

Revival 341

Chapter 341 - 340 Covered by a Face

The appearance of Ghost Face, the disappearance of Tong Qian, and the ringing of her satellite-located cell phone.

Yang Jian had evidence to believe that Tong Qian was very likely already dead, as the chances of surviving after vanishing in a supernatural event were very slim.

Despite such thoughts, he did not target his suspicions on the female receptionist.

But now...

Ghost Shadow had invaded the female receptionist's body, taking direct control over it. Unless something unexpected happened, this female receptionist would no longer be capable of any action, even if she were a ghost.

The cell phone's ringtone was still sounding.

Liu Xiaoyu didn't ask Tong Qian's communicator to turn off the music.

But the sound didn't come from the counter.

Upon entering, Yang Jian found that the music actually came from within the female receptionist's body.

To be exact... from inside her stomach.

The ringtone, muffled by the body, sounded somewhat dull and was easy to pinpoint without being deliberately concealed.

Yang Jian looked, a ghost eye opened in his palm, and then he thrust his hand forward, piercing through the female receptionist's body and grabbed hold of the source of the ringing.

His hand retracted.

Along with stomach acid, the slightly disgusting satellite-located cell phone was retrieved by him.

"This is too disgusting, the phone actually inside her stomach, who would do such a thing?" Xiong Wenwen said with disgust after seeing it.

Yang Jian said, "It should be that Tong Qian swallowed it herself before she died. She knew clearly that this was the only way to preserve the satellite-located cell phone. Otherwise, if the phone was lost in the hotel and found by that ghost, it might lead to a phone scam, luring the people who later entered the hotel to their deaths."

"But is she really Tong Qian?" Xiong Wenwen was a bit skeptical, standing far away, not daring to approach.

Yang Jian didn't immediately answer, but instead looked at the cell phone of Tong Qian. It wasn't damaged, but he felt a warmth from the phone.

Under normal circumstances, Tong Qian had been out of contact for three days.

If Tong Qian had died at that time, her corpse should be cold by now and wouldn't possibly still have body temperature.

Could this female receptionist not be Tong Qian?

That seemed unlikely, given the current experience and evidence, his conjecture shouldn't be wrong.

Looking at the face with a smile, but with a somewhat stiff expression.

Yang Jian pondered for a moment and then reached out to touch it.

This beautiful face had a peculiar feel to it, similar to when he had touched human skin paper previously: it had the softness of human skin but also a strange chill and a foreboding aura.

Moreover, when he pressed down slightly with his fingers.

The cheeks didn't rebound as normal flesh would but instead caved in, leaving the indentations of three fingertips.

As his palm slid over, the once beautiful face of this female receptionist twisted and became horribly disfigured.

"Just as I thought," Yang Jian's expression changed and he immediately grasped the face and yanked it downward.

He didn't rely on brute force to tear it off but instead used the power of Ghost Shadow.

Ghost Shadow possessed the ability to piece together the corpses of fierce ghosts.

The next moment.

He tore the human face off, revealing a bloodied, feminine human skin mask in his hand.

This human skin mask had eyebrows and eyes, and its features were remarkably three-dimensional. From the front, it looked indistinguishable from a real face, perfectly human.

But behind this human skin mask was another woman's face.

Despite the blood remnants, it was still very clear, this face was... Tong Qian.

"So it really is Tong Qian," Xiong Wenwen exclaimed in shock, nearly jumping: "There was another face on her face, just like you said, her face had been swapped by a ghost."

Yang Jian immediately withdrew Ghost Shadow, releasing his control over Tong Qian.

And as the human skin mask was torn off, coupled with the withdrawal of Ghost Shadow, Tong Qian's body, now like a lifeless corpse, slumped and fell to the ground.

"Contact that Zhang Gao, call for an ambulance. I just noticed she still has some life signs; if we're in luck, we might be able to save her. After all, she's only been missing for three days, and her body hasn't suffered much damage," said Yang Jian, supporting the fallen Tong Qian and immediately dictating.

Xiong Wenwen immediately began to dial Zhang Gao's number.

Yang Jian looked at the unconscious Tong Qian and checked her physical condition.

Her breath was very faint, but her heartbeat was still there.

Her whole body was like it was in hibernation, in a very peculiar state, and he, not being a professional, couldn't determine whether Tong Qian could recover from this condition.

"If her own face is still on her body, then the Ghost Face should have disappeared," Yang Jian's gaze shifted back to the top of Tong Qian's head.

Her hair was coiled on top of her head, covering the crown thoroughly.

Yang Jian uncovered it and was immediately hit with a pungent smell of blood. The top of her head was a mess of blood and flesh, as if the scalp was ripped off forcefully, leaving an empty patch.

"As expected, the Ghost Face was taken, but why did the ghost only take Tong Qian's Ghost Face and not attack her? Under normal circumstances, without the Ghost Face, Tong Qian should undoubtedly be dead."

Without the Ghost Face, Tong Qian was just a normal person; how could she survive in a supernatural event?

There was only one possibility unless at that time Tong Qian didn't meet the ghost's conditions for attack, or that the ghost could only take one face per person.

Having taken the Ghost Face, it didn't take her other face, and so she survived.

"It's not certain, there's too little information. Unless Tong Qian wakes up and I ask her myself, all of this is just meaningless speculation," Yang Jian murmured.

"The ambulance is here, right outside the hotel," Xiong Wenwen informed him at that moment.

Yang Jian said, "Let's leave this place first. If Tong Qian can be saved, this could be a good beginning for the incident."

After saying that, he immediately picked up the unconscious Tong Qian and quickly left the Caesar Hotel with Xiong Wenwen.

The lower level of the supernatural event was its only advantage. Unlike the previous Hungry Ghost incident in Dachang City, which formed a Ghost Domain lockdown, ordinary people could leave the area of the supernatural event without worry of being trapped, provided that they didn't act recklessly and decide to stay.

