

Revival 171

Chapter 171 Ghost Face Tong Qian

At this moment,

on the second floor of a hotpot restaurant by the roadside.

The place was dim, all the lights extinguished, with only the occasional flicker of cell phone light gathering in a corner. Muffled sobs and hushed conversations could be faintly heard.

Dozens of people had gathered here.

They were survivors caught up in this incident, and after some events, they had started to realize what exactly they were facing now.

Fear was nearly destroying their sanity.

The reason they had not completely collapsed was because of one person.

An international ghost summoner.

Outside the crowd, on a stool, sat a tall woman dressed in the professional attire of an international ghost summoner, her hair pulled back into a ponytail, looking very capable.

Her mature and indifferent face was filled with solemnity and unease.

Her name was Tong Qian, an international ghost summoner from another city, responsible for handling the supernatural events of a city. Since the population of the city she oversaw was not large and supernatural events rarely happened, her usual responsibilities were not heavy.

This time, when the Ghost Door Knocker incident broke out in Dachang City, she was dispatched by the Asian branch to provide support.

However, the situation here was worse than she had imagined.

Upon entering the Ghost Domain, Tong Qian sensed that things were amiss.

She had not encountered the Door Knocking Ghost mentioned in the files, but the sheer number of Ghost Slaves here was enough to send shivers down her spine.

This was no longer a matter of facing a single ghost but a horde.

And to make matters worse, they were deep within the Ghost Domain.

Tong Qian was no longer certain she could lead these survivors out alive. All she could do was hold out as long as possible, waiting for the situation to change and for reinforcements from above.

So she had gathered dozens of survivors and taken refuge in this hotpot restaurant.

But at that moment, a woman's scream made her face change immediately.

"Who is making noise? Haven't I already ordered you? No matter what emergency you face, do not shout, and if you want to live, follow my commands." Tong Qian stood up annoyed and turned to scold.

"She, she was the one who screamed," someone pointed out, indicating a middle-aged woman.

The woman's face was very unsightly, shivering as she said, "No, no, it wasn't me, it wasn't."

"If you screamed, you screamed, why deny it? Tell me, what is the reason?" Tong Qian asked.

"I've said it wasn't me, you can't blame me," the woman adamantly denied.

Tong Qian's brow furrowed. "Speak immediately if there's any issue. These are extraordinary times, and any abnormality must be reported to me. The place we are in is very special, more complicated than you

can imagine. This kind of noise is unacceptable now, and there won't be a next time. Otherwise, I can't ensure the safety of everyone here if something goes wrong."

"Aren't you a ghost summoner? How can you say such things?" the woman reproached.

Tong Qian's face darkened, ready to speak, but a sound made her tense up, unable to help but turn to look.

"Thud, thud thud~!"

The clear sound of someone ascending stairs came from the darkness ahead, each step heavy, stiff, and lacking the lightness and agility of a normal person's stride.

Just by hearing these footsteps, Tong Qian could tell.

It was a corpse walking.

"Silence," Tong Qian said in a low voice.

She quickly went up to the hotpot restaurant's glass door, shining her flashlight towards the staircase, attempting to use the strong light to see clearly what was coming up.

If it was a Ghost Slave, Tong Qian was confident she could handle it.

The footsteps, coming from downstairs, gradually reached the second floor.

Despite the military flashlight's bright beam, the darkness seemed to reduce it to a dim glow by the time it reached the staircase, though it was still bright enough to reveal what was ahead.

The stiff, thudding footsteps were getting closer.

Tong Qian's heart tightened.

She understood, the ghost had found them.

Indeed, hoping to hide in the hotpot restaurant to avoid all dangers was naive.

But taking refuge here was also out of necessity. There were too many survivors; moving as a group would be dangerous with their psychological state—each one a liability. Wandering outside would be even more risky. It was better to stick together and hide somewhere.

A moment later,

at the staircase shrouded in the dim light, suddenly, a head appeared.

Tong Qian's eyes narrowed sharply.

It was an old man, his face withered, wrinkles deep as ravines, eyes hollow, ashen, without a spark of life, and his aged skin covered in livor mortis, as if he had been dead for days. Clad in an old-fashioned, black, traditional long robe, his tall, thin body trudged up the stairs, the heavy footfalls echoing.

Moreover, as the old man drew closer, the strong light of the flashlight seemed to be pushed back.

A darkness was gradually creeping in.

The surroundings were affected, the floor decaying, the walls peeling away.

"This ghost... is extraordinary," Tong Qian's heart chilled instantly.

In all her time as a ghost summoner, she had never seen such a terrifying ghost.

Just one glance gave her the feeling of being trapped in a nightmare.

Without guessing, Tong Qian was already certain this was the culprit behind the supernatural event, codenamed the Ghost Door Knocker.

"What to do? What now? Should we run?" Tong Qian forced herself to remain calm and began thinking swiftly.

She could still make it out alone.

But the dozens of survivors behind her would likely be left behind.

However, the old man before her would not give her time to think.

At that moment, the old man had fully ascended to the second floor and was heading straight for the interior of the shop.

