

Revival 256

Chapter 256 Conference Call

"President Yang, you're finally back."

Upon arriving at the community, as soon as the car stopped and he had just walked into the villa, he saw the living room filled with people.

There were Zhang Han, Zhang Wei, Jiang Yan, Zhang Xiang, and Wang Xiaoming, as well as some unfamiliar faces, mostly relatives of some residents. Beside Wang Xiaoming sat two strong and serious-looking bodyguards, one on each side. It seemed the arrangements made earlier were effective.

Liu Xiaoyu's efficiency in handling matters was still very high.

Speaking was Zhang Wei's uncle, a man in his thirties wearing a suit.

"What happened?" Yang Jian felt something was off about the atmosphere here.

Zhang Xiang was covering his bleeding head and said, "What else could it be? The workers have revolted, unwilling to stay and work here anymore. Just before, the contractor took them all away, and I couldn't stop them."

"Uncle Zhang, are you alright?" Yang Jian asked.

"I'm fine, it's just a scratch," Zhang Xiang said; "But this way, I'm afraid the safety house won't be completed."

"How much has been completed so far?" Yang Jian said.

"The main structure is finished, but the supporting facilities aren't yet complete. If it needs to be used now, the safety house can protect people for at most about ten days, after which it will become unsuitable to live in due to lack of water, electricity, and other issues. At that point, we will have to open the safety house again for maintenance and supplies," Zhang Xiang said.

The construction of the safety house was not easy; it wasn't just about building a room, there were many aspects to consider.

"Can we only stay for a maximum of ten days?" Yang Jian frowned slightly.

It was much shorter than expected.

In his calculations, the safety house would need to accommodate people for at least two to three months, not as long as a year or half a year.

Yang Jian then looked at the people and said, "Don't look so down. It's their loss, those workers who ran away. In my view, the Guanjiang Residential Complex is the safest one in the entire Dachang City. By leaving here, they're going to more dangerous places."

"Even with the offer of ten thousand per day to keep them working here, they wouldn't stay, even though we promised to allocate housing for them to live in here. They really don't know what's best for them," grumbled Zhang Wei's uncle.

"In the face of a great disaster, everyone is out for themselves; it's not surprising for them to do anything," Yang Jian said.

At this moment, Wang Xiaoming suddenly said, "You went to the city center? And you saved someone? That doesn't fit your style at all. Never mind. Can you tell us what the situation has become there?"

Yang Jian glanced at the exhausted and powerless Zhang Liqin behind him and said, "Jiang Yan, take her to have a bath and eat something."

"Oh~!" Jiang Yan looked at Zhang Liqin with a weird expression and led her away from the living room.

"As you said before, it's almost completely fallen. Ghosts are spreading out from the city center, and I estimate we'll see that thing here within three days," Yang Jian said.

As soon as he said this, the faces of the others in the living room changed, some showing outright fear.

The safety house wasn't fully constructed yet, and the ghostly creature might appear in the Guanjiang Residential Complex within three days. Those who were faint-hearted were trembling.

"It's as bad as expected," Wang Xiaoming said, touching his chin. But he was cuffed at the wrist, the handcuffs extending to a special security officer's hand.

He was now thoroughly protected.

"The safety house can't protect so many people; many will die."

Zhang Han was silent, smoking a cigarette and then said, "There's enough food and water stored, but that doesn't solve the critical issue. The remaining people can't live with the ghosts for long, even if we know the patterns and how to avoid being killed, it's only temporary."

"There's not just one Fourth Stage Ghost Infant that died like Ye Feng; that thing will kill all the people who are cursed. Everyone here has breathed in this gloom."

A quick calculation was clear in everyone's mind.

The safety house, at most, could accommodate twenty people, the rest would have to stay in the community.

Though the community was temporarily safe, soon it would become like the center of Dachang City.

"So, what do we do now?" Zhang Xiang asked.

But no one answered him; everyone else fell silent.

What to do?

This was a very heavy topic.

At this moment, Yang Jian had already made a decision. He looked at the silent people and said, "Since you all don't know what to do, then listen to my opinion."

Everyone suddenly looked towards Yang Jian.

"Uncle Zhang, how many people can the safety house accommodate at most now?" Yang Jian asked.

"Nineteen," Zhang Xiang said; "No more than that."

"Alright, then nineteen it will be."

Yang Jian said, "Prepare from tomorrow, letting nineteen people enter the safety house to take refuge. As for the allocation of spots, let's start discussing now. My requirement is not high, I only need five essential spots. Apart from the three spots I previously promised to send out to the Ghost Masters Headquarters, I want to give the remaining two spots to Wang Xiaoming and Jiang Yan.

The rest of you will decide."

"What about you?" Wang Xiaoming looked at him.

The others were also surprised.

The initiator of the safety house, Yang Jian, had actually not considered himself.

"As a Ghost Master, there's no use for me in the safety house; if a fierce ghost resurfaces inside, you will all die. Plus, I still have other things to do," Yang Jian said.

"I'm tired, I'm going to rest, the rest is up to you, Uncle Zhang."

Zhang Xiang gave a bitter smile, feeling a huge pressure fall upon him. All the remaining fourteen spots were now his responsibility, and any misstep could spell disaster.

Yang Jian had no mind to consider these things at the moment, leaving such troublesome matters to those who were seasoned and experienced.

Let those who should worry, worry.

Of course, he wasn't idle either.

He went up to the fifth floor alone.

Zhang Xiangü was smart indeed, having foreseen the issue of power outages, so he had prepared several generators days in advance, even stocking up on diesel. Because of that, the villa still maintained its power supply.

Yang Jian did not turn on the lights, but instead sat on a chair in front of a row of floor-to-ceiling windows, gazing out at the murky scene outside. He took out a satellite positioning mobile phone, ready to make a series of calls.

"This is Yang Jian, currently safe. I wish to speak with someone from the Ghost Master Headquarters."

Liu Xiaoyu, in the communications room, lay resting on the desk, dark circles under her eyes from days without proper sleep. Hearing Yang Jian's voice through her headphones, she jerked awake.

"Yang Jian, this is operator Liu Xiaoyu. How are things on your end?"

"Not good. I don't have time to chat with you right now. I need to speak with someone from headquarters, arrange it for me."