After walking a few hundred meters and crossing several police lines, Yang Jian saw Zhang Gao and the swiftly-arrived ambulance and some emergency medical personnel.

"I heard from Xiong Wenwen that you needed an ambulance. What happened inside?" Zhang Gao couldn't help but ask curiously.

"The situation is more complex than imagined. Let's save the person first," Yang Jian said as he placed Tong Qian on the stretcher, and the medical personnel immediately gathered around.

"The heart rate is too low, prepare to resuscitate."

"The patient has lost too much blood, start transfusion immediately."

"The patient has internal bleeding, multiple fractures throughout the body, be careful when lifting, and also notify the hospital to be ready for surgery at any time"

The accompanying paramedics quickly assessed her and then undertook some emergency measures.

"Is she... Tong Qian?" Zhang Gao glanced at her and was shocked as well.

The Tong Qian who had been missing for three days was miraculously rescued by Yang Jian.

"If she wakes up, inform me immediately, as I need to ask her about some matters. If she's dead, then never mind," Yang Jian said as the ambulance took Tong Qian away.

Zhang Gao said, "She should be okay, right? After all, I've notified the best doctors in Z City and prepared the best medical facilities."

"Not necessarily. Her condition is very special, after all, she was attacked by a ghost. No one can say for sure what might happen to her body," Yang Jian replied.

Although he could use the Ghost Shadow to patch up the body, it could only heal external injuries, and there was no way he could cure some of the special damages caused by ghosts.

"What about Guo Fan and Feng Quan, the two of them? Why didn't they come out with you?" Zhang Gao asked softly.

Yang Jian replied, "They have their tasks and aren't on the same line as me. Moreover, the incident in Z City isn't easy to deal with. I thought it could be resolved in a day, but now it seems we must take it slowly. Still, finding Tong Qian is a gain, I guess. Xiong Wenwen, our task for today is over. We'll see again tomorrow."

"Not going back to the hotel?" Xiong Wenwen asked.

"Not for today. The Ghost Face has already been taken, and my plan to stop it has failed. There's no significant point in going back now," Yang Jian said. "Let's find a place to rest."

"That's good, I was almost scared to death earlier," Xiong Wenwen breathed a sigh of relief.

Zhang Gao immediately said, "We have prepared accommodations here, although they're a bit simple, but still passable."

"Then I'll trouble you," Yang Jian responded.

Soon, he and Xiong Wenwen temporarily retreated from the Caesar Hotel to devise a new plan and also to wait and see whether Tong Qian might wake up.

However, as Yang Jian and his party left, Feng Quan and Guo Fan were still in the hotel.

By that time, the sky was gradually growing dim.

Chapter 342 - 341 Action on the Fourth Floor

The nights in City Z seemed somewhat deserted.

Perhaps it was because the ghost stories had gradually started to spread throughout the city.

Yang Jian temporarily chose to retreat and rest with Xiong Wenwen in a tent set up on the outskirts of the city, considering safety, so it was necessary to stay away from the Caesar Hotel.

But a city could not possibly evacuate within a short period, so except for some blocked areas, most places still maintained their normal routine, with people eating when they needed to eat and working when it was time to work.

However, as the events brewed, this calm would soon be shattered.

The Ghost Hunters Headquarters had surely realized this, otherwise, they wouldn't have dispatched top-tier specialists like Feng Quan, Guo Fan, and Yang Jian so quickly to support Tong Qian. They had even sought external assistance to ensure the swift resolution of the events and stabilize the situation in City Z.

Yet, above the nocturnal city, those pale Dead Man's Heads still floated in the sky.

Though they were invisible at night, that did not mean these things didn't exist.

This happened in a residential district of City Z.

Most residents had already shut their doors and windows and drawn their curtains before it had gotten completely dark, turning on all the lights in the living room.

The rumors of haunting were no longer just urban legends; they had become things happening around them. The residents of City Z weren't foolish—information channels were well-developed now; various social media circles were abuzz, and pictures of the Dead Man's Head balloons had spread far and wide.

They simply didn't understand the true danger behind the events, otherwise, the people of City Z would have fled the city long ago.

Of course, there were still some skeptics who refused to believe in a supernatural occurrence.

Not everyone could easily reconstruct their worldview.

After all, the situation was still within a controllable range, with no large-scale casualties. Or perhaps, the events had not yet occurred close to them.

Dai Yong, who lived in this district, was among the skeptics.

In his early thirties with a moderate level of success in his career, he couldn't be considered a successful person at his age, but he was nevertheless a middle-class individual.

Yet today, Dai Yong was not in good spirits because the rumors of the Dead Man's Head balloons in City Z had affected his work, causing his income to drop significantly.

"What Dead Man's Head balloons, only those old men and women could be fooled by such things. What era are we living in to believe this? If there really were ghosts, I'd like to see one. I've grown up without ever seeing such a thing," grumbled Dai Yong as he opened the door.

Upon entering, he saw his five-year-old son sitting on the sofa watching cartoons.

"Lele, where's Mom? Why are you the only one home?" Dai Yong looked around the house but couldn't find his wife.

While watching cartoons, Lele replied, "Mom went downstairs to play mahjong. Daddy, I'm hungry."

"That irresponsible woman, she's okay leaving the child at home alone. It's so late and she hasn't even made dinner," said Dai Yong, a bit annoyed.

Angry as he was, he couldn't just ignore his hungry child, so he had to go to the kitchen to cook a couple of dishes for dinner.

"Ding Dong~!"

Just as Dai Yong was cooking, a text message arrived: Dai Yong, are you still home? Don't wait, get out of City Z now, it's haunted there.

...

"I'm cooking for the kid; what's all this fuss about? And when did you start joining in on this kind of panic?" Dai Yong replied to his friend's message.

