

Revival 371

Chapter 371: New Balance

Forcibly piecing together the two ghosts within Feng Quan's body to achieve a new balance.

Truthfully, Yang Jian was not confident in this endeavor. A necromancer controlling two ghosts is an extremely dangerous affair—once a mutual suppression situation is reached, it would require the necromancer himself to slowly adjust, effectively prolonging the time for the fierce ghosts to revive.

This kind of adjustment is not long-lasting. Over time, the two ghosts would still continuously revive, until one day the balance is broken and the necromancer dies from the ghostly revival.

Feng Quan was currently facing a situation where the balance was being broken—it was uncertain whether he could suppress the two ghosts within his body.

So, Yang Jian waited, while also making a backup plan.

If Feng Quan couldn't return to normal, Yang Jian would restrain him here and then lock him up, absolutely not allowing the two ghosts in his body to escape.

However, Feng Quan's current state could not be considered good.

Grave Soil continuously emerged from his body, and dense fog enveloped the surroundings, dissipating at times, then condensing again.

The power of the two ghosts affected everything around them.

The new balance had not yet formed.

Feng Quan was in unbearable pain, struggling on the ground. He was succumbing to death, yet he could not die because the full outbreak of the ghostly revival had not yet happened. Some supernatural force was maintaining his life, letting him continue to exist in an unbelievable state.

But this situation would not last long.

Once one of the ghosts in his body took the upper hand, he would soon die here.

“All the hard work, finally managed to change Feng Quan’s memory, it would truly be a pity if he died here,” Yang Jian thought to himself.

He didn’t have any particular affection for Feng Quan; he merely hoped for an extra helping hand in the future.

In an era of frequent supernatural incidents, Yang Jian was not sure he could survive every encounter. He felt that if he had a few teammates, it would be much easier to deal with supernatural events in the

future. However, most other necromancers harbored ill intentions, and those who could be trusted were very few. If Feng Quan could survive this ordeal, Yang Jian would have an extremely trustworthy person in the future.

Even if such trust was obtained through some underhanded methods.

Yet for the sake of survival, Yang Jian didn't feel like he had done anything wrong.

"Feng Quan, can you hold on?" Yang Jian asked tentatively.

"The Grave Soil revival is worse than I imagined, and the Ghost Fog is a bit overwhelming..." Feng Quan suppressed his pain, clenched his teeth, and said, "I can only try my best. If I fail, don't hesitate later, just confine me. You absolutely can't let the two ghosts loose in Z city."

"Don't imagine the situation to be so dire, I believe you can handle it," Yang Jian comforted him.

Of course, he was also ready to restrain Feng Quan at any moment.

However, as time ticked away.

The Ghost Fog inside Feng Quan's body could not achieve a new balance as he had said. It was gradually retreating; more and more Grave Soil was emerging from his body.

The dark brown mud covering him seemed as if it was about to form a new grave mound.

“This will lead to his failure,” Yang Jian felt a shift in his gaze; Feng Quan’s condition was getting worse.

Continuing like this, he would certainly die from the ghostly revival.

The two ghosts could no longer achieve a new balance.

After all, the Grave Soil had completely revived; it was only suppressed by Yang Jian’s Headless Ghost Shadow, whereas the Ghost Fog was still only partly revived. The levels of terror between the two ghosts had become unequal.

“Unless a third party joins, suppressing the revival of Grave Soil, allowing Feng Quan to switch from controlling two ghosts to controlling three, achieving a new balance,” Yang Jian thought to himself.

But then he shook his head, deeming this solution unfeasible.

The difficulty of controlling three ghosts was even greater, plus where could he find a third ghost now for Feng Quan to control.

Yang Jian's gaze flickered as he pondered other methods that could help Feng Quan.

After all, the Feng Quan before him was a product of his own making; his death here would be too great a loss for Yang Jian.

"Yang Jian, quick, I can't hold on much longer, act now, restrain me..." Feng Quan, struggling in agony, suddenly opened his eyes wide. His eyes were no longer human; the eye sockets were stuffed full of dark brown mud, no longer showing the flesh and blood that humans should have.

His body was gradually being covered by Grave Soil.

The Ghost Fog, which had previously enveloped the surroundings, had completely vanished.

The Mist Ghost was without a doubt restrained by the Grave Soil, buried within it, without any chance to resist.

"With my Headless Ghost Shadow, I can help Feng Quan regain balance, but it's not very meaningful because my Headless Ghost Shadow can't be in Feng Quan's body forever to help him suppress the ghostly revival," Yang Jian realized, seeing him like this and feeling the impending failure.

But as his mind raced, he thought of a very special method.

Perhaps it could help Feng Quan.

“We’re not out of options yet. I’ll make one last attempt. If this fails, then I’ll have no choice but to zip you into a body bag,” Yang Jian’s gaze shifted as he took out a white candle from his equipment.

This was also a Ghost Candle.

Unlike the red Ghost Candle, however, this one was used to summon ghosts.

“You should know what this is. It can attract ghosts in the vicinity. I’ll light this candle beside your body, and if all goes well, it should draw out some of the fierce ghost power within you. You must then take this opportunity to regain control of the two ghosts and restore balance. But the Ghost Candle won’t last long, and I’m worried it might attract other supernatural entities from around here, so you must seize the moment.”

Without delay, he lit the Ghost Candle and placed it next to Feng Quan, who was about to become a grave mound.

The white Ghost Candle burned with a black flame.

Immediately, the surroundings turned into a murky gray, even blocking out the light.