"Are you looking for the captain, or...?" Liu Xiaoyu asked. "Previously, our Deputy Minister Cao Yanhua wanted to connect with you, but it was put on hold because you were in the city center."

"Deputy Minister Cao Yanhua? Even better. Get all the influential people from Ghost Master Headquarters to join this voice conference. Tell them it concerns the life and death of Dachang City. How to arrange it is your job. I'm giving you twenty minutes.

Don't make me wait too long," said Yang Jian.

"Have Wang Xiaoming join as well. Tell him to come to the fifth floor alone. Remember, alone."

"Okay, I'll get on it right now. Give me fifteen minutes; that will be enough," said Liu Xiaoyu, suddenly springing into action.

She was trembling all over, uncertain if it was from nervousness or fear, but she could sense that the upcoming meeting would face incredibly severe issues.

Yang Jian put down the satellite positioning phone and waited quietly.

In just a few minutes, hurried footsteps echoed in the corridor.

It was Jiang Yan, who, gasping for breath, ran up. She pushed open the door and rushed in without turning on the lights.

"Why did you come up? I remember you're supposed to be afraid of coming to the fifth floor," said Yang Jian, glancing back but then turning away again.

"Why." Jiang Yan was visibly agitated.

"What why?" Yang Jian, sitting in the chair, had his back to her.

"Why are you so nice to me? Giving me the spot and not keeping one for yourself?" said Jiang Yan.

"You mean what happened downstairs just now? It's nothing. You are my employee, and I promised to ensure your safety," said Yang Jian. "Since I said so, I mean it. That much trustworthiness I do have."

"Are you going to be okay?" asked Jiang Yan, approaching with concern.

Yang Jian contemplated for a moment and then said, "I suppose... I'll likely die."

"Then don't die, okay? What am I supposed to do if you die? You can't just leave me behind," cried Jiang Yan, holding onto Yang Jian's arm and squatting beside him, looking utterly forlorn.

"Big Sister Jiang, no one wants it to be this way, but this is the best possible outcome. If I die, and you manage to survive, find yourself another boss in the future. The world has changed, and we all have to face life and death sooner or later," Yang Jian said.

Jiang Yan, crying, shook her head quickly and said, "No, I won't work for anyone else. Come with me to the safe house. It can be like when we lived in the apartment. I can squeeze in and make room for you."

"It's not that I don't have a spot in the safe house. I just don't want to go. Forget it, you wouldn't understand. I still have things to do; please leave. You know the fifth floor is dangerous... What are you doing, Big Sister Jiang?"

"Why are you touching me? Hey, stop unbuttoning my pants. Stop it, or I'll call for help."

"Surviving in a safe house isn't guaranteed either. I don't want to live with regrets. Today, I'm making a stand," said Jiang Yan, her cheeks flushed with embarrassment. Normally, she couldn't believe she would do something like this.

"I'm sorry."

Suddenly, a sound came from behind, and without knowing when, Wang Xiaoming was standing there: "If you two wish to continue, I could wait for three minutes."

"Three minutes? Who do you think you're looking down on?" Yang Jian raised an eyebrow.

Wang Xiaoming calmly replied, "It's just the average standard from my personal research. Three minutes is the ideal."

"I... I'll go out first," said Jiang Yan, her face burning red with shame, bowing her head and quickly leaving.

"What did you call me here for, alone? I recall you're not very welcoming when it comes to your home on the fifth floor," Wang Xiaoming said, glancing around after Jiang Yan had left, "You've locked all these rooms, what's inside?"

Yang Jian, after fixing his pants, said, "Terror."

"I do value personal privacy quite a bit. There's no need to guard against me like that," responded Wang Xiaoming.

"Then why did you just have to open every door?" asked Yang Jian.

"Just a professional habit, it doesn't imply anything," replied Wang Xiaoming.

"This time, I've requested a phone conference with headquarters, and you're part of it. After this meeting, you won't have anything to do with it. Stay in the safe house and behave yourself," said Yang Jian.

"Oh, and what do you want to discuss with those people at headquarters?"

"You'll know soon enough," said Yang Jian.

Chapter 257: The Last Night

The Ghost Hunter Yang Jian of Dachang City is going to have a phone conference with people from the Ghost Handlers' headquarters?

When Zhao Jianguo received this message from Liu Xiaoyu, he immediately realized the gravity of the situation.

Yang Jian was a Ghost Handler he had always paid close attention to.

Furthermore, with the Hungry Ghost incident in Dachang City nearly catching the world's attention, the name "Ghost Eye Yang Jian" had already spread among the Ghost Handler circles. While discussing these Terror Level events, it was inevitable that they would talk about Yang Jian, and also Zhao Kaiming.

But there was not much good to say.

Things like, "what two unlucky bastards, they are as good as dead."

But it was undeniable that, under the current circumstances, Yang Jian was without a doubt the most knowledgeable person regarding the Hungry Ghost incident.

"Immediately inform the minister and deputy minister, and have the technicians make sure that this phone conference is set up within ten minutes, and all relevant key personnel must be present,"

Zhao Jianguo did not work at the Ghost Handlers' headquarters; he had flown to the outskirts of Dachang City several days earlier.

Once he hung up the phone, he immediately began to prepare.

And it wasn't just the headquarters' minister and deputy minister that Zhao Jianguo's phone call alarmed, various leaders above were also startled and expressed their intention to attend the meeting.

After all, Yang Jian had made it very clear that this meeting was about the life or death of Dachang City.

Who would dare to take lightly the safety of an entire city?

If it weren't for the fact that Yang Jian was a Ghost Handler dealing with supernatural incidents, his satellite-positioned phone would have been blown up long ago.

Within three minutes, the information had reached the ears of the leaders of each vitally important department.

Within five minutes, the list of participants for this phone conference was confirmed.

The list was highly classified; no one saw it, not even Zhao Jianguo, who was in charge of the matter, knew how many people would attend the meeting. He only saw several phones and telephones, continuously being placed on the table at the temporary command center outside Dachang City, and connections were already being made.

God knows which leaders stood behind each of these phones.

The minister of the Asian headquarters hadn't arrived because he had flown overseas several days earlier to seek aid with a thick face, leaving Deputy Minister Cao Yanhua in charge of the command.

