan softly added, "If the ghost succeeds, then Liu Qi's right; the ghost truly can do whatever it wants, without restriction, so we have only two ways to avoid this event: either keep the ghost from finding Yang Jian before midnight, preventing it from fulfilling its demand, or act promptly during the ghost's appearance in front of Yang Jian to capture it."

"We definitely can't let the ghost smoothly pass tonight by midnight."

Checking the time.

It was now ten fifteen at night, with an hour and forty-five minutes left until the day ended.

"What are you all talking about? I can't quite understand now," Zhang Wei scratched his head, initially keeping up but now entirely lost.

"Nothing much, just discussing how to handle this potential threat," Yang Jian casually replied.

Liu Qi continued, "Miao Xiaoshan, I think the first plan is most secure; the second one is too dangerous, if the ghost appears at eleven fifty-nine, it counts as completing the transaction, and we wouldn't have the time to act, resulting in us losing this game."

"Indeed, Yang Jian lying low today to prevent the ghost from finding him is the safest bet," Miao Xiaoshan nodded, agreeing.

"Quiet."

Suddenly, Yang Jian gestured for silence.

Immediately.

The scene quieted down once more.

Then, a strange scene occurred again, as another waiter pushed a dining cart, opening the door and slowly entering.

On the dining table, there was still a bowl of egg-fried rice.

This was already the third bowl of egg-fried rice.

Chapter 1373: Preparation and Trap

Looking at the third bowl of egg fried rice on the table, everyone fell silent.

"Sending egg fried rice one after another, this is very suspicious."

Liu Qi watched the waiter pushing the cart away, clearly also affected by the supernatural like the previous waiter, only responsible for delivering meals, completely unaware of what he was doing.

Even stopping him wouldn't yield any answers.

"The ghost's actions are difficult to understand, perhaps it's just a meaningless act with no significance," Miao Xiaoshan broke the silence and spoke.

Wang Shanshan shook her head and said, "Impossible, every action of a ghost follows a pattern and won't do meaningless things, the only meaningless act might be wandering around. Now the ghost keeps affecting waiters to deliver egg fried rice to us, but we still don't know the meaning behind it."

"But I understand, this is definitely not a good thing."

"Fried rice is normal, nothing special," Yang Jian reached out to touch the steaming egg fried rice, finding nothing amiss.

Then he glanced at Zhang Wei nearby.

"Brother Tui, why are you looking at me like this?" Zhang Wei asked in confusion.

Yang Jian said, "Do you remember what you said when the first waiter delivered the egg fried rice?"

Zhang Wei thought for a moment and said, "I didn't say much."

"You did. You told the waiter that one bowl of egg fried rice wasn't enough and asked for a few more bowls, one per person," Yang Jian said, noting this detail.

"I might have said that, I'm not sure," Zhang Wei scratched his head, wondering who would remember offhand comments like that.

Liu Qi asked, "Yang Jian, is there a problem with what he said?"

"There's no problem with the words themselves, but the key is whom you said them to," Yang Jian replied. "The first waiter was corrupted by a fierce ghost, so what you say to the waiter could be understood as saying to the ghost."

"Even so, Zhang Wei's words won't trigger the ghost's killing pattern, right?" Wang Shanshan said.

Yang Jian said, "Indeed, they won't trigger the killing pattern, but this ghost is different, you don't know the inside story, so you're not aware."

"The Wishing Ghost? I've seen this file. This ghost can fulfill a person's wish, but at the cost of a family member's death each time," Liu Qi recalled the information. Then he said, "Yang Jian, do you think Zhang Wei's request for everyone to get a bowl of egg fried rice was essentially a wish to the ghost?"

"The ghost heard it and started fulfilling Zhang Wei's wish, hence the constant deliveries of egg fried rice. Once all the egg fried rice is delivered, the ghost will have fulfilled Zhang Wei's wish, and as a cost, a family member of Zhang Wei will die."

"That seems possible," Yang Jian nodded.

Everyone immediately looked at Zhang Wei in unison.

Zhang Wei was furious: "What the hell is this, how can you play like this? This isn't some Wishing Ghost, more like an Orphan Ghost. It doesn't dare come for me and instead targets my family, truly insidious."

"How many people are here? Counting the five of us, plus these people we invited..."

Miao Xiaoshan began counting the numbers. She quickly calculated: "A total of twenty people, meaning the ghost must deliver twenty portions of egg fried rice to fulfill Zhang Wei's wish."

"So, my life's wish turns out to be twenty bowls of egg fried rice," Zhang Wei widened his eyes, face full of disbelief.

"The priority now is not the egg fried rice, but after the ghost fulfills your request, it will kill a family member. You should be worrying about your parents and family's safety," Wang Shanshan said.

Zhang Wei immediately looked at Yang Jian: "Brother Tui, it's up to you now, we're like brothers from different parents. If something happens to my parents, you would surely be sad, right?"

Yang Jian said, "Preventing this isn't difficult. You just need to confine the ghost before it delivers twenty bowls of egg fried rice. If the ghost loses its ability to act, it won't harm your family."

"How do we act?" Liu Qi asked.

"Given the circumstances, I definitely can't hide from the ghost anymore. I must take the initiative, and time is quite tight," Yang Jian stood up, reaching out across the air to grab something.

Suddenly.

A golden lotus-shaped oil lamp appeared in his hand.

The oil lamp ignited, casting a yellow glow that seemed to create a halo, covering the surrounding area. At the same time, a stench of corpse oil with a chilling aura spread.

"What is this? It smells terrible," Miao Xiaoshan slightly covered her nose.

Yang Jian said, "A Corpse Oil Lamp, a paranormal tool I made. Once lit, it can reveal unseen fierce ghosts. This Wishing Ghost is hidden very deep and not easy to detect. I can only see the outline with my five-layer Ghost Domain, but using it is too dangerous, causing everything around to vanish from reality. So before I can easily use the five-layer Ghost Domain, I have to rely on this lamp."

"This good stuff, you must share with me. I'll hold the lamp in one hand and an axe in the other. No ghost would dare to appear before me," Zhang Wei's eyes lit up, quickly approaching to take the lamp.

Yang Jian glanced at Zhang Wei's axe and then at the lamp in his hand, considering for a moment: "You're right, having a weapon means you also need something to see the ghost. Otherwise, your axe's ability won't be utilized."

"Brother Tui is generous, I'll give you a computer filled with resources later," Zhang Wei eagerly reached out to take the lamp.

But Yang Jian dodged: "Don't rush, this one's mine. This one is yours."

Afterwards, he reached out with his other hand again, and a brand new golden oil lamp appeared.

The oil lamp was just an empty shell. Back then, Yang Jian had Doctor Chen make several spares. The truly precious part was the oil in the lamp. Without the oil, the lamp was merely a golden craftwork.

Yang Jian poured half of the lamp oil into another new oil lamp before handing it to Zhang Wei: "Use it sparingly. Once the oil burns out, it's gone. I don't have any more. This is the last batch."

"Don't worry, I'll definitely use it sparingly."

Zhang Wei, thrilled as if he had received a treasure, took the new oil lamp.

"Just having the oil lamp isn't enough. This time, to ensure nothing goes wrong, I've decided to light this incense." Yang Jian then took out a stick of wax-yellow incense from somewhere.

This is Ghost Incense.

It was something Yang Jian obtained from Wang Xiaoming while he was still alive. It's said that when lit, it can make vengeful spirits fall asleep. However, this Ghost Incense has a flaw: its efficacy takes too long to activate, so it's often unusable.

"In the supernatural circle, you're the only one with such deep pockets." Liu Qi watched enviously.

One supernatural tool after another was taken out, as if money was no object, and each one was extremely precious. Not to mention Yang Jian holding them, even if he held them, he would dare to wander into S-level supernatural events.

"Everyone who sees gets a share. I'll give you one." Yang Jian then tossed something to Liu Qi.

It was a Grass Rope Circle.

"You should know how to use this, right? If not, I can explain it to you." Yang Jian said.

Liu Qi said, "I know, I've seen the headquarters' archival materials."

In his spare time, he would often flip through the archives at headquarters, cramming knowledge related to the supernatural. He knew quite a bit, and was no longer a newbie.

"That's good." Yang Jian said as he lit the wax-yellow Ghost Incense.

The incense was placed in the middle of the table, but once lit, it had no scent because living people couldn't smell it. Only Yang Jian and Liu Qi could smell it.

It was a peculiar aroma that could make people become obsessed. Just a whiff would make someone want to stand still and take another sniff.

"As long as the incense hasn't burned out, everyone here is safe. Just don't leave this place. If a ghost appears here, it will be entranced by the Ghost Incense and fall asleep." Yang Jian said, his purpose being to protect Miao Xiaoshan and Wang Shanshan.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have been willing to light this incense.

"Brother Tui, everything's ready, right? We can move out now." Zhang Wei said impatiently.

At this moment.

The door opened again, and a waiter pushed a dining cart in slowly, with a plate of steaming hot fried rice, just like before.

This was the fourth bowl of egg fried rice.

"Zhang Wei, hold on. There's one more issue. How do we know where the ghost is? It might not be in the restaurant. What if it's somewhere else? Dachang City isn't small. If a ghost wants to hide, it's hard to find." Wang Shanshan said.

Liu Qi immediately responded: "Use the Ghost Candle, the white Ghost Candle. Light it and it will draw the ghost."

"Right. With all this preparation, if we can't even find the ghost, it would be too embarrassing. The Ghost Incense is meant to be used with the white Ghost Candle. The two don't conflict." Yang Jian said.

Then he took out the white Ghost Candle and placed it on the table.

The white Ghost Candle draws ghosts, the Ghost Incense can make ghosts fall asleep, and the Corpse Oil Lamp can reveal hidden ghosts.

This was purely a strategy using a combination of supernatural tools to counter vengeful spirits.

This time, Yang Jian didn't plan to use force. He intended to deal with the ghost using a gentler approach.

Of course, forceful methods wouldn't work on the Wishing Ghost either, so Yang Jian decided not to waste his energy.

Once the white Ghost Candle was lit, the bright lights around dimmed significantly, as if they could go out at any moment.

"Ah!"

Someone couldn't help but scream.

"Shut up."

Liu Qi shouted: "Today's matter has nothing to do with you. Stay there quietly and you'll be fine. If you run around or scream, even if the ghost doesn't kill you, I might."

Under this threat, the people there immediately covered their mouths, not daring to make a sound.

"Alright, now we just have to wait." Yang Jian said.

"My axe has been waiting eagerly for this."

Zhang Wei stroked the red axe like he was caressing a lover, showing an excited smile.

Chapter 1374: An Unconventional Solution

The trap set for the Wishing Ghost is now complete.

The Ghost Candle is burning, the scent of Ghost Incense is drifting, the oil lamp that reflects ghosts is flickering, coupled with the presence of the two ghost handlers, Yang Jian and Liu Qi, here. Under such conditions, even a ghost at the Terror Level within an S-class supernatural event might find it difficult to escape being captured.

Everyone is feeling confident at the moment, all silently waiting for the ghost to appear.

"If the Wishing Ghost possesses the consciousness of a living person, then I am very curious how it will respond in this situation," Yang Jian thought to himself.

The time has now reached eleven o'clock at night, with only one hour left until the day is over.

Within this remaining hour, the ghost is bound to appear before Yang Jian.

However, facing this pre-set trap, if the ghost appears normally, it will definitely be easily captured.

At this moment.

The door opened again, and the food cart reappeared.

This time, however, there was a change; three bowls of egg fried rice were placed on this cart, and the number had unexpectedly increased.

"The ghost is actually speeding up the delivery of meals, now Zhang Wei is in trouble," Wang Shanshan said.

But Zhang Wei said, "It's okay, adding the previous ones, it's only seven servings of egg fried rice, still far from twenty servings, I can manage."

