

Revival 301

Chapter 301 Bus

"Driver, turn left up ahead," Yang Jian instructed, tracking the signal on his satellite phone and directing the taxi driver to chase after it.

Considering the speed of the signal, there was no need to rush to Ghost Domain; following by car was easily manageable.

The driver quickly reached a main road following Yang Jian's directions.

The signal stopped here, and it was very close to Yang Jian.

Out of caution, Yang Jian surveyed his surroundings, searching for anything out of the ordinary.

Everything appeared normal, with continuous traffic on the road and plenty of pedestrians nearby. No special incidents were unfolding—this was Xiaochun City, after all, sparsely populated, where supernatural events wouldn't occur as frequently as in Big C City. Under most circumstances, the city tended toward stability and normalcy.

Even though a Hungry Ghost incident in Big C City had drawn global attention and caused a stir among ghost-controllers, it wasn't enough to provoke a storm in the grand scheme of things.

That's why, despite the turmoil hundreds of miles away in Big C City, residents here carried on with life and work as if nothing was amiss.

After getting out of the cab and ensuring his surroundings were normal, Yang Jian kept his head down and continued to follow the signal on his phone.

His phone's coordinates were precise; with the satellite positioning and inter-device tracking among international ghost-controllers, the margin of error for the signal was unlikely to exceed two meters.

Even a child could locate the source within such a small range.

"It's up ahead." Yang Jian walked for several dozen meters, crossing a street to the signal's source.

It was a bus stop, with about seven or eight people gradually boarding a bus.

As Yang Jian watched the passengers board, and then checked the signal source, he realized it wasn't moving; meaning the missing ghost-controller's phone wasn't on any of these passengers. He looked around and even searched the trash bins at the station, but he couldn't find the satellite-tracked phone.

"If it's not at the station, then there's only one possibility—the phone is on the bus."

Yang Jian was almost certain of the signal's true location.

Without delay, he decided to queue for the bus.

One by one, the people in front of him dropped coins and boarded. When it was Yang Jian's turn, however, he felt a push from behind that nearly made him stumble and fall.

"Who the hell is trying to push me?" Yang Jian turned to look.

But he found no one behind him; he was the last one in line to board, so it was impossible for someone to have pushed him from behind.

With that, he frowned.

His experience told him something was odd, yet the circumstances suggested everything was normal, as if the stumble was merely a result of losing balance, not caused by an actual push.

"Is something wrong with my body?" Yang Jian glanced down.

Since his resurrection from Ghost Mirror, his body could no longer be considered human, and after Ghost Shadow's crash, he couldn't guarantee that nothing unusual would occur.

After considering for a moment, he didn't suspect anything serious and decided to focus on the task at hand first.

After boarding the bus, Yang Jian surveyed the interior.

There weren't many passengers, just a dozen or so sitting, with the back seats more crowded and the front quite empty, leaving plenty of vacant seats.

"The signal is indeed here."

Yang Jian checked the satellite-tracked phone again and found that his signal had overlapped with that of the missing ghost-controller. He could, therefore, ascertain that the satellite phone was on this bus, although he couldn't yet determine which passenger had it unless he searched each one.

"Searching and questioning are too troublesome; better to wait for the signal to move again," Yang Jian thought. "As soon as the person carrying the phone exits the bus, I can lock in on them immediately."

After some thought, he decided against using forceful measures.

Lest he lose his temper, draw his gun, and start shooting—causing a scene that would be a hassle to clean up—he opted for a more gentle approach,

He chose a seat near the back door where he could observe easily; this way, he could see anyone getting off and track them without difficulty.

Soon, the bus doors closed and it pulled away.

"Who's the ghost-controller in Xiaochun City? Let me check." Seeing that no one was getting off soon, Yang Jian began to investigate the local person in charge.

Accessing another ghost-controller's information was easy, provided one was determined enough to compile a comprehensive dossier of national and international ghost-controllers.

However, such files were classified.

Ordinary files contained only basic personal information and lacked specific details. Abilities were described merely by a codename without elaborate disclosure.

But Yang Jian had access to the highest-level files.

Even though his official position hadn't changed, he had been internally upgraded.

"The person in charge of Xiaochun City is... Xu Feng, Interestingly, there's no codename, no ghost-controller introduction; he's intentionally concealed his information," Yang Jian browsed the file on his phone.

He noticed that the file for the local ghost-controller, Xu Feng, was marked as intentionally hidden.

But the psychological assessment was listed as stable.

"This guy is also very cautious, trusting no one. He hides all his information even from headquarters, unwilling to let anyone know his background," Yang Jian mused internally.

Such thoughts were normal.

Anyone who suddenly gained inconceivable abilities would, as long as they were somewhat mature, not recklessly show off, but instead keep them discreetly hidden.

Especially since in this world, those who controlled ghosts were not unique.

Being inconspicuous was, therefore, particularly important.