At this moment, Cao Yanhua's face was covered with cold sweat.

His heart was trembling.

He wasn't nervous about the content of the meeting, but that he had never expected that just one call from Yang Jian would blow so many significant figures out of the woodwork.

On the surface, there weren't many people in this temporary command center, but secretly, numerous pairs of eyes had long been watching every move here.

Think about it, the case in Dachang City was so serious, stirring up national unrest and attracting global attention. If it couldn't be resolved, who knew the extent of the impact it could bring? The higher-ups maintained silence because they did not understand these matters and feared adding to the chaos, but that did not mean they didn't care.

"Minister, the phone conference has been set up and is ready to begin at any time," Zhao Jianguo entered and placed his satellite-positioned phone at the center of the table.

As soon as Liu Xiaoyu switched the line over, Yang Jian's communication would be transferred here.

"How long has it been now?" Cao Yanhua asked.

Zhao Jianguo replied, "Ten minutes, but Yang Jian gave us twenty minutes to prepare, and Liu Xiaoyu promised fifteen minutes, so we still have five minutes to get ready. Because this is related to a significant decision, for security reasons, I did not inform many people with insufficient clearance.

Currently, there are only me, Li Jun, and you, minister, a total of three people in the conference room, with other leaders all connected by phone. However, those who have the qualification to participate in this decision-making..."

"Enough, as long as you understand. Some lines are already connected. Don't say what you shouldn't, order the guards to be on high alert, and no one is to enter the command room until the meeting is

over. Additionally, all phones must be destroyed immediately after the meeting; we cannot allow any information to leak," Cao Yanhua cautioned.

"Understood," Zhao Jianguo nodded.

A mere phone conference had escalated to a level perhaps even surpassing an international summit of state leaders.

Because no one knew how much sensitive information could slip out with just a word from Yang Jian.

"Everyone take your seats, the meeting will begin in a minute," Cao Yanhua steadied himself: "There will be only one copy of this phone conference's recording, kept here with me."

After he finished, he took out a recording pen.

Once this was confirmed here, Liu Xiaoyu notified Yang Jian.

"The meeting will start in thirty seconds, are you ready on your end?"

"No problem," Yang Jian replied.

Soon, in less than thirty seconds, his line was disconnected and then reconnected.

"This is Deputy Minister Cao Yanhua from the Ghost Handlers' headquarters, currently in charge of the Hungry Ghost incident in Dachang City. Ghost Handler Yang Jian, you requested this phone conference to discuss the existential crisis facing Dachang City. Is that correct?" Cao Yanhua asked calmly as he started the meeting from inside the command room.

Hearing the voice coming from the phone, Wang Xiaoming was stunned for a moment.

He hadn't received any news of this sort.

"Strictly speaking, that's correct, but there are some matters I need someone to verify, after all no matter what, I'm a Ghost Handler who has joined the headquarters. I can't act recklessly based on my own whims; I need someone to consult," Yang Jian said.

"Consult on what?" Cao Yanhua asked.

Yang Jian replied, "To resolve the incident in Dachang City, we need to fulfill two conditions, but unfortunately, to date, we fulfill neither. You've probably received the detailed documents by now, and you should also be clear about these two conditions."

"Which two conditions? If they can be resolved, we will resolve them for you here. If not, we will also figure out a solution for you, as long as Dachang City remains safe."

Suddenly, a voice with a strong presence of an older person came through the phone.

"Which old fart is butting in? Sneaking into a meeting without knowing anything? Go study up," Yang Jian said.

Hearing this, cold sweat broke out on the foreheads of Cao Yanhua and Zhao Jianguo in the command room, and the corner of Li Jun's mouth involuntarily twitched.

"Kid, be a bit more polite. If it weren't such a critical moment, I'd take you down for talking to me like that, if it were normal times," the man on the phone immediately bristled, obviously a person in charge with a volatile temper.

Yang Jian said, "Shoot me? From your voice, you seem old, can you even handle a gun? And which law states that cursing someone is punishable by firing squad? You seem like a person of some status to be in this meeting; don't you know that murder is illegal? You've got quite the nerve."

"Minister Cao Yanhua, I don't want to talk to him, kick him off the line."

"..."

At this moment, Cao Yanhua in the command center was sweating even more profusely. You probably don't even know who you are arguing with.

"Brave kid, you've got the guts to come into my territory, I won't let you off unless you accept being my grandson," the old man said.

"Cough, cough, Old Li, restrain yourself a bit. Don't you see what time it is? Yang Jian, is it? Continue speaking, we're listening," another man's voice interrupted, stopping the pointless quarrel.

The man known as Old Li seemed to swallow his anger and did not continue the argument.

"Where were we before the argument? I forgot," said Yang Jian.

Wang Xiaoming's calm voice rose, "The two prerequisites to deal with the Dachang City incident are contact and containment. Direct contact with the Source Ghost implies a very high risk of death, which necessitates certain safety measures. Ghost Candles are a good tool, but unfortunately, the last one was used on an S-Class Ghost Infant during the fourth phase and is now gone."

"I can solve this condition. As I told Xiaoming last time, I have less than a twenty percent chance of success, and failure means death, but I've decided to try it anyway," Yang Jian said.

"Just for that statement, young friend, I take back my previous words. If you come to my place, I'll treat you to tea, no, to alcohol, and we won't call it quits until we're drunk," said Old Li.

Yang Jian said, "Minister Cao, why is this old guy still here? Didn't you say to kick him off the line? He doesn't understand a thing and is just talking nonsense here."

"After finishing the drink, I'll still have to shoot you," Old Li cursed again.

At this time, Cao Yanhua was too afraid to speak. Kick him off the line? Didn't you see that when Old Li spoke up, everyone else fell silent?

"Old Li, you really need to temper your impatience. I understand the first condition; I'm leaving it all to you now. If there's anything you need to instruct, you can tell us, and we will sort it out from the outside," said another heavy male voice.

Yang Jian said, "Right now, what I need is not consolation. Xiaoming, please continue from where you left off."

Wang Xiaoming on the side said, "The second condition is containment, which presupposes limiting that Source Ghost. My plan involved that finger, which you've all read about in the dossier, but it failed. The limiter is lost, and unless we find another object capable of restricting a fierce ghost..."