An inexplicable and cryptic atmosphere pervaded the area.

The effect of the white Ghost Candle was astonishing. Almost instantly, the Grave Soil covering Feng Quan's body began to move towards the candle as if alive.

The ghosts in the Grave Soil were drawn to the Ghost Candle.

The body of Feng Quan, buried under the Grave Soil, gradually regained its form as he re-emerged from the mound, and his suffering quickly diminished.

But this improvement wouldn't last.

While the Grave Soil could be attracted, so could the Ghost Fog, and the reason there was no movement from the Ghost Fog yet was that it was being suppressed by the Grave Soil.

But this suppression would soon come to an end.

And at the instant the suppression ended, there would be a moment when the two ghosts in Feng Quan's body balanced out.

This was Feng Quan's only chance to seize.

Very quickly.

About two minutes passed.

All the Grave Soil on Feng Quan's body had transferred next to the white Ghost Candle, forming a new mound there.

A portion of the fierce ghost's power left Feng Quan's body.

However, this departure was not necessarily a good thing, as if the ghost completely left Feng Quan, his current physical condition would surely lead to death — he needed the ghost inside him to keep alive.

A moment later.

Feng Quan, who had been lying on the ground, suddenly sat up. In this instant, he balanced the forces of the Ghost Fog and the Grave Soil and regained the ability to move.

"Brother Tui, hurry," Feng Quan's expression changed drastically as he urged.

Yang Jian certainly understood what Feng Quan meant. He immediately blew out the white Ghost Candle, ending the attraction.

But as soon as the Ghost Candle was extinguished, the newly-formed Grave Soil began to surge back towards Feng Quan's body.

"It seems we have to sacrifice this portion of the Grave Soil to restore your balance," Yang Jian stepped forward, the Ghost Shadow casting over, and cut off the path of the Grave Soil returning.

Yet the remaining Grave Soil still formed a small mound, with dark brown dirt gradually seeping fresh blood from within.

This was an unfathomable eeriness.

After all, what Yang Jian had done was too extreme, having split a near-reviving complete ghost.

"How are things now?" Yang Jian asked.

"Better, much better. I feel like I've returned to my previous state. The issue of the fierce ghost's revival seems to have been resolved. Brother Tui, your method was amazing. Using the white Ghost Candle to draw out some of the ghost from my body helped me regain balance," Feng Quan said excitedly.

"That's good. Since you've survived, this thing is useless now. I'll contain it," Yang Jian said, looking at the pile of separated Grave Soil, and without hesitation, he put it in a body bag.

The specially made body bag was crafted from gold. Once the Grave Soil was inside, even if there were any eerie occurrences, as long as it didn't come out, there would be no trouble.

"Done."

After completing this, Yang Jian also breathed a sigh of relief.

After being so busy for so long, there was finally some payoff. With Feng Quan's issue resolved, he could move on to the next steps more smoothly.

Chapter 372: Paranormal Invasion

"Look, Yang Jian is coming out, and it seems there's an extra person with him. Could there be any problem?"

Waiting outside the second security cordon, Luo Su Yi saw two people emerge from the rapidly dissipating Ghost Fog. Both were dressed in identical specially made uniforms. One of them was around twenty years old, around one meter seventy-eight in height, his youthful face betraying an unusual wariness for his age, yet possessing a reliable and steady presence.

The other person appeared to be in his early thirties, with plain features, coughing as he walked. His dark brown skin didn't seem like that of a living person, but instead eerily resembled that of a resurrected corpse, prompting an inexplicable dread in others.

"It's Feng Quan, did Yang Jian bring him out?" Xiong Wenwen, who was playing with his cellphone, looked up and was immediately surprised.

He thought Feng Quan had already been a goner, but unexpectedly, he had left Cesare Grand Hotel alive.

But where had that guy Guo Fan gone?

Could it be that only Feng Quan had survived, and the other person had died?

“Let’s go, follow me to The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine,” Yang Jian strode forward, his voice subdued, “It’s time to get down to business.”

“What are we doing at the hospital? Is someone sick?” Luo Su Yi asked.

Yang Jian said, “That ghost is in The Third Hospital. Our next task is to contain it. As long as we deal with that thing, the incident in Z city can be temporarily closed.”

After speaking, he turned back to look at Cesare Grand Hotel.

“As for this place, continue the blockade. When I left, I sealed all the doors and windows. If everything goes well, the ghost inside shouldn’t be able to get out as long as it isn’t interfered with.”

When leaving, Yang Jian had taken precautions by using the power of the Ghost Domain to block all the entrances, exits, doors, and windows of the hotel.

Unless the ghost was capable of destroying walls, or creating its own Ghost Domain, it would remain trapped inside for the foreseeable future.

He would not return until he felt confident in containing it; otherwise, a direct encounter in his current state would certainly end in a gruesome death. Xiong Wenwen's precognitive results should be trusted.

"Besides, this is a team operation, the risk won't be very high. Get in the car, and I'll tell you about the ghost's information while driving, so you'll be prepared," said Yang Jian as he walked towards a temporary issue pickup truck.

"Good, by joining forces to resolve this supernatural event, getting promoted and a raise isn't a dream. From now on, I'll stick with you, Brother Tui," Feng Quan said with a laugh.

Although he now lived like a corpse, his personality had changed. He'd become a good person; seemingly dangerous, but actually very safe.

The vehicle was driving on the main road of Z city.