"These ghost controllers who hide all information and have no merit, if their psychological assessment weren't good, might even be dismissed. No wonder Liu Xiaoyu hasn't insisted that I investigate this guy's disappearance. If it were a ghost controller of Wang Xiaoming's level, they'd probably organize a large-scale rescue operation,"

Yang Jian found nothing improper about this.

Because this was reality, this was society.

You're only worth others' efforts if you have value. If you prove to be useless, no one would waste resources on you.

"The reason Liu Xiaoyu asked me to investigate was not for the safety of this Xu Feng. After all, the records showed he had been missing for ten days. The point was to see if any supernatural events had occurred here, to establish a file promptly."

At that moment, the bus stopped.

Five young people got on, two men and three women, looking like they were headed out for some fun.

But no one got off.

The signal source was still on board, so Yang Jian decided to wait a few more stops.

The five newcomers took seats towards the back, settling down two rows to the left of Yang Jian, chatting with each other, in high spirits.

Watching their carefree manner, Yang Jian felt a touch of envy.

The bus continued on its way.

Then, a young guy with a backpack sitting nearby suddenly said in a secretive tone to his companions, "Hey, have you guys heard about the recent fog incident?"

"Of course we know, it's all over the internet. The news said it was chemical pollution from the outskirts, lucky it didn't drift over here, or we locals would be out of luck," another guy replied.

The girls chimed in, "Yeah, it's chemical pollution. What's there to talk about?"

"Chemical pollution my ass, you believe that bullshit? Let me tell you, the real reason for Big C City's fog incident is ghosts," said the backpacker, lowering his voice. "I have a friend in Big C; it was about ten days ago, when the fog hadn't cleared. My friend was sending frantic texts for help—I got them too—he said there were ghosts all over Big C City."

"Bullshit."

One of the girls immediately laughed and retorted, "Ghosts causing that much trouble? It's as if you think we're in Resident Evil."

"It's because it was so severe that the state implemented direct controls, I heard the whole area was locked down, and they even enforced martial law thirty kilometers out," the backpacker said.

"Fine, let's say there were ghosts, why did they stop then? If you tell me the ghosts got blasted away by cannons, I'll believe you," scoffed a companion.

"Er, I'm not sure about that, but my friend wouldn't lie to me," the young man with the backpack insisted.

"Speaking of ghost stories, I heard from my mom about a strange incident that happened in our hometown," a usually quiet girl suddenly spoke up.

The others asked, "What happened?"

"My hometown's in the countryside, and about a month ago, there were a string of deaths, mostly older people. At first, it wasn't taken seriously but on the day the whole village held funerals, all the corpses placed in the coffins vanished by night," the girl said, her complexion pale as if she believed the event.

"Is that so? Hasn't anyone suspected body snatching?" A girl asked almost jokingly.

The narrator shook her head, "No, it's not that. The bodies were still there; the next day, the villagers called the police and organized a large search. You know what? All the bodies ended up standing in the fields, just like scarecrows, sunk into the mud up to this deep."

She gestured to show the depth, indicating the mud reached above the legs.

"What's even more baffling is that upon examining the footprints near the fields, they discovered they all belonged to the deceased. My mom saw it herself, and she was so scared she no longer dared to stay in our hometown, claiming it was haunted."

The others looked at each other, some stunned.

"Talking about ghost stories, I've got one too..." another boy eagerly began.

Yang Jian listened from the side, certain in his mind that what the girl had recounted was true, as the details were clear and not the kind of story that couldn't withstand scrutiny.

Obviously, it was a supernatural event that had occurred in the countryside.

From the number of deaths, it seemed to be a minor event, at most a C-level incident.

Riding the bus, before he knew it, the sky outside had darkened.

The bus had stopped two or three times en route, yet no one had disembarked, and the intervals between stops became longer as they continued. Eventually, it seemed a long time had passed since the last stop. Looking out into the dimming world outside,

Yang Jian realized the vehicle had left the urban area and entered the suburbs.

He checked the bus information and found it had completely deviated from its original route.

Yet, the satellite positioning signal of the missing ghost controller was still on board.

"Don't tell me I'm that unlucky..." Yang Jian's heart immediately sank.

Chapter 302 The Isolated Train Carriage

Yang Jian originally only planned to pick up a phone to satisfy the headquarters' arrangement and then head back to Dachang City. He had never considered dealing with any paranormal incidents. Although he was slightly more skilled than other ghost controllers, he also didn't want to deal with ghosts all the time.

Therefore, he was thinking about how to be lazy, skip work, and clock out as soon as possible.

But who would have thought that while catching a pickpocket on the bus, he assumed that such a trivial matter could be easily resolved? However, when he realized something was off, he discovered that there was something unusual about this bus.

At first, the bus was operating normally, making stops at several stations along the way and picking up passengers. But later, there was something wrong with the bus. Its route had been changed, and it hadn't stopped at any station for over ten minutes. What's more, the direction it was taking was off. By this time, it had already left Xiaochun City proper.