Despite the mere three meters separating Tong Qian from the old man, with only a glass door between them, she dared not act recklessly. She had no confidence in dealing with this ghost, nor did she have the conviction, and her purpose here was not to resolve the supernatural event but to save people, to mitigate losses.

She did not act irrationally but instead slowly backed away.

The old man did not enter directly as imagined; instead, he eerily stopped at the doorway. Then, he slowly lifted his stiff and withered palm and began knocking on the glass door.

"Thud, thud-thud~!"

Dull, oppressive, almost suffocating.

Tong Qian had reviewed the case files of the Ghost Door Knocker and her face suddenly changed as she shouted, "Leave this place, everyone leave here."

The others were stunned for a moment, not yet understanding what was happening.

"Move quickly, exit through the side door," Tong Qian shouted again.

Only then did the others snap to their senses. Several screams rang out as they panickedly ran towards the side door.

But when the first person raced to the side door, they crashed into a wall with a loud bang, even their nosebleed flowing out.

The door that was there before had vanished.

There was only a wall covered with moss, exuding a rotten smell.

"What's going on?" Tong Qian looked back and her complexion drastically changed when she saw that the door had disappeared.

Looking back at the glass windows that faced the street.

Now they too had vanished, replaced by an unbreakable wall.

Even the hot pot tables inside the shop began to disappear.

"This place, it's not a hot pot restaurant at all," Tong Qian realized this abruptly.

"Thud, thud-thud~!"

The knocking started again.

Thump~!

Among the chaotic and screaming crowd, someone thumped down onto the ground, breathless, their body cold.

Dead.

Tong Qian understood, this was the Door Knocking Ghost's way of killing. Knocking to kill, nearly unsolvable, as the files had already explained.

"There's no other way." She grit her teeth and untied the ponytail at the back of her head.

Her hair loosened and was draped in front of her by Tong Qian.

Without the hair to cover it, a ghastly, bizarre face appeared behind Tong Qian's head.

This face had a nose and a mouth, appeared both male and female, eyes shut, with the corners of the mouth curved upward into a pale and sinister smile.

Ghost Face Tong Qian.

That's how the ghost controller's file referred to her.

Tong Qian turned her back to the old man outside the door and pointed the face that was grown on the back of her head towards him.

"Giggle, giggle-giggle~!"

The next moment, the face's mouth split open to emit a bone-chilling, eerie laugh, sharp... weird? It sent shivers down the spine to merely hear it and one instinctively knew it was the laugh of a ghost, it couldn't possibly be a human.

The Ghost Face's laughter ensued.

The action of the old man knocking at the door suddenly stopped.

The stiff, withered palm frozen mid-air motionless.

The deadly knocking had been halted.

But Tong Qian's Ghost Face couldn't keep laughing forever, the restlessness for the evil ghost's revival stirred in her heart.

And to restrain the old man, the reliance on the power of the ferocious ghost was beyond her previous imagination.

Quickly.

Tong Qian felt the Ghost Face on the back of her head began to move towards the front while laughing.

She knew that once the Ghost Face moved onto her own face, it would entirely cover her face.

By then, she would no longer be human but a ghost.

"I can't go on like this," Tong Qian realized the direness of the situation and immediately turned around, recombining her hair over her head to cover the Ghost Face.

The laughter stopped.

The movement of the Ghost Face also halted.

But as soon as the Ghost Face's laugh ceased, the terrifying knocking began anew.

"Thud, thud-thud~!"

The old man in black robes, his body covered with corpse spots, once again lifted his hand and knocked on the door.

As if headless flies, survivors scattered every which way, another thumped to the ground.

A fierce ghost killing, it was that simple.

Seeing three people dead beside them, the survivors grew even more panicked; screams, cries for help kept echoing.

With her lips tightly pressed, Tong Qian finally made up her mind and turned around to shout, "Stop yelling and find a way to get out of here, you can leave from anywhere. I'll hold off this... ghost for now."

After speaking, she once again brushed aside the hair on the back of her head.

"Is it worth it? Continuing like this, you will soon die from the revived fierce ghost, and with another two ghosts here, these survivors will die even quicker." However, at this moment, a calm male voice suddenly rose from a corner.

"Who?"

Tong Qian was startled and immediately turned to look.

In an inconspicuous corner of the wall, stood a young man in short sleeves, a stark gash across his forehead from which a crimson eye stared intently their way.

In the young man's hands, he held a crimson candle.

The candle was lit.

It emitted a creepy, green flame, spectral and ominous.

Chapter 172: Ghost Candle's Flame

Tong Qian was ready for a desperate struggle.

She realized that it was very difficult for her to leave this place, and in her heart, she had already thought of buying some time for these survivors, wondering if they could be lucky enough to wait for rescue to arrive.

But Yang Jian's sudden appearance gave her a sense of surprise and suspicion.

"Are you... the Ghost Eye Detective, Yang Jian?" Tong Qian looked at the man in the corner holding a candle, with a fierce ghost eye visible on his forehead.

"Have you seen my file?" Yang Jian didn't find it strange.

Detective files are shared, and every detective is entitled to access other detectives' files, with the purpose of understanding and checking on each other.