Yang Jian didn't say a word. He kept his distance from the range of the Ghost Incense, not wanting to be influenced, and at this moment, he was sitting in a corner, using his ghostly eye to observe the hotel and its surroundings.

Five minutes have passed.

Everything is normal, but a new food cart appeared once more, still carrying egg fried rice, again in three servings.

"At this rate of delivery and frequency, it won't take half an hour to reach twenty servings of egg fried rice, and these food carts are not coming from within the hotel but from outside, no wonder there's such a gap in time, it seems the ghost is being very cautious."

"Wait, something's happening."

In the vision of the ghostly eye, Yang Jian saw that many vehicles suddenly appeared on the roads near the hotel, there were private cars, taxis, and buses... all vehicles seemed to be under unified command, heading toward the Peace Hotel.

The vehicles completely ignored traffic rules, dashing madly.

Soon, the vicinity of the Peace Hotel was tightly encircled by these vehicles.

Then.

The car doors opened, and people started to get out one after another and, as if all agreed, walked toward the entrance.

There were so many people that a quick glance could estimate the number was no less than four hundred.

And as the incident progressed, more and more people drove over and kept moving toward the hotel. In just a matter of moments, all the nearby streets were clogged with cars, but the people in the cars did not give up, continuing to approach on foot.

"Is the ghost's first probe through the use of sheer numbers? Or is the ghost trying to hide in such a large crowd to sneak into the hotel?"

Yang Jian frowned.

In his ghostly eye vision, all these people were normal living beings, but like the waiters before, they were controlled by a supernatural force, at this moment having no idea what they were doing.

Liu Qi also heard the commotion, he immediately got up and went to the window to look outside, his face changed immediately: "So many people? Is the ghost planning to sneak in under the cover of these people?"

"It controls living people, letting them all rush in, I can totally send the people away again."

Yang Jian said, "By using the Ghost Domain to send these people tens of kilometers away, they wouldn't be able to come back within an hour, but..."

Just as he was preparing to take action.

The body of the first waiter on the ground kept reminding him of something important.

If mishandled, these people will immediately die like the first waiter.

"Yang Jian, they are coming in, you can act now, Yang Jian..." Liu Qi reminded, then turned around and saw Yang Jian staring at the corpse on the ground.

Then, his face also changed, realizing the issue: "Are these people really like the first waiter, who will die at the slightest touch?"

"Ten out of eight or nine chances."

Yang Jian said with a heavy expression, "Otherwise, the ghost wouldn't bring these living people over, it intends to use the lives of the living as cover."

"Is there a way to break the ghost's influence over them?" Wang Shanshan, at this point, had already heard the sound of a group of people coming upstairs, chaotic and disturbing.

"To cut off the ghost's connection with living people, we must use supernatural power, but once supernatural power is used, these living people will be killed by the ghost without hesitation under interference," Yang Jian's gaze turned colder, "The ghost's purpose is clear, to fill this hotel with people."

"In the presence of living people interfering, there are many things we cannot do."

"Isn't this just moral blackmail? If we had no morals, we wouldn't be blackmailed," Zhang Wei said.

Miao Xiaoshan said, "Don't come up with lousy ideas, this is Dachang City, there are a lot of people here, do you really want Yang Jian to wipe out a whole city's population? Not to mention, there might be many acquaintances among these people."

"That is definitely not acceptable," Zhang Wei said.

"If we can't touch these people, then we move, I will relocate the entire Peace Hotel to the suburbs," Yang Jian said.

Then the Ghost Domain enveloped, attempting to move the building.

However, once the Ghost Eye's vision left the hall, it immediately began to distort and deform, with intense supernatural interference enveloping the building.

"Still trying to interfere with me?" Yang Jian's face turned cold.

Instantly, the Ghost Flame ignited.

The eerie, cold flame began to burn, and at that moment, the Ghost Domain was no longer affected. The building was now enveloped within the Ghost Domain.

Yet, when Yang Jian tried to use the Ghost Domain to transfer the building, he found that the building remained completely stationary, without the slightest change.

Some sort of supernatural force was blocking everything, forcefully anchoring the building in place, preventing it from being transferred away.

"Is it the supernatural power of the Wishing Ghost?" Yang Jian deeply furrowed his brow.

Only now did he realize that the ghost is not just about granting wishes; its terror level is also very high.

Bang! Bang!

At this moment, heavy thumping sounds came from outside the door. Many people were trying to break in, but the door was temporarily locked by Liu Qi, briefly blocking those outside.

"The Ghost Domain transfer failed. Now, we either withdraw or stay to fight these people, and then find the fierce ghost. However, I don't want to withdraw. If a ghost can seal off this building, it can seal off other buildings too, so delaying doesn't make much sense. If the Ghost General delivers all the remaining fried rice next time, Zhang Wei's family will undoubtedly die." Yang Jian said.

After speaking, he turned his Ghost Eye.

Then, the structure of this floor changed.

The windows disappeared, and the door was gone too, all turning into thick walls. Yang Jian sealed off the hall, leaving only a few small ventilation openings to prevent everyone from suffocating.

As he did this.

The thumping sounds immediately ceased.

But then, unexpectedly, something happened.

The walls suddenly crumbled, disintegrated, and turned to powder, disappearing cleanly in the wind.

Accompanied by the disappearance of the walls, everyone outside started walking into the hall, whether driven by the ghost or attracted by the Ghost Candle, none of them showed any intention of stopping.

"So many people?" Zhang Wei was stunned, his eager axe slowly lowered.

The densely packed crowd occupied every space, making one's scalp tingle.

Liu Qi also frowned and stepped back: "This damn ghost, actually manipulating living people, and we can't do anything to them. If we act, the ghost will let the living die. It's completely disgusting. This ghost indeed has consciousness; otherwise, how could it use lives to blackmail us."

"Moreover, with this trick, the ghost can ignore the effects of Ghost Incense, hide among the crowd, making the Ghost Candle and oil lamp ineffective. Our traps are dismantled, and during this process, if the ghost really shows up, we can't distinguish it, which also equals completing the deal with you, Yang Jian. It's a win-win situation for the ghost."

"Looks like the ghost is playing tricks with us." Wang Shanshan said.

"Playing tricks? Interesting, I'm quite smart, let me think a bit, and I'll surely come up with a good idea."
Ah Wei said.

Zhang Wei, at this moment, was also furrowing his brow, deep in thought.

Liu Qi looked at Yang Jian and said: "The best solution is for us to retreat. Once we move, the ghost will need time to gather such a scale again. Our traps are still effective and can be rearranged."

"The ghost may also have a Ghost Domain. Anywhere we can go, the ghost can go too. It can still appear around us with numerous people."

Yang Jian said as water slowly seeped under his feet, and familiar black-clad figures gradually appeared before him.

"I have plenty of people too."

Black-clad figures appeared out of thin air, their faces, stature completely identical, even their consciousness was the same.

"The supernatural power of the Deceiving Ghost?" Liu Qi and Wang Shanshan had seen it in Baishui Town, so they were not surprised.

Soon, the black-clad figures awoke. Without speaking, they acted immediately, forming lines of human walls to block those who were flooding in from outside.

Yang Jian stared at the front line of living people.

Just as he suspected, contact with these living people did not cause any deaths among them.

"Push them out of here."

Yang Jian gave the order while more black-clad figures appeared. They were very strong, much more formidable than these living people controlled by the fierce ghost.

The situation quickly improved.

However, as the black-clad figures pushed these living people away, the originally cramped hall gradually became spacious again.

But then.

Yang Jian found plates of fried rice left behind under the feet of those departing.

He had the black-clad figures gather these fried rices and count them along with previous ones.

"Nineteen plates now, damn it, isn't this cheating? It was far fewer before," Zhang Wei almost jumped up.

Just one plate short, and the ghost will go to kill his relatives.

"The Wishing Ghost is intentionally controlling the speed at which your wish is fulfilled, deliberately stalling at this last plate of fried rice." Yang Jian squinted his eyes and said, "It thinks you're very important and wants to use you."

Chapter 1375: The Terrifying Gift

At this moment, Yang Jian and the others clearly felt that the ghost lurking in the dark differed from other ghosts involved in supernatural events. This ghost didn't kill much and wasn't planning to cause a large-scale supernatural event. Instead, it seemed to be following certain rules,

trying to achieve a specific goal.

But this time, the ghost's opponent isn't Zhao Kaiming, but Yang Jian.

Trying to achieve its objective through Yang Jian poses a challenge for the ghost as well.

However, the game has just begun.

Hundreds of people flooded into the Peace Hotel.

The ghost wished to overcome Yang Jian's trap with strength in numbers and was prepared to fulfill Zhang Wei's wish at any given moment. Once the wish was fulfilled, one of Zhang Wei's family members would die.

"Brother Tui, I'm counting on you. I believe you can handle this ghost. I'm too young to become an orphan," Zhang Wei began to feel nervous at this moment.

Nineteen plates of egg fried rice were placed before him, just one more and a family member would die, making it difficult for anyone to remain calm.

"Don't worry, your family member won't die so easily. The ghost could complete the last plate of egg fried rice to fulfill your wish and kill one of your family members, but according to what Yang Jian said earlier, one wish means one family member dies. Once the ghost kills one of your family members, it means it can no longer threaten us with your family,"

Wang Shanshan said coldly, "To the ghost, killing one more person or one less makes no difference. Therefore, before it loses this bargaining chip, it won't easily deliver the last plate of egg fried rice."

"It's increasing its bargaining chips."

Miao Xiaoshan pondered for a moment, then looked at Yang Jian, "Is it trying to make an additional deal with Yang Jian?"

Yang Jian also realized this, his expression shifting slightly, "Is the ghost trying to use Zhang Wei's family's lives as leverage to complete a deal with me?"

"Very likely, it doesn't dare to appear easily, fearing confinement by you. So it hasn't shown up yet. But it has less than an hour left to act, so during this time it won't appear on its own but will continuously use supernatural powers to increase its bargaining chips, forcing you to agree to its deal," Miao Xiaoshan pondered.

"A ghost not daring to come indicates it fears us, knowing it can't win in a direct confrontation, all actions trying to avoid confronting us," Liu Qi said.

"If the ghost can use this method to leverage Zhang Wei's family as a threat, then it might reapply the same strategy on others. It's no longer under Zhao Xiaoya's control."

Yang Jian's expression changed suddenly, then realized something, his ghost eyes promptly turning towards the Guanjiang Residential Complex.

But it was already too late for Yang Jian to react.

Meanwhile.

In a five-story villa within Guanjian Residential Complex.

Though it was past eleven at night, Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin hadn't slept. They sat in the first-floor living room watching TV, waiting for Yang Jian's return.

The topic from earlier made them increasingly uneasy.

They didn't know what Yang Jian's stance was, fearing unfavorable outcomes. Let alone progressing the relationship, they might even get kicked out by Yang Jian.

"Yang Jian went to attend a class reunion with Zhang Wei today, probably won't return early,"

Jiang Yan said, then fretfully added, "Elder Sister Qin, what do you think Yang Jian means? Is he dissatisfied with us or does he feel we are too calculating, so angry he doesn't plan to come back?"

Beside her, Zhang Liqin gently shook her head, "I don't know what President Yang thinks nowadays. Before, I could still somewhat fathom his thoughts. Since he returned from a certain business trip, instead of seeing through him, he could deduce my thoughts clearly. His wisdom is more profound now than ever. We should just obediently listen, thinking more is futile."

"You've read President Yang's diary. If he wishes, he could subtly influence our thoughts. But if he does acting this way, it reassures me, as it shows we can be fully trusted, with no barriers. Unlike now, worrying endlessly."

She finished and sighed helplessly.

"Are we sure Yang Jian hasn't influenced our thoughts subtly?" Jiang Yan blinked.

"Definitely not, because this matter isn't recorded in his diary," Zhang Liqin shook her head.

Jiang Yan then whispered, "Elder Sister Qin, is Yang Jian really planning to get married?"