"I can solve this second condition too, but here's the problem: if I survive the first step, the next would be to find a replacement for that finger," Yang Jian said.

Yang Jian continued, "I know a place in Dachang City that might have such an object."

"Then why haven't you taken it?" an unfamiliar voice could not help but ask.

"How can I take it? With a keyboard?"

Yang Jian continued, "That object is restraining another ghost, whose Terror Level cannot be precisely labeled, but it probably isn't lower than A-Class, possibly even S-Class. To resolve the Dachang City incident, I will need that object since we no longer have any resources at our disposal.

What I'm discussing with you today is this dilemma: to solve this problem, we have to personally unleash a ghost of unknown Terror Level."

"Perhaps the released entity might cause a disaster worse than Dachang City, or perhaps not. But this concerns the lives of millions of people. I cannot make this decision on my own; this decision has to be made by the headquarters of the ghost controllers."

"Alright, I'm done speaking. Let Liu Xiaoyu give me an answer by tomorrow evening at six," he said.

After speaking, he immediately hung up the call.

The command center outside Dachang City fell silent.

"How much are you hiding?"

Listening to Yang Jian's words, Wang Xiaoming frowned at him.

He had not expected this man to have so many secrets, that even in this dire situation, he still had the capability to resolve the Hungry Ghost incident.

"Can I trust you?" Yang Jian didn't respond to him but turned to ask.

Wang Xiaoming said, "You should trust me."

Yang Jian said, "Alright then, I will start this plan once you and the others are safe in the shelter tomorrow. Take this phone; I'll leave another one here to keep the line open with you. I'm unsure how long the video call will last with one phone, but I believe you'll understand everything once you see it tomorrow."

"Whether the plan ends in success depends entirely on my less than twenty percent chance of survival. If I die, how many ghosts will awaken, I have no idea, nor can I predict the dangers that will arise from that, but you must be more aware of them than I am."

"Since you've made up your mind, then why bother with this call?" Wang Xiaoming asked.

Yang Jian said, "Even if it's successful, the cost will be enormous. I will personally release a ghost, and what that ghost will bring, I don't know, but I suspect it will be terrifying... and I can't shoulder the consequences alone. I have to find someone to share the burden, especially considering the future.

Of course, if I die, then all plans are off, and there's no need to worry about it anymore."

"So you're making headquarters clean up your mess?" Wang Xiaoming asked.

"Is there a problem with that? I'm the man who is risking his life for this city, so what's wrong with them wiping my ass for once?" Yang Jian said.

Wang Xiaoming said, "You're thinking too much. If you really succeed, your merits will speak for themselves, and the higher-ups won't have anything to say. Besides, you could've kept this entire thing secret, eliminating the need for this call."

Yang Jian replied, "If I don't say anything, how would they know the merits are mine? If I die, I might as well get some sort of heroic reward; the recognition would sound better than dying quietly in some corner, unknown to the world, right?"

"Your utilitarianism is too heavy—you even calculate for this," Wang Xiaoming raised an eyebrow.

"It's not that I am overly utilitarian, but this is how society operates. If you don't fight for certain things, you will lose them," Yang Jian replied. "Not everyone is as noble as you. I'm just an ordinary person, that's all."

"Okay, let's end today's conversation here. My plan is already in motion; you don't need to worry about the rest, just wait for the outcome," said Yang Jian.

"I hope you succeed," Wang Xiaoming said, then got up and left, knowing that if Yang Jian was willing to give it one last go, there was nothing more to say.

As for whether headquarters would agree to Yang Jian's action, he wasn't worried.

They would definitely agree.

No country can afford the cost of losing a major city. This precedent cannot be set, not now, at least.

Even if the ghost unleashed by Yang Jian turns out to be terrifying, that doesn't matter.

Who knows about the future? Take care of the present first.

After Wang Xiaoming left, Yang Jian stared at the increasingly dim sky outside and thought, "I wonder if I'll still be able to open my eyes and see this world after tomorrow."

Chapter 258 Hanging Suicide

A pathway that hasn't yet been poured with concrete leads directly to the basement of an unfinished villa.

Surrounding the area are scattered construction materials.

Underneath this unassuming villa is a hurriedly completed safe room.

A room constructed of gold, steel, and concrete—not very large, but large enough to accommodate nineteen people.

At this moment, the list of nineteen has been confirmed. Zhang Xiang, accompanied by a few family members, has begun to enter the safe room in succession. Besides his immediate family, there were Zhang Han's relatives, two special operations security personnel, Wang Xiaoming, Jiang Yan, and others.

"Zhang Wei, come here for a second. Keep this box with the human skin paper for me. If I die this time, give it to Wang Xiaoming," Yang Jian whispered as he handed the box to Zhang Wei.

"What is this?" Zhang Wei paused.

Yang Jian said, "You've seen it before, the human skin paper that was at the school last time."

"Okay, alright," Zhang Wei nodded very seriously.

Yang Jian said, "If you're not sure whether I'm dead or not, then give it to him on the ninth day after you enter the safe room. If I'm alive, I'll come back."

"Here's the key to that villa downtown, you know the place," Zhang Wei handed over a key. "There are only a few of us left from our class. You can't die, you know. I still want to take you for chicken in the future."

"I'll try my best. I'm leaving."

Yang Jian took the key and then drove away from the Guanjiang Residential Complex in a pickup truck from Zhang Xiang's company.

He didn't plan to undertake such a perilous act here because should he fail, all the residents in the complex would perish. Hence, he decided to carry it out at the villa in the city center that belonged to Zhang Wei,

a place that could guarantee to be void of people and ensure quietness with no disturbances.

"Yang Jian, he's gone..."

From a high floor in one of the buildings in the complex, Wang Bin's family stood by the window watching the departing lights of Yang Jian's vehicle.

"We really should have asked Yang Jian to spare some slots for us; they've all gone into the safe room, leaving our family out here. It's just not fair," Wang Haiyan lamented regretfully.

Wang Bin said, "We're not qualified. Didn't you see who those entering the safe room were? Billionaires worth tens of billions, those who built the safe room, major professors with considerable influence internationally, nationally protected talents, and ghost handlers like Yang Jian..."