"Although there are some eerie aspects right now, they're not so bad as to put me in danger. Let's just keep it this way for now."

Although Yang Jian was in a bad mood when he encountered this kind of situation, his experience in dealing with special events reminded him.

Never mess around when you encounter something off. Calm down, find a place to sit, and smoke a cigarette to think things through, which is better than getting emotional and yelling.

Of course, most people can't stay calm in the face of danger.

Yang Jian checked the time.

6:20 PM.

But since the days are longer in summer, it wasn't considered nighttime yet, as there was still sunlight outside. It's just that the bus had already driven to the outskirts, with mountainous areas blocking the view, giving the illusion that the surrounding sky was rapidly dimming.

It was the rapid change in the light and environment outside the window that alerted him to the oddness.

"Should I check to see if it's really a paranormal incident or just jump out the window and leave?" Yang Jian was now faced with two options.

Although he was 80% sure that this was the beginning of a paranormal event, everything inside the bus still seemed normal. Maybe the driver had simply taken the wrong route.

"Just jump out the window and leave. I don't want to get involved in this," Yang Jian didn't think twice and immediately made a decision.

Whatever the situation, whether it's dangerous or a misunderstanding, he would leave first and ask questions later.

Yang Jian immediately reached out to open the window next to him, preparing to jump out and leave. With his current capabilities, even if he jumped from the tenth floor, as long as he didn't hit his head, he would be fine, let alone jumping from a bus.

"The window won't open?"

However, the next moment, as he tried to push open a glass window on the bus, he found that it was stuck and simply wouldn't budge.

He tried again, using more force, but it still wouldn't open.

The glass window remained sealed shut, immovable, as if it were stronger than steel.

"With my current strength, I should be able to easily shatter tempered glass. How can this window not react at all?" Yang Jian's expression changed subtly.

Since he couldn't break the window, he had to use Ghost Domain.

He placed his palm on the glass window, and his palm split open, revealing a ghost eye that emitted red light.

However, the red light of the Ghost Domain couldn't spread outside; it was blocked by the carriage. It was as if the outside world and the inside of the bus were in two different realms. Even the Ghost Domain couldn't cross this boundary. The seemingly normal bus only began to reveal its eeriness after some probing.

"What in the world is this? It's one thing not to be able to open the door, but to have even the Ghost Domain blocked..." Yang Jian furrowed his brows deeply.

He now believed that Xu Feng, the missing ghost controller from Xiaochun City, most likely met his end on this bus. His satellite-located phone wasn't picked up by someone; it probably fell somewhere on this bus.

It was just his bad luck to want to help retrieve the phone but ending up on this strange bus by mistake.

At this moment, the five young men and women sitting nearby were still unaware of what was happening around them. They were discussing ghost stories, taking turns telling them, and having a great time. But an argument broke out—the backpack-clad young man and a girl believed in ghosts, while the other three did not, leading to a dispute.

"Hey, buddy, I have a question for you. Do you think there really are ghosts in this world? Don't tell me you don't know about the incidents in Dachang City. I believe it's haunted, but they say it's not," the backpack-clad young man asked Yang Jian, the stranger.

Yang Jian slightly lifted his head and glanced at him: "What's your name?"

"I'm Zhang Haw," the backpack-clad young man said with a laugh, his demeanor quite amiable.

"Zhang Haw, we just voted three against two, and you lost. There are no ghosts in this world, so how could you still be trying to get votes?" a girl next to him said.

Zhang Haw chuckled: "You didn't say we couldn't count the other people on the bus. Buddy, back me up, will you? Otherwise, we lost, and we'll have to treat everyone to dinner later."

Yang Jian didn't answer but looked at them and said, "Before discussing whether ghosts exist or not, I have a question for you. Are you afraid of ghosts?"

"Of course... Not afraid. Ghosts? What are they? If I really come across one, I'll take them down with a punch. I don't believe my twenty-two years of Virgin Boy Power will be afraid of those things," Zhang Haw said with great confidence.

I really don't know where that confidence of his comes from.

Yang Jian gave him a thumbs-up and sighed with admiration, "Big brother, you're truly a brave man. Just for that statement alone, I have immense respect for you. I can't do it. I'm terribly afraid of ghosts. Like right now, I may seem composed, but my heart is actually in turmoil. If it weren't for you guys breathing around me, I'd even doubt whether the people sitting next to me are really humans."

Right now, he couldn't even be sure if there was something wrong with the more than twenty people on the bus.

However, Yang Jian had seen these five people get on the bus and talk non-stop. They should be fine among this group of people on the bus.

"Why would you say that?" Zhang Haw was puzzled.

Yang Jian said, "Haven't you guys noticed anything unusual after riding for half an hour? I'm a foreigner and don't know the roads here, but could it be that the buses in Xiaochun City all head to the suburbs?"

He pointed outside the window.