"He likely is. To President Yang, marriage is merely a formality. He needs to explain things to his mother and needs someone to reasonably and legally take care of his company and family, plus his mother has been urging him, so he won't refuse. The key is who will become the lucky one."

Zhang Liqin propped her chin and glanced at the TV casually.

Jiang Yan's eyes lit up, "Aren't we very likely? Who do you think Yang Jian would choose, you or me? We agreed before, no matter who Yang Jian chooses, we'll support each other."

Zhang Liqin laughed, "You're too naive, you think President Yang only has us as options? He has many choices, Yang's classmate Wang Shanshan, Liu Xiaoyu from the company, and Miao Xiaoshan who was almost his childhood playmate with him..... Besides, he may have acquaintances outside who's also female friends."

"Age, beauty, figure, education, we can't offer much. Our only advantage is being with Yang Jian for longer. So we should stop thinking too much and stay at home obediently. I've long stopped hoping, no matter whom President Yang marries, I'd work for him all my life."

"Damn!"

Jiang Yan's spirits sunk upon hearing this, frustratedly pounding the pillow in her arms.

Suddenly.

At this moment, a cold wind blew, the originally closed door creakingly opened.

In the silent night, the noise unnerved Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin, making their hairs stand on end, instinctively directing their gaze towards the door.

The door was now wide open, darkness enveloping the outside, lights flickering sporadically, appearing to be under some interference, the electricity unstably flowing.

And not far outside the door, sometime ago, a silhouette abruptly stood there.

"Who!" Jiang Yan plucked her courage to ask, her body tensed tightly.

Under the flashing illumination from the backyard, the outline briefly appeared, the person was Yang Jian himself. Yet under the pallid light, his face appeared grotesquely pale, eyes frozen and void.

Relieved, Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin exhaled.

Terrified for a moment, but relieved it's Yang Jian,

They were quite accustomed to these situations, as Yang Jian often returned home through various means, sometimes suddenly appearing in rooms, sometimes in the pool, sometimes shower sounds suddenly emerging from upstairs..... An uninformed individual might think the house was haunted.

Actually, every time something happened at home, their first reaction was that Yang Jian appeared, not that the house was haunted.

Over time, it became a subconscious reaction.

However, it was the first time something like this had happened, suddenly appearing outside the door.

"Yang Jian, why did you come back so late? Come in quickly, Elder Sister Qin and I have been waiting for you to come back and rest." Jiang Yan called out.

But the person outside the door didn't move, nor did they respond, only a familiar yet strange voice sounded, "Do you want to eat egg fried rice?"

"I'm not hungry right now, I don't want to eat. Are you hungry?" Jiang Yan asked. "If you're hungry, Elder Sister Qin and I can cook for you."

Zhang Liqin also stood up, preparing to go to the kitchen to cook.

"Do you want to eat egg fried rice?"

However, the Yang Jian outside the door remained silent, still asking, his voice carrying a hint of unfamiliarity.

Just as Jiang Yan was about to speak, Zhang Liqin suddenly came over and covered her mouth.

"What are you doing?" Jiang Yan struggled a bit, unable to understand Zhang Liqin's behavior.

But Zhang Liqin's eyes widened, her body trembling slightly, revealing an indescribable fear. She was quite familiar with Yang Jian, yet her intuition told her the person outside didn't seem like Yang Jian. Although he looked the same, the feeling he gave off was exceedingly strange.

"Jiang Yan, something's wrong. Yang Jian never asks the same question twice. The person standing outside makes me feel scared."

Though Jiang Yan was somewhat thick-skinned, she had experienced paranormal events, and she immediately reacted, her eyes widening in fear.

"Let's hurry and leave, escape through the back door, and head to the safe house. I still remember the password." As Zhang Liqin spoke, she continued to cover Jiang Yan's mouth, slowly retreating.

Although she was scared, she hadn't lost her reason. Faced with such a situation, her first thought was to hide in the safe house.

This was a lesson learned from the Hungry Ghost incident.

Jiang Yan cooperated by slowly retreating, but as they passed the staircase, she suddenly remembered something and hurriedly pried Zhang Liqin's hand away, "No, we can't leave. Aunt is still resting upstairs. We can't just ignore her."

"Let's go upstairs and take Aunt with us."

Zhang Liqin also realized that Yang Jian's mother was still sleeping upstairs.

They dared to leave anyone else behind in their escape, but they absolutely couldn't abandon Yang Jian's mother, or they wouldn't be able to face Yang Jian in the future.

They carefully made their way upstairs, their eyes fixed on the situation outside the door.

"Do you want to eat egg fried rice?" The Yang Jian outside was still asking that question.

That's the third time he's asked.

At this moment.

Any remaining hope in Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin's hearts was completely swallowed by fear.

Without a doubt, the person outside couldn't possibly be Yang Jian; it was likely an Evil Ghost that looked exactly like him.

"Run!" Jiang Yan shouted.

The two of them quickly ran upstairs.

However, before they even reached the stairs, the lights in the living room suddenly flickered, and the silhouetted figure cloaked in darkness began to slowly enter.

"It's coming inside." Zhang Liqin felt her scalp tingle.

Since the end of the Hungry Ghost incident, this was probably the first time an Evil Ghost had stepped into Yang Jian's home.

Even though Yang Jian was in Dachang City, why would a ghost appear here? Wasn't the Guanjiang Residential Complex protected by the Ghost Child?

Where is the Ghost Child?

Amidst her fear, Zhang Liqin suddenly remembered the Ghost Child and everything noted about it in that book.

Yet the Evil Ghost was now walking in the dim living room, its clear footsteps echoing, its silhouette in the dark drawing a terrifying black outline. As the darkness crept closer, both Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin felt as though they were about to be swallowed, even as they tried to escape.

"Ghost Child." Suddenly, Zhang Liqin called out in fear, almost hysterically.

Jiang Yan was so frightened by this scream that her legs went weak, and she fell onto the stairs, pulling Zhang Liqin down with her.

"Ghost Child." Zhang Liqin was still shouting, calling the name of the Evil Ghost.

"Buzz!"

The lights flickered.

At that moment, the room regained some brightness.

Two children, wearing burial clothes and exuding a cold, eerie aura, suddenly appeared near the stairway, their pairs of eyes emitting a faint red glow. They moved slightly, their innocent yet wicked gaze fixed on the living room ahead.

The terrifying figure shrouded in darkness stopped in its tracks.

"Is the Ghost Child really here?"

Jiang Yan's tightly wound nerves relaxed a bit, an inexplicable sense of safety surged within her.

She had seen the Ghost Child many times; it was on their side, always wandering around the Guanjiang Residential Complex, safeguarding the safety of that area.

The human-shaped silhouette hidden in the darkness of the living room was blocked by the Ghost Child, and it slowly retreated, withdrawing from the living room.

The Ghost Child remained motionless, just watching everything without doing anything.

Because it was Zhang Liqin's shout that drew out the Ghost Child, but she wasn't qualified to command it. Only two people could give orders to the Ghost Child: one was Yang Jian, the other was Wang Shanshan.

Zhang Liqin, as the recorder of Yang Jian's diary, was very aware of this.

The ghost continued to retreat, and the lights in the living room gradually returned to brightness.

But just as the ghost was about to exit the door, a scarlet light appeared, instantly engulfing the entire building, making everything seem to freeze under its glow.

In the blink of an eye.

The red light dissipated.

The darkness disappeared along with it, and the lights returned to normal.

At the doorway, a cracked long spear pierced through a chilling corpse, pinning it to the ground, incapable of any further movement.

Subsequently, Yang Jian appeared out of nowhere beside it, coldly staring at the chilling corpse.

The corpse was rapidly decaying, its face, identical to his own, sloughing off.

"Another corpse being controlled; this ghost is hidden deep, always using living or dead humans as walking mediums, never showing itself. But everything is just as I suspected—the ghost is tempting people to make wishes, increasing its stakes."

Yang Jian's gaze was somber, ghost flame ignited as he set the supernatural corpse aflame, then pulled out the long spear, casually flicking it to throw the body into the river outside the villa.

The river connected to Ghost Lake; the body disappeared quickly once it plunged into the water.

Afterward, he looked at Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin, collapsed on the stairs.

Clearly, this time the ghost was targeting them.

"How are you two? Are you okay?" Yang Jian asked.

"No, we're fine."

Jiang Yan was dazed, instinctively replied, then realized, her tears welled up as she rushed out, throwing herself onto Yang Jian: "Boohoo, I was scared to death. I thought I was sure to die this time. Where did you go, and why didn't you come to save me?"

Zhang Liqin sighed in relief, limp all over, utterly exhausted; she touched her tears, filled with the joy of surviving a catastrophe.

"That thing won't kill you; its appearance was just to make a deal with you. Did you two ask it to do anything just now?" Yang Jian said calmly.

He knew the killing pattern of the Wishing Ghost, wouldn't randomly kill before fulfilling wishes.

"No, the ghost kept asking me if I wanted to eat fried rice. I sensed something was wrong, didn't dare answer, grabbed Jiang Yan, and tried to escape to the safe house. At the last critical moment, I called out the Ghost Child, and then the ghost was planning to leave."

Zhang Liqin hurriedly recounted what had just happened.

Yang Jian glanced at her and said: "You actually knew to call out the Ghost Child's name."

After the Ghost Child devoured Code Silent's evil ghost, it possessed Silent's supernatural power and would appear whenever someone called its name, albeit within a certain range. But few people knew about this; coincidentally, Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin, who were responsible for recording the diary, did.

"I was just trying it in desperation... You won't blame me, right?"

Zhang Liqin stood up, like admitting fault, cautiously walked over.

Yang Jian said: "No, this time you did very well, far exceeding my expectations, even managing to think of such a tactic at a critical moment."

"Glad you don't blame me," Zhang Liqin sighed in relief.

"Yang Jian, what are you all shouting about downstairs? Do you not sleep at night?"

Suddenly, Zhang Fen upstairs heard the commotion and came down, somewhat reproachful.

"Mom, it's fine, just now, they accidentally tripped when coming upstairs and fell," Yang Jian said.

Zhang Fen said: "How badly did they fall, are they okay?"

"Auntie, we're fine, just a little scraped, we'll apply some medicine later," Zhang Liqin replied.

Zhang Fen said: "That's good, be careful in the future. By the way, didn't you say you bought me a piece of clothing, asking if I wanted it earlier? Where is it? I'll try it on first, and if it doesn't fit, I'll return it. Also, don't buy anything in the middle of the night in the future."

"Buying clothes?" Yang Jian was momentarily stunned.

Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin suddenly looked at Zhang Fen; the fear that had disappeared from their eyes surfaced again.

It's over.

The ghost didn't target them but targeted Auntie.

The two realized the severity of the issue, no longer dared to look at Yang Jian, slumping directly to the ground.

Yang Jian's indifferent face rarely showed a hint of anger; he was fully aware at this moment that the Wishing Ghost wasn't just targeting Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin at home but ultimately targeting his mother, Zhang Fen.

"What's wrong with you? Why suddenly sit on the ground?"

Zhang Fen hadn't yet realized the seriousness, walked over, attempting to help Jiang Yan and Zhang Liqin up.

Zhang Liqin and Jiang Yan didn't stand up but nervously and uneasily turned their gaze to Yang Jian.

"President Yang, I'm sorry, we didn't take good care of Auntie." Zhang Liqin bit her lip, utterly powerless, even the apology was weak and futile.

Jiang Yan dared not say a single word.

They understood that anyone here could have problems, but Auntie must not; Yang Jian had repeatedly instructed them to take care of Auntie. If something happened to Auntie, even with a tiny bit of responsibility, they knew they couldn't stay in this home.

Leaving this home equaled leaving Yang Jian, an unbearable huge price for them.

Yang Jian's complexion was gloomy with an indescribable anger; he sternly said at this moment: "Stand up."

Zhang Liqin and Jiang Yan nervously and uneasily supported themselves to stand up, their expressions evasive, faces pale, at a loss for what to do.