Because of the incident at Cesare Grand Hotel, the area had been cordoned off and the nearby citizens had been evacuated from the city. Because Yang Jian had not guaranteed to solve the supernatural event, headquarters had made the worst-case arrangement.

“The ghost we have to deal with has the ability to alter people’s memories, apparently directly affecting the memories of those nearby. As for how it influences and alters them, I don’t know much,” said Yang Jian while driving, deliberately keeping the existence of the Ghost Newspaper a secret and attributing all the memory alteration capabilities to the ghost itself.

After all, no one was going to confront the ghost about it.

“I know about this, Brother Tui mentioned it before,” nodded Feng Quan. “It’s a very dangerous ability. Ordinary people, no, even ghost manipulators could possibly be affected by the Ghost Shadow’s memory manipulation.”

“Of course, while the ability is strange, it’s not particularly harmful. However, the subsequent impact is terrifying. What I want to talk about is the second point. Currently, the ghost has obtained the Ghost Face behind Tong Qian’s head. A ghost controlling another ghost is an extremely terrifying scenario. You should know something about Tong Qian and Ghost Face’s abilities, so I won’t elaborate,” continued Yang Jian.

“My only concern is that after acquiring Ghost Face, the ghost might undergo a kind of unbelievable and terrifying transformation. You need to be on guard. As for the Ghost Face’s abilities, they’re easy to deal with.”

“Laughter is the key. As long as you don’t hear it, you’ll be fine.”

Ghost Face and the crying face abilities are somewhat similar; one involves crying, the other laughing.

Both kill using sounds of laughter or crying.

“You’ve said so much, but you haven’t told us how to pinpoint the ghost’s location,” Luo Su Yi said. “I have no objection to working together, but I really fear that what happened back at the hotel might happen again. A few misguided steps and getting killed out of confusion.”

He had developed a huge shadow from his experience in the hotel and estimated he would never stay at a hotel again.

Yang Jian said, “The ghost’s identity is Tong Qian, who is currently receiving treatment in The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine.”

“How could it be her?” Feng Quan was also shocked. “That’s impossible.”

“Nothing’s impossible. If the ghost could take Tong Qian’s Ghost Face, it could just as well take her identity. I’m not wrong,” Yang Jian said with confidence.

He was certain that Tong Qian was the ghost.

But certainly, he couldn’t reveal the exact method of his judgment, especially since Feng Quan’s memory had been manipulated, and he was afraid it would lead to suspicion.

“If we’re really going to take action against Tong Qian, we’ll need to apply for authorization from headquarters. If we act on our own, it’s like attacking a colleague. If we’re wrong, the consequences could be quite severe,” Feng Quan said.

Yang Jian said, “Turn on the satellite positioning and report this to Captain Zhao.”

“Alright, I’ll speak to him right now.” Feng Quan took out his satellite positioning phone to make contact.

However, he discovered that his satellite phone was turned off, and he couldn’t remember exactly when it had powered down.

Although he was somewhat puzzled, he didn’t pay it too much mind.

As soon as he switched on the phone, Zhao Jianguo’s voice immediately came through, “Feng Quan, what’s the situation over there? Why did the communication suddenly break off, is Yang Jian there? Whoever can hear me, quickly report your situation, have you encountered any other dangers...”

From his tone, one could tell that Zhao Jianguo was very anxious.

After all, Yang Jian and Feng Quan had both lost connection at the same time.

Under normal circumstances, a sudden loss of signal and contact often signifies encountering a very serious danger.

“Feng Quan and I are fine. There is another ghost in the hotel, and for safety, I turned off the communication,” Yang Jian said while driving.

“That’s a relief. You really scared me by suddenly dropping out of contact,” Zhao Jianguo instantly breathed easier upon hearing Yang Jian’s voice, “If you had fallen in Z City, the responsibility on my shoulders would’ve been enormous.”

If someone like Yang Jian, who had resolved S-level supernatural events, were to perish, it would be a tremendous blow to the headquarters’ prestige, making hopeful recruits reconsider their chances of survival.

“Tell Zhao Jianguo about Tong Qian,” Yang Jian instructed.

Feng Quan said, “Captain Zhao, I am currently with Yang Jian, Xiong Wenwen, Luo Su Yi, and a few others, preparing to restrict Tong Qian, who is now in The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Z City. Based on what Yang Jian has deduced, the identity of Tong Qian lying in the hospital could be that of a ghost...”

“What, Tong Qian is a ghost?” The news obviously shocked Zhao Jianguo on the other end.

“Is that true?”

"It's unlikely to be wrong," Feng Quan said, "After all, Yang Jian's judgments rarely miss, and his words are trustworthy."

"This matter is no joke, Yang Jian. Tong Qian is still in the hospital. If your judgment on this is wrong, the situation will be tough to manage... after all, she is an international ghost controller from Z City who has made notable achievements. You have to consider the impact of this affair," Zhao Jianguo said with a grave tone.

He wasn't trying to stop Yang Jian from acting, but he was worried about a misjudgment.

"I will act according to my judgment. I had Feng Quan inform you just as a matter of routine. Regardless of whether you agree or not, I am going to act. I can't possibly wait for you to verify before making a move. There is only one chance, and once Tong Qian learns that I have confirmed her ghostly identity, that ghost will surely switch to another identity."

Yang Jian said firmly, "By then, the ghost will lie even deeper in hiding, and I will not be able to find it again. After all, that ghost has already acquired Tong Qian's Ghost Face, and I can't predict its next move."

"Alright, that's all, we're almost at The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine."