"Us ordinary people cannot mix in with them. It's quite good already that we were allowed to stay in the complex."

"How come Jiang Yan could get in? Isn't it just because she's involved with Yang Jian? Our Shanshan is no worse than her," Wang Haiyan said.

Wang Shanshan, with a pale complexion, said indifferently, "If he dies, I will die too. I don't need to enter the safe room."

"If we have to die, we die together as a family. Even if we begged Yang Jian for a slot, who would go in?" Wang Bin sighed.

However, within the complex, it wasn't just their family left outside; many of Zhang Xiang's relatives were left outside as well. Zhang Han had picked only a newborn child from his family to bring into the safe room. With so many important officials in Dachang City, Yang Jian only gave out three spots.

Two of those were for the determined and ably skilled special operations personnel.

The reason for bringing two special operations personnel, besides protecting Wang Xiaoming, was also to maintain order inside the safe room.

In short, there were sacrifices from every side.

At this moment, inside the villa.

The lights are out, leaving only Zhang Liqin in this vast and empty building,

She stood at the door watching Yang Jian leave, standing frozen for a long while, her eyes filled with worry and confusion.

It seems that now Yang Jian has left, she doesn't know what to do anymore.

Subconsciously, Zhang Liqin had relied on this man too many times. In the depths of her heart, she had come to see Yang Jian as the only ray of hope in her despair, like a drowning person clinging to their last life-saving straw, unwilling to let go.

It has nothing to do with emotions; it is the survival instinct of a living being that drives her decision-making.

Jiang Yan might feel the same.

This time, Yang Jian only brought along the Ghost Rope and the Ghost Mirror in the back of the pickup truck.

It was already a gamble, and now Yang Jian had left behind even the human skin paper. Should he die, the item would fall into Wang Xiaoming's hands. Perhaps with his intellect, he might extract more useful information from the human skin paper. It's certain though that Wang Xiaoming would use the human skin paper in a more aggressive and bold manner.

But none of that matters to Yang Jian now.

On the road, the vehicle bounces, knocking over several horrifying figures.

But Yang Jian is expressionless, not planning to stop. He even hears some desperate cries for help but doesn't bother to look or pay attention.

Soon, he arrives at the quiet and luxurious residential area.

The vehicle drives directly into the courtyard of Zhang Wei's home, knocking over the gate in the process.

Yang Jian gets out of the car, lifts the Ghost Mirror from the truck, and walks towards the house.

The Ghost Mirror is covered with a black cloth and is not translucent. He places the mirror in an empty room on the second floor of Zhang Wei's home, positioning it against the wall to prevent accidental toppling.

He then brings over a cabinet and places a fully charged phone on it. The phone's camera has a night vision feature. Although not very clear, Yang Jian can still see everything happening in the room.

The phone connection is successful.

At this moment.

In the safe house, Wang Xiaoming sat on the ground against the wall. He felt a vibration from his phone, and immediately his expression tensed as he looked down.

He saw Yang Jian's figure in an empty room, with the camera shaking, seemingly still adjusting the angle. After the camera was properly adjusted, he saw a mirror.

A mirror styled from the Republic of China period, shrouded in a black cloth, revealing only parts of the frame.

"What on earth are you going to do?" he wondered to himself.

After Yang Jian had placed the phone properly, ensuring the camera would not intersect with the mirror, he finally relaxed.

He drew the curtains in the room, moved out all other unrelated items, then closed and locked the door securely.

Sitting before the ghost mirror covered in black cloth, Yang Jian was silent for a long time before finally taking out an object wrapped in gold foil from his pocket.

Inside was an old straw rope.

It was the Ghost Rope obtained from Wang Yue. Ordinary people could no longer control it, as it was already in a state of rejuvenation.

However, compared to other ghosts, this Ghost Rope was not particularly difficult to deal with, as long as it was restrained in time—otherwise, if left unchecked, this Ghost Rope might hang the inhabitants of an entire city.

Without immediately unwrapping the gold foil from the Ghost Rope, he first tied one end of it to the room's chandelier.

He tested the weight, finding it acceptable.

The quality of Zhang Wei's home renovation was solid, so it shouldn't fall.

Next, Yang Jian placed the other end of the rope around his neck, ensuring he would be the first target of the Ghost Rope's attack. If he didn't do this, it would be awkward if the thing got loose and ran away.

"The sequence should be correct," Yang Jian thought to himself before walking in front of the ghost mirror again.

The ghost mirror covered in black cloth was harmless to humans and animals.

But only Yang Jian knew how sinister it really was.

Capable of bringing people back from the dead, at the price of releasing an unknown level of ghost from the mirror.

As an object that was suspected to have been left by ghost tamers a hundred years ago, its presence in modern times was enigmatic, and no one knew what it signified.

At this moment, though tense within, Yang Jian was not retreating.

Having come this far, he had no choice but to press on.

He gestured an OK sign to the phone camera and then extended his fingers to begin a countdown.

"Three~!"

"Is Yang Jian trying to hang himself?"

Wang Xiaoming, observing Yang Jian's series of bizarre actions and seeing him put what appeared to be a rope around his head, realized what he was about to do, even if he was usually slow to catch on.

"No, not simply suicide. The rope is wrapped and entwined in gold foil—it's a ghost in a state of imprisonment. That mirror whose front can't be seen has something strange about it. It's definitely not a regular mirror; otherwise, Yang Jian wouldn't have deliberately placed it in front of him."

"Is the mirror a ghost? It doesn't seem like it. Yang Jian hasn't imprisoned the mirror; it has been quiet the whole time."

Wang Xiaoming was completely unfamiliar with all of these arrangements and no matter how smart he was, he couldn't guess what Yang Jian was actually trying to do.

If it was just a simple hanging, there would be no need to prepare so much.

"Two~!"

Yang Jian gestured again.

But at this moment, his movements paused, seemingly because his satellite-positioning phone rang.

"Yang Jian, it's me, Liu Xiaoyu. The higher-ups have approved your action. Vice Minister Cao Yanhua said, whether your action fails or succeeds, all consequences will be borne by the state, so go ahead with confidence and without any psychological burden. By the way, do you need to talk to your mother? I can connect you at any time," came the voice of Liu Xiaoyu.