"This matter has nothing to do with you. Take my mom to the safe house and don't come out before dawn."

Yang Jian was seething with anger, but his anger wasn't directed at these two people in front of him; it was directed at the Wishing Ghost.

"Alright, alright, I understand." Jiang Yan replied nervously.

Zhang Fen asked, "Yang Jian, what's going on?"

"Dachang City is haunted. I'm looking for that thing. Don't worry, I can handle it." Yang Jian said.

"Haunted? Will there be many casualties again?" Zhang Fen also became a bit tense.

"Not this time. This time it's not serious." Yang Jian didn't want to say too much and just brushed it off with a couple of words, then gestured to Zhang Liqin and Jiang Yan.

The two didn't dare to be careless and hurriedly took Zhang Fen away to the safe house.

After the three left, Yang Jian then tightly gripped the cracked lance and turned to leave.

He knew clearly that the ghost had already made a deal with his mother Zhang Fen, and Zhang Fen's wish was just a piece of clothing.

Once the ghost fulfilled this wish, a relative would die.

What concerned Yang Jian most was not this.

But that the Evil Ghost might persistently linger around his mother.

Dealing with ghosts has always been dangerous, especially with such terrifying ghosts, it's peril of the highest order.

However, Yang Jian didn't have the time to worry about this; he needed to resolve this quickly and imprison the ghost, or else his mother would be in danger.

A brief appearance and a brief departure.

Yang Jian returned once more to the Peace Hotel.

"Yang Jian, there's been an incident. I just received a call from my mom, she seems to be haunted by a ghost."

As soon as Yang Jian appeared, Wang Shanshan immediately reported the recent situation.

"What's going on?" Yang Jian asked.

"When my mom was at home, someone knocked on the door, and when she opened it, she saw my dad coming back from the company..."

Wang Shanshan quickly recounted the situation, which was very similar to what Zhang Liqin and Jiang Yan encountered.

The ghost disguised itself as a relative, attempting to lead others to make a wish.

Wang Shanshan's mother, Wang Haiyan, fell for it; her wish was for a pearl necklace.

At this time, Miao Xiaoshan also put down the phone in her hand, her face grave: "There's a situation with my dad as well."

"Your dad isn't in Dachang City; even from such a distance..."

Liu Qi said suspiciously, and then his phone rang as well.

Yang Jian said, "There's no need to answer the phone; the situations are similar. The people around us have been targeted by the ghost; they all made deals with it. Now our relatives are being threatened by the Evil Ghost. If we don't cooperate with the ghost, that fatal gift will be sent out. Once sent, the deal completes, and what happens afterward, I think you all understand."

"Damn it."

Liu Qi squeezed the constantly ringing phone and slammed it, smashing it to pieces.

"It's indeed bad now; if we're not careful, everyone is finished." Zhang Wei was pacing anxiously.

Miao Xiaoshan pressed her lips, saying, "The ghost is holding more cards now. We're passive. It's gambling with us, betting that we won't imprison it before midnight. If the ghost wins, it becomes completely free and no longer bound by rules. But we don't dare to gamble because if we lose, we'll lose a relative."

"So you mean to let the ghost appear, and just walk past midnight openly? Do you think that will make the ghost spare our families?" Wang Shanshan said coldly, "Yang Jian, don't be influenced by that ghost. Imprison it before midnight to solve all problems once and for all."

Liu Qi was silent for a moment before saying, "The problem is, if we do that, the ghost might begin killing our relatives before midnight."

"Even if you let the ghost pass midnight, it won't spare our families. The supernatural is untrustworthy; it's not human and doesn't have integrity. A deal has been made, and the ghost will keep acting on it." Wang Shanshan said.

Liu Qi said, "But if the ghost gets past midnight, it can escape the rules, and the deal with our relatives can be indefinitely postponed."

Wang Shanshan said angrily, "The ghost can use this method to coerce us once, and it can do it a second and third time. Are we supposed to agree to the ghost's demands every time? Imprisoning it solves the problem once and for all; keeping it around remains a scourge, a hidden danger. When the ghost wants to kill, it can kill anyone. We'll still lose relatives, maybe even more."

"Wang Shanshan makes sense; this time, I'm with her." Zhang Wei expressed his stance.

"Yang Jian, make your decision; whatever you decide, I respect you." Liu Qi said seriously to Yang Jian.

This was a painful decision. No one dared to make the call because this decision bore so many lives.

"Me too, the risk of losing relatives is not just ours; Yang Jian is also bearing it. But we're limited in our ability, so we can only leave it to you. Whatever decision you make, I'll support you," said Miao Xiaoshan.

Wang Shanshan and Zhang Wei also looked at Yang Jian.

At this moment, the pressure fell on him once again.

However, Yang Jian was accustomed to such situations. He was a decision-maker. This time, it was special because his mother was also involved in this supernatural incident.

"Let me think." Yang Jian did not rush to make a decision; he was pondering.

However, he didn't have much time left.

It was already 11:30 PM.

Only the last half-hour remained.

During this half-hour, the ghost was certain to appear. Whether the deal would proceed depended on whether Yang Jian would give the ghost a chance to pass midnight.

Chapter 1376: Sitting Together Awaiting

Less than half an hour remains for decision-making, and Yang Jian's decision at this moment involves the life and death of many people, even extending to his own family's life and death.

There are only two choices before him now.

Either confront the ghost, detain it, and completely resolve the supernatural incident caused by the Wishing Ghost.

Or do nothing, let the Wishing Ghost complete its transaction with him.

The former is high-risk; if successful, everyone affected by the ghost can survive unharmed. But if it fails, undoubtedly, many people will die today.

The latter is low-risk; Yang Jian needs to do nothing to ensure everyone survives, but this survival bears significant hidden danger as their lives remain under the ghost's control.

"Detention is necessary; compromise is not an option. If the Wishing Ghost shakes off the constraints of rules, the consequences are unimaginable. Like Wang Shanshan, I don't believe that after midnight, the ghost would let everyone go. If it continues to kill, I won't be able to stop it; when the initiative is out of my hands, things will be harder to deal with."

Yang Jian has already made up his mind.

Compromise leads to a worse defeat; only a struggle can win this game.

But how can he ensure the successful detainment of the Wishing Ghost? It's a ghost whose mere outline appears in the five-layer Ghost Domain, hidden deeply, and the Wishing Ghost itself is terrifying.

"The Wishing Ghost's absence proves my trap is effective. If I stay here without moving, the Wishing Ghost will certainly enter here before midnight, fall into the trap, and be detained, but before this result arrives, many people will definitely die."

"The method to achieve both detaining the ghost and minimizing death is singular: remove the trap, make the ghost believe I will trade with it, and detain it at that moment."

"The challenge now lies in deceiving the ghost while ensuring the detention without error."

Yang Jian falls into silence, pondering the difficulty.

Detention with the Coffin Nail is undoubtedly effective, but he knows it's difficult for the ghost to show itself while the Coffin Nail is in hand.

Thus, he must abandon supernatural weapons, leaving himself completely unguarded against the Wishing Ghost.

"Yang Jian, there's not much time left to think; the commotion outside has ceased, seems something's off." Liu Qi speaks quietly.

Earlier, the black-clothed operatives pushed all those influenced by the supernatural out from the hall. Though both sides were clashing, people from the Peace Hotel suddenly ceased action, standing motionless without further confrontations.

"This means the ghost abandoned its plan of breaking the trap with numbers to easily pass tonight. If the ghost doesn't intend to confront Yang Jian head-on, it indicates its plan is underway. Now, our relatives face the danger of being attacked by the ghost." Wang Shanshan says.

Before she finishes, someone's phone rings abruptly.

"My phone," Zhang Wei hurriedly answers.

A voice filled with panic reaches him; it's his father, Zhang Xianggu, seeking help: "Ah Wei, quickly, notify Brother Tui. It seems haunted here, something is following me, and I'm terrified."

"Dad, it's fine, that's just a ghost. It won't kill you now; I haven't received my final egg fried rice yet. Be brave, go and slap it; I assure you it won't hit back. Besides, Brother Tui will handle this, trust us, okay, I'll hang up now as I'm busy here."

"Ah Wei, don't hang up, I'm not joking, it's real beside me." Zhang Xianggu's voice reveals fear.

Zhang Wei replies, "Dad, act like a man, we've weathered big storms. Sorta scares you, stay happy, eat and drink, maintain a smile. If anything truly goes wrong, we're all here for you, what is there to fear."

After a couple of comforting words, Zhang Wei hangs up immediately, cursing: "Damn it, this is bad, the ghost's targeted my dad."

"Clearly, it plans to kill your father first, then others... to force Yang Jian to concede by murder. With midnight approaching, the ghost will surely become more frenzied." Wang Shanshan speaks coldly.

Miao Xiaoshan suggests, "How about having everyone hide in the safe house? I recall Yang Jian built several safe houses in Dachang City."

"No chance, the ghost is watching closely; if it decides to kill, it'll act before ordinary people reach the safe house. With a regular person's ability, there's no way to resist or survive the journey to the safe house." Liu Qi shakes his head.

"Enough discussion, I already have the answer in my mind." Yang Jian ends his contemplation, speaking.

Immediately.

Everyone falls silent, gazing at Yang Jian, awaiting the final result.

Time is pressing, and Yang Jian doesn't mince words; he says, "Ah Wei, extinguish your oil lamp."

"What?" Zhang Wei is momentarily stunned.

"Put out the oil lamp; there's no need to keep it burning anymore. With it lit, the ghost won't dare show itself." Yang Jian extinguishes his own oil lamp as he speaks.

Wang Shanshan's expression changes: "Is this a compromise with the ghost? It's a wrong decision; despite understanding your concern for everyone's lives, ghosts can't be trusted, they lack integrity. Rules are the only constraint on them, thus detention is essential."

"I know, but no one here can bear the cost. Each of us will lose a family member before detaining the ghost, that's just the beginning. Twenty-five minutes remain; during this time, the ghost could keep killing, and deaths may exceed what we imagined." Yang Jian walks to the table, snuffing out Ghost Incense and Ghost Candle.

Without Ghost Incense, Ghost Candle, and Corpse Oil Lamp, the trap is completely dismantled.

Despite unwillingness, Zhang Wei promptly extinguishes his oil lamp.

All preparations for ghost detention are rolled back.

Moreover, Yang Jian raises his hand; the cracked spear in hand pierces the window, thrown hundreds of meters away, its final destination unknown.

"Are you... even discarding weapons? That had a Coffin Nail; you're abandoning all detention means. You're taking a huge risk—if things go awry, there won't be a counter." Liu Qi hesitates, deciphering Yang Jian's strategy.

"I understand."

Not satisfied after completing all this, Yang Jian commands the nearby black-clad people: "Withdraw, stop blocking those outside."

Not only traps were abolished, supernatural weapons discarded, even the black-clad order maintainers are recalled.

Every measure against the ghost abandoned.

Upon hearing the command, black-clad individuals unhesitatingly retreat, leaving paths clear, not blocking those affected by supernatural forces.

Witnessing all, others don't challenge Yang Jian's decision.

Perhaps, in Yang Jian's view, this is the best choice.

With no blockade from black-clad individuals, those outside begin moving again, orderly flooding the hall. Soon the spacious hall fills with people, leaving only a small space around the table Yang Jian and others are at.

"Damn it, showing sincerity, yet the ghost manipulates these people still." Liu Qi expresses indignation.

"It's to ensure we don't suddenly regret reigniting Ghost Incense and Ghost Candle. Even if lit amidst so many people now, it's futile."

Yang Jian remarks, scanning the crowd: "My sincerity is clear; now I demand the ghost's sincerity too, or all bets are off."

Following his words.

Soon.

The densely packed crowd parts, revealing a few cold individuals appearing abruptly among them. Each holds something—a bowl of egg fried rice, an article of clothing, a pearl necklace... These seemingly ordinary items symbolize a transaction.