"It's true. I know someone who works in the department, and today, three helicopters flew into Z City. Do you know who they brought? It's personnel from the most secretive ghost-catching department, and four of them arrived at once. Something big must be going down in Z City. I've already slipped away, and now I'm sending you this message from a rest stop on the highway."

"Damn, you really ran away? Quit your job? Planning to starve?" Dai Yong replied again.

"Work won't matter if I'm dead. Don't disbelieve me; I have evidence. My friend risked imprisonment to secretly take this photo." A photo followed this message.

It was of a young man with a child about ten years old just getting out of a car, with the highly-secured Caesar Hotel in the background.

"See that? The place they're going to is the Caesar Hotel where you had your wedding. Your house isn't too far from there, right? I'm certain that hotel is definitely haunted. Did you see all those police tapes? There are armed special personnel patrolling around."

"You take one photo and claim people are ghost hunters - why not include a Taoist priest to make it look more convincing? Besides, do the people in the photo even add up to thirty years old?" Dai Yong chuckled and replied with a voice message.

His friend, now anxious, said: "Don't disbelieve. This guy's been transferred from Dachang City. I don't have the specifics, but there have been ghost rumors in Dachang City lately too. The fact that he has been transferred here says a lot. Run for it. Not many know about this yet; I've only told a few relatives and friends."

Though Yang Jian's actions and work are highly confidential, there's no such thing as a wall that doesn't leak as long as people are involved.

After all, those involved in related work have families. Knowing that supernatural events are happening, they risk punishment to get the word out in any way possible. Word spreads from one person to ten, from ten to a hundred—secretly, quite a few are aware of the ghostly disturbances at the Caesar Hotel.

This isn't the Hungry Ghost incident; the whole city hasn't been locked down. So, those in the know are naturally fleeing quickly.

"Okay, enough, I'm going to eat. We'll chat next time." Dai Yong brushed it off and set down the phone.

He'd heard such rumours enough. If he was going to believe them, he already would have—no matter if a friend came to tell him in person, he wouldn't change his stance unless he saw it with his own eyes.

But some things aren't meant to be seen, for seeing means that horror and death are about to befall you, and by then, it's all over.

"Lele, dinner's ready." Dai Yong came out of the kitchen with freshly cooked dishes.

His son, who had been watching cartoons on the living room sofa, was now nowhere to be found.

Dai Yong looked around and found Lele standing on the balcony, on tiptoes on a stool, with over half of his body leaning out of the window, which scared him into running over and grabbing him at once.

"Haven't I warned you many times? Don't climb on the window. If you're not careful, you could fall and die," he scolded angrily.

Lele pointed outside and said, "But Mommy's out there, I want to open the window to let Mommy in."

"What?"

Dai Yong was startled and glanced outside; nothing but darkness as far as he could see.

This was the eighteenth floor, a high-rise residence; it was impossible for someone to be outside.

"Lele, you must be mistaken; Mommy's not outside, she's downstairs playing mahjong. I'll call her to come back for dinner," Dai Yong said, then stood up to close the window.

But as he was closing the window, he suddenly paused.

Outside, about one or two meters away, appeared to be something floating, like a dark balloon, too unclear to discern.

However, as that dark object floated and twisted in mid-air, when it turned to face forward, illuminated by the light from inside the house, a pale woman's face came into view—it was identical to Dai Yong's wife's face.

...

No, that was his wife, still wearing those familiar earrings on her ears.

"Ah~!"

Dai Yong, a man in his thirties, was now so frightened that his face turned pale, his legs gave way, and he collapsed to the ground, his eyes filled with terror.

For there was nothing below the head, it floated like a balloon.

Was the rumor of the floating head balloon incident in Z City actually true?

However, before Dai Yong's mind could process this, a gust of wind blew in from outside, and the floating head outside the window slowly flew in with the breeze, passing the window frame, entering the room, and seemingly intentionally drifting towards him.

Dai Yong, in his fear, wanted to grab his son and flee, to leave this place, to leave this city.

But when he turned to his son, he found that the boy was just standing there, not knowing better.

His neck had no head, also like a balloon, it had left the neck and risen up.

Despair, and terror caused Dai Yong to let out a devastated scream.

However, what happened to his family was not an isolated case; the horror in Z City continued to brew, and this was just one of many.

Inside the Kaiser Hotel, suspected to be the source of the incidents.

Fourth floor.

Feng Quan was smoking and resting, leaning against the wall with a frown, his hands trembling slightly, whether due to nervousness or fear.

"Haven't found a way out yet?" He took a deep drag of his cigarette and said the words.

With a dark expression, Guo Fan walked back, "No, we've been lost for four hours since we came in, constantly walking in circles in this hallway. It feels like it will never end. We might have entered a special kind of Ghost Domain, and it's very difficult to leave by simply walking."

"Too bad Yang Jian took Xiong Wenwen to the second floor to investigate. If we worked together, we definitely wouldn't be trapped. His code name is 'Ghost Eye' Yang Jian; he's a player when it comes to Ghost Domains," Feng Quan said with a headache, "If we can't find a way out by dawn, we should ask for Yang Jian's help."

He wasn't afraid of the Ghost Domain; he was afraid of being trapped without escape.

"If I had the Ghost Candle, I wouldn't need to rely on some unfathomable kid," Guo Fan said.

Feng Quan shook his head, "Yang Jian isn't that simple. He's experienced the most top-notch supernatural events, he's a very unusual person. How should I put it, because he started young, he's very malleable. After all, he was lucky at the beginning, mastering the use of the Ghost Eye, which can harness the Ghost Domain, like Li Jun, he has huge potential.

If this incident in Z City is resolved by him, the selection for team leader is almost a sure thing for him."

"Since when did you start speaking for him?" Guo Fan interjected.

"I only differ with him in ideology. I really don't like his personality; he's too selfish. A typical self-centered mentality, afraid of death and interested only in profit, concerned only with his own patch of land and indifferent to everything else. Although such people have a high survival rate, I despise them, but I have to admire his abilities," Feng Quan shared his opinion of Yang Jian.