"I understand. Tell my mom that I am doing very well, and besides, after this call ends, unless I contact you actively, don't connect on your own. A single call might kill me."

Yang Jian kept his voice low, as he wasn't sure if any third-stage Ghost Infants were nearby.

"Alright then, the well-being of Dachang City is in your hands," Liu Xiaoyu said with a note of heaviness and respect.

Yang Jian didn't respond to her but simply hung up the phone, then threw the satellite-positioning phone behind him.

"One~!"

He gestured the final number towards the direction of the camera, and then he violently pulled away the black cloth covering the ghost mirror.

"Come on, let's see if I can climb out of hell and become an Evil Ghost."

Yang Jian roared in his heart, his eyes filled with the madness of gambling against fate.

As the smooth and bright ghost mirror reflected his entire body.

The terror officially began.

Chapter 259 The Dead Yang Jian

Ghost Mirror.

Yang Jian didn't even know if this thing could be defined as a ghost, but it was, like the human skin parchment, seemingly harmless on the surface yet concealing a massive terror in the dark.

The mirror reflected his body but did not show Yang Jian's shadow.

The surface of the mirror was blank.

However, all this had been taken into account; the Ghost Mirror needed a bit of time to capture a person's shadow.

During this time, Yang Jian had to complete the remaining tasks.

He first controlled the Ghost Shadow to enter his body, while simultaneously unraveling the gold foil wrapped around the Ghost Rope.

Both tasks were completed at the same time to ensure he wasn't controlled by the Ghost Shadow after which, unable to untie the Ghost Rope, he'd die a haphazard and confused death.

For this moment, Yang Jian hadn't slept last night, pondering over today's actions, so he was extremely cautious, ensuring no detail went awry, even going so far as to borrow a black suit from Zhang Xiang to prevent any reflections and repositioning his phone camera to avoid contact between the lens and the mirror.

This moment.

The only person aware of what was happening here was Wang Xiaoming in the safe house.

Right now, the phone screen in his hand showed that after Yang Jian unveiled the black cloth covering the Ghost Mirror, he stood in the center of the room, unraveling the gold foil on the rope around his neck, with a tall Headless Ghost Shadow slowly standing up behind him.

The shadow stood eerily still behind Yang Jian, motionless.

"The Headless Ghost Shadow is a ghost controlled by Yang Jian, is it his control or has it already lost control now? Does Yang Jian want to untie that rope now? This is simply suicide, that rope is definitely a ghost—once its restraints are undone, it will kill Yang Jian first; in his current state, he's unable to resist the ghost's attack."

"He's now either going to die to the ghost's resurrection or from that rope of grass."

Wang Xiaoming's gaze was uncertain, as his research had made it clear that Yang Jian had now entered a situation of certain death, soon to meet the conditions for an inevitable demise.

He couldn't understand what Yang Jian could possibly rely on to turn this situation around.

The less than twenty percent chance of survival mentioned by Yang Jian was nonexistent—looking at the situation, the chance of survival was literally zero.

Unless Jesus descends, Buddha incarnates, Bodhisattva manifests... of course, all these are impossible.

"Now..."

the only thing that can reverse this deadly situation is that mirror itself, he chose to hang himself in front of the mirror for a reason, but he didn't want to show me the mirror completely, no, wrong, if he really wanted to do that, he could have just switched to an angle where it couldn't be captured, there was no need to let me know of the mirror's existence." Wang Xiaoming furrowed his brows deeply.

"The only possibility is that he's apprehensive, he dares not point the camera at the mirror."

Watching every detail in the video closely, not missing any unsettling elements—rope, Headless Ghost Shadow, mirror... the person hanging in front of the mirror.

These pieces of information seemed unrelated, but Wang Xiaoming vaguely felt they were forming a strict line.

Only, this line, lacking the right supporting information, was incomprehensible.

"I'm looking forward to you more and more, Yang Jian." Wang Xiaoming felt an unprecedented sense of anticipation in his heart.

Yang Jian didn't stop his movements.

The Headless Ghost Shadow behind him was still barely controllable, but he had already started to feel the restlessness of the ghost's resurrection within his body.

It seemed the ghost was eager to resurrect at any moment.

"It doesn't matter." Yang Jian didn't care about this restlessness; he felt that before the ghost inside him resurrected, he would definitely have finished the task at hand.

Afterward, he would leave it to fate.

"Here it comes~!"

...

Suddenly.

Just at this moment, a new scene appeared abruptly inside the bright Ghost Mirror in front of Yang Jian.

A vague figure was slowly walking towards him from the depths of the mirror.

The terror of the Ghost Mirror began to unveil itself.

Initially, the figure in the mirror was as small as a thumb, positioned in the middle of the mirror, but as it continued to walk forward, the figure grew larger and clearer.

At first, Yang Jian could only make out a blurry black outline in the mirror, but by the time the person reached halfway, he was able to discern the features and stature.

As the figure in the mirror covered about two-thirds of the surface, even the style of the clothes became distinctly visible.

This was a person dressed in a black suit, with dark skin and a rigid body, whose facial features were identical to Yang Jian's.

The person in the mirror walked towards Yang Jian as if they would step out of it at any moment.

Yang Jian's face was solemn. He knew the figure in the mirror was actually a ghost, and if he looked at the mirror for too long, he would be replaced by the ghost inside it. He would enter the Ghost Mirror, while the ghost would escape to this world.

"Start."

No more hesitation.

At that moment, the Headless Ghost Shadow behind him slowly merged into his body like a dense fog.

Cold, numb, stiff.

As the Headless Ghost Shadow invaded, Yang Jian felt an enormous area of his back go completely numb.

It was as if... he was already dead.

As the invasion of the Headless Ghost Shadow continued, Yang Jian felt his blood stop flowing, his limbs lose vitality, and eventually, even his heartbeat disappeared.

Apart from his head, every other part of him was now dead, a mere corpse.

As his arms lost control and fell from mid-air.

The last piece of gold leaf wrapped around the Ghost Rope was torn off by him.

At this moment.

The Ghost Rope began to recover.

In an instant, Yang Jian felt the rough noose around his neck tighten violently, as if invisible large hands were desperately constricting the rope, almost snapping his neck. Concurrently, as his body suffered the invasion of the Headless Ghost Shadow, the cessation of blood flow and the stopping of his heart, an intense feeling of suffocation surged into his mind.