"The route was changed recently, the road ahead is under construction, and the route has been altered to this direction. It's correct," Zhang Haw looked out and didn't seem particularly surprised.

"?" Upon hearing this, it was Yang Jian's turn to feel puzzled.

There's no problem with the route?

How is that possible? If the route is fine, then why can't the windows of this bus be opened? Could it be that I am physically weak?

"Dammit, the driver has taken the wrong route. I just remembered, the city roads were repaired a while ago, and the route had changed back five days ago. No wonder something has felt off. Zhang Haw, you really are blind. How could you not realize we've been on the wrong route for so long?" Another boy reacted.

"What do we do now?" A girl was taken aback.

"I'll ask the driver to see if we can get back on the right route," Zhang Haw quickly stood up, his interest in ghost stories gone completely.

If we keep going like this, who knows when we'll get off the bus.

"You better be careful," Yang Jian warned.

Be careful?

Zhang Haw glanced at Yang Jian, "What do you mean by 'be careful'?"

"Nothing much, just taking the words at face value. It might be dangerous to go ask the driver directly, though I'm not sure. I'd suggest you call out a few times and try that," Yang Jian said.

"Could it be that the driver is a criminal and he's hijacked us?" a girl next to him asked, somewhat frightened.

"What are you thinking? With so many people, he wouldn't dare to hijack us alone. Don't worry, I'll go and inquire about the situation," Zhang Haw said.

Seeing him like this, Yang Jian didn't urge any further. It would be good for him to check out the situation, to test the waters.

There's always one who sticks his neck out first, right?

Yang Jian didn't think much of it at first, but after hearing what he said, Zhang Haw felt strangely scared.

Could it be that someone really has hijacked the bus?

Yet, Zhang Haw still walked over, but as he reached the middle of the bus, an elderly grandmother sitting beside him suddenly stretched out her wrinkled hand and grabbed him.

He turned to look.

But he saw the old lady smile, "Young man, just sit down and relax for now. You can get off at the next stop. There's no need to ask the driver to change routes."

"Why?" Zhang Haw asked, puzzled.

Yang Jian's eyebrows twitched as he fixed his gaze on the old woman.

"I'm old and it's not easy for me to get around. This bus happens to pass right by my village, and I want to get home earlier," the old lady said.

"Then... okay," Zhang Haw thought for a moment and decided not to press the issue of changing the route.

The old lady seemed to notice Yang Jian was looking at her. She turned her head and gave him an embarrassed smile before turning away.

Chapter 303 The Deceased Driver

Seeing that Zhang Haw was actually persuaded to come back, Yang Jian had a look of bemusement on his face. This guy's stance was really not firm at all, being coaxed back with just a few words.

However...

Yang Jian looked at the old woman sitting in front of her, her eyes flickering uncertainly.

She knew something was wrong with this bus~!

The persuasion to bring Zhang Haw back seemed well-intentioned, not wanting him to keep probing further.

"Everything seems normal, no problems, bro, you're being paranoid, the driver taking a detour might be for some other reason, don't make a big deal out of it. But it is annoying to get on the wrong bus, when we stop at the next station, we'll just get off early, then you'll have to decide for yourself what to do next," Zhang Haw said.

Yang Jian replied casually, "It'll be good if we can get off smoothly."

He had just tried, and with his own abilities, he wasn't able to get off the bus. These ordinary people probably hadn't realized how weird this bus was.

"What do you mean by that?" the girl who was telling ghost stories earlier looked at Yang Jian.

Yang Jian said, "Although it may sound unbelievable, I think all of us here, including the other people on the bus, seem to be out of luck, having gotten on a bus we shouldn't have. Whether the driver has really taken a detour or not I don't know, but there is indeed something very wrong with this bus, and getting off easily might not be an easy task.

As for waiting for the bus to stop, who knows how long that would be, it's been over twenty minutes since the last station and we haven't progressed."

"Moreover, now that we've left the city area, the bus obviously can't just stop at the side of the road."

"Of course, you can think I'm being paranoid, you don't have to believe what I'm saying. If something really goes wrong later, it's not certain that I won't be able to help you, whether you believe it or not doesn't make much of a difference."

"Bro, you think this is some kind of ghost story? Stop scaring people, you can't scare me," Zhang Haw curled his lip in disbelief at Yang Jian's words.

He believed in ghosts, but he didn't believe that with so many people in a car, they would encounter one.

"Zhang Haw, you should ask the driver again, see how long until we stop," the girl who had just spoken couldn't help feeling uneasy.

"I think you all are a bit crazy, it's just a wrong bus, what's there to freak out about? People who don't know would think we're on an airplane about to crash. Everyone's heard too many ghost stories."

Another young man nearby couldn't stand it any longer, thinking Yang Jian was a little off his rocker, perhaps a person suffering from delusions, ignoring his words, he immediately called out, "Driver, you've taken the wrong route, please pull over to the side, we need to get off."

With this shout, many people turned their heads in the bus and looked at him in unison.