The presence of the wish fulfillment items indicates the ghost's actions have ceased.

Zhang Wei's phone rang at this moment, and the call was from his father, Zhang Xiang: "Ah Wei, it seems like the ghost is gone. Ask Brother Tui if it's safe now?"

"Dad, stop being so scared of dying, okay? I told you there won't be any problem, and I'm very busy right now. Stop calling me every day; you're embarrassing me in front of my friends, don't you know? Also, I'm not coming home tonight. Just go to bed early. Fine, that's it."

After saying that, Zhang Wei hung up the phone again.

"The ghost's sincerity came pretty fast. It seems like it really wants to resolve this matter in this way. The more it does so, the more it's at a disadvantage. This means it knows that facing us head-on is a sure loss," Wang Shanshan said.

Yang Jian said, "At least things are moving in a good direction, and everyone's family members are currently safe."

"What do we do next?" Liu Qi asked.

"Do nothing, wait for the ghost to show up in front of me. You guys don't have to be nervous either, just sit down and rest. There's still twenty minutes left; the ghost probably won't appear so soon. It will most likely show up in the last few minutes." Yang Jian sat down again, taking no further action.

Seeing this, the others also had no choice but to sit down.

But as everyone took their seats, the crowd around them moved a few steps forward again, compressing the space even more. The people at the front were almost touching them, and just a slight lean back could make contact.

These people sealed off the space like walls and did nothing more.

But the light overhead that had just turned on was now flickering again with a buzzing sound.

The light flickered on and off, gradually revealing a chill in the surrounding air.

This chill touched people's skin, making their hairs stand on end, as if something was blowing cold air around.

"The ghost should already be in the hall, definitely among the crowd."

Liu Qi's gaze shifted from side to side, trying to find any clues, but unfortunately, there was nothing to see through the thick wall of people, and everyone around seemed as still as wooden statues.

"Ignore it, there's nothing we can do now." Yang Jian didn't even open his ghost eye, seemingly dropping all his defenses.

At this moment, the scene was silent, and the air felt particularly oppressive, almost suffocating.

However, this state didn't last long, and the flickering lights in the hall suddenly went out completely.

The lights went out from afar, moving closer and closer to the table where Yang Jian and the others were.

The time came to 11:50 PM.

Only ten minutes left.

At this moment, all the lights went out, except for an inconspicuous little bulb over Yang Jian's head still stubbornly shining, but it was very dim and unsteady, only barely illuminating the table.

Outside the table was pitch black, all the light consumed, and visibility was next to nothing.

People surrounding the table could only see the vague shapes of those behind them, unable to discern who was who, or even if what stood behind them was a person or a ghost.

The five of them were staring at each other, some nervous, some uneasy, others calm.

"This isn't a normal blackout; it's the supernatural impacting the entire hall, forming a considerable strength Ghost Domain. The ghost seems like it will appear in front of us in the last ten minutes," Liu Qi sensed the surrounding darkness.

At this moment, he felt that the darkness was boundless, as if he had fallen into a Supernatural Space, no longer inside the Peace Hotel.

Then, Liu Qi's scarlet lips moved slightly, though no sound was made, but the voice echoed in Yang Jian's mind: "Yang Jian, can you tell me the truth? Do you want to trick that ghost out, or are you really planning to compromise? If it's the former, I can cooperate with your actions."

Liu Qi stopped pretending and sought clarity on Yang Jian's true intentions.

He didn't believe that Yang Jian's character would compromise with a fierce ghost, inclined to think it was a trap set up by Yang Jian.

By dismantling the visible trap, a real trap could be set up to lure the fierce ghost.

Yang Jian didn't speak, only glanced at Liu Qi and slightly shook his head.

Liu Qi's lips moved slightly again: "Got it."

The time came to 11:55 PM.

In these final five minutes.

A distinct footstep suddenly sounded in the dark.

The direction from which this footstep came was clear, right in front of Yang Jian, just behind Zhang Wei.

"Damn, that thing is here." Zhang Wei was startled and turned to look, but was blocked by the person standing in the dark, seeing nothing.

Wang Shanshan and Miao Xiaoshan remained silent, their mouths shut, knowing that staying quiet was the best course of action at this time so as not to add trouble for Yang Jian.

The footsteps did not pause, proceeding forward, and the sound came gradually closer.

"Zhang Wei, don't move. Just sit there, don't turn around." Yang Jian said.

"Okay, okay, I won't move." Zhang Wei sat up straight immediately, not moving, but his eyes were darting around.

Soon.

A person behind Zhang Wei made space, and the footsteps stopped abruptly behind him.

However, in their sight, the spot behind Zhang Wei was empty; there was no ghost nor anything unusual, only darkness.

But as everyone stared.

A human-shaped silhouette gradually emerged from the darkness in that spot.

It seemed the real fierce ghost was about to appear.

Yang Jian's expression was calm, remaining still, his ghost eye unopened, so even he couldn't see what exactly was behind Zhang Wei.

Zhang Wei's body was tense; he wanted to turn around and see for himself but restrained the urge under Yang Jian's indication, not turning back.

But he could feel, there was indeed someone standing behind him.

Even with his bold nature, cold sweat started to form on his forehead at this moment.

Soon.

The outline in the darkness became clearer, and that figure gradually bent over, leaning forward, revealing an extremely unfamiliar face under the weak light above them.

The ghost was now keeping its promise to meet with Yang Jian.

But it hid behind Zhang Wei, seemingly fearing Yang Jian's sudden move.

Yang Jian watched the unfamiliar face appearing behind Zhang Wei, maintaining his calm demeanor.

Chapter 1377: The Final Minute

In the pitch-black hall, a dim yellow light flickered, barely illuminating a dining table.

Yang Jian, Zhang Wei, Liu Qi, Miao Xiaoshan, and Wang Shanshan sat around this table, motionless, without making the slightest sound, even restraining their breathing as much as possible.

Because behind them, in the darkness, stood countless shadowy figures.

But at this moment, Yang Jian's eyes were locked on the figure behind Zhang Wei, which leaned out of the darkness, revealing a strange face.

Rather than calling it a person, it would be more accurate to say that this thing was likely a ghost.

Zhang Wei's breathing became somewhat erratic; his eyelids twitched, and he couldn't help but glance upwards. He could distinctly feel the icy coldness of the figure above him, without the slightest warmth, and just being near it made his skin crawl. Yet, his hand remained tightly clenched around the red axe.

The ghost maintained its bizarre posture without moving, yet its cold and unfamiliar face was always facing Yang Jian.

"Yang Jian, the ghost has not only appeared but also stands there motionless. This is a good opportunity; if we act now... we can win."

Liu Qi was also staring at the ghost behind Zhang Wei, itching to act, with his hand gripping the Grass Rope Circle beneath the table.

He believed that by working with Yang Jian, they could definitely restrain the ghost immediately, or even detain it.

Yang Jian did not respond but merely signaled with his eyes for Liu Qi not to act recklessly.

"I got it." Seeing this, Liu Qi could only suppress his impulse.

To have made it this far, he had to have the right insight. At this moment, Yang Jian's lack of action indicated this was not the right time to move. After all, as a captain of the headquarters, Yang Jian could not have missed an opportunity that Liu Qi could see.

Time passed bit by bit.

11:56, 11:57...

The ghost behind Zhang Wei remained motionless.

The scene was terrifyingly silent, with everyone on edge.

"There are only three minutes left, and I don't believe the figure behind Zhang Wei is the ghost. I believe the real ghost is still hidden within this hall and hasn't appeared." Yang Jian remained calm, with that sole thought in his mind.

He was gambling at this moment.

Because the ghost appeared too early, at 11:55, he had reason to suspect that this first ghost might be fake, intended to provoke him into action.

Of course, it's also possible that the ghost behind Zhang Wei was real.

If that's the case, it means Yang Jian would lose the gamble, the ghost would successfully complete its transaction, silently vanish, pass through today, and rid itself of the killing pattern's restriction.

If, hypothetically, Yang Jian's judgment was correct.

The ghost would appear in the last three minutes, also meaning it would have no time left to adjust its plan. When that moment arrived, if the ghost couldn't hide within the transaction time or leave Yang Jian's field of vision, their action would certainly succeed.

This was the most prudent course of action; otherwise, if any mishap occurred, all their loved ones would die, and even if the ghost was eventually detained, it would still cause irreversible loss.

And Yang Jian trusted his judgment—he refrained from acting, even in the last few minutes, despite knowing that acting now would certainly deal with the ghost behind Zhang Wei.

The time reached 11:58 at night.

With only two minutes left before today ended.

But at that moment.

Another set of footsteps started among the people shrouded in darkness around them.

Hearing the second set of footsteps, Yang Jian knew he had won the bet.

The figure behind Zhang Wei was not the real ghost at all.

"So that's how it is." Liu Qi instantly understood too, surprised and uncertain, and looked at Yang Jian with amazement.

How did Yang Jian determine that the ghost was fake in that situation?

Was there some detail he had overlooked?

But upon careful reflection, Liu Qi could find no flaw indicating that the ghost behind Zhang Wei was fake.

The only possibility was a personal judgment.

After the second set of footsteps appeared, it quickly closed in on the group.

"Behind me." Miao Xiaoshan's expression changed slightly, whispering.

"Don't panic, just stay calm," Yang Jian said.

In the darkness behind Miao Xiaoshan, the crowd parted to make way. A chilling figure approached, leaning over, revealing half of its body.

Likewise, a strange and cold face appeared in the dim light.

And this strange face was identical to the figure behind Zhang Wei.

"The same?" Wang Shanshan looked around, unable to distinguish any differences between the two.

Liu Qi wanted to act again, glancing at Yang Jian, but saw that Yang Jian was still sitting there, with no intention of moving.

"Not acting yet? Only two minutes left. Wait, could it be that the second ghost might also be fake?"

After experiencing the earlier encounter, he quickly realized this second ghost might also be fake. After all, a method that could be used once could undoubtedly be used a second time.

But there shouldn't be enough time left for the ghost to take such action.

Quickly.

Another development occurred.

The third, fourth, and fifth footsteps appeared almost simultaneously.

These three footsteps rapidly approached, appearing behind Miao Xiaoshan, Liu Qi, and Yang Jian.

At this moment, Yang Jian also sensed a cold aura from behind, a person with an icy presence standing behind him along with the footsteps, similar to the situation with Wang Shanshan and Liu Qi.

Then.

These three eerie figures also leaned forward, presenting a strange face in the dim light, identical to the person behind Miao Xiaoshan and Zhang Wei.

Time reached eleven fifty-nine.

In the last minute, the ghost appeared before Yang Jian, but not in the way he imagined.

Five unfamiliar people, one of whom is the ghost.

There's no doubt about it.

"This is troublesome, only one minute left, who would've thought the ghost would come up with such a plan." Even Liu Qi had to weigh his options before taking action.

Because he could only target one ghost, and if he made the wrong choice, it could lead to dreadful consequences.

But the last minute left no time for contemplation.

Yang Jian glanced at the ghosts behind everyone; he knew this was the final chance. If he acted swiftly enough, he could resolve this paranormal incident before the ghost could kill.

In an instant, he reached out with a charred Ghost Hand, grabbing the neck of the weird figure behind him at an incredible angle.

The Ghost Flame burned, enveloping it in an instant, igniting it.

Simultaneously, Yang Jian's Ghost Eye suddenly opened. This time, he was prepared, without any complacency, and directly activated the Ghost Domain to the sixth level.

The sixth-level Ghost Domain can pause everything, including the paranormal, but the more terrifying the ghost, the less time it can be paused.

A crimson light, as thick as blood, appeared at this moment, like a river of blood rushing in, swallowing everything in front of it.

Everyone was enveloped in the sixth-level Ghost Domain.

At this moment, everything, including Yang Jian, was at a standstill.

The only thing not paused was the Ghost Eye.

The Ghost Eye was restlessly moving, observing every anomaly within the Ghost Domain.