Tong Qian said, "I saw the files of several ghost controllers from Dachang City on the way here, including yours, because you are the only ghost controller who has survived the Ghost Door Knocker incident so far. Did you come to support us?"

"I can't say it was to provide support; someone agreed to my terms and let me come here to save people. I suppose that foolish detective who rushed into the Ghost Domain is you."

Yang Jian said, "I saw what happened earlier. Originally, I didn't want to show myself. It would have been convenient for me to let all of you die in the Ghost Domain and report back to Zhao Jianguo afterward. I believe no one would be able to prove that I stood by without helping. But your action just now seemed familiar, and I thought it would be better to lend you a hand."

Tong Qian's self-sacrificing behavior reminded him of Zhou Zheng.

It was only then that Yang Jian was willing to show up and help her.

"How could you think like that?" Tong Qian said, somewhat angrily.

"Why can't I think like that?"

Yang Jian said calmly, as he walked over step by step, holding the candle: "Supernatural incidents cannot be resolved by individual heroics. Anyone involved could die, including me. I can ensure not to harm people, but I can't guarantee to save them. I admit that your actions just now were noble and great, and you are a heroine."

"But what about after that?"

"You will die, they will die, and there will be one more female ghost here. That's the worst outcome."

"Dealing with supernatural incidents is inherently a matter of risking life, and becoming a detective means being ready to sacrifice oneself at any time," Tong Qian said.

Yang Jian said, "Telling me this is useless; you have to tell it to that thing."

He pointed at the old man knocking on the door outside.

"Knock, knock-knock~!"

The knocking continued, and the survivors kept dying.

At this rate, everyone here would soon be dead, including Tong Qian.

If it were a group facing the Ghost Door Knocker, there would be randomness to it, randomly selecting someone to die, but the likelihood of a ghost controller being selected would be very low.

"Enough, don't talk anymore. Hurry up and save people. If this goes on, everyone left will die. We can talk after we get out of here," Tong Qian said with a look of panic on her face.

"Saving people is not about standing by the door with a smile; it's about relationships. Watch and learn carefully how I do it," Yang Jian said as he strode forward and spoke.

Tong Qian's face turned dark.

This guy actually said she was pandering with a smile.

But Yang Jian's words left her a bit puzzled.

Relationships?

What did he mean by that?

"Grandpa, it's me, one of your own, stop knocking. Give me some face, let these people go," Yang Jian said as he held the Ghost Candle in his hand and walked up to the glass door.

The flame of the Ghost Candle emitted a pale green light.

It shrouded the area about three meters around him.

As the candlelight approached the old man, the stiff, emaciated palm ceased its knocking, and the rigid body slowly receded.

The ghost was repelled by the light of the candle.

"This works?"

Tong Qian's eyes widened in disbelief.

Was this ghost Yang Jian's deceased grandfather? Did he really use relationships to keep the ghost from harming them?

No, that's not right.

It was the candle.

Tong Qian's gaze returned to the blood-red candle.

The eerie light of the candle flickered in the darkness, as if reflecting the shadows of numerous Evil Ghosts.

"Professor Bruce Pi's item proved to be quite effective, even pushing back the Door Knocking Ghost, but the candle is burning faster now," Yang Jian observed, holding the Ghost Candle in his hand.

When he had first lit the Ghost Candle, it seemed like it would never burn out, not even flickering, but now.

He saw the candle clearly burning down, and the closer it got to the old man, the faster it burned.

"One minute, I'm only giving you one minute to leave this place, that's my limit. It's up to you to save as many people as possible," Yang Jian turned back and said, "The door is over there, where I first appeared. Many things within the Ghost Domain have changed; what you see with your eyes might not be real."

"I understand."

Tong Qian seized this moment of safety and immediately shouted, "Anyone who wants to live, follow me, the exit is here."

However, among the survivors, not a few had suffered mental collapses, and it was uncertain how much of Tong Qian's words they could take in, or how many would follow her instructions.

But all of this, Yang Jian ignored.

He watched the old man standing outside the candlelight, within the shadows, with a grave expression.

It was the second time he had seen this old man.

And yet, seeing him again still sent chills down his spine, but towards this ghost, Yang Jian harbored a deep animosity, even hatred.

It had killed too many of his classmates, and nearly killed him as well.

"Just how exactly can I trap you, you old thing?" Yang Jian muttered to himself.

"No matter, there will be plenty of opportunities later. With the knowledge of the Ghost Domain, I won't die by your hand as long as I stay alert. Moreover, you are a double-edged sword to me; there will be times when I need you."

"Time's almost up, old man, goodbye."

He glanced at his phone; it had already been a minute and several seconds.

He was overtime.

Without hesitation, he held the Ghost Candle and turned to leave.

As he turned away, the candlelight receded.

The old man walked over again.

"Don't cower here, hurry, get up and leave with me."

"Stop crying, it's too late if we don't go now."

"What are you doing lying on the ground? Get up quickly."

Tong Qian felt an intense urgency in her heart.