But after his call, there was no response to his question, the driver at the front remained silent at this time.

"Driver?"

He called out a few times in a row, but the driver in front still didn't answer, as if he couldn't hear this person's inquiries.

"Damn, what's going on? The driver can't be mute now, can he? I'll go check it out," the young man said angrily, walking forward.

Different from before, when he walked past the old woman, she didn't try to stop him.

"Hey, I'm talking to you," the youth approached with a hint of anger, walked up to the area of the driver's seat, and pushed the driver who was at the wheel.

But this push was significant.

The driver, who had been at the wheel all this time, collapsed limply, his cap falling to the ground, revealing a rigid, pale face heavy with the pallor of death, and his slightly open mouth emitted a foul stench. It was clear the driver had been dead for at least a day, now nothing but a corpse starting to decay.

"Ah~!" The youth was so frightened his face turned white, and he collapsed on the ground.

"Zheng Wen Yao, what happened?" his companion Zhang Haw hurriedly asked.

"Driver, the driver, he, he seems to be dead..." The young man named Zheng Wen Yao was so scared at this moment that he was nearly crying, pointing at the driver's body on the ground, his whole body trembling with fear.

Ordinary people are afraid of the dead, which is very normal.

But what should be more frightening is the eerie events happening behind the death.

The driver had been dead for over a day, so who had been driving the bus before? It's inconceivable that a corpse could drive a car.

At this moment.

Although there was no one driving at the bus's helm anymore, the steering wheel was subtly turning as the bus made its way around bends, as if an invisible person was controlling the vehicle, driving this bus towards an unknown destination.

Yang Jian paid no attention to the bus driver's corpse, instead, he focused on the driver's seat and witnessed such a strange scene.

"If it's not the driver at the helm, then it could be... a ghost, or rather, it's not a ghost driving, the whole bus is a ghost; or the ghost driver controlling the vehicle isn't actually sitting at the helm, but has disguised himself as a person and blended in with all the passengers."

His eyes narrowed, and with this small amount of information, he immediately conceived three possibilities.

The first possibility was the least likely, the second and third were the most.

However, after the previous attempts, Yang Jian's heart was leaning towards the second possibility: the bus itself was a ghost.

This would also explain why he could not get off the bus.

Unless it stopped and opened its doors voluntarily.

But when Yang Jian sensed that something was amiss, he didn't get the chance to wait for the bus to stop and open its doors.

And the sight of the driver's body lying in the bus directly triggered panic among the people.

It was not just Zhang Haw, Zheng Yaowen, and the other five passengers who were in panic; the other passengers also started to get hysterical, realizing the gravity of the situation. This was no longer just a simple matter of the bus taking the wrong route.

"Quick, call the police, call an ambulance, the driver must have had a heart attack," someone shouted anxiously.

What use is calling an ambulance when the driver's body is already stinking?

"Quickly, get control of the bus, stop the vehicle, don't let it go out of control, or we're all done for," said another person, who was relatively calm in his response.

An unfamiliar middle-aged man took the initiative and rushed forward, seemingly ready to showcase the skill of an experienced driver, took control of the steering wheel, pressed lightly on the brakes, preparing to bring the bus to a stop.

However, just as the middle-aged man began to manipulate the controls, he suddenly realized.

The bus hadn't been started at all; the various indicators on the dashboard were off.

Even though the vehicle wasn't running, the bus was still moving at a speed of fifty miles an hour on the highway, showing no intention of stopping after losing power.

After a few attempts, the middle-aged man who was trying to drive discovered that the brake and steering wheel were non-responsive.

The whole vehicle was completely out of control.

"How can this be?"

He was flabbergasted on the spot, having never encountered such an uncanny event in his life.

Chapter 304 The Passenger in the Car

As the bus driver's corpse fell to the ground, the entire bus went out of control, and it was only then that the passengers realized the gravity of the situation. It seemed that this was no longer a simple matter of the driver taking a detour on his own, because this bus was truly bizarre.

Though the vehicle's engine was not running, it was still eerily moving along the road with no sign of slowing down.

Once everyone grasped the situation, panic erupted instantly.

Some frantically made phone calls for help, others tried to open windows to see if they could jump out and leave, while some were petrified with fear.

Those who called did get through and were told that help was on the way, but under these circumstances, not only was it unlikely that they would be reached in time, but also they might not even live to see the rescue.

This was a haunted and mysterious bus.

Xu Feng, a local ghost handler who had previously been on this bus, had disappeared on it, which meant something very clear to Yang Jian.

Something extremely terrifying was bound to happen on this bus, it was just that, for now, the urgent and bizarre events had not yet occurred.

"Damn it, the windows won't open, they're all sealed shut."

"The door won't budge either, there's a problem with this bus. It can't really be haunted, can it?"

"I've already reported it to the police, they say they're ready to rescue us, told us to wait."

The passengers all began to look for ways to save themselves, but the results were not very good. Aside from still being able to contact the outside world through phones, all other means had failed on this bus.