Within this degree of Ghost Domain, the real ghost and the fake ones were easy to distinguish.

Yang Jian immediately locked onto the location of the real ghost.

Behind Miao Xiaoshan.

However, as Yang Jian found the real ghost, it also knew it was exposed, its little tricks couldn't escape the Ghost Eye's scrutiny.

And with only one minute left, it didn't have the time to use others' lives to threaten Yang Jian.

It could be said that the ghost had lost its means of restraining Yang Jian at this moment.

Reaching this predicament wasn't caused by Yang Jian but because the ghost was overly cautious. It used fake ghosts to deceive Yang Jian, using up the last bit of time, leaving no room for adjustments.

One would have thought that in this final minute, Yang Jian could render the ghost powerless.

However, the next occurrence left him astonished.

Within the sixth-level Ghost Domain, that ghost began to move.

It seemed unaffected—no, it was affected, but its movements were merely delayed slightly. The sixth-level Ghost Domain hadn't fully paused the ghost, only slowed its actions.

The ghost slowly raised its hand and placed it on Miao Xiaoshan's head.

The cold, slightly pale hands bore nothing remarkable, but at this moment, those cold, pale hands were lethal to an ordinary person.

"Impossible, how can the ghost actually make a move to kill? Its wish wasn't fulfilled, and Miao Xiaoshan didn't have any interaction with it... Wait, the attack on Miao Xiaoshan indicates that one of her relatives made a wish to the ghost. The ghost had another trap; it had already granted her relative's wish, waiting for this moment to take Miao Xiaoshan's life."

Yang Jian's Ghost Eye shed its golden hue, turning crimson. He fixed his gaze on the scene, and the rolling water beneath his feet was unaffected by the sixth-level Ghost Domain.

An old-fashioned, rust-coated large sword slowly emerged from the water.

This was Zhang Xiangguang's supernatural weapon, which he intended to use against the Wishing Ghost after discarding his spear.

"Use the five-level Ghost Domain to temporarily send Miao Xiaoshan away, then slash the Wishing Ghost into pieces with one swipe."

Yang Jian's sixth-level Ghost Domain receded, transforming into a five-level Ghost Domain.

The terrifying, suspending supernatural phenomena dissipated.

At this moment, the ghost, without the influence of the sixth-level Ghost Domain, made a move to kill, but as the five-level Ghost Domain sent Miao Xiaoshan away, Yang Jian's sword had already slashed out across space.

Everything intersected within the final few seconds.

Chapter 1378: The Truth Behind the 40-Minute Reboot

The red Ghost Domain is dissipating, and the darkness enveloping the entire hall is fading away.

The rusted old knife in Yang Jian's hand slowly lowered as well, his ghost eye still turning, eagerly observing the result of the collision just now.

In an instant, many things happened, and even he didn't know what the situation would turn into next.

"Succeeded?"

At this moment, Liu Qi stood up in some surprise. He saw that the ghost behind Miao Xiaoshan had its head already rolled onto the ground, and the headless body stood motionless in place.

"But... Miao Xiaoshan is gone."

The spot where Miao Xiaoshan was previously sitting was now completely empty, with both her and the chair disappearing without a trace.

The others were also startled.

In the blink of an eye, a living person just disappeared into thin air like this. Could it be that Miao Xiaoshan was attacked by a ghost at that time, and the ghost made her vanish?

Actually, Miao Xiaoshan didn't disappear because of a ghost; she was transported away by Yang Jian's Five-layer Ghost Domain and was no longer in reality.

However, just as Yang Jian can send people away, he can also pull them back through the Ghost Domain.

Yet, when Yang Jian's ghost eye peered ahead, his face immediately darkened.

In the world isolated from reality by the Five-layer Ghost Domain, Miao Xiaoshan's figure appeared there. Her body seemed to float in mid-air, motionless, while blood specks floated around her, because at this moment her head had cracked open, deformed, and her eyes were dim and lifeless.

It was clear that in the final contest between Yang Jian and the ghost, although Yang Jian had chopped off the ghost's head, the ghost also killed Miao Xiaoshan in its final moment.

The Five-layer Ghost Domain could have safely sent Miao Xiaoshan away, but an accident still occurred.

"She's already dead, no longer breathing."

Yang Jian's ghost eye confirmed without doubt that Miao Xiaoshan was now a corpse.

"What, Miao Xiaoshan is dead?" Upon hearing this news, everyone else widened their eyes.

The joy of having just successfully chopped off the ghost's head vanished instantly.

To have lost an important friend for the sake of dealing with a ghost was a result unacceptable to everyone.

Yang Jian glanced at the time at this moment.

It was not yet midnight; the current time displayed as 11:59, perhaps just a few seconds until today passed.

His eyes flickered, weighing the situation in his heart.

Since Miao Xiaoshan hadn't been dead for long, using the Eight Layer Ghost Domain to restart the area, he could completely bring back a person who had already died. He had done such things more than once, so it was a familiar task. If the person had been dead for too long, then there would be nothing he could do.

"Should I use the restart to save Miao Xiaoshan?" The reason Yang Jian was hesitant was because once he performed the restart, the ghost would also recover.

Then, his previous efforts would all be in vain.

After all, after the restart, the ghost's actions might become unpredictable, making it perhaps not so easy to chop off its head again.

However, as Yang Jian was considering, anomalies had already occurred around him.

Yang Jian's consciousness blurred for a moment, and the same sensation occurred to Liu Qi, Wang Shanshan, Zhang Wei... and everyone else in the hotel.

"What's going on, why all of a sudden..."

He detected something off and tried to resist this supernatural force that was blurring his consciousness.

But very quickly.

His consciousness returned to clarity, and the others also regained their clarity. They all felt the same as Yang Jian, showing no differences due to their ghostly possession or being ordinary people.

As their consciousness returned to clarity, the scene in front of them reappeared in their vision.

The surroundings were no longer pitch black, but brightened up again. All the lights turned on, but the people surrounding them at this moment had disappeared, as if something massive had changed during that brief moment of consciousness blur, but everything came so quickly that no one even reacted.

However, these changes weren't the most shocking; what struck Yang Jian the most was at the table, where the previously missing Miao Xiaoshan appeared again, and the reappeared Miao Xiaoshan wasn't dead; she was alive and well, her head intact.

"This is bad."

Yang Jian's face changed unpredictably, and then he realized something and stood up abruptly.

Such a dramatic change happened in an instant, even bringing back someone who had died; this could only mean one thing: a restart.

But he hadn't used the restart just now.

So if he hadn't used the restart, then within the hall, the only one who could have initiated it...

Yang Jian's gaze moved to behind Miao Xiaoshan.

Behind her was empty; the ghost that had its head chopped off was now gone, nowhere to be found.

"What time is it now?" Yang Jian asked.

Zhang Wei immediately looked at his watch: "Eleven twenty. Damn, what's going on? Is my watch broken? A watch that costs over a million, and this is the quality? It can't even show the correct time."

As he spoke, he took the watch and knocked it hard against the table, then looked at it again.

The time was still moving normally, and it still displayed eleven twenty.

"Stop knocking, your watch isn't broken. My clock also shows it's eleven twenty," Wang Shanshan said.

"It's the same here too."

Miao Xiaoshan said, then added somewhat puzzled: "But just now I clearly remember the time was eleven fifty-nine, and the ghost had already appeared behind me."

"It's a reset. The ghost used its most terrifying supernatural power to reset the entire area, turning back the time by forty minutes. That's why this phenomenon occurred," Yang Jian said calmly.

Liu Qi was also skeptical at this moment. He stared at the time repeatedly, finding it unbelievable, but reality told him Yang Jian's explanation was correct.

The whole area indeed reset, and time went back forty minutes.

However, despite the reset, everyone's memories seemed to remain intact, unaffected by the reset.

Yet this scene felt familiar to Yang Jian.

A forty-minute reset, so precise and spanning such a long period, Yang Jian had only encountered once since entering the supernatural circle, and that was during the Hungry Ghost incident.

Back then, during his first action, he almost used the Coffin Nail to imprison the Hungry Ghost. As a result, the Hungry Ghost reset and turned back time by forty minutes, causing the first action to fail.

"Isn't the forty-minute reset the Hungry Ghost's supernatural power? How could it appear here... Wait a minute, could it be that I've always misunderstood? Maybe the Hungry Ghost can't reset at all; the one who can actually reset has always been the Wishing Ghost, because during the Hungry Ghost incident, Zhao Kaiming was still alive, and the Wishing Ghost was still by his side."

Yang Jian's face suddenly changed.

The truth behind that long-misunderstood matter from a year ago was finally revealed today.

The reset is the Wishing Ghost's ability.

And upon realizing the ghost could reset, everyone present was extremely shocked.

"Are you kidding me, it can reset and roll back forty minutes? How is there such a cheat? This is totally hacking," Zhang Wei cursed.

"The supernatural power can actually accomplish this, it's just unbelievable."

Wang Shanshan thought this matter was absurd, even more so than the dead coming back to life.

Miao Xiaoshan also nodded: "This has completely exceeded my understanding of the supernatural."

Liu Qi couldn't help but take a deep breath. Now he finally understood how terrifyingly abnormal the top supernatural ghosts in this circle were. Just a moment ago, they had clearly won, the ghost's head had been cut off, yet with a reset, everything went back to forty minutes ago and started all over again.

But after starting over, would the previous strategy to imprison the ghost still be effective?

And even if the second attempt succeeded, what about another reset by the ghost?

Resetting again and again means the ghost has countless chances to make mistakes, while they only have one. If they lose even once, it's over.

"It was my mistake; I didn't realize the one with the ability to reset is the Wishing Ghost. Forty minutes of reset time is enough to change everything," Yang Jian said, taking a deep breath.

"That ghost is cheating, Brother Tui, what do we do now? Let's just admit defeat straight away; this isn't winnable."

Zhang Wei quickly explained to everyone: "Let me state clearly, I'm not scared, nor are we lacking in skill, but the other side can reset and cheat."

Liu Qi smiled wryly: "No one would blame you for thinking that. Right now, I can't think of any way to win. Yang Jian's plan earlier was already perfect—lowering our guard, luring the ghost over, and

detaining it in the last minute, leaving the ghost no place to hide and no time to harm our families, even unmasking the ghost's disguise."

"But if there's a do-over and the ghost knows Yang Jian's plan in advance, how can we win?"

The only relief was that this ghost didn't kill indiscriminately; otherwise, the loss would have been greater. Even with a reset, it's just another confrontation with the ghost, without a large cost.

"It's too early to think about surrendering and admitting defeat. If the first plan doesn't work, then come up with a second, a third. It's not time to give up. I believe we'll be the ones to win in the end," Yang Jian said, his gaze steady.

This reset may have exceeded his expectations, but it was something he could accept.

After all, the ghost's reset also saved Miao Xiaoshan, at most making this a draw, with no losses on either side.

Since the ghost wants to go again, Yang Jian is willing to go again.

With this experience, Yang Jian vowed to block the ghost's reset the second time, giving it no chance to start over.

While they were discussing,

inside the Peace Hotel, commotion arose once more.

The ordinary people who had entered the hotel earlier were now leaving quickly, moving as if controlled, heading outside and then dispersing by car.

Not only the ordinary people who had entered the hotel earlier, but even the hotel's staff were leaving.

Soon, the hotel, which had been crowded, became desolate.

Clearly, all this was the ghost's doing.

After its first failure, the ghost seemed to have another course of action.

Chapter 1379: The New Supernatural Game

"People inside the Peace Hotel are evacuating, leaving."

Yang Jian saw this scene, as did Liu Qi and the others. Through the windows, they could clearly see the dense crowds outside dispersing and leaving.

The ghost seemed to have abandoned its plan to fill the hotel with people. It's unclear whether the ghost intended to use another method, or if it gave up on this tactic after Yang Jian unraveled it.

However, this is not necessarily a bad thing.

