

Revival 541

Chapter 541 Yang Jian's Action

At the entrance of Ping'an Hotel.

A red sports car was parked conspicuously and boldly by the roadside, and a tall, beautiful woman wearing sunglasses sat on the hood, her gaze fixed in the direction of the hotel as if waiting for someone.

"You didn't keep me waiting too long, you're more punctual than I thought."

After a moment, Li Yao's mouth curved into a slight smile, and after she took off her sunglasses, her delicately made-up face was revealed, her dark eyes looking toward Yang Jian who had just walked out of the hotel entrance.

Yang Jian glanced around, "I thought you'd send someone else to deliver the item, but I didn't expect you to come in person. Isn't that asking for trouble having your identity exposed so quickly?"

As a pawn Yang Jian had placed within his circle of friends, Li Yao's value would be lost if she were discovered.

Nevertheless, Li Yao approached with a cheerful smile, her long, shapely legs carrying her over. She directly linked arms with Yang Jian, "What's the big deal if I'm discovered? Worst case, I'll go back to Dachang City with you. Don't you have a company? Do you need a beautiful secretary? I can work for free, just provide room and board."

"I already have a free secretary, and she's quite handy. I'm not planning on replacing her."

Yang Jian kept a calm expression, unmoved by Li Yao's flirtation.

"I didn't realize you were such a playboy."

Li Yao squinted her eyes playfully, "No matter, just add another one. I don't mind, after all, I have confidence in myself. In the end, you will surely choose me."

Yang Jian stopped in his tracks, looking at her seriously, "Do you think if your identity were really discovered, you would still be alive to go to Dachang City with me? For people like us, making someone disappear from this world is easier than stepping on an ant."

"I was just joking."

Li Yao dimmed her smile a bit, "I'm not that stupid. It's just that several department heads in the circle of friends are too busy with more important matters to care about the actions of an insignificant assistant like me. After all, however small an ant may be, if it hides well, it can also survive till the end, right?"

"Get in the car, it's rather cold outside."

It was now winter, and the temperature outside was not high; soon it would start to snow.

Having just gotten into the car,

the car heater quickly dispelled the chill from outside. Li Yao promptly gave the driver's seat to Yang Jian and took the passenger seat. Then she removed her thick down jacket, revealing only a thin nightgown underneath.

"To handle the matter you entrusted me with, I worked overtime all night yesterday. You'll have to compensate me well afterward," she said languidly, yawning and then winking at Yang Jian with a coquettish tone.

Yang Jian paid no mind to the woman.

He knew that everything Li Yao was doing was not of her own volition but the result of modified memories.

"You mentioned that the department heads in the circle of friends are all busy? What happened?"

Yang Jian scrutinized her, his eyes sharp as he took note of the information revealed in her previous statement, not distracted by Li Yao's seductive figure.

"Didn't you get the notice from the headquarters? With your current level, that Liu Xiaoyu of yours should have told you about last night's events. It's a rather important matter after all," said Li Yao, then glanced at the time, "Maybe it's not that early yet; after all, news travels faster through the circle of friends than from the headquarters."

"Last night?"

Yang Jian's expression changed slightly, "The business with the Ghost Painting?"

Li Yao turned to the back seat to grab a document bag, "Yes, last night, five ghosts emerged from the Ghost Painting. Three of them were led away by the Ghost Candle as planned, but there was a bit of an incident, and two ghosts went missing. They still haven't been found up to now. Headquarters is already conducting a search, but there are no results yet."

"The last person to handle the case was Jang Shangbai, so the circle of friends has to put in the effort now. If the incident with the Ghost Painting blows up, at least half of the responsibility would fall on our circle of friends, especially since the ghosts slipped from their hands. This is all the member information I could gather to date; take a look."

After saying that, she handed the document bag to Yang Jian.

Yang Jian took it, "A latent S-level paranormal threat is enough to keep the circle of friends busy, especially now, when it's crucial to determine the team leader."

As he said that, he opened the document bag.

Inside were various personal files.

"This many?"

Casually flipping through, there were dozens of files, which made Yang Jian furrow his brows.

There were more ghost controllers who had joined the circle of friends than he had expected.

Li Yao spoke somewhat helplessly, "This is only part of it. That's why I suggest you not be so quick to take action. Once you start targeting these members on the list, you're likely to invoke the rage of the others. You won't be able to handle their retaliation, and headquarters won't be able to protect you either."

Yang Jian looked at the list before him and fell into deep thought.

Indeed, as Li Yao had said, there were more people in the friend circle than he had imagined, and it was simply unrealistic to take them out one by one, not to mention that there might be other entities lurking behind each ghost master.

"Forget it, let's think of another approach. We can't rush this; we need to take it slowly. It would be best to secure the captain's position first."

"If I don't make a move, the people in the friend circle will come after me. They have already made their plans. Am I supposed to wait for them to act?"

Yang Jian put down the documents in his hand and said with a stern expression, "So, I still need to make the first move."

"That will be quite dangerous."

Li Yao was full of worry and had little confidence in her heart.

Yang Jian pointed to the list and said, "How many people do you think on this list are willingly serving the friend circle? Most are just in name only; I understand the nature of ghost masters better than you do."

"What do you want to do?" Li Yao looked at him, voicing her doubt.

"Every power has its core members, right? There can't be too many core members. Take them out, and the friend circle is finished."