Seeing the panic-stricken state of the other passengers, Zheng Yaowen was also scared out of his wits. "Zhang Haw, what do we do now? We must have run into something evil."

With a gloomy face, Zhang Haw said, "How would I know what to do? This is my first time encountering something like this. Anyway, let's try to get out of here. If it really is haunted, then we're in big trouble. I don't want to die in Dachang City like my friend did. I've always told you that ghosts really exist, but you just wouldn't believe me,"

"But, how do we get off this bus?" Zheng Yaowen asked, stuttering, clearly panicked.

At this moment, Yang Jian ignored the panic of the other passengers and chose to leave his seat, standing up and walking toward the driver's area.

It had already been confirmed earlier that nothing happened when Zheng Yaowen pushed the driver's corpse, which meant that this action did not touch upon some taboo, and moving around the cabin was safe for the time being. Since it was safe, it was necessary to investigate the surroundings.

Passing through the frantic crowd, he approached the driver's seat to check it out.

Someone was still trying to control the steering wheel to stop the bus, but it was utterly useless.

Yang Jian looked around but found no clues, nor did he discover any patterns. It seemed at this point that there was no solution to the situation. He felt like the passengers were locked in a cell with no way out, unless, perhaps, the bus doors opened automatically at some point.

"What in the world is this bus? It's one thing for ordinary people to be trapped here, but even I am stuck."

He now had no better option than to wait for some kind of change in circumstance.

And just as he turned around to go back to his seat, suddenly,

he saw a black electronic display screen hanging in the middle of the bus. Despite the vehicle not being started and the screen not being electrified, it was still lit up. The red lights formed a line of words that floated across: Current number of passengers: 2.

"Passenger number 2?"

Yang Jian paused for a moment, then scanned the more than twenty people in the bus. No matter how he looked at it, it didn't seem like there were only two passengers. Had they forgotten to add a zero at the end?

"Perhaps this 'passenger number 2' doesn't refer to people..."

For some reason, this thought suddenly crossed his mind.

If the number on the display didn't refer to the number of people, it was very likely referring to the number of ghosts on the bus. The light displayed 'passengers', but these passengers didn't necessarily have to be living to count, perhaps the dead were included as well.

At that thought,

Yang Jian couldn't help but feel a chill.

Were there two ghosts mingling among the more than twenty passengers?

No.

It wasn't that the ghosts were mingling among the passengers; instead, the twenty passengers had stumbled into the midst of ghosts. Perhaps this bus wasn't meant for the living at all, and the others had just blundered onto a ghost bus.

Taking another look at the passengers, this time Yang Jian scrutinized them with extra care, trying to identify any unnatural beings.

He immediately locked onto several suspicious individuals.

The driver's body lay on the ground, ignored by everyone.

The old country woman sitting in the front, she who had previously spoken up to warn Zhang Haw.

And the very last row of the bus.

Ever since getting on the bus, two passengers who had remained silent, sat still as if nothing were amiss.

One of them wore a trench coat, arms crossed and head bowed, unrecognizable, seated on the far right; the other wore a duckbill cap and a long-sleeved shirt, also with head bowed, leaning against the window.

Sitting apart, motionless, they resembled stiff corpses, emanating an eerie, inexplicable aura.

"Could the two passengers on the bus refer to them?" Yang Jian couldn't help but make such a guess.

If, as he surmised, those two passengers were ghosts, then these two people were very likely the ones.

He wasn't quite certain.

Moreover, even if he were certain about the identity of the ghosts, Yang Jian didn't see how it would be of any use; it seemed unrelated to him.

Even if there were two ghosts on the bus, as long as they didn't start killing people on their own, the effect was minimal.

The real concern was how to find a way to get off the bus and leave this place.

Yang Jian had no intentions of being trapped here indefinitely.

"This paranormal event is completely different from the ones before, a different kind altogether. In previous events, like the Hungry Ghost incident, you only had to deal with fierce spirits, and as long as you could contain them, the event would end. But in this case, you don't need to confront any fierce spirits, just think about how to leave," he reflected.

His head began to ache.

If before it was like a game of fighting a boss, now it had become a game of room escape.

The danger was less intense, but the difficulty had increased.

"Thinking things through has never been my strong suit, that's Wang Xiaoming's area of expertise. I'm better at direct confrontations, finding solutions through contact with fierce spirits, not by sitting here overthinking," Yang Jian inwardly sighed with a sense of powerlessness. His ability to deduce was limited; with nothing happening, it was hard to conjecture anything from thin air.

He settled back into his seat.

At that moment he felt his phone vibrate.

Checking it, Yang Jian saw a text from Chong Xiong of the Casework Bureau. He glanced at it, confirming the good news that the handwriting from before had been analyzed, then turned it off. Now wasn't the time to be distracted by the Ghost Cabinet; he needed to figure out a way to deal with the situation at hand.