"If his abilities were mine, once I became the team leader, I would change the world and then end this supernatural era, restoring peace to the entire world. That's what a man ought to do."

Feng Quan revealed his dreams and ambitions.

Guo Fan looked at him and remained silent, for he felt that Feng Quan's words were too beautiful, so beautiful that they seemed somewhat hypocritical. On the other hand, Yang Jian seemed to him to live a more realistic life, living only for himself, just like himself.

Because that was how he was too.

Resolve supernatural incidents, earn commendations, get promoted, live a little longer—only then could one enjoy the delights that come with money and power.

"Creak... bang~!"

But just then, the sudden sound of a door opening and then closing arose.

Although the sound wasn't loud, it clearly echoed in the hallway, causing an involuntary shiver, as every muscle tensed reflexively.

Feng Quan leaped up from the ground, his face changing color, "Did it appear?"

Earlier they had received news that the hotel was no longer inhabited by anyone; staff or guests had all been evacuated several days ago, so it was impossible for anyone to be on the fourth floor.

"It's quiet again." Guo Fan listened but found that the surroundings had become silent once more.

"Let's go and see."

Feng Quan cautiously followed the sound that had indicated a door opening, until he came to a corridor they had previously not encountered.

Ahead was a carpeted floor with a deep-red hue on both sides, lined with hotel rooms, each labeled with a room number: 1, 2, 3... and so on.

"The place up ahead shouldn't be part of this hotel," Guo Fan paused, not continuing forward.

"Why?"

Guo Fan analyzed, "The room number plates in this hotel are not hung like this. I checked before; here, the room numbers are of the type 002, 004, and so forth. There are no rooms that start with number 1."

"A supernatural site?" Feng Quan furrowed his brow.

He was not surprised; supernatural places were just like that, seemingly integrated with the surrounding environment, but certain areas would be oddly out of place, eerie and mysterious, unexplainable.

"Creak~!"

Yet at that moment, the sound of a door opening echoed again down the hallway, and the door of a room in the far distance slowly opened, but paused halfway.

The door was left ajar, letting a sliver of light spill out.

Through the half-open door, they could faintly see the room number: 31.

The two of them immediately fell silent, their gaze fixed on the door that had opened, trying to determine what, if anything, would emerge from inside.

However, nothing did.

The door remained ajar, but no one came out, yet through the partially open door, one could see as if someone was moving inside, the light shifting constantly.

"Should we go up?" Feng Quan readied himself for action because he knew that if they made contact, it was highly likely they'd encounter a ghost.

Guo Fan's expression changed, "I can't face the humiliation of being trapped here and asking Yang Jian for help tomorrow. Let's take action. With the two of us working together, we can handle it; with our abilities, we don't need to clarify the rules. If we encounter a ghost, we can immediately detain it.

After all, this ghost is rated only B-level in terms of danger, and it was only defined as A-level due to the substantial impact."

"Alright, let's act together," Feng Quan nodded in agreement right away.

Chapter 343: Visit

Night.

Yang Jian didn't sleep, but Xiong Wenwen, on the contrary, couldn't stay awake even though she was frightened today, and fell asleep on the bed quickly, after all, she was just a child.

With his current physical condition, he could maintain a state similar to hibernation for a long time without sleep or drink.

As long as the environment allowed, Yang Jian could stay alert for an extended time. After all, the problem of the ghost's revival had temporarily been solved, which gave him quite an advantage in some aspects.

“Feng Quan and Guo Fan have entered the hotel, and according to the signal, they haven’t come out. I don’t know if they can survive this incident, they better not get stuck in there, otherwise, it will only bring me big trouble.”

Yang Jian stepped out of the tent and frowned as he looked at the brightly lit Z city in the distance.

He wasn’t concerned about the two men’s lives, just worried that an accident with them might release the ghosts inside their bodies, complicating matters.

“Zhao Lei’s location is still unconfirmed, and the source of the ghost that can tamper with memories hasn’t been found. Today’s operation was indeed somewhat of a failure. If Xiong Wenwen could have predicted the identity of that ghost, everything would have been much easier. It’s only a pity that my Ghost Domain was restrained, making it impossible to keep that ghost inside for a long time, otherwise, I wouldn’t have been forced to withdraw.”

Yang Jian pondered his daytime experience at the hotel, vaguely feeling like the arrangement in the restaurant was a trap aimed at him.

Although he couldn’t be sure, he couldn’t help but suspect it.

“In the end, the lack of information is still too great. The ghost controlling Zhao Lei seems to have the intention of converging various supernatural events to increase complexity, to evade my investigations and attacks time and again. Otherwise, it wouldn’t have the confidence to stay in the hotel waiting for me, knowing full well I have the capability to imprison it,” he mused.

Indeed, Yang Jian had the ability to not fear the attacks of the memory-altering ghost, but he was concerned it would grow stronger, alter people's memories, turn them into Ghost Slaves, and use them against him.

Ordinary people or ghost masters alike could potentially be manipulated by that ghost.

"Therefore, to deal with the memory-altering ghost, I must dissect these supernatural events one by one and prevent them from intersecting with each other."

"However, such action is quite difficult, unwinding them layer by layer would be too time-consuming and energy-draining. The second method would be to confirm the ghost's location and identity, and directly work out a way to imprison it."

In his mind, he weighed the pros and cons, planning his next move.

Dealing with ghosts is a dangerous affair; even a special ghost master like Yang Jian might perish in a supernatural event.

As Yang Jian was deep in thought, suddenly, not far away, Zhang Gaoliang hurried out from another tent, rushing towards him.

"Zhang Gaoliang, running over here in the middle of the night, has something happened?" Yang Jian saw him and asked first.

Zhang Gaoliang wore an anxious expression: “The hospital called. It’s the attending physician’s report—Tong Qian’s condition is a bit tricky, and I think it’s necessary to discuss it with you.”