Dizzy and nearly blacking out.

"Gack, gack gack~!"

Although Yang Jian had prepared himself to be hanged, when the moment actually came, the instinct to survive urged him to struggle and escape desperately.

But his body no longer belonged to him; it belonged to the Headless Ghost Shadow.

He could only utter painful, gurgling noises, his body resembling a hung corpse, limbs dangling weakly and swaying slightly in the air.

Meanwhile, the person in the Ghost Mirror had completely filled the reflective surface, their shape and attire now identical to Yang Jian's.

As Yang Jian was hanged, the figure in the mirror also slowly rose, neck lifted, limbs hanging down.

It was imitating Yang Jian at the moment of his hanging.

Yang Jian was not dead yet. His face showed an expression of utmost pain—the feeling of being hung alive and dying from suffocation was something he fully realized at this moment.

His consciousness was now in turmoil.

...

His vision was becoming increasingly blurry.

Thinking had become a laborious task for his brain.

He was about to die...

Ten seconds, twenty seconds, thirty seconds, one minute, two minutes...

The painful passage of time felt excruciatingly slow, yet as time slowly went on, Yang Jian no longer felt so much pain and was rapidly losing consciousness.

After approximately four minutes, Yang Jian closed his eyes without a sound, and his shoes dropped to the ground with a clatter.

Yet according to scientific calculations, he should only have passed out due to brain hypoxia, not truly dead.

However, the hanging by the Ghost Rope continued.

There was no way someone would let him down at this time, so his death was a foregone conclusion.

"Dead?"

Wang Xiaoming, watching everything through the phone, was now filled with uncertainty.

He thought there would be some variation or twist in the situation midway.

But there wasn't.

Yang Jian died from hanging just like a normal outcome.

Through the phone, Wang Xiaoming could affirm with certainty that Yang Jian had lost all vital signs of life. His heartbeat had stopped, his fingers no longer moved, and rigidity had begun to set in throughout his body.

Death came somewhat quickly.

But that didn't affect anything.

"Why did he choose to die like this? Is there some change I'm unaware of, or has Yang Jian already failed?" Wang Xiaoming's gaze was fixed intently on the screen.

It had been ten minutes since the hanging.

Yang Jian still made no movement.

Twenty minutes passed, still no movement.

An hour went by.

It was now completely certain that Yang Jian was dead—completely and utterly dead. A ten-minute hanging might have been survivable, but after hanging for so long, Yang Jian had become a corpse.

Wang Xiaoming stared at the phone screen for over an hour, and could not help but start to believe that the anticipated change would not occur. Yang Jian seemed to be truly dead; he had failed.

After all, he had previously said the survival probability was less than twenty percent.

Meaning, the likelihood of death was considerably high.

"Lost the gamble?"

Wang Xiaoming rubbed his sore eyes, letting out a weary sigh in his heart.

Yet he did not put down the phone; he was still watching.

He wouldn't put the phone down until the battery on the phone near Yang Jian's corpse ran out.

He would watch until the end before drawing a conclusion.

So many days had passed; a few more hours wouldn't matter.

However, after an hour and a half, there was no movement from Yang Jian in the video. His limbs dangled helplessly, and his face had a peaceful expression as he hung in midair.

Two hours passed, and it was the same.

The body did not move at all, and the entire room seemed to be frozen in time. To the unknowing eye, one might think they were looking at a screensaver on the phone.

But in the place Wang Xiaoming's phone could not see,

inside the Ghost Mirror,

the person reflected in the mirror also hung in the air like a hanged man, limbs dangling, face serene.

The appearance, the posture, had already coincided with Yang Jian.

According to the rules of the Ghost Mirror, Yang Jian, who had died, should have resurrected within it, just as Zhang Wei did, appearing in the mirror after his death.

But there was nothing.

The shadow in the mirror made no movements, and the corpse of Yang Jian outside the mirror remained still.

The Ghost Shadow that had controlled Yang Jian's body was motionless, and even the revived Ghost Rope was still.

This apparent silence was merely a surface phenomenon.

In reality, in the unseen darkness, the struggle between ghosts had already begun.

The Ghost Shadow, seeking to seize Yang Jian's body, would first have to overcome the Ghost Rope.

The Ghost Rope, suspending Yang Jian's corpse, was out of the Ghost Shadow's control, and that underlying struggle had commenced.

So the revived Ghost Rope seemed to have lost its power, only a single strand was released, whereas normally the ropes would densely fill the sky.

Though it appeared unchanging, indeed, change had already occurred.

The Ghost Rope was being suppressed.

Within Yang Jian's corpse, the Ghost Shadow had gained the upper hand.

To suppress the reviving Ghost Rope, the limited strength of the Headless Ghost Shadow wasn't enough.

Dark shadows started to mysteriously emerge on Yang Jian's corpse and grew increasingly intense as if they were about to merge into one dark mass.

The Headless Ghost Shadow began to revive.

"Drip~!"

Three hours after Yang Jian had hung dead, a drop of ink-like black substance fell from the tip of his foot.

The video did not capture this because the angle was insufficient to film all sides.

This drop of ink seemed like part of the Headless Ghost Shadow's body, forcibly separated by some force.

The Ghost Mirror had joined in.

At this point, Yang Jian was dead, and according to the current situation, he should have begun to resurrect.

However, the presence of the Ghost Shadow prevented all this. To maintain normal operations, expelling the Ghost Shadow from Yang Jian's corpse was a priority.

"Did the body just get moved a bit?"

At this moment, Wang Xiaoming wasn't sure if it was an illusion, but he felt that Yang Jian's body hanging in midair had shifted slightly from its original position.

It was not a significant shift, but he had a vague sense of it, having watched for so long.

Chapter 260 Anomalies of the Corpse

Guanjiang Residential Complex, a high-rise dwelling.

This was the new home of Wang Bin and Wang Haiyan, where the family of three huddled together for warmth before despair arrived, comforting each other and giving confidence.

However, at this moment.

Sitting on the sofa, the pale-faced Wang Shanshan suddenly closed her eyes and collapsed powerlessly to the ground.

"Daughter, what's wrong with you?" Wang Haiyan was startled and hurriedly helped Wang Shanshan up from the ground.