The panic within the bus continued and had gradually evolved into an indescribable fear.

More people started to believe they had encountered evil spirits, that there was something wrong with the bus.

"Brother, you were so quick to notice something was off about this bus, you must have a way to leave here now," Zhang Haw said after regaining some composure from the earlier panic and noticing Yang Jian, who had warned him.

Even though they didn't know each other, he felt this person knew more than he did.

Yang Jian said, "Didn't I mention earlier? Don't be fooled by my calm demeanor, I'm actually panicking, and if I had a way I wouldn't just be sitting here. I want to leave even more than you do."

He shook his head, indicating he couldn't think of any good plan.

"We can only continue waiting, waiting for the bus to stop on its own as there seems to be no other way to leave right now," he added.

"No, can't be, doesn't that mean we're in great danger? Who knows how long we'll have to stay in this damned place," Zhang Haw replied.

Yang Jian responded, "Weren't you the one who said being single for over twenty years meant you weren't afraid of any ghost? And now you're afraid of taking a bus?"

"I was just bragging then, how can that count?" said Zhang Haw.

However, while the two were talking, the eerie bus, which hadn't stopped for over half an hour, suddenly began to slow down and gradually pulled over to the side of the road.

It seemed as if the bus was about to make a stop.

"Hm?"

Yang Jian's expression instantly became stern; he stopped the idle chatter with Zhang Haw and got ready to disembark.

If the door opened and nothing unexpected happened, his Ghost Domain would be able to extend outward, allowing him to leave the bus safely.

Chapter 305 Disembark at the Stop

The bus was about to pull into the station and stop.

Passengers aboard this eerie bus had already been in a state of panic, terrified beyond belief, all thinking about how to escape this place. But after a series of attempts, they realized they were stuck on the bus, at the mercy of the uncontrollable vehicle taking them to an unknown destination.

But now, they noticed that the bus was actually slowing down to stop.

No one was pressing the brake or controlling the steering wheel; the bus seemed to be stopping on its own as if self-driven.

"The bus is stopping," someone shouted nervously.

Everyone prepared to dash off the bus in unison.

Although the current situation was incomprehensible, as normal people confronted with such a bizarre event, the first impulse to think of escaping was undeniably correct.

"Is it really that easy to get off?" Unlike the others, Yang Jian's heart was filled with concern at this moment.

With the sound of the brakes becoming clear,

the bus finally stopped after travelling for so long.

The next moment,

the front door opened.

A chill, along with a breeze from outside, blew into the bus, instantly dropping the temperature several degrees, causing an involuntary shiver.

Outside, it was dim.

Dead silent, as if they had arrived in an unknown and mysterious world that was definitely not a bus stop beside the road.

"Hurry up and get off."

The passengers started to rush out frantically, eager to distance themselves as much as possible from the frightening bus.

Yang Jian frowned, extending his Ghost Domain cautiously out of the bus through the front door, making a tentative exploration.

Because he sensed that the world outside the bus was no longer the normal world they knew.

But compared to his wariness, the other people showed no hesitation whatsoever. In the blink of an eye, the other passengers had all rushed out the bus. Zhang Haw, Zheng Yaowen, and the three girls who were travelling with them also squeezed frantically toward the door. In a short while, most of the passengers had disembarked.

"The situation outside seems a bit abnormal."

Although Yang Jian got up to follow at the end, he was not too hurried, as he could exit immediately through the Ghost Domain if he wished.

Only, the environment outside the bus was even more eerie.

"Where is this?" A middle-aged man who had gotten off earlier was dumbfounded.

This was not a bus stop at all, but an intersection with a utility pole next to it. Hanging on the pole was a sign, seemingly a makeshift bus stop common in rural areas.

But what was strange was not the stop; since there was a stop, there should also be some kind of town or village nearby, right?

Yet, as far as the eye could see, there was nothing but a desolate forest, looking utterly unfamiliar.

Seeing that the others disembarked without incident, Yang Jian too decided to get off and take a look.

At that moment, suddenly, a voice came from the very back seat of the bus: "I think you must be one of the international ghost hunters. Since you're a ghost hunter, you should be somewhat cautious. I advise you it's better not to get off. Once you exit through the front door, who knows what kind of ghostly place you'll enter. Anyway, I haven't seen a single person come back alive these days."

"Who?"

Yang Jian turned around sharply, his gaze fixing on the person who had been sleeping in the corner while wearing a trench coat.

"Who I am is not important. Since you're on the bus, our predicaments are the same. It's easy to get on this Ghost Car, but hard to disembark. You'll find out soon enough. If you don't believe me, go ahead and try getting off," the man at the back of the bus said coldly.

"What do you know?" Yang Jian asked without making any rash moves.

The man said, "I don't know much. All I know is that once this bus passes six o'clock, it will pick up a fierce ghost at every stop. Sometimes it's one, sometimes it's two. You've seen that electronic display, haven't you? It's not recording the number of living people; it's tracking the number of fierce ghosts in the bus."