“Did she die?” Yang Jian asked calmly, prepared for the possibility of Tong Qian’s death.

Zhang Gaoliang said, “Her physical injuries have stabilized for the time being, which I suppose is good news. However, she still hasn’t woken up. I’m not quite sure of the details, but the hospital has notified Tong Qian’s family to prepare for the possibility of her becoming a vegetative state. After all, this isn’t a medical problem, it involves that thing.”

“A vegetative state?” Yang Jian’s expression shifted: “She can’t be woken up?”

“That seems to be the case.”

Yang Jian checked the time: “How far is the hospital from here? I’d like to see the situation myself. Whether Tong Qian can wake up safely affects my next steps. I need to ascertain her condition.”

“It’s at The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Z city, not far from here.”

“Is Xiong Wenwen safe here?” Yang Jian looked back at the tent.

“There won’t be any problems. The area is under martial law. Even though it seems quiet at night, it’s actually tight inside and loose outside. Unless permission is granted, no one is allowed to enter or exit at will. That’s the arrangement from higher up,” Zhang Gaoliang said.

Yang Jian said, “Arrange for someone to stay here and watch, no, two people. If anything happens, notify me immediately, and I will rush back.”

He was worried that Xiong Wenwen might have an accident when he was gone.

This troublesome kid could only predict the future but couldn’t protect himself. If something really happened, even if he foresaw it, with just a child’s ability, survival would be difficult. So he needed to be paired with someone like Yang Jian, who had strong ghost-controlling capabilities.

“Okay, I’ll arrange it right now.” Zhang Haw immediately notified the security personnel to protect Xiong Wenwen.

“Let’s go.”

After making sure everything was in order, Yang Jian and Zhang Gaoliang hurried to The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Dachang City is the best hospital in the city.

And to save Tong Qian, Dachang City's only international ghost controller, all sorts of medical resources naturally leaned toward this hospital. With current medical technology, as long as it wasn't an incurable disease, there was still time for life-saving interventions.

Moreover, the physical injuries Tong Qian had sustained weren't serious.

But because she was involved in a supernatural incident, she remained in a coma, with no signs of waking up.

Very soon,

Yang Jian and Zhang Gaoliang arrived at the hospital.

It too was under martial law, especially the floor where the ward was located, with security guards on rotation. Zhang Gaoliang had to show his credentials before being allowed to visit.

In a special ward,

Tong Qian was wearing a hospital gown, her head wrapped in bandages and a medical head cover, lying in bed pale-faced and unconscious.

To the side, various authoritative experts and well-known local doctors gathered, observing her condition. But seeing their furrowed brows, it was clear that the process was not going smoothly.

“Doctors, experts, how is Tong Qian doing? Can you tell me?” Yang Jian walked in and got straight to the point.

Five or six middle-aged doctors turned to look at him and were momentarily taken aback.

Zhang Gaoliang then showed his ID and said, “This is Yang Jian, Dachang City’s international ghost controller. He is in charge of this case, and we hope the doctors can cooperate with our work.”

“Hello, I am the lead doctor, Qian Zhiqiang.” One doctor stepped forward, giving Yang Jian a keen once-over.

From the doctor’s perspective, the Yang Jian in front of them was very young and in odd health, breathing heavily and with an irregular heartbeat, as if he had an illness. Yet upon shaking hands, he exuded an indefinable chill and a terrifyingly inhuman, powerful grip.

“Hello, Doctor Qian, could you tell me specifically about Tong Qian’s condition?” Yang Jian shook his hand and asked earnestly.

“The patient currently doesn’t have too many problems. Before she was brought to the hospital, she had multiple fractures, internal bleeding, and severe scalp trauma... But these are not the most critical issues. The main problem lies here.” Doctor Qian pointed to his own head.

Chapter 344: The Method of Awakening

From Doctor Qian's professional perspective, Tong Qian's condition was not severe; it was simply excessive blood loss and scalp trauma. Although there were multiple fractures, these were treatable. The only thing that left them helpless was Tong Qian's brain.

"What's wrong with her brain? Did she suffer a heavy blow?" Yang Jian pressed for details.

Doctor Qian said, "No, it's not for that reason. I've examined the patient's head and there are no particularly severe external injuries. The extensive damage to the scalp tissue did not extend to the inside of the brain. However, our hospital has used instruments to repeatedly check the patient's brain over several days. Strangely enough, no matter how we check, we can't detect the patient's brainwaves."

"Well, put simply, the patient is likely in a state of brain death. Generally, this condition would only be found in a dead person. Sorry, this description is a bit impolite, but it's the truth. Even people who have been paralytic and in a vegetative state for over a decade have continuous brainwave activity."

"Medically, death is determined when brain activity stops, also known as brain death, as mentioned before. But the patient is strange. Although she's in a state of brain death, her body is still maintaining normal physiological functions. If it weren't for this, I think I would have had to issue a death certificate by now."

"Doctor Qian, maybe the patient's brain is in a deep dormant state with very low brainwave frequency. Should we check again?" proposed another expert beside him.

Another doctor said, "We've checked several times already and can't detect a hint of brainwaves. It's an unsolved medical mystery."

Yang Jian frowned upon hearing this diagnosis.

This was not an unsolved medical mystery; it was an aftereffect of Tong Qian being attacked by a ghost.

If nothing unexpected happened, Tong Qian would likely sleep forever, until her bodily functions ceased and she died in her hospital bed.

"I've understood the rough situation now, thank you for your hard work, experts and professors. If it's possible, I would like to spend some time alone with the patient. May I trouble you to step outside for a moment?" Yang Jian suddenly requested.

"Of course, that's possible," Doctor Qian nodded in agreement.

Soon, the group of experts and professors filed out of the hospital room one after another.

They were not incompetent; they were simply powerless in the face of this peculiar situation. Surgery could only treat Tong Qian's body but not her current baffling condition.