As terror struck, these city-dwellers revealed their poor mental fortitude: either breaking down and screaming or curling up in a corner, trembling, some even collapsing on the ground in fright.

"Yang Jian, wait, just wait a bit longer, some people haven't caught up," she cried out urgently when she saw Yang Jian lift the candle, ready to leave.

"No problem, I'll wait for you guys outside," Yang Jian readily agreed.

Tong Qian felt both angry and anxious.

If he left, the others would lose their way again in the Ghost Domain, and surely they would die.

"Are you planning to stay here with them?" Yang Jian asked again.

Tong Qian urged several times, and only two or three people barely stood up, but it was impossible to take care of everyone.

Watching the green candle flame getting farther and farther away, it seemed Yang Jian wouldn't stay a moment longer for these survivors.

Once he left, not only the remaining survivors but also she herself would die here.

"If you don't go now, you're all going to die. Make your choice," Tong Qian yelled angrily, then turned and left, quickly taking a few survivors with her.

As the people departed.

The light of the candle moved further away.

Darkness once again swept over, enveloping the area.

The knocking sound echoed through the shop again; the cries and screams gradually becoming sparse until they vanished completely, leaving a deathly stillness behind.

At last, the knocking sounds disappeared, too.

The old man enveloped in darkness outside also turned and slowly walked away.

However, the Ghost Domain was still present.

Chapter 173 Dispute

"Why are you in such a hurry to leave? You clearly have a way to restrain that ghost. Give me three more minutes, and I could bring out all the remaining survivors. Since you're here to help, you should give it your all and not hold back."

On the empty street, Tong Qian caught up with Yang Jian, who was walking ahead, and said with some annoyance.

Yang Jian stopped in his tracks and turned to look at her, "Continuing to say such things will only make the little bit of good impression I had of you disappear."

"And what makes you think that all of you are safe now? The Ghost Domain is still there, and that ghost hasn't left; the next attack will still result in deaths. I think it's already quite an achievement to have brought out most of the survivors. To expect that no one would die, and everyone would just come out, do you think you are God?"

"I thought you were an experienced ghost hunter, but now it seems you are still too naive and haven't fully experienced the horror and despair of a supernatural incident."

"No, I've already felt it. It's precisely because we've felt this despair and understood the terror of malevolent ghosts that we should stand guard over this city more and protect ordinary people from being involved in supernatural incidents," Tong Qian said coldly.

"That's why I should spare no effort to save each person."

Yang Jian said, "If you do that, you'll die very quickly."

"Everyone will die someday. From the day we became ghost hunters, we people were destined to bear this kind of responsibility and mission, without choice," Tong Qian said.

Yang Jian suddenly smiled, "I'm not as noble as you. I came from a single-parent family when I was very young, we were poor and life wasn't good. Now that I've become a ghost hunter, I only have one wish: to stay alive, and to live well at that. So what I pursue are just those vulgar things, which are incompatible with your lofty ideals."

"I saved you not because you're a ghost hunter, but because Zhou Zheng agreed to my terms. Additionally, you need to understand clearly that without me, you can't leave the Ghost Domain alive; it's not a place you can walk out of."

"So you have the ability and confidence to resolve this supernatural incident, but you choose not to act and instead wait for the opportunity to exchange it for benefits of your own," Tong Qian said.

Yang Jian said, "That's correct, it's the way I operate, and you can't learn it."

"How mercenary, to think that even human lives can be measured against benefits in your eyes?" Tong Qian said.

Yang Jian's expression turned cold, and he turned to say, "Don't stand on your moral high ground to criticize your lifesaver. If you want to play the saint, then go and arrest that old man, who actually has saved countless lives and has done immeasurable good deeds. Criticizing me here, is that all you can do? Don't forget, your lives were exchanged for benefits by Zhou Zheng."

"Moreover, in such a situation, as someone who has been saved, you should learn to show some respect. This is not just a matter of manners, but a matter of survival."

"Because I can save you, and I can also kill you, including them."

After speaking, he glanced at the survivors.

"I'm not criticizing you, but rather hoping that when you have the capability, you'll save more people instead of always thinking about benefits," Tong Qian still said earnestly.

"If my death could resolve this supernatural incident, I wouldn't hesitate for a second. But it can't—my death would only make things here even more complicated. However, you did save us, and I really should thank you for that. But that's a different issue. I still hope you can give others a bit more of a chance."

Yang Jian narrowed his eyes at her.

Tong Qian and Zhou Zheng belong to the same kind.

Upright, stubborn, almost to the point of being obsessive, but also equally brave, fearless, and dauntless.

All these characteristics combined, Yang Jian saw something akin to a belief in her.

A self-sacrificing spirit that goes, "If I don't enter hell, who will?"

For the survivors, encountering Tong Qian was simply the luckiest thing, because her nature ensured she wouldn't easily give up on anyone.

But to Yang Jian,

She was as good as a pig-headed teammate.

In dealing with supernatural incidents, being too indecisive can lead to the deaths of many people.

"I don't want to continue arguing futile points with you. After this incident, you and I will have no chance to meet again. Take your ideals and continue to watch over your city. Just stay away from Dachang City in the future; this place will be my territory," Yang Jian looked away, saying calmly.