Feng Quan also said, "At this point, we must trust Yang Jian. Captain Zhao, you should just wait for the results. We will resolve the situation here, don't worry about our end."

"I understand," said Zhao Jianguo, frowning deeply in the communications room at headquarters.

After putting down the communication device, he immediately said, "Contact The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Z City, inquire about Tong Qian's condition."

A female liaison officer immediately started the communication.

"Hello, is this The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Z City?" She dialed the number, ready to consult with the person in charge there.

But though the call connected, no one on the other end spoke.

"Captain, the call connected, but there's no response," the female liaison officer reported.

A connected call but with no one speaking?

Zhao Jianguo's expression suddenly changed, "Cut the communication immediately."

However, just when the female liaison officer was about to disconnect, a strange laughter suddenly came through the headset.

Upon hearing this laughter, the female liaison officer's body gradually stiffened, then her face began to display a bizarre smile. After a few seconds, she lost her balance and fell backwards onto the floor with a thud, while her headset dangled in mid-air, gently swinging, faintly emitting that creepy laughter.

As time passed, the laughter inside the communications room grew louder and clearer.

"Everyone, leave the communications room, now," Zhao Jianguo shouted in alarm after seeing the female liaison officer's eerie death with a smile on her face.

The supernatural had invaded here.

At the same time, he was certain that something had gone wrong at The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Z City.

Yang Jian's judgment was most likely correct.

The current identity of Tong Qian is... a ghost.

Chapter 373: Tong Qian's Crisis

Supernatural forces invaded the headquarters' communication room.

Though the real ghost was hundreds of kilometers away in Z city, the terror it spread had already revealed the tip of the iceberg, instilling in these operators—who had never encountered supernatural events—fear of imminent death and unease.

After a brief commotion, normalcy was restored.

All communications were cut off, and the strange laughter ceased.

However, the damage from this brief terror invasion was significant.

In an isolated communication room, tasked with receiving Yang Jian's calls, Liu Xiaoyu walked out curiously after hearing the noise outside.

"What happened, why did the alarm suddenly go off?" She was working alone, unaware of the events that had just unfolded.

"A call to Z city caused a supernatural invasion at headquarters, and a colleague was killed."

A colleague standing guard nearby whispered, "It's related to the incident Yang Jian is dealing with right now. Aren't you Yang Jian's operator? Don't you know anything about it?"

Liu Xiaoyu was well-known in the communication room because she was responsible for the Ghost-Eye, Yang Jian. Others envied and resented her for it.

“His satellite-positioned phone is off; I can only determine his exact location, not contact him. The line has been down for some time. Earlier, Team Leader Zhao said Yang Jian is fine, that he cut off the connection himself due to some special circumstances,” Liu Xiaoyu explained.

“It seems Yang Jian anticipated this and disconnected proactively,” the colleague assumed, believing that Yang Jian knew the ins and outs, thus taking precautions against the eerie phone-induced killings.

“How are the other people in the communication room?” Liu Xiaoyu felt a strong unease.

The guard glanced around and whispered, “Thankfully, after the last incident in Z city, you were assigned to an isolated communication room. Otherwise, you might have been involved this time. I’m just in charge of maintaining order; I don’t know much more, but judging by the seriousness of the situation, the casualties must be significant.”

“The higher-ups have ordered you not to worry about anything else. Headquarters is currently safe, so you must continue to attempt contact with Yang Jian. The event in Z city is nearing its end.”

Liu Xiaoyu nodded subconsciously, ready to return to work.

But just as she was about to turn and enter her office, employees dressed in protective suits like those used in hazardous environments were carrying out body after body from the communication room.

Each body had eyes wide open, faces adorned with eerie smiles. From the attire, it was clear they were all operators from the communication room and Liu Xiaoyu's colleagues, some of whom she was quite close with, often chatting together after work.

But now, those familiar colleagues of Liu Xiaoyu lay on stretchers as lifeless corpses.

Seeing those familiar faces with weird smiles in death, Liu Xiaoyu felt an unnamed fear within her heart.

This fear seeped through her, making her feel icy cold all over.

At that moment, her mind was a blank canvas, but somehow she thought of one person.

That person was the ghost controller... Yang Jian, Liu Xiaoyu's charge.

Was Yang Jian dealing with things like this every day?

Watching body after body pass by her, the expression in Liu Xiaoyu's eyes shifted from fear to numbness, and then to a madness that radiated from within.

She started to realize that the work she had done before was utterly meaningless.

She was too fragile, so were her colleagues, and so was Team Leader Zhao... Just one phone call, merely a single connection, had turned the communication room into this.

The communication room at headquarters, once thought to be incredibly safe, now felt to Liu Xiaoyu like a sinister cage of death, where no one could leave alive. Whether it was today or eventually, she felt it was inevitable that everyone would die there.

Without a sound.

“Bang~!”

Liu Xiaoyu didn't know when she came back to her senses, but she suddenly returned to her office and slammed the door shut.

With emotions running high, she grabbed the communication equipment and frantically pressed the buttons, desperate to establish contact with Yang Jian.

Trembling, fear, anxiety, and the occasional flashes in her mind of her colleagues' weird smiling faces.

All of this was becoming too much for Liu Xiaoyu to bear.

The regular training and guidance were of no use at that moment.

“Hurry, hurry, open the line,” Liu Xiaoyu didn’t know why she was so desperate to connect with Yang Jian.

All she knew was that it was the only thing she could do at the moment.

Or perhaps, just hearing Yang Jian’s indifferent voice would allow her to retrieve the self she was during her switchboard duties.