After the others left, only Yang Jian, the liaison officer Zhang Wei, and Tong Qian on the hospital bed remained in the room.

“Yang Jian, although there is a lot I don’t know and my questions may seem foolish, do you think there’s a solution for Tong Qian’s condition?” Zhang Wei asked seriously, “Tong Qian is, after all, an international ghost controller from Z city. If there’s a way to save her, we hope you can lend a hand.”

Yang Jian glanced at him: “Some things cannot be changed by human effort, but I can only try for Tong Qian’s case. If it doesn’t work, then this is how she’ll be for life. After all, as you know, our line of work has a high mortality rate. From the day one becomes a ghost controller, their life is already on a countdown, and death can come at any time.”

“Tong Qian is like that, and so am I.”

“I understand that,” Zhang Wei nodded.

“Let me be alone for a while,” Yang Jian said.

“Then I’ll leave it to you,” Zhang Wei said earnestly, then he also left the hospital room.

Yang Jian’s gaze shifted back to Tong Qian, who was unconscious. He was not very confident about waking her up; after all, it had come to this point. However, it was worth a try, as it would be very beneficial for his future actions if Tong Qian could wake up.

But how to save her was a significant problem.

This was not something that could be done with just strength; it required a method.

“Combining the results from those experts’ tests, I can affirm that Tong Qian’s brain must be a blank slate right now. She has likely lost all her memories, which is why her brain is in a state of inactivity. The only way to save her is to retrieve her memories,” Yang Jian reasoned.

Based on his knowledge of the ghost, he came up with a conclusion.

But the memories were likely in the ghost’s possession.

The difficulty of retrieving the memories was enormous. Moreover, would the retrieved memories still be Tong Qian’s own? If the ghost had altered them, then Tong Qian might wake up as a Ghost Slave instead of her true self.

Unless... he could control the ghost and return Tong Qian’s memories to their original state.

Yang Jian’s eyes flickered as he thought of a very challenging yet perfect solution.

“This is almost an impossible task. If the ghost can change other people’s memories, how can it be controlled by an ordinary person? Even if forced to combine, it might turn out to be the ghost controlling the person, not the person controlling the ghost,” he mused.

Then, this bold hypothesis had a very serious flaw.

Not every ghost can be controlled by a person, and the difficulty of controlling one that can alter memories must be exceptionally high, making his speculation utterly impossible.

“No, with my current information and abilities, it’s indeed impossible to accomplish this. But with its help, it would be completely different,” he reflected.

Sitting next to the hospital bed, Yang Jian suddenly took out a gold box from the body bag he carried with him.

The locked box was sealed shut by welding because of certain circumstances.

But Yang Jian just had to give it a light tug to open it. With his strength, the box could be forcibly opened.

A piece of dark-brown, ancient-looking material that resembled a folded sheepskin scroll appeared before him.

Unfolded, it looked like an old piece of paper.

However, the material of the paper was human skin, which felt somewhat chilly to hold and bore blotches that exuded an ominous aura.

This was People Skin Paper.

Ever since the Hungry Ghost incident in Dachang City, Yang Jian hadn't used this thing much. It was too eerie, and he felt he couldn't control it, nor did he want to be led by the nose by it. So, it had been kept in storage. But given the significance of the event in Z city, which wasn't just a simple A-level supernatural occurrence, he decided to bring it with him.

"My name is Yang Jian. When you see this sentence, I am already dead..." On the People Skin Paper, a line of black text emerged like a watermark.

But that was all, just that one sentence—the rest was omitted as if it was concealing information or refusing to reveal more.

"Tell me, how can we save Tong Qian?" Yang Jian asked directly, foregoing any pleasantries.

This was not their first encounter.

The writing on the human skin paper began to fade gradually, even the first sentence disappeared, then it settled into a prolonged silence.

"Refusing to reveal information to me? Or have you realized you can no longer deceive me and thus changed your attitude towards me?"

Yang Jian's gaze was icy, "If that is the case, then you are of no value to me. Do you think I will keep something of no value around? Last time I could put you ten thousand meters underground, I can do the same now, and this time, I won't be retrieving you."

He opened with a threat, leaving no room to negotiate.

Dealing with such a strange entity required no mercy.

Zhao Kaiming's fate was a stark reminder to Yang Jian, who did not wish to follow the same path.

The silent human skin paper seemed to compromise once again, perhaps sensing a different attitude in Yang Jian this time.

Previously it was a bluff, but now Yang Jian truly considered discarding the thing for he still had the Ghost Cabinet as a backup.

What Yang Jian didn't know was that the existence of the Ghost Cabinet had also been revealed to him by the human skin paper.

No one knew what that implied.

Gradually, black characters appeared again on the human skin paper, as if someone were writing with invisible ink that had been there all along, just emerging at this moment.

“...On that day, I arrived in Z City with worries about a certain ghost, albeit unwillingly. I knew Zhao Lei posed a potential grave threat.”

“If I remember correctly, the supernatural event in Z City was called the Human Head Balloon incident, a terrifying curse that spared no one it touched. Yet, what concerned me at that moment was not this, but Tong Qian’s situation.”

“Ghost Face Tong Qian was attacked in Caesars Hotel, seemingly stripped of her ghost face, losing her memory, and became vegetative.”

“I should have thought of a way to save her, but then I realized it was not going to be easy. Saving Tong Qian meant finding the newspaper that belonged to her, that cursed paper that took away her memory. Perhaps overlaying it on her face again might awaken her.”

“I didn’t succeed at the time, as the newspaper was still in Caesars Hotel, still by the side of that ghost. It meant risking another venture into the hotel to search for the item, which was not a wise choice because I later realized that there was something even more terrifying than that ghost in the hotel.”

“I must not rouse it...”

The message covered the entire human skin paper and left no room for more writing, thus abruptly ended there.