"So far, the number of ghosts in the bus... is 1. Lucky for us, that ghost got off."

The person looked up slightly, noticing the passenger count on the electronic screen: 1.

That was one less from the previous 2.

Upon hearing this, Yang Jian's expression turned serious, as this man's words coincided with his own previous speculations.

He too had guessed that the passenger count on this bus, did not refer to the number of living people, but to the ghosts.

Out of the more than twenty passengers, there were two ghosts.

"How can you be sure that this is the number of ghosts?" Yang Jian asked.

The man chuckled, "If you can survive here for seven or eight days, you'd know this too."

"Seven or eight days? Are you Xu Feng, the spirit medium who disappeared from Xiaochun City?" Yang Jian's expression shifted slightly as he immediately spoke.

"Oh, you know me?"

Xu Feng raised his head slightly, his complexion haggard, his eyes bloodshot as if he hadn't slept for several days, desperately hanging on until now. His pallor indicated he might suddenly drop dead at any moment.

Yang Jian said, "You've been missing for a long time. The headquarters wanted to find you, and the result was they had me track down your signal to this bus."

After thinking for a moment, Xu Feng replied, "Then you're quite unlucky. At the time of the incident, I accidentally lost my satellite-locating mobile phone on the bus. Although I tried to find it afterward, I didn't succeed. If you say the phone signal is still on the bus, that complicates things."

"Are you suggesting that your phone ended up in the hands of some ghost?" Yang Jian furrowed his brow deeply.

Xu Feng was on the bus, but his phone was not, yet the phone signal was.

So, where could the phone be?

"There's that possibility, and a high one at that. As far as I can see, there's nowhere on this bus to hide anything." Xu Feng's tired eyes moved: "The bus is about to leave. You decide whether to get on or off."

"You know the departure time?" asked Yang Jian.

Xu Feng replied, "I've observed for quite some time. It's always five minutes, not a second more or less. After five minutes, regardless of whether someone disembarks, the bus will set off again with however many people are inside—at least that's how it seems to me."

"You've been here so long and yet have found no way to leave?" Yang Jian said, "Before, when you were in Xiaochun City, you had opportunities to get off the bus."

He didn't fully trust Xu Feng's words, but neither did he completely discount them—he just felt there were many loopholes in Xu Feng's story.

If Xu Feng had been here for seven or eight days, it wasn't possible that he hadn't found a chance to leave. How could he have been trapped here all this time?

"I've said before, it's not that easy to disembark. Disembarking requires a certain opportunity, which I have yet to encounter," said Xu Feng.

An opportunity?

What kind of opportunity?

More doubts surfaced in Yang Jian's mind.

What seemed a simple matter had become increasingly complicated with Xu Feng's words.

Originally, he was planning to get off the bus, but now he hesitated.

However, at that moment, from the dim world outside, a series of cries suddenly echoed. The crying was eerie, as if coming from deep within ancient woods, giving off a ghostly sensation.

Yang Jian's face changed. He still didn't choose to disembark immediately, but stood by the bus door, looking in the direction from which the crying originated.

In the distance, in the dim wasteland, he could vaguely make out a grave.

There was no tombstone in front of the grave. A person in white mourning clothes, unidentifiable as male or female, knelt before the grave, their body stiff, motionless, and the cry, ambiguous in gender, emanated from them.

"When did that grave appear? I didn't see it when I looked outside before," Yang Jian's gaze flickered.

Previously, he had paid attention to the outside, and although it was odd, it hadn't seemed abnormal.

Yet no sooner had the crying started than many of the passengers who had disembarked began to cry one after another, following the sound.

Their volume grew from soft to loud, gradually merging with the cry.

Then the passengers' crying stopped. They knelt on the ground, facing the direction of the grave, motionless.

"You, what's wrong with you?" someone asked, trembling in fear, pushing them.

But those kneeling passengers collapsed to the ground, lifeless, their cold faces streaked with tears, their expressions sorrowful, their features rigid.

Dead, they were dead~!

And not just one—several people had started crying on the ground and then abruptly died there, their bodies motionless.

"Run, run! It's haunted!" someone screamed hysterically, starting to scatter in all directions, like a headless fly.

Zhang Haw, Zheng Yaowen, and several others were also terrified and tried to flee.

Yang Jian glanced at them, and, in consideration of their previous conversation, offered a piece of advice: "If you don't want to die, get back on the bus. The world out there belongs to the ghosts. Out there, no matter where you run, there's only the path of death."

Now he understood.

Why Xu Feng said getting off was very dangerous.

It was a ghost's world, akin to the Ghost Domain, a place where stepping into meant facing a direct assault from a ghost.

Surviving was difficult.

Moreover, whether the world outside was the Ghost Domain as Yang Jian knew it or not, it might be an even more terrifying place of supernatural phenomena.

Once you set foot there, once the bus left, relying solely on oneself, it was most likely very difficult to leave alive.