The ghost doesn't plan to use ordinary people anymore, which means fewer concerns for Yang Jian.

"After the reset just now, the ghost is pretty familiar with our previous plans. Who knows how it will appear before us this time," Liu Qi said.

"This class reunion is really interesting, fighting a ghost non-stop with this group of people," Wang Shanshan shook her head slightly and said, "No matter what, we still have to resolve this quickly, we can't afford to drag it out."

"Earlier, Brother Tui signaled, so I didn't have a chance to make a move. Don't worry, this time I, Ah Wei, will definitely take care of this thing. It's not that I'm trying to prove how amazing I am, but I simply want to give that thing a chop," Zhang Wei became enthusiastic again, touching the axe in his hand, looking for an opportunity to strike.

"Just don't cause any trouble," Miao Xiaoshan said, not believing him.

"No, the ghost has evacuated everyone, but left one person behind, and that person is coming towards us." Yang Jian, who had been observing the Peace Hotel's movements, noticed something amiss.

One person was behaving differently, not leaving with the majority of people, but instead approaching them.

"Is it the ghost or a human?" Liu Qi asked.

Yang Jian said, "It's a human, but judging by the appearance, they've most likely been influenced by the supernatural and become a Ghost Slave. It seems that the ghost plans to use this person as a medium to contact me. After all, even after the reset, the ghost still has to fulfill its deal with me and appear before me before midnight. Our struggles continue."

Thinking of this, Yang Jian did not stop that person from entering the lobby.

Soon, the lobby door opened, and a middle-aged man in a suit, with a blank expression and vacant eyes, strode in.

Everyone's gaze immediately focused on this man in a suit.

Zhang Wei went ahead and lit an oil lamp, carrying the axe as he approached.

But under the dim oil lamp, there was nothing beside this middle-aged man; the real ghost was not beside this person, it hadn't even entered the lobby.

"Damn, that ghost thing has hidden itself again."

Zhang Wei wandered around the man in the suit with his axe, "Brother Tui, what do you think about me chopping this thing?"

"No, this is just an ordinary person who's been influenced; chopping him won't have any effect." Yang Jian shook his head.

Suddenly.

The middle-aged man in the suit, expressionless, suddenly spoke, "Yang Jian."

"It's speaking?" Yang Jian's face changed, and he immediately walked over.

It seemed that the ghost intended to communicate through this living Ghost Slave.

"Yang Jian," the man in the suit spoke stiffly, still calling out Yang Jian's name.

"Yang Jian, don't respond to it, or you'll be targeted." Liu Qi urged cautiously.

Yang Jian gestured with his hand, "It's fine."

Then he approached the man in the suit, "I am Yang Jian, what do you want to say?"

The originally lifeless man in the suit suddenly moved his neck slightly, then stared eerily at Yang Jian in front of him. A strange look appeared in his eyes, and the stiff voice continued, "In the remaining thirty-five minutes, I want to play a game with you."

"Why should I play a game with you? Even after the reset, you still don't dare to show yourself in front of me. Your defeat is certain." Yang Jian spoke calmly.

The man in the suit did not speak. He merely opened his palm to reveal a familiar sticker, and the stiff voice continued, "This is the reward for winning the game."

Wish Sticker?

Yang Jian recognized the paper; it was a supernatural item that could grant wishes, originating from Zhao Xiaoya. But since Zhao Xiaoya was now in a deep sleep, no more of these were being made, and even when Zhao Xiaoya was awake, making these was forbidden.

Because behind each Wish Sticker was a human life.

However, this Wish Sticker already had words written on it, twisted and unlike those written by the living, with a simple content: The Wishing Ghost will never kill.

Clearly.

If Yang Jian won, the wish on the sticker would come true, and the Wishing Ghost would never kill again.

Once the Wishing Ghost never kills again, it would mean the ghost has given up on killing Yang Jian and his relatives, and the terror level would drop sharply.

"What if I lose?" Yang Jian frowned slightly.

The ghost shutting itself off from the supernatural, such a good thing must be balanced by an appropriate cost.

"All your relatives will die before midnight today," the middle-aged man said in a stiff voice.

"Yang Jian, don't agree to it, it's a trap." Wang Shanshan immediately refused.

Liu Qi also said, "It can't be trusted, it can reset and cheat again."

Yang Jian signaled slightly, then said, "Why should I engage in this pointless game with you."

"Refuse, and after 11:30, every minute, ten thousand people will commit suicide in Dachang City," the man in the suit said.

The ghost adheres to the killing rules and can't directly kill, but it can influence the living to commit suicide, effectively circumventing the killing rules.

"You're threatening me?" Yang Jian said coldly.

"Do you agree to the game?"

The man in the suit didn't respond, just stiffly extended his hand, stained with blood. This blood was thick and scarlet, reminiscent of the paint on the Ghost Cabinet.

"This isn't an ordinary game, it's a supernatural game. Yang Jian, the ghost must be prepared if we really agree, we'll lose miserably," Liu Qi said, eyeing the bloodstained hand of the man in the suit.

It's clear that this is a curse, not just a verbal game. Agreeing means the game proceeds under the curse.

Wang Shanshan also said, "Yang Jian, it wants to use new rules of transaction to override the old killing rules. Only then can it kill wantonly. Previously, it could only kill one of our relatives, but if we agree to the game and lose, it can break the rules and kill all our relatives at once."

"But the ghost killing our relatives is surely not the main point. The main point is that there's a second step hidden in its request. Ultimately, it likely wants to use all our relatives as leverage, to let it safely pass midnight. It found that the price of one relative isn't enough for us to compromise."

"And winning doesn't benefit us, it can restart."

"Killing ten thousand people in Dachang City every minute, the cost of refusing is too high. The ghost clearly wants to use the lives of ordinary people as leverage, and if the ghost locks up like before in the last minute, then it has twenty-nine minutes to kill, costing us two hundred ninety thousand lives." Miao Xiaoshan pursed her lips in fear.

This is the evil of the ghost; hundreds of thousands of people are just numbers in its mouth.

"The ghost found our weak spot in the first wave of encounters." Liu Qi wanted to curse the ghost at this moment; it's truly insidious.

"This situation absolutely cannot happen. Dachang City will be protected by me, Ah Wei, today. I'll agree to play the game with you."

Zhang Wei shouted loudly at this time, then without hesitation, he reached out and grabbed the bloody hand of the middle-aged man.

Blood stained his hand, forming a crimson blood handprint, some kind of curse and trade seemed to be made.

"Zhang Wei, don't be impulsive." Liu Qi's face changed abruptly, wanting to stop it, but it was too late.

Yang Jian stood aside; he could intervene but chose not to.

Zhang Wei's choice was not wrong, and he silently agreed with this action.

"You can add two more ordinary people to the game." The middle-aged man spoke again in a daze.

Apparently, after Zhang Wei accepted the game, the supernatural game changed. The game was no longer aimed at Yang Jian but at ordinary people. This is the transaction mechanism of the Ghost Cabinet, which adjusts according to the strength of the traders, avoiding sending them into certain death situations.

After all, if people die, who would complete the transaction?

"Still need to add two teammates?" Zhang Wei scratched his head, looking around.

"I'll participate in its so-called supernatural game." Wang Shanshan came forward and said.

Miao Xiaoshan pursed her lips and said, "Count me in, only Wang Shanshan and I meet the criteria here."

"Some people have more experience in supernatural games than you, and you're a bit early to join."
Yang Jian's eyes moved slightly, ghost eye looking towards Shangtong Tower.

In the next moment.

A man around thirty suddenly appeared in front of his eyes, looked around, and quickly calmed down:
"Yang Jian?"

"Eagle, do you still have the experience from the Ghost Post Office's delivery task? There is a supernatural game that needs your help, which requires someone who meets the criteria of an ordinary person to participate. I would like you to do me this favor." Yang Jian said seriously.

He brought in a very experienced messenger from the company.

However, Eagle was also someone resurrected from the supernatural, unsure if he fits the profile of an ordinary person.

Eagle quickly understood the situation around him, smiled and said, "Since you've asked, how can I refuse? What should I do?"

"Shake hands with him." Yang Jian pointed at the middle-aged man in a suit.

Eagle looked at that bloody hand, did not hesitate, and reached out to shake it.

Soon, his hand also had a crimson palm print on it, like a curse.

"Seems like I qualify as an ordinary person."

Eagle then added, "But next time, get me earlier, I was just on the phone with my family. By the way, who are you planning to get as the third person? Yang Xiaohua? She's not suitable."

"I'll be the third one."

Wang Shanshan came forward without hesitation and shook the blood-stained hand.

The third crimson palm print was left on her hand.

"Such a pretty girl, Yang Jian, you can bear this?" Eagle took a glance, surprised at Wang Shanshan's actions.

"You're speaking too much nonsense, Eagle." Yang Jian glanced at him and said.

Eagle shrugged, speaking no more.

At this moment, the middle-aged man in the suit spoke again, stiffly: "The game starts in three minutes, the three participants enter the Peace Hotel, the others leave. The content of the game is: Survive. At eleven thirty, the ghost will begin killing in the Peace Hotel. If there are survivors after midnight, the ghost loses; if there are no survivors before midnight, the ghost wins."

"Game interference is prohibited, otherwise the ghost will leave the Peace Hotel, free from rule constraints, and kill randomly."

"Interesting, the ghost can still set game rules." Eagle squinted his eyes and said.

Liu Qi said, "This ghost seems eager for us to break the rules."

"Let's retreat from the Peace Hotel first." Yang Jian did not speak much, directly left the hall with everyone, arriving at the entrance of the hotel.

Looking at the time, there are still two minutes until the game starts.

"Zhang Wei, Wang Shanshan, Eagle, since you chose to participate in this game, then you must win. The ghost will adjust the difficulty according to the trader; this is its rule and cannot be changed. You are ordinary people; the ghost won't show too terrifying murder methods, so you have a chance to win."

"If you fail, shout, and I'll intervene." Yang Jian said seriously.

"Brother Tui, don't worry, would I lose a game? You have too little faith in me." Zhang Wei confidently spoke, carrying a red axe.

"If it's just the ordinary person difficulty of the supernatural game, our winning odds aren't small." Eagle said.

Wang Shanshan said, "This is the best choice, Yang Jian, trust me this time."

Yang Jian said, "Okay, then I trust you this time, begin the operation, I'll be watching from outside."

The three nodded, immediately walking towards the dim Peace Hotel.

"Yang Jian, what are you planning this time? Knowing your character, you would never agree to any supernatural game." Liu Qi came over, lips slightly moving, secretly asking.

Just like before, Yang Jian removed all traps, lured the ghost out.

He felt Yang Jian still had countermeasures this time; otherwise, how could he let Wang Shanshan and Zhang Wei accompany the ghost in the game?

"The ghost wants to set rules to decide victory inside the game, and I want to decide victory outside the game. I won against the ghost once before, and I can win a second time. Liu Qi, don't rush, have some patience, cheating is not the ghost's privilege; if the game is lost, I'll also cheat." Yang Jian said calmly.

"But what if we win? After all, once the ghost sets the rules, it cannot violate them."

"But it will reboot." Liu Qi said.

Yang Jian said, "I said I would block the ghost's reboot; this kind of thing can only appear once, I won't let it happen a second time, also, the supernatural game seems beneficial to the ghost, but in fact, it's digging a pit for itself."

"Previously, it only had one transaction rule binding it, now it also has a game rule binding it, the more bindings the ghost has, the more its weaknesses are exposed."

"It's eleven thirty, the supernatural game has begun."

Then, he raised his head to look at the Peace Hotel.

The Peace Hotel became blurry, interfered by the supernatural, his ghost eye vision was affected, unless using the Ghost Flame, he wouldn't know what's happening inside.

However, once the Ghost Flame is used to ignite the hotel, it means the end of the game.

Chapter 1380 - Inside and Outside the Game

"It's the first time I've encountered a ghost wanting to play a game with us. It seems like this ghost is quite unusual, possessing some degree of human consciousness."