It was a form of escape and a way to seek comfort.

Sudden fear could crush a person’s heart, and Liu Xiaoyu evidently did not possess a very strong psychological quality.

“I am Yang Jian, communication is now restored.” However, in Liu Xiaoyu’s almost collapsing state, Yang Jian on the other end took the initiative to open communication.

Because Yang Jian was about to make a move against Tong Qian.

Considering Tong Qian might be a ghost in disguise, communication had to be maintained so as not to suggest he was up to something shady.

“Yang Jian, it’s, it’s me, Liu Xiaoyu.” Liu Xiaoyu was emotionally agitated, her voice tinged with a hint of crying. She wanted to say something, but once she actually maintained communication with Yang Jian, she didn’t know what to say.

She had become accustomed to being a listener for Yang Jian, not a storyteller.

“I know.” Yang Jian didn’t chat with Liu Xiaoyu, just casually responded and then turned his attention elsewhere.

Liu Xiaoyu, with her headset on, lay in front of the communication console, head buried, quietly listening to Yang Jian’s action reports from the other end.

As per usual.

Yang Jian, who was outside of The Third Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Dachang City, did not know that a single phone call from Zhao Jianguo almost caused everyone in the communication room to perish. His current priority was to pinpoint Tong Qian’s location and deal with her.

“Tong Qian is in a special ward on the top floor of the hospital, at least that’s the information I have, but I cannot be certain if her location has changed.” Yang Jian got out of the car and looked up at the hospital building.

Honestly, the thought of entering the hospital cast a shadow over his heart.

Back in Dachang City, Yang Jian had nearly died in a hospital.

“Now that Tong Qian’s identity is confirmed, Brother Tui, do you have any action plans? We’ll follow your lead,” Feng Quan chimed in.

Luo Su Yi and Lin Luomei also turned their attention towards him.

Although they were forced to come and assist, if Yang Jian was willing to devise a plan, they would comply with it, which was definitely better than acting recklessly on their own.

“No plans. That ghost’s Terror Level is not very high. The only thing to fear is that it can alter memories, steal others’ identities, and has strong infiltrative abilities. Luckily, the scope of this ghost’s infiltration isn’t large. If it had run abroad and messed with a foreign president, taking control of a country, that would be extraordinary.”

“So just go directly and be cautious,” he concluded.

Yang Jian didn’t find this ghost particularly difficult to deal with; with so many ghost controllers acting together, success was almost assured.

Hearing this, the others also gained confidence.

The group strode toward the hospital.

And just as they passed the main gate, a security guard on watch gave Yang Jian a strange, eerie smile.

Yang Jian noticed the security guard.

His gaze hardened, his flesh stretched tight, revealing his Ghost Eye, which watched the security guard with an indescribable eeriness.

“The ghost knows we are here. It seems we don’t have time for a slow approach. Let’s be more aggressive. I’ll use the Ghost Domain to lead you to it.” Yang Jian withdrew his gaze, ignoring the strangely-smiling security guard.

How many Ghost Slaves with altered memories were there in this city, only heaven knew.

Now, he had only one target.

His Ghost Eyes opened one after another, his body emitting a red glow, and the Ghost Domain instantly enveloped the entire hospital.

While the Ghost Domain spread over the hospital,

Tong Qian stood eerily in front of a window in a ward, watching Yang Jian drive from afar and then stop downstairs, seemingly watching Yang Jian enter the hospital all along.

Concurrently, as the Ghost Domain covered the hospital,

a smile gradually appeared on Tong Qian's face, a strange, sinister laugh emanated from her lips, spreading from the ward and diffusing in all directions.

Soon, the entire hospital was echoing with this terrifying laughter.

But, no matter how horrifying this laughter was, Yang Jian knew this was going to be his final encounter with this ghost.

Either Yang Jian would die here or the ghost would be captured and confined.

Chapter 374: Successfully Restrained

"Brother Tui, did you hear that... there seems to be laughter."

Despite being in the Ghost Domain, Feng Quan still faintly heard a strange, elusive laugh echoing near his ear.

The laughter seemed to be coming from a distant place but did not decay and vanish due to the distance.

On the contrary, the laughter appeared to grow clearer, initially intermittent as if it was an auditory hallucination, but it became increasingly distinct over time. It was as if someone was really laughing right next to his ear. This laugh had a bizarre infectiousness; after listening for a while, he couldn't help but want to join in the laughter.

"It's the laugh of Ghost Face; Tong Qian's Ghost Face is now on that ghost, and that thing already knows we're coming." As soon as Yang Jian heard the laughter, he activated the second layer of the Ghost Domain.

The laughter was blocked.

But this kind of blockage couldn't last too long. Laughter and wailing by ghosts were alike; if one remained in a place for a long time, the laughter would grow stronger.

In the end, even if Yang Jian used the third layer of the Ghost Domain, he couldn't withstand the laughter; he would still die.

However, all he needed now was a little time.

While the laughter of the ghost had not yet become terrifying, he sought to restrain that ghost.

“Tong Qian is on the top floor.” Yang Jian immediately located the source of the laughter.

It was coming from a ward on the top floor.

Immediately, he took Feng Quan and Luo Su Yi with him directly to the top floor, to the room from where the laughter emanated.

As for Lin Luomei and Xiong Wenwen, Yang Jian felt that these two would not be particularly effective in such a situation, so he did not ask them to come along. Therefore, only the three of them were truly taking action this time.

Upon entering the room, the eerie laughter became even more terrifying.