Tong Qian said, "If you don't need my support, I would be very pleased."

"Look, look over there, there seems to be someone standing under the streetlight," at that moment, one of the survivors, a man, shakily pointed to the front.

After leaving the most dangerous area, the vicinity was no longer engulfed in darkness. Although it was still dim all around, it was not to the extent that one couldn't see their surroundings clearly—there was even light coming from nearby, completely different from other perilous regions.

At that moment, under a dim streetlight ahead, one person stood erect, motionless with their body facing forward and back to the crowd.

The previously arguing Tong Qian and Yang Jian instantly fell silent, their expressions hardened as they looked together towards the front.

In the presence of a malevolent ghost, any dispute is worth putting aside.

"In most cases, there's only a possibility of one ghost existing in the Ghost Domain, which is the Door Knocking Ghost that you've all encountered before. The rest, even if there are any ghosts, at most, could only be... Ghost Slaves," Yang Jian immediately said.

"Take it out," Tong Qian immediately walked forward.

Yang Jian said, "No, let's bypass it. There's no need to get entangled with a ghost slave unnecessarily. Using the power of a fierce ghost when it's not absolutely necessary is a waste. And with ghost slaves, even if you deal with one, there will be a second, a third, unless you eliminate the source."

He didn't approach the person under the streetlamp; instead, he chose to go around.

Tong Qian didn't object and chose to follow his advice.

They took a different road to move forward.

However, after walking for quite a while, Tong Qian couldn't help but ask, "Didn't you say we can't get out of the Ghost Domain? Then why do you keep wandering around here?"

"Who said I want to leave this place?" Yang Jian said, "I'm here to find someone."

"Do you have someone you need to save?" Tong Qian asked, somewhat surprised.

Such a cold person was actually willing to go save someone else.

Yang Jian said, "This is my personal business and has nothing to do with you. Instead of worrying about me, you should take care of the survivors. I don't think they'll be able to hold on until they can leave alive."

After speaking, he glanced over.

They were following behind, each with a face full of terror, looking around constantly, startled by every little rustle of wind or movement in the grass.

But it was better than before; at least there was no one paralyzed on the ground or breaking down in a corner.

Survival of the fittest, the strong survive.

This saying was indeed true.

At this moment, Yang Jian felt it should be temporarily safe.

The Door Knocking Ghost probably hadn't chosen to follow them.

In that case, the Door Knocking Ghost seemed to have a pattern.

Which was, after avoiding one attack, the Door Knocking Ghost wouldn't bother with a second one.

"Make a call, and tell the others to rest where they are," Yang Jian said, taking out his phone and dialing Jiang Yan's number at this time.

'It's me, Yang Jian. How's it going? Make a sound if you're not dead.'

"Squeak~!"

Jiang Yan's voice came through on the phone.

Yang Jian said, "Where are you?"

Jiang Yan's voice was very tense: "I—I don't know, I just know I'm on the highway, driving a car. Just now I was attacked by a ghost, but luckily, by speeding up, I managed to escape from that ghost. It seems to be alright now, but I'm lost. There's a road ahead, but no matter how far I drive, I can't reach the end. What should I do now?"

Yang Jian frowned.

He knew Jiang Yan was lost within the Ghost Domain, and although she was safe for the moment, she would eventually die trapped here.

"I've already entered this damn place. The only way you'll be able to leave is for me to find you. Otherwise, you'll die here." Yang Jian said.

"I don't want to die, Yang Jian. Save me, please tell me how I can find you?" Jiang Yan's voice was teary.

"You don't need to find me; you've completely lost direction, position, and even everything you see before your eyes might not be real. The only way is for me to find you," Yang Jian said. "So this time it's going to depend on your luck."

"Then you must find me," Jiang Yan pleaded.

Yang Jian said, "I'll try my best, that's it for now."

After saying that, he hung up the phone.

The Ghost Domain here was even bigger than when he first encountered it.

It might look like it only covered a few streets, but once you actually enter the Ghost Domain, the space becomes infinitely expanded.

Moreover, in this place, Yang Jian couldn't freely use his own Ghost Domain either; otherwise, it would neutralize each other, leading to the same situation as last time—leaving without understanding how.

This was good news for the survivors.

But for him, it wasn't.

Chapter 174 Under the Streetlight

"Where are you going now?" Tong Qian saw Yang Jian put down the phone and actually found a bicycle at roadside.

He even scanned the QR code to unlock it and was ready to ride away, which made her unable to help but ask.

"To find someone," Yang Jian said.

"Is it very important?" Tong Qian asked.

Yang Jian said, "It's certainly more important to me than you all."

"So you're not planning to take care of these survivors?" Tong Qian asked.

Yang Jian said, "You should be capable of looking after these survivors."

"But I'm not sure I can deal with that ghost. If you leave and that ghost comes, these people are bound to die."

Tong Qian said, "I suggest you take them with you. If you're going to act, we should act together. With our combined abilities, we should be able to save this group of survivors."