But as soon as she touched Wang Shanshan's body, Wang Haiyan jumped in shock.

Her body, already colder than the average person, was now ice-cold, completely devoid of any warmth, prompting her to quickly check her daughter's chest.

"Ah~!"

Wang Haiyan couldn't help but let out a scream as she quickly withdrew her hand.

Her daughter's heartbeat had stopped; she was already dead.

"Husband, come quickly, something has happened to our daughter..." Wang Haiyan called for Wang Bin.

"Don't shout so loudly, do you want to attract that thing?" Wang Bin, frightened, hurried out of the kitchen, almost ready to cover his wife's mouth.

Although they hadn't entered the safe room, they knew how those ghostly things outside killed people.

But Wang Bin was stunned when he found out what had just happened.

His daughter was dead?

"Yang Jian, right, let's ask Yang Jian," Wang Bin instinctively thought of Yang Jian.

He must know about his daughter's condition.

But just as Wang Bin was about to make the call, he froze, because he suddenly remembered something his daughter had said: If Yang Jian died, she would die too.

Could it be... Yang Jian was already dead?

Yang Jian was more than just dead; by this time, his body was cold. With a serene expression, his limbs dangled limply, his shoes having already fallen off, his entire body hung in the air by an old rope, motionless.

His body had been in that position for quite a while.

If nothing unexpected happened, his corpse would hang there, rot, breed maggots, and eventually be reduced to a skeleton.

This was about four hours after his suicide by hanging.

"Drip, drip~!"

The black drops of liquid, dark as ink, dripping from beneath his feet, started to increase and fall more frequently. The camera occasionally caught it, but it was just a fleeting glimpse and it was unclear what it was.

"Just now... was there water dripping from his feet? Could it be that his internal organs have started to rot, producing corpse fluids?"

Wang Xiaoming, who noticed this detail, was still puzzled.

Logically, rotting shouldn't happen so quickly.

But then Wang Xiaoming saw some supernatural occurrences with Yang Jian's corpse.

His body was swaying~!

It began to move back and forth, slowly starting to sway.

As the heavy corpse swayed, the ceiling of the room made creaking noises.

If others saw such a scene, they would probably be scared out of their wits.

The corpse, dead for hours, was now rocking in mid-air.

"This situation... could it be that Yang Jian will come back to life? No, that's not right. It's not that Yang Jian's corpse is moving on its own, it's the rope that's moving," Wang Xiaoming's eyes narrowed as he began to realize why Yang Jian had chosen this particular way to commit suicide.

He must have figured out some pattern of a fierce ghost, hoping to use this pattern.

As for what the outcome would be, Wang Xiaoming wasn't sure.

"He hasn't lost, Yang Jian hasn't lost yet." Hope surged again in his heart.

In the video, Yang Jian's body hung in mid-air, swaying slightly at first, but the amplitude of the swaying gradually increased.

And the black liquid dripping from Yang Jian's body became more and more abundant.

These black droplets didn't just turn into a puddle of dead water on the ground, but moved like living things, gradually spreading outward from the spot where they fell.

The ground began to be covered by darkness.

"Damn it, my phone's about to die." Wang Xiaoming stared intently at the unfolding events, realizing at this moment that his phone's battery was nearly depleted.

He wanted to charge it, but he refrained from doing so because if his phone ran out of battery, Yang Jian's would too due to exhaustion of power, severing the video connection once that phone turned off.

"There's about twenty minutes of battery life left," he estimated in his mind.

But at such a critical moment, he had no idea if twenty minutes of battery would suffice.

In the dimly lit room.

Yang Jian's corpse continued to sway midair beneath the chandelier, as if blown by an invisible gust of wind.

Yet the room's doors and windows were tightly shut, making any breeze impossible.

At this moment, the extent of the swaying of Yang Jian's body in midair seemed to have reached a limit.

During this sway, the body's feet touched the Ghost Mirror in front of it.

Upon contact.

The corpse's feet were inexplicably adhered to the mirror, unable to detach.

Because of the adhesion, the swinging ceased.

Yang Jian's body now hung at an angle midair, defying all logic.

The grass rope around his neck was taut, tightly gripping his neck as if preventing the body from being sucked into the Ghost Mirror.

At the same time, the once peaceful-faced Yang Jian began to tremble, with a black liquid seeping out all over his body.

"Could it be?"

Wang Xiaoming, upon witnessing this scene, suddenly realized something and stood up in shock, drawing curious glances from the others in the safehouse.

Ignoring everyone else's looks, Wang Xiaoming was incredibly startled and, although not certain, he began to understand Yang Jian's true intentions.

If he wasn't wrong, Yang Jian intended to exploit the properties of several ghosts to artificially create a contradiction and conflict, causing a collision between ghost and ghost.

"But that's impossible, one condition is missing. Even if he could perfectly orchestrate a conflict between ghosts, he is still dead..."

As he said this, Wang Xiaoming abruptly paused, then stared fixedly at Zhang Wei.

What if the dead could be resurrected?

Just at that moment.

The Ghost Rope around Yang Jian's neck was gradually saturated by the black liquid, taking on a pitch-black hue.

That substance wasn't actually liquid, but a part of the Ghost Shadow, so dense it was frightening, resembling ink.

"Crack~!"

With a slight sound.

The Ghost Rope that hung Yang Jian lost its strength after being covered by the black shade and drooped down from midair.

Under the influence of revival, the Ghost Rope finally succumbed to the Ghost Shadow.

It couldn't suppress the Ghost Shadow with a physical form, especially not in its revived state.

Not only that, it was also controlled by the Headless Ghost Shadow.

But the Ghost Rope had completed its mission.

The very moment the Ghost Rope dangled down from above.

Yang Jian's corpse abruptly stood upright in midair and finally crashed onto the Ghost Mirror in front of him.

No, it wasn't a crash, but the mirror suctioned it.

Now the critical moment began, the creation of a logical death loop between the Ghost Shadow and the Ghost Mirror.

Causing both ghosts to crash.

If successful.

Yang Jian would resurrect from death.

But at that moment, the phone's battery died, and it shut down automatically.

Wang Xiaoming only saw Yang Jian's body absorbed in front of the mirror before the connection was lost.