The second layer of the Ghost Domain was instantly invaded; that indistinct laughter appeared within the second layer of the Ghost Domain and was becoming clearer gradually. Once it reached a certain threshold, everyone who heard this laughter would die, and even the masters of ghosts might not be able to withstand it.

Only true ghosts could ignore such laughter.

Having had the experience dealing with it once before, Yang Jian wasn't about to give the ghost any chance to attack. He immediately locked onto the source of the laughter.

It was a woman with bandages wrapped around her head, wearing a hospital gown.

This woman had a slender figure full of youth and vitality, unlike the lifeless corpses in the hotel. She was very much alive, belonging to Tong Qian. The only difference was her bizarre complexion and a smile that emitted a chillingly strange laugh.

She seemed to be aware of Yang Jian's presence, her hollow and spiritless eyes looking in their direction.

But, the next moment.

A tall, headless shadow suddenly materialized behind Tong Qian without any warning.

After that, a pair of arms covered in dark brown grave soil appeared out of nowhere beside Tong Qian.

On the floor, bloodstained threads spread like numerous worms, swiftly extending to Tong Qian's feet.

Three utterly different terrifying supernatural forces attacked her at the moment she emitted the laugh.

Ghost Shadows invaded Tong Qian's body, arms covered in dark brown grave soil, clutching her neck like the hands of a corpse, covering her mouth.

The bloodstained threads on the floor climbed up Tong Qian's legs, quickly wrapping around her entire body, making her unable to move an inch.

The simultaneous suppression by the three supernaturals instantly stripped Tong Qian of her ability to act.

The laughter came to an abrupt stop.

"Is that a success?"

As the Ghost Domain gradually faded, Luo Su Yi, seeing that Tong Qian had become still, couldn't help feeling somewhat incredulous.

The source of the supernatural phenomena that had entangled them for days, the ghost that could tamper with people's memories, could it really have been restrained just like that?

It seemed too easy.

So easy that he began to doubt whether their previous desperate efforts had been worth it.

"The three of us acting together is equivalent to three ghosts attacking Tong Qian at once. This kind of suppression should leave her no capability to act. Otherwise, I would have to consider fleeing. Besides, this ghost itself isn't that terrifying; if categorized, it's at most a C, restricted level. The truly frightening

thing is its ability to control people,” Yang Jian remarked, feeling that the Headless Ghost Shadow had not been expelled.

Tong Qian was truly suppressed in an instant.

Ghost Face also lost its supernatural presence.

However, they still couldn’t let their guard down; if the suppression was gone, the ghost could still kill.

“Brother Tui, this thing is pretty difficult to contain. If it keeps laughing, even if we put it in a gold container, the sound might still come out, not to mention that this time all we’ve prepared is a body bag,” said Feng Quan, his hands stained with soil, clutching Tong Qian.

Yang Jian said, “I didn’t plan to just contain it like this. I want to separate the ghost from Ghost Face, that way it’ll be much easier to contain.”

With that, he took out the bloodstained red newspaper.

First, the smile was removed to turn the ghost back into a faceless one.

The red newspaper quickly stuck to Tong Qian’s face, but after a few minutes, the result was not as expected— the smile wasn’t removed.

This bizarre smile still remained on Tong Qian's body.

"How can this be?" Yang Jian's expression changed, he hadn't expected the red newspaper to lose its effect.

But this was impossible, he had clearly removed Feng Quan's face before, and the experiment was very successful.

Then, Yang Jian realized the crux of the problem.

Removing Feng Quan's face was merely utilizing a characteristic of the red newspaper's indiscriminate attack on people, and not truly mastering the item. Since the newspaper and the ghost were originally one entity, how could one use someone else's belonging to remove another's face?

"It seems this thing is useless against this ghost. It looks like I have to use my own Ghost Shadow to remove the Ghost Face now," Yang Jian muttered after the failed attempt, without any frustration.

He had another method.

However, the method of removing faces with the red newspaper was completely different from his.

Yang Jian's approach was akin to a forceful patchwork, while the red newspaper offered a perfect imprint, which might affect Tong Qian's body in ways he was not certain of.

"Has Brother Tui recovered? It's bad to keep suppressing it," Feng Quan urged at that moment.

He couldn't keep using the power of evil ghosts to suppress Tong Qian indefinitely.

After all, Feng Quan had just regained balance in his body, and using the power of grave soil for a prolonged period risked awakening the evil ghost once more, disrupting the balance. Therefore, he couldn't overstep the limits.

Upon hearing this, Yang Jian swiftly put away the red newspaper and directly used the Ghost Shadow to remove the smiling face.

The Ghost Face formed a black hand that emerged from Tong Qian's body. Like a shadow, the hand covered Tong Qian's face and with merely a slight tug, it removed the smile as if it were a puzzle piece.

Once the Ghost Face was in hand, Yang Jian immediately placed the item into a gold box and locked it away.

"Put Tong Qian's body into a body bag. The Ghost Face is just a part of it. Tong Qian herself is now a ghost, and I haven't yet figured out how to take her body back," Yang Jian sensed that the suppression from the Headless Ghost Shadow was still in effect.

This indicated that Tong Qian, even without a face, still retained the ability to act.

This eerie fact showed that Tong Qian was the ghost that tampered with memories.

As for why this ghost still retained Tong Qian's identity even after the Ghost Face was removed, Yang Jian had no idea.

It was probably something akin to a supernatural possession.