Yang Jian said, "No, I plan to act alone for now. Don't worry too much about that ghost. Since you've already avoided an attack once, the next should be after some time, so you're safe for now."

"But..." Tong Qian furrowed her brow.

"No buts. If you want to leave here, you have to follow my instructions," Yang Jian cut her off, "Wait for me to return in this area."

"What if you don't come back?"

Yang Jian said, "Then you can declare all of you officially dead."

"This isn't right. You can't sacrifice so many people just to save one. I hope you figure out a way to get them out of here immediately," Tong Qian grabbed Yang Jian's bicycle, stopping him.

Yang Jian gave her a look and suddenly exploded in anger, grabbing her by the throat and forcefully pushing her to the ground.

"You..." Tong Qian's face changed drastically, never expecting Yang Jian to suddenly make a move on her.

But before she could speak, a handgun was pressed against her forehead.

"Enough. I don't need you directing my actions. If you want to save people, I won't stop you, but don't get in the way of my business. Speak out of turn again and I'll blow your head off. I'd like to see if that Ghost Face behind you can save your pretty little head," Yang Jian said coldly, the golden pistol in his hand now loaded and safety off.

His finger on the trigger, it would only take one move to blow Tong Qian's head open.

"You maniac," Tong Qian's eyes widened.

"This world easily drives people mad," Yang Jian stared at her fiercely, "So, are you going to stop me, or not?"

While he spoke, his finger slowly began to bend.

Tong Qian could even see the trigger being pulled.

This Yang Jian really dared to shoot and kill her.

Zhao Kaiming, what kind of person did you ask to come for support?

Is someone like this going to become Dachang City's Ghost Dominator in the future?

Tong Qian didn't think too much, remaining silent, not daring to say another word to provoke this man.

Any action of her own could cause Yang Jian to kill her on the spot.

After a moment of silence.

"Good, you're not completely beyond saving," Yang Jian slowly withdrew the pistol and turned around without another word, getting on his bicycle, and then left the place.

Watching him slowly disappear into the darkness ahead on his bike, Tong Qian stood up with an unsettled expression on her face.

This guy really had no restraints.

Are all Ghost Dominators this reckless?

Or is it just this man?

Tong Qian had very few contacts with other Ghost Dominators; the city she was responsible for was just a small city, not even ranking as a fourth-tier, and supernatural events there were extremely rare. Besides contact with her superiors, she had little interaction with others in the circle.

Yang Jian's actions and behavior gave her an inexplicable shock.

As if revealing a cruel corner of this world.

"This man is like a wolf struggling to survive in the darkness, occasionally showing kindness, but that can't cover up his wolf nature," Tong Qian thought silently, "This person is very dangerous. I must keep my distance from him in the future."

But what she didn't realize was that the world was changing and some order was collapsing.

Zhou Zheng's way of living would no longer work.

People like Yang Jian were better suited for the survival environment of the future.

"What are you doing as a Ghost Dominator? You've driven him away. With him gone, who's going to protect us? You don't have that ability. From the beginning, I felt there was something wrong with your attitude. That young man saved us no matter what, and you started off with a barrage of principles.

If I were him, I'd feel uncomfortable too," a survivor, an old lady, scolded with squinting eyes.

"When it really matters, women are unreliable, their minds filled with who knows what."

"It's over. We're done for. That capable guy rode away on his bike, and now all of us are going to die in this damned place."

Hearing what the survivors said, Tong Qian's face changed, but she had no comeback.

She indeed was unable to handle the current situation.

"Tong Qian may have a good character, but she is too idealistic and has yet to recognize the cruel reality," Yang Jian pedaled his bicycle along the road, his gaze vigilantly sweeping the surroundings as these thoughts ran through his mind. "A ghost master like her doesn't even qualify to be a teammate. Teaming up with her would only be a burden.

In my opinion, it's impossible for her to survive more than two paranormal events on her own unless she relies on others."

Because Tong Qian had one fatal flaw: she could not rationally assess the situation.

This might be inconsequential for ordinary people, especially for a woman of appealing appearance.

But it was unacceptable for a ghost master.

Dealing with fierce ghosts required a calm mind and accurate judgment of the situation, knowing when to act and when to hold back.

One wrong step could mean death, with no second chance.

On this point, he believed that Zhao Kaiming did it the best.

Although they were enemies, Yang Jian could not help admiring Zhao Kaiming's meticulous approach to matters. If it weren't for the curse of the Ghost Door Knocker spread through the phone, which caught him off guard and dragged him into this incident, his fate unknown,

Otherwise, Yang Jian would have remained in a passive position, constantly being hit.

Most importantly, he couldn't find any opportunity to fight back.

Because Zhao Kaiming was well aware that he couldn't handle Yang Jian, who had now mastered two ghosts, and even as a ghost master from Dachang City he had to stay hidden.

"However, he is also in this Ghost Domain now, and this event occurred because of him. If all goes well, Zhao Kaiming should already be dead somewhere... If Zhao Kaiming really is dead, then there shouldn't be just one ghost here; there should be two," Yang Jian thought, resolving to be even more observant.

With that thought,

Yang Jian became even more cautious.