Though there was some irrelevant chatter, two crucial pieces of information were revealed on the human skin paper: the newspaper that stole Tong Qian's memory and an unknown ghost presence in Caesars Hotel.

"To retrieve Tong Qian's memory, find that newspaper and cover her face with it again?" Yang Jian murmured to himself.

This was almost in line with his deduction.

However, the challenge remained: how to ascertain that Tong Qian's memory was still intact and not altered.

Yang Jian raised this issue.

The human skin paper cooperated this time, dissipating the original writing and new characters emerged: "...At that time I wasn't sure if Tong Qian's memory had been modified by the ghost. If that was the case, the person waking up after retrieving the memory for her wouldn't be Tong Qian, but an unknown personality controlled by the ghost, which is not what I wanted."

"To solve this problem, I had to find the source of that ghost, contain it, and then forcibly modify Tong Qian's memory according to my wish. But this was risky..."

The message stopped there.

“So after all this talk, we’re back to square one? I still need to deal with that ghost first,” Yang Jian felt as though he had circled back despite having an answer.

It seemed like he had an answer, when he actually didn’t.

He wanted to wake Tong Qian and gather intelligence to confront that ghost, yet to save Tong Qian, the ghost must be dealt with first, rendering the intelligence inconsequential.

The method suggested by the human skin paper turned out to be a pointless option.

“Onerous thing,” Yang Jian squinted at the human skin paper in his hand.

Indeed, interacting with this entity was an intellectual battle, not something just anyone could handle.

Otherwise, Yang Jian wouldn’t have entrusted it to Zhang Wei, asking him to pass it to Wang Xiaoming after his own death by hanging in front of the Ghost Mirror.

Among those Yang Jian had met, only Wang Xiaoming qualified to deal with the human skin paper, as anyone else would assuredly be hoodwinked to death by it.

Yet as he was deep in thought, the old writing on the skin paper vanished, and new characters surfaced.

This proactive revelation of information was very rare.

But upon seeing the new information, Yang Jian's face showed shock, and he abruptly stood up.

"...Tong Qian's situation made me realize that at that time, I was perfectly positioned to command two Ghost Faces. The conditions were somewhat stringent, but if successful, I would gain a powerful subordinate. Tong Qian, having lost her memory, was qualified to control two Ghost Faces. Once she succeeded, I could ensure her loyalty by altering her memory to my advantage."

"It all depended on whether I could contain that ghost."

...

The following line contained a special method.

Chapter 345: Breaking Free

Yang Jian stared intently at the writing on the human skin paper in his hand for a long time.

This time, the human skin paper didn't seem to hold back on revealing information, sharing more than ever before, much of which Yang Jian hadn't even asked for.

Such voluntary disclosure of information hides a terrible trap beneath it.

“The human skin paper sees Tong Qian as the bait, trying to lure me into contacting the ghost again without enough information? Does it want to use another unknown ghost in the Caesar Hotel to kill me? Or does it think I can’t defeat the ghost that can tamper with memories? Going there would be marching to my death?”

“However, this thing is good at guessing human thoughts, knowing that risks and rewards are proportional. If I succeed, according to its method I might really gain a perfect subordinate who has mastered two Ghost Faces, heh, truly insidious. The human skin paper’s approach reminds me of a story.”

The story of a hunter and a fox came to mind.

The story goes that a hunter armed with a shotgun went hunting in the mountains and encountered a fox. The hunter took a shot, but the crafty fox dodged it. The hunter shot again, and the fox dodged once more, then mocked the hunter, “If you know you can’t hit me, why do you shoot at me?”

The hunter replied, “If I miss, all I lose is a bullet, but you could lose your life.”

With that, he fired again. Panicked, the fox didn’t manage to dodge and was shot dead.

At this moment, the human skin paper is like the hunter, and Yang Jian is like the fox. He might dodge once, twice, but a single failure would mean a total loss for Yang Jian.

Unless Yang Jian decides to stop playing with the human skin paper, as long as he remains in the game, he will always be the one at a disadvantage.

But the most terrifying aspect of the human skin paper is the impeccable timing of its information leak.

It seems as though just by taking the gamble according to its suggestion, one could get a promotion, a raise, and reach the pinnacle of life.

“Resolving the ghost controlling Zhao Lei is a must, but even if the human skin paper hadn’t revealed this, I would still have sought a solution. Why is it divulging this information? Is it merely adding bait, or is there some danger and horror hidden beneath this intelligence that I don’t know about?”

Yang Jian had no doubt about the feasibility of the method.

As long as he successfully restrained that ghost, as stated, Tong Qian could indeed perfectly master two Ghost Faces and become a ghost master on the same level as him, with almost no risk since he would bear it all.

But that alone wasn’t convincing enough—Yang Jian would certainly not risk his life for a stranger, letting go of the opportunity to perfectly master the Ghost Faces.

However, that ghost could tamper with memories.

Following the method on the human skin paper, if Yang Jian succeeded, he could freely alter Tong Qian's memories, making her wake up as the personality he wanted her to be.

Although such an act was devious and despicable.

But it was undeniably tempting.

Human controlling ghosts is dangerous, but human controlling humans is not. If Tong Qian's case is successful, Yang Jian could even use this method to create his own team.

"What exactly do you want to do? Why reveal this method so actively?" What worried Yang Jian even more was the hidden intentions behind the human skin paper.

Even though the human skin paper hadn't shown any harm to him so far.

But Yang Jian knew this was only because he was careful. Once he made a mistake, the consequences would be tremendous.

As he was reflecting, Zhang Gao from outside immediately came in, "Yang Jian, Tong Qian's relatives are here to visit. Do you think you should avoid them?"

Yang Jian snapped back to reality, only then realizing he had been contemplating the human skin paper for some time. He said, "Sorry, I was just preoccupied with some thoughts. I'm finished here; let's go."

Zhang Gao nodded.