Yang Jian had previously hypothesized that the ghost altering memories might not have a physical form but was an invisible, supernatural force— whoever took on this force became the ghost.

Now, that seemed very likely.

Without a word, Feng Quan immediately packed Tong Qian's body into a body bag and secured it.

As soon as they stopped suppressing it, noise immediately emanated from the body bag.

The Tong Qian inside was struggling incessantly, seemingly desperate to escape her confines like an evil ghost trapped in a cage making its last effort.

“Let’s leave it at that for now, and it’s best to find a box to keep her in. Contact Zhao Jianguo and have him handle it,” Yang Jian said.

“Alright, I’ll get in touch with Zhao Jianguo right away and also let him know the incident in Z City is over,” Feng Quan nodded.

But was the incident in Z City truly over?

The origin of the human head balloon event was still unclear to Yang Jian to date.

All he knew was that people in Z City were no longer dying.

“I can’t manage that much anymore. This trip was not in vain anyway, at least a potential major risk was eliminated, and I also restricted the movement of the ghost in the hotel. As for why the human head balloon event abruptly stopped, I don’t have the interest to know now,” Yang Jian thought to himself.

Moreover, he now had all the items the human skin paper asked him to collect.

The smiling face, the crying face, the red newspaper.

If possible, he could now directly create a ghost manipulator who controlled two ghosts.

The initial target for this was supposed to be Tong Qian.

But Tong Qian was a ghost, and choosing her would mean giving everything to the ghost.

It was a potential trap.

“Let’s think about it when I get back,” Yang Jian rubbed his head, feeling tired now.

Dealing with these ghostly entities was truly unpleasant, and it wasn’t until now that he could finally take a break.

Chapter 375: Taboo Rebirth

After Tong Qian was restrained, Yang Jian delegated the aftermath management to Feng Quan.

Due to the unique identity of the ghost, it wasn’t appropriate for him to handle it alone, so the best course of action was to let Feng Quan take care of it, who naturally proceeded to contact headquarters.

Speaking of headquarters.

Zhao Jianguo was not having an easy time at the moment because his command mistake led to the supernatural invasion of the communication room, causing considerable casualties. Although the incident was promptly stopped, many operators nonetheless fell victim and died.

The death of the operators led to many subsequent tasks being mishandled, causing a great deal of indirect damage.

If it weren't for Zhao Jianguo's recent recruitment of Yang Jian, it's likely that just this one mistake at work would have gotten him fired and put into solitary confinement by the headquarters.

"Zhao Jianguo, you're not a newcomer to handling special incidents, so how could you make such a severe mistake? I really don't know how to properly criticize you."

In the office, Deputy Minister Cao Yanhua, furious, looked at the table: "Look now, look, thirty-two operators are dead."

"Do you realize how hard it was for these operators to build a good rapport with their respective ghost controllers? Now they've all perished here. Even if we replace them with newcomers, can you imagine the consequences in the meantime?"

Generally speaking, unless a ghost controller dies, headquarters would not readily change operators.

Just like Yang Jian's case, his operator was Liu Xiaoyu, and in the later stage, due to his importance, new operators would be added but not replaced.

After all, earning the trust of a ghost controller is not an easy task.

“This matter was my mistake, I won’t argue.”

Zhao Jianguo said while lowering his head, showing deep remorse.

Cao Yanhua continued, “By saying this, it means you still don’t understand your wrongdoings. Your true error was not that one phone call. I’ve already reviewed the recording of the entire incident. Yang Jian, while dealing with the supernatural event in Z City and after confirming that Tong Qian was a ghost, had already called you.”

“This point is key.”

Here, he spoke angrily, “You know very well what Yang Jian is like—he might be a bit rebellious, but he doesn’t talk nonsense like those slippery types in society. Anything that comes out of his mouth is of great importance. You overlooked this, failing to understand the risks behind that call from Yang Jian, and this is the main reason you caused this incident.”

“Therefore, I am really uneasy about having you continue to be responsible for Yang Jian after this event...”

Zhao Jianguo stood with his head bowed, enduring the reprimand without rebuttal, because he indeed bore the primary responsibility for this occasion—those thirty-two operators’ deaths were all caused by him.

However, just at that moment, the office door suddenly opened.

“What is it?” Cao Yanhua asked, his anger subsiding, very seriously.

“Minister, we’ve received news from Feng Quan in Z City. He says that the matter there has been resolved, that the ghost which replaced Tong Qian’s identity has been restrained. He’s asking us to arrange for someone to take over,” hurriedly reported a staff member.

“Good, I understand,” Cao Yanhua thought for a moment and said, “Arrange for Shen Liang to go.”

“Yes, Minister.”

The staff member quickly left.

Zhao Jianguo also sighed inwardly, considering the Deputy Minister’s arrangement, it was very likely that Shen Liang would be in charge of Yang Jian from now on. Although he often met Shen Liang, to be honest, he did not quite like the man, because even though Shen Liang was very capable, Zhao could not accept some of his ideas.

At this very moment, in Z City.

Yang Jian, after restraining the ghost, did not rush to leave the area, but he also did not feel at ease staying alone in this district.

Although the ghost had been restrained, the danger had not completely ended.

Who knows how many more people had their memories tampered with, secretly watching him, and he certainly couldn't catch each one and restore their memories.

So the best course of action was to head to the suburbs and find a secluded, uninhabited place to hide.

Luo Su Yi had a villa in the outskirts of Z City, where Yang Jian decided to temporarily stay for a few days to also deal with Ghost Face.

As for Xiong Wenwen.