Arriving at the empty Peace Hotel, Ah Wei wasn't nervous at all. Instead, he analyzed the situation with interest.

"This ghost is an anomaly, and such anomalies are rare. We've just happened to run into one," Wang Shanshan said. "We just need to survive for thirty minutes in this hotel. Once the game ends, the ghost will adhere to the agreement, making it much easier for Yang Jian to deal with it."

Ah Wei laughed, "Young lady, I think you've misunderstood something. It's not Yang Jian trying to deal with the ghost; it's the ghost trying to find a way to deal with Yang Jian. The fact that the ghost chose to engage in a supernatural game means it's trying hard to avoid a direct confrontation with Yang Jian, which also means the ghost is at a disadvantage against him."

"Only when facing an unbeatable enemy do you resort to such fancy tricks. If the ghost could kill Yang Jian, it wouldn't need to bother with this, even if it's following certain rules."

"You're right. In the previous encounter, we almost contained the ghost, which then rebooted, bringing the time back forty minutes, which is why this has happened," Wang Shanshan said.

Zhang Wei chimed in from the side, "Aren't we supposed to be playing the game seriously? How did we end up chatting?"

"Hasn't the game already started?" Wang Shanshan replied.

"Why aren't you getting into it at all? It's making me feel really awkward," Zhang Wei said, carrying an axe, looking around, and appearing like a Clown compared to Wang Shanshan and Ah Wei, who continued to chat as they walked.

Ah Wei smiled and said, "The ghost is already inside Peace Hotel; this is its territory. We don't need to go looking for it. It will come to us, as the longer it takes, the worse it is for the ghost. Considering that the three of us are ordinary people, the ghost's level of terror will decrease accordingly. If the ghost's method of killing is terrifying, like instant death upon meeting or contact, then its actions will be limited. Conversely, if the ghost's actions are bizarre, its killing method won't be too excessive."

"After all, the game should be relatively fair. If it's excessively imbalanced, it loses the meaning of a game, and Yang Jian outside wouldn't agree."

At this point.

Ah Wei halted his steps, "So, the first step is to determine what aspect the ghost is emphasizing. Considering that the ghost hasn't appeared yet, I believe that before revealing itself, it definitely wants to first reduce our number by one."

"Moreover, we must consider, what kind of existence are we facing? Is it a real ghost, or is it just a ghost within this game?"

"Is there a difference?" Wang Shanshan asked.

Ah Wei replied, "Of course, there's a difference. If it's a real ghost, it can adjust the game's difficulty at any time, greatly enhancing its level of terror. Winning this game would be difficult. However, if we're facing a ghost that's only part of this supernatural game and not a real ghost, then the level of terror won't adjust, and our chances of winning are substantial."

"The first step is to determine the ghost's abilities, the second is to determine the level of its terror, and if we can grasp this information, the third step is to choose our game strategy," Wang Shanshan said.

"Exactly." Ah Wei nodded.

Wang Shanshan halted her steps, "So the first encounter is the most dangerous because we know nothing about the ghost, but we can't avoid contact either. Instead of waiting passively, we might as well take the initiative. The lobby on this floor is spacious, so let's wait for the ghost here."

Looking around.

Although the surroundings were dark, some light still shone through the windows, allowing everyone to clearly see this spacious lobby through the dim reflections.

"This place is good; you can defend, escape, and have a wide view to avoid ambushes. If the ghost wants to kill us, it must appear in our line of sight," Ah Wei said, agreeing with Wang Shanshan's assessment.

"After all that talk, I get it. We'll just stay put here, and confront whatever that ghost is head-on. Wang Shanshan, take this thing for self-defense, and leave the rest to me, Ah Wei," Zhang Wei took the initiative to hand a golden pistol to Wang Shanshan while gripping an axe, on high alert.

The supernatural axe defied logic in weight, seemingly heavy, yet Zhang Wei held it effortlessly, feeling as light as a feather.

Wang Shanshan didn't refuse and took the pistol.

This pistol couldn't kill ghosts but could slow down a fierce ghost's actions slightly, providing some usefulness.

Ah Wei had no weapon at hand, but he was unafraid because he knew ordinary weapons were just for comfort, while only Zhang Wei's supernatural weapon could play a decisive role.

As expected.

Soon.

An abrupt sound of hurried footsteps echoed in the silent, empty building. It sounded like someone was running quickly, heading straight for them.

"The ghost's action has started. Be cautious. Even though you are friends of Yang Jian, don't expect him to save you if something really happens. Since you've chosen to participate in this game, you should have already made up your minds," Ah Wei reminded the two again, strengthening their resolve to avoid retreat at a critical moment.

The hurried footsteps echoed through the lobby, and as ordinary people, they couldn't tell where the sound was coming from, only knowing that the ghost was getting closer.

Fortunately, the three of them were not novices anymore. There was no panic, and no chaotic movements; they remained calmly waiting in place.

After the footsteps appeared for a moment, the ghost possibly realized it couldn't disturb the three with such minor tactics and thus changed its tactics.

The noisy footsteps vanished.

A blurred figure, without anyone noticing, suddenly appeared at the entrance. It merged into the darkness, perhaps having stood there all along, unnoticed by the others.

The ghost began walking forward after appearing, without hiding itself, though its pace wasn't quick, much like a normal person walking.

"That's not good news," Ah Wei frowned.

A ghost moving slowly suggested it kills fiercely, which was a terrible start, as the first encounter could likely lead to immediate casualties.

"Great timing, I've been waiting here for you. It's late already, so let's get this over with. Take this axe!" Zhang Wei rushed out, swinging the axe.

"Zhang Wei." Wang Shanshan tried to stop him, but failed.

Ah Wei gestured with his hand, indicating, "Let him go. Someone must take the risk for the first contact. He has a supernatural weapon in his hand, enough to confront a fierce ghost. Since he's making a move, we'll observe the situation. Now is not a time for emotional decisions."

Zhang Wei was extremely agitated, harboring a bellyful of fire, eager to release it on this ghost.

The ghost made no attempt to dodge and continued walking towards Zhang Wei, at the same steady pace.

As the ghost got closer, Ah Wei noticed the ghost was carrying something in its hand: a wooden stick, resembling a table leg, likely dismantled from some furniture. This piece of wood was blood-red, its lacquer vivid like fresh blood, remarkably striking even in the weak light.

"Is the ghost carrying a weapon because Zhang Wei has an axe?" Ah Wei speculated.

One human, one ghost; they'd already closed in on each other.

Zhang Wei swung his axe at the ghost's head decisively, without hesitation. The ghost simultaneously raised its red piece of wood, striking at Zhang Wei, and didn't evade.

"Not good, the ghost is trying to swap Zhang Wei." At this moment, Ah Wei saw through the ploy, but it was too late.

"Bang!"

At this moment, a gunshot suddenly rang out, and Wang Shanshan chose to shoot at that instant.

The next moment.

Zhang Wei's axe split open the ghost's head in front of him, but he wasn't hit by the red wooden stick. Instead, the red wooden stick was knocked away and fell to the side.

The ghost's body fell heavily to the ground, motionless.

However, from the darkness beside him, another eerie figure slowly emerged. It bent over and picked up the red piece of wood from the ground, which clearly bore a bullet hole. The source of this content is Novel-Fire.net

"Another ghost? Isn't this cheating?"

Zhang Wei was just about to feel smug, but he was taken aback when he saw the figure that appeared beside him.

"I made a mistake in my judgment before. This ghost isn't very terrifying; its real danger comes from the red wooden stick in its hand. If we're not hit by that thing, we'll be fine. Now let's move and snatch it away, and whatever we do, don't let the ghost run off with it."

Old Eagle fully understood after observing. This ghost's movements weren't slow; it was just pretending earlier.

Without any hesitation, he charged directly at the ghost.

"I'm good at this." Zhang Wei once again grabbed his axe and rushed towards the second ghost.

However, the second ghost slowly retreated at this moment, its figure hiding in the darkness.

When Zhang Wei and Old Eagle charged forward, they found no trace of the ghost in the darkness ahead, as if it had vanished into thin air.

"Gone?" Zhang Wei was momentarily stunned.

"It can disappear into the darkness, which means the ghost's movement speed is very strange and can appear beside any of us. Not good, Wang Shanshan is in danger." Old Eagle suddenly realized this and turned his head sharply.

At this moment.

A cold human-like silhouette quickly appeared behind Wang Shanshan, simultaneously raising the red wooden stick.

"Bang!"

Just then, Zhang Wei fired his gun again, hitting the wooden stick directly, knocking it away without causing any harm to Wang Shanshan.

"Is it really this bold? Sneaking up on me, Ah Wei, doesn't it know I'm known as the Dual-wielding Gunslinger? My Gun Trembling Technique isn't just for show."

Zhang Wei's marksmanship was precise, and he was very confident, not worried about hitting Wang Shanshan at all. After the gunshot, Old Eagle rushed out.

Old Eagle's target wasn't the ghost but the red wooden stick that had been shot away by Ah Wei.

Even the ghost knows to recover this thing first. Old Eagle naturally understands its role. As long as they grab it, the ghost loses its most terrifying killing method, making their chances of winning much higher.

"What an unexpected individual." Old Eagle thought to himself, gaining newfound respect for Zhang Wei.

Because very few ordinary people can achieve this level.

However, the ghost's actions didn't stop because of Zhang Wei's gunshot.

Having lost the red wooden stick, the ghost still attacked Wang Shanshan. A pair of cold hands reached out from the darkness behind her and grabbed her by the neck, quickly dragging her into the darkness.

Wang Shanshan's body was suspended in mid-air, her legs unable to touch the ground, struggling desperately, but it was to no avail. The intense suffocation almost causing her to pass out.

"Save the teammate." Zhang Wei immediately reacted, wanting to save her, but it was too late.

His speed wasn't enough.

However, Old Eagle had already reached Wang Shanshan's side, and at this moment, Old Eagle had two choices: either save Wang Shanshan or grab that red wooden stick.

Two choices.

"The ghost wants to trade Wang Shanshan's life with me, that's why it didn't break her neck right away."
Old Eagle thought quickly, immediately realizing this.

Without any hesitation, he charged heavily into the darkness behind Wang Shanshan.

The ghost was hit, released Wang Shanshan, and disappeared.

Then, a hand reached out from the darkness beside them, grabbed the red wooden stick on the ground, and disappeared into the darkness again.

"Well done," Zhang Wei praised Old Eagle vigorously.

"Cough, cough."

Wang Shanshan touched her neck, her breathing gradually easing: "If you had taken that red wooden stick just now, we would have won. Saving me wasn't a good idea. With your ability, you can surely see this point, otherwise Yang Jian wouldn't have chosen you."

"Yang Jian's purpose in choosing me wasn't to win but to take care of you," Old Eagle said calmly. "If necessary, I can die, but you guys can't."

If he were still a courier, he would definitely go for the item instead of saving people.

Zhang Wei said, "Don't talk like that. Even if we call it a tie just now, there's still plenty of time, and this game is still going on. With my recent performance, the one who'll eventually win will surely be us."

"I hope so," Wang Shanshan said coldly.

Since it's already happened, there's no need to say anything more. They should just face the upcoming situation.

Meanwhile.

Outside the Peace Hotel, Yang Jian hadn't left. He had been standing still for quite some time, but he wasn't idle during this period.

Because under his feet, at some unknown moment, a pool of water had emerged, cold and deep, submerging his feet.

Not just this area, but the nearby streets, roads, shops, buildings... almost half of Dachang City was covered by a layer of water, and this range was still expanding.

Yang Jian's purpose at this moment was simple: he wanted to use the water from Ghost Lake to lock down the entire Dachang City.

To stop the ghost's movements.

As long as Zhang Wei, Wang Shanshan, and Old Eagle inside the Peace Hotel hold on for some time without losing, this game will be his victory.