He decided to look around the area. If he couldn't find Jiang Yan, he would save a few people and leave this place to briefly acknowledge Zhao Jianguo's concern and be done with it.

As for Jiang Yan's life, he could only give it up.

Though this woman indeed helped him a lot, he had not treated her poorly either. He had offered his help during paranormal events, but if her luck was truly so dreadful, what could be done?

If he continued to stay here, Yang Jian would only lose more.

And so,

He rode his bicycle through the darkened streets.

No matter how dark the surroundings, how impenetrable by sight, his Ghost Eye could see everything clearly.

If everyone here were to die, Yang Jian was convinced that he certainly would not be among them.

"Something seems off about the Ghost Domain here," Yang Jian noted as he cycled along and suddenly saw a street lamp by the roadside, unlike the others that were extinguished, this one shone brightly.

Under the street lamp stood a stiff figure, its back still turned towards Yang Jian, an exact replica of the scene he'd encountered before.

Without a doubt, the person standing under the light was a ghost.

Lost?

A hallucination?

Yang Jian stopped his bicycle, frowned.

But the Ghost Eye on his forehead told him this was no hallucination, nor was it getting lost.

He didn't rely on his own eyes to see the path but on the Ghost Eye; he couldn't be tricked by some aspects of the Ghost Domain.

Unless... the ghost had changed its location, and he had merely come across it again.

"I should take a look to confirm whether I'm lost or if there's something wrong with this ghost," Yang Jian hesitated briefly, not wanting to continue circling around and wasting time, deciding to ride past it.

If it was a Ghost Slave then it would be a mere scare.

But to be on the safe side, he lit the Ghost Candle once again.

The sinister Ghost Flame emitted a strange glow.

Enveloped by this light, Yang Jian felt an additional sense of security.

The fire of the Ghost Candle, capable of repelling even the Door Knocking Ghost, had no reason to fear a mere Ghost Slave.

However, as he rode his bicycle with the ignited Ghost Candle, approaching slowly.

Something unexpected happened.

The fire of the Ghost Candle suddenly flared up as if doused with gasoline.

The candlelight flickered wildly without wind, its flame swaying dramatically.

At the same time, the wax of the candle burned away at an alarming rate.

In just a few seconds, the Ghost Candle had burned down five centimeters.

"This is impossible," Yang Jian stopped his bicycle abruptly, his eyes narrowing, quickly backing away.

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Yang Jian was already very clear about the effectiveness of the Ghost Candle.

Just as Wang Xiaoming said, once the Ghost Candle was lit, evil ghosts could not approach the area covered by its light, making it absolutely safe for humans.

But there was one very important thing to note.

The closer the proximity to a more terrifying ghost, the faster the Ghost Candle would burn. In special circumstances, a Ghost Candle could burn out in just a few minutes, or even in tens of seconds, greatly shortening the time of safety.

Previously, when Yang Jian faced the Door Knocking Ghost, the candle did not burn as rapidly.

But near that streetlight with the ghost.

The burning speed was now several times faster than that of the Door Knocking Ghost.

And this signal only represented one thing: danger, extreme danger.

Yang Jian almost instinctively retreated,

After moving a considerable distance away,

The burning speed of the Ghost Candle noticeably decreased, and the flickering flame, which seemed like it could go out at any moment, returned to normal.

The feeling of crisis rapidly dissipated.

But the sense of crisis in Yang Jian's heart did not diminish one bit.

He had always thought that it was just a Ghost Slave within the Ghost Domain, dangerous though it may be, it was insignificant to him now.

Thinking of Tong Qian's reckless behavior before, Yang Jian couldn't help but feel secretly relieved that his previous vigilance and caution had saved his life. Otherwise, this attempt to save someone might have cost him his own life.

"Does this mean that the level of this ghost is higher than that of the Door Knocking Ghost?"

"But that's impossible. If the terror level of this ghost really were that high, then why would it appear within the Ghost Domain of the Door Knocking Ghost?"

Yang Jian's gaze was uncertain as he watched from afar, looking at the ghost standing stiffly under the streetlight, its back to him.

Suddenly,

The lit streetlight made him understand what was going on.

This ghost was not within the Ghost Domain at all.

It had always been in the realm of reality.

That's why the streetlight had not gone out and remained lit; the area around the ghost was not affected by the Ghost Domain.

Correspondingly,

If the ghost had not entered the Ghost Domain, it should not be able to see Yang Jian.

Could it be that the Ghost Domain of the Door Knocking Ghost had actually protected them, preventing any contact with this ghost?

"What on earth is happening in Dachang City lately, aside from the Door Knocking Ghost that I attracted, the other ghosts that have appeared have terror levels higher than one another. I thought it was just a

minor specter, but it turned out to be a boss," said Yang Jian with a serious look, "Could there be something special about Dachang City? Or is it the same situation in other major cities?"

"Let's not worry about that for now. To be on the safe side, if I see this ghost again, I'll immediately distance myself, no questions asked."

He took a breath and calmed his emotions.

After all, it had been a false alarm.

The ghost under the streetlight had not made any dangerous moves.

He was safe.