Yang Jian didn't leave him behind but contacted headquarters directly and had them send a special plane to pick him up.

He had done his utmost to help Yang Jian survive several crises. If it weren't for Xiong Wenwen's premonition ability, perhaps he would have died in their first encounter and wouldn't have lasted until now.

“Hopefully, he can find a way to survive,” Yang Jian sighed in his heart after sending Xiong Wenwen away.

If the child died due to the resurrection of vicious ghosts, it would be a pity, and even more, a tragedy.

Whether Xiong Wenwen could survive depended on whether the headquarters was willing to expend some effort to help him control the second ghost.

And in this, Yang Jian was powerless.

Evening.

Outside a villa in the suburbs of Z City, Luo Su Yi had set up a barbecue grill and was enthusiastically grilling skewers with a companion named Huang Fei, both drinking beer and in high spirits, clearly very happy.

After all, they had just managed to survive the ordeal in Z City; the feeling of escaping death was not something one could enjoy all the time.

“To celebrating our survival once more,” Luo Su Yi raised his beer bottle and shouted.

Huang Fei laughed and toasted.

However, Lin Luomei next to him watched Luo Su Yi with a look of tolerant amusement. Without a word, she fiddled with a brand-new business card in her hands.

It was a card Yang Jian had given her, which was blank except for a special phone number.

It was Wang Xiaoming's private contact method.

Yang Jian had given the opportunity to control a second ghost to Lin Luomei, and she was now contemplating when to make that call.

Of course, not just yet.

I've just finished with the busy work, it'll take a few days at least.

"By the way, where's Yang Jian? He was just here eating kebabs, why did he disappear all of a sudden?" Luo Su Yi realized that Yang Jian was no longer on the recliner next to him after chugging a bottle of beer.

Huang Fei said, "He went back to his room and took away all the skewers we just roasted."

“Damn, can this guy eat that much?” said Luo Su Yi. “Won’t he burst from overeating?”

“Shush, keep your voice down, or you’ll get beaten up,” Huang Fei said with some concern.

Luo Su Yi scoffed, “I can’t be killed anyway, what’s there to be afraid of?”

“...”

His words were assertive and seemingly flawless, one might think he was challenging Yang Jian to a fight.

At this moment, Yang Jian was sitting in his room eating skewers with a blank expression, methodically chewing the roasted beef in his mouth, while an array of faces with clear features were laid out before him.

A stench of rotting corpse filled the air.

Some of the faces had been removed from their owners for too long and had decayed, but most were still relatively intact.

Yang Jian continued to eat while controlling the Headless Ghost Shadow to sort through the pile of faces.

Each face represented an identity, a person's memories, and putting on that face meant that the person could be resurrected in another's body.

This bizarre method was akin to an alternative form of resurrection.

And, Yang Jian had come up with an extremely crazy idea.

If swapping faces onto a body could bring a person back to life, what if that body belonged to a ghost?

Could a person control a ghost's body? In that case, the ghost would essentially possess human memories.

So, what would such a hybrid ultimately be, human or ghost?

"I might try it someday, but I don't have a ghost's body right now, not a single one," Yang Jian murmured, slightly furrowing his brow as he kept eating the skewers.

He had seen ghosts with bodies before, but not many.

For instance, the Door Knocking Ghost, the ghost with a knife in Caesar Hotel of Z city, and the Crying Tomb Ghost, Dried Corpse Bride... However, unfortunately, he couldn't deal with a single ghost at the moment.

"Forget it, I'll think about this problem later. The priority now is how to solve the current issue."

Yang Jian suddenly stared at one of the faces and zoned out.

The Headless Ghost Shadow stood before him, holding a woman's human skin mask in its hands, featuring a beautiful visage with a noble bearing, clearly the face of a beautiful woman.

However, this face belonged to Tong Qian.

The real Tong Qian was dead, only this face remained, even her body had been claimed by a ghost.

Yang Jian could no longer attach Tong Qian's face back to her body.

Her original body was no longer suitable.

The only option was to find her another body and attach the face before it decayed any further.

“There were many faceless corpses in room 13 of the hotel before. Although most of them are dead now, some still show vital signs... But there are other hauntings in that place, and I don’t want to make another trip just for a body.”

Yang Jian thought about it and decided it wasn’t worth the risk for a single corpse.

And he did have another body at his disposal.

A living one.

Similarly faceless.

It was the body of his classmate, Zhao Lei.

He looked to the side.

Zhao Lei’s body lay on the bed, still showing signs of life, but this state wouldn’t last much longer; the body would die in a day or two at most.

And during this time, Zhao Lei’s face had not been found.

Maybe it was already beyond recovery.

“Zhao Lei will die, and so will Tong Qian. Since that’s the case, let’s merge the two, allowing Tong Qian’s memories to live on in Zhao Lei’s body,” Yang Jian’s gaze flickered as he looked at Tong Qian’s face and then at Zhao Lei’s body.

This was his extreme way to remedy his regret.

It would not only save Tong Qian but also allow Zhao Lei to live on in another form.

“Should I really do this?”

However, as Yang Jian prepared to proceed, he couldn’t help but question his own conscience.

Changing identities and faces was a taboo against morality.

Would the newly resurrected Tong Qian accept this form of rebirth?

But if he didn’t do this, both Tong Qian and Zhao Lei would die. Yang Jian couldn’t find another face for Zhao Lei or another body for Tong Qian.

Using Zhao Lei's body and Tong Qian's face to create a new being was the best and most prudent solution.