As soon as they left the ward, Yang Jian saw Tong Qian's parents and relatives who had rushed over to visit in the night. There were quite a few of them, about ten or so, big and small.

"Do you have any good ideas about Tong Qian's situation? If you need help with anything in Dachang City, just let me know, and I will do my best to assist," Zhang Gao said as they walked.

"If I need help, I will definitely ask. Right now, I haven't decided yet, but I do have a rough idea of a plan regarding Tong Qian's situation..." Yang Jian started but abruptly stopped as he seemed to sense something, his footsteps suddenly halted, then he turned to look at the group of people entering the ward one after another.

Among the visiting relatives, a middle-aged man with an ordinary appearance blended into the crowd. This man, silent with his head slightly bowed, curved his lips into a strange smile.

This expression was exactly like the Ghost Face Yang Jian had seen in the hotel during the day.

"Stop." Yang Jian frowned and suddenly shouted.

Zhang Gao beside him stopped as well, and protectors nearby turned their gaze towards them.

The other visiting relatives also subconsciously looked at Yang Jian. Only that middle-aged man continued moving toward the ward without stopping.

“I said stop, didn’t you hear me?” Yang Jian said coldly as he walked over, pushed through the crowd, grabbed the middle-aged man by the neck, and slammed him against the wall with a loud thud.

The strength was surprisingly great; an ordinary person had no chance to struggle, unable to even lift their head.

“Who are you, and what do you want to do to me? Let me go—help, someone’s beating me up...” the middle-aged man cried out in pain.

But Yang Jian had no intention of letting go, his face cold as he said, “Did you just laugh just now?”

“What are you talking about? I don’t know what you mean. Let go of me, you lunatic,” the middle-aged man shouted.

“You really think I only rely on my eyes to see people?” Yang Jian said. “It doesn’t matter if you don’t admit it. Zhang Gao, lock this guy up, don’t let him out until the matter in Z city is resolved, and keep him away from Tong Qian. Cancel his visit today too. From now on, except for necessary medical staff, no one else is allowed in this hospital room.”

“And the medical staff must be accompanied by at least three other people when they come and go.”

Having said that, he dragged the middle-aged man toward the security personnel.

“What on earth are you doing, just attacking people like that? Is there no law anymore? Let go of me right now. Do you really think my family is that easy to bully?” A middle-aged woman couldn’t stand it anymore and rushed over, pulling and even trying to bite Yang Jian’s arm.

“Kid, you looking for a fight? Let go, or I’ll make sure you regret it today.”

“Damn it, even daring to bully us, you’re looking for death.”

Seeing Yang Jian arbitrarily grabbing someone, other visiting relatives immediately became furious and rushed over, ready to throw punches.

“Everybody calm down, please, let’s calm down,” Zhang Gao called out in a hurry, signaling two security guards to come over and break up the fight.

Although the pulling, tearing, and cursing from these people posed no threat to Yang Jian, he didn’t want to be interfered with in his work. Not waiting for Zhang Gao to intervene, Yang Jian took out the internationally issued ghost hunter’s pistol and fired a shot at the ceiling.

“Bang~!”

The gunshot was loud, causing the people nearby to involuntarily jump.

This kid has a gun?

Once they realized this, everyone from the biting and cursing woman to the man ready to throw punches became frightened.

“I am Yang Jian, the person in charge of Dachang City, and I am currently conducting an investigation. You have no right to interfere. If you continue to obstruct, after a warning shot proves ineffective, I have the authority to shoot to kill, regardless of how many people there are,” Yang Jian said coldly, sweeping them with his gaze. “If anyone isn’t afraid to die, they can try it.”

This was one of the privileges of an international ghost hunter, which could be exercised even outside their jurisdiction.

Zhang Gao hurriedly said, “Yang Jian, calm down; they are Tong Qian’s relatives.”

“I know, but Tong Qian has become a vegetable, her value is gone. Shooting her now won’t make Tong Qian jump up from her bed to hit me, and given the special circumstances, even Z city’s leaders would have to stand aside, never mind Tong Qian’s relatives,” Yang Jian said in an indifferent and ruthless manner.

He had already spotted a problem among these people; it was possible there were others with issues too.

So this kind of warning was already polite; otherwise, Yang Jian would have had Zhang Gao lock all these people up.

"I know, but I still hope you can leave the matter here to me to handle, I promise to take care of it," Zhang Gao said.

"Do you realize the severity behind this incident?" Yang Jian stared at him. "The impact of this incident has slightly exceeded previous estimates."

After saying this, he handed the middle-aged man over to him.

"That ghost wants to make contact with Tong Qian again; maybe it wants to kill her or for some other purpose, but it definitely won't be a good thing," Yang Jian remarked.

Zhang Gao's face changed dramatically upon hearing this, and he quickly grabbed the middle-aged man and handcuffed him.

"If you say you can handle it, then it's yours. I have other things to do and no time to waste here. I hope you can do better than I imagine," Yang Jian said, then left in a hurry without planning to stay any longer.

And such potential Ghost Slaves were hidden very deeply.

“Now the trouble is big; I might have been under that ghost’s surveillance as soon as I entered Z city. Eight or nine out of ten places in the entire city could have that ghost’s spies... Initially, it was me in the dark against an exposed enemy, but now it’s reversed. This setup doesn’t feel like that of the ghost but rather Zhao Lei’s style because that’s how Zhao Lei plays games—he likes to place eyes everywhere, monitoring enemies’ movements, then setting up ambushes.”

Yang Jian’s heart sank.

If the ghost had taken control of Zhao Lei, then Zhao Lei would be following the ghost’s orders, essentially meaning that Zhao Lei’s intelligence was aiding the ghost’s cause.

The outcomes under these circumstances were terrifying.

Yang Jian even felt that the ghost, after taking control of Zhao Lei, had gradually become unbridled, no longer the entity without intelligence he once encountered, one that operated purely on rules.