Circling around this area and passing through a small alley, Yang Jian arrived at the other end of the Ghost Domain.

If he could not find Jiang Yan here, then he would have no choice but to give up.

And at this very moment,

In the reality outside the Ghost Domain,

Where Yang Jian had passed by the streetlight earlier,

Due to the blockade, several streets here were already devoid of people, and the surroundings were silent, with the shops temporarily closed.

But a person was sitting against the wall with his head slightly bowed, his face injured and dripping with foul-smelling blood. However, the psychological impact appeared even more severe than his physical injuries, and he seemed to emanate an aura of lifelessness.

"Now that I have nothing left but my life, why do you still cling to me and refuse to leave?" The person lifted his head slightly, looking towards the nearby streetlight.

The streetlight flickered as if there was a loose connection.

But in his eyes,

He saw a ghost standing under the streetlight.

A ghost that would never turn around to show its face or features.

And the person conversing with this ghost was none other than Zhao Kaiming.

He had survived and come out of the Ghost Domain alive, avoiding the fatal Ghost Door Knocker incident, but at a cost he was unwilling to bear.

"You refuse to leave because there's something of mine you haven't drained yet?" Zhao Kaiming had lost his previous bravado, only a cold and bitter smile remained.

"You really are an evil ghost. Because of you, I've lost so much. If you're that terrifying, why don't you just kill me?"

Zhao Kaiming looked at the special pistol he was holding in his hand.

Without a second thought, he put it to his temple and pulled the trigger.

He chose to commit suicide.

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But the gunshot did not sound.

The bullet had jammed.

Zhao Kaiming chambered another round and a golden bullet fell to the ground, then he continued to point the gun at his own head and pull the trigger.

Still jammed.

He ejected the round again and fired.

It jammed again.

An entire magazine of bullets was expended without firing a single shot.

"Fuck this," Zhao Kaiming said, his face twisted in fury, like a madman, he threw the handgun at the ghost under the street lamp.

The gun hit the ghost but caused no damage; it just fell to the ground.

This was not the first time something like this had happened.

He was unable to commit suicide.

Because the ghost lingering by his side wouldn't allow it.

He had thought about pulling himself together, but reality kept knocking him down again and again, making him lose even more.

"You still don't want me dead, huh? Fine, I'll live. I will change all this. I'll fight you ghosts once more and see whether you win or I do," he said.

Zhao Kaiming struggled to his feet, limping forward with his broken prosthesis.

As he was leaving, his cell phone in his pocket rang.

"Hello, is this Zhao Kaiming? Your dad just had an accident, you need to come back..." a relative's voice came through the phone.

Zhao Kaiming seemed prepared, and calmly responded, "Uncle, I know. I'm tied up today. I'll come back in a couple of days to take care of my dad's funeral."

After finishing, he hung up the phone, but his face twisted even more fiercely.

He glanced back,

the ghost under the street lamp had disappeared without a trace.

At the moment he left alive.

Yang Jian was still in the Ghost Domain.

Riding his bicycle and lighting a Ghost Candle, he seemed to be leisurely strolling through the streets and alleys, but in reality, his Ghost Eye was wide open, vigilant of any movement around him, and also searching for Jiang Yan's location.

Finally,

the Ghost Eye at the back of his head suddenly noticed a car parked next to a clothing store with its headlights persistently on.

It was a brand-new luxury car, and through its window, one could vaguely make out someone sitting in the driver's seat.

However, among the rows of cars parked along the curb, this was not particularly noticeable.

"Found it?"

Yang Jian vaguely guessed that this was Jiang Yan's car.

Because he had earlier told Jiang Yan to keep moving, not to turn off the engine and stop.

The purpose of this was to avoid Jiang Yan getting trapped in one place for too long, sitting like a sitting duck, while also leaving a signal for himself.

A vehicle constantly running would be much easier to distinguish.

However, she had still gotten confused.

The car had somehow been stopped by her without him knowing when.

And next to the car,

Yang Jian also saw a familiar person standing still.

It was his classmate... Qian Wanhao.

At this moment, Qian Wanhao had lost half of his head, his body had turned black and was rotting, emitting the stench of decay, but he was still wearing the same clothes as before.

As Yang Jian rode his bicycle closer, Qian Wanhao slowly raised his head and looked at him with eye sockets that were already rotted away.

"Turned into a Ghost Slave?" he frowned deeply.

Originally, back when they were at school, Qian Wanhao had the chance to leave alive with him and Zhang Wei, among others.

Unfortunately, he answered a phone call he shouldn't have, and as a result, the Door Knocking Ghost found him.

"Since he's a Ghost Slave, he's not much of a threat, especially considering he's almost completely rotted away," Yang Jian thought to himself.

As he approached,

the light from the Ghost Candle had already forcibly repelled Qian Wanhao.

Within the range covered by the candlelight, Qian Wanhao had to retreat and could not approach closer.

Yang Jian looked through the car window and saw that Jiang Yan was still maintaining the tense posture of driving, clearly lost in an illusion, not knowing how long she had been in that state.

"It's me, open the car door,"

he made the call and told Jiang Yan directly through the phone.