Yang Jian handed the list to Li Yao, "You know best. Help me filter them out."

"Disintegrating the core members? That is indeed a method, but is it really effective just like that? Won't others stand up?"

Li Yao took over the materials and said.

"They won't stand up. I'll quickly spread the word, telling people in the ghost master circle that I, 'Ghost Eye' Yang Jian, am going to fight with the people from the friend circle. Those who don't want to die had better stay away," Yang Jian said.

Li Yao immediately understood Yang Jian's plan.

He wanted to use his reputation to deter others and prevent them from acting rashly.

But could he really deter them?

Ghost masters were a bunch of lunatics; their behaviors could not be presumed using normal human logic.

"We can only try this."

Li Yao thought to herself, unable to predict the outcome and unable to persuade Yang Jian to abandon the plan. Therefore, she could only support Yang Jian's strategy.

Soon, she extracted a list from the materials in her hands, "Here, the friend circle's core members are indeed few. If you are going to make a move, I suggest starting with this person. He is the president of Ping'an Tower. If the people from the friend circle plan against you, he will definitely be the one making the plans."

Yang Jian took the list and furrowed his brows immediately, "A regular person?"

"Yes, although President Fei is a regular person, he is involved in many things, and he does the work. After all, the minds of most ghost masters are not normal, and it's not possible to leave such a large company in the hands of such people. Of course, President Fei isn't hard to deal with, but he has bodyguards."

Li Yao finished speaking and handed over another document, "This is the one, Zhang Jian."

"Where are they now?" Yang Jian asked.

"President Fei is definitely in the office now. You can't make a move in Ping'an Tower, so you'll have to find Zhang Jian first. At this time, he should be at a bar, on the street opposite Ping'an Tower."

"Give me directions."

Yang Jian looked seriously at Zhang Jian's information and then started the car.

"Zhang Jian doesn't show up at the office during regular hours. Only after President Fei leaves work to go home does Zhang Jian start driving to follow him, secretly protecting him along the way. By taking out Zhang Jian first, later on, we can drive Zhang Jian's car, pretending he's still alive, and follow President Fei home..."

On the road, Li Yao had already thought through a series of actions.

"With our efficiency, as long as the action goes smoothly, the people from the friend circle won't be able to react in time. By the time they notice something is wrong, we should have almost finished the job."

"We've arrived."

After a while, Yang Jian pulled up in front of a bar's entrance.

The bar's door was tightly closed with a sign hanging that read 'Closed for Business.'

"He's not here?" Yang Jian asked.

"The bar is Zhang Jian's private property; he doesn't open it to the public. You'll have to go in through the back door. I can't show my face now; I can't go with you but can only wait for you outside," Li Yao said.

"Okay."

Yang Jian got out of the car and headed straight for the shuttered doors.

Chapter 542 Crazy People

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In broad daylight, still in the morning.

When Yang Jian walked into the closed bar, he was immediately struck by the deafening music blasting inside, making his scalp tingle.

He frowned deeply, casting a glance around, seeing nothing but excited young men and women, all of whom seemed to be endlessly energetic as they vented their surplus energy amidst the music.

"I thought the place would be deserted after it closed down, but there are far more people here than I expected. Is this some kind of cover-up?" Yang Jian thought to himself.

"But where could Zhang Jian be now?"

He made his way through the crowd, looking for the location of his target while those around him didn't even realize someone was moving through their midst in a nearly illogical fashion.

At that moment.

In a luxurious private room.

A man in his thirties, pale and bloated, was smoking and playing cards with a group of young men and women.

They were playing the simplest of games—Fight the Landlord.

"Haha, dare to lay down a straight—won't stop till you drink yourself to death..." Zhang Jian laughed as he dropped several cards on the table, "Beat this, got any bombs? If not, I'm passing."

"Can't beat it."

"Damn, why'd you have to play a straight."

The card players included two men in their early twenties, with several female companions sitting by their side, all there to accompany President Zhang in drinking and card playing.

"Three with one, what do you say?" Zhang Jian continued to play.

"Pass..."

Soon, the last card fell to the table, and Zhang Jian won the hand. He kicked the bag beside him with a smile; "Seems like you have worse luck than those guys yesterday. Win one hand from me and you get ten thousand; the money's right here. If you want to take it away, you've got to earn it, but a sip of drink for each card you lose—that's the rule. Count the cards left in your hand; I won't say more."

"Pour the drinks."

With a wave of his hand, two female companions immediately took out glasses and set them on the table.

The two young men, seeing a table full of drinks, felt a chill in their hearts but eventually gritted their teeth and faced the challenge.

After a short while.

Neither of the two could hold on any longer and suddenly rushed out of the private room with their mouths covered.

"Ha-ha, done in already? It's just one game," Zhang Jian clapped his hands and laughed, finding it extremely amusing.

"Who will call two more in for me? I'm in a good mood this time, winnings double. Otherwise, it looks like I won't be able to give away my money today."

Having said this, he casually pulled out a wad of cash from the bag beside him and placed it on the table.

"I'll go, I'll go..." The several female companions' eyes lit up, and they immediately pounced at the chance, all here to accompany President Zhang in his moment of card playing and money splurging.

Those quick hands grabbed tens of thousands, the slow ones only managed a few thousand, a few hundred—the scene was chaotic.

Zhang Jian grinned, continuing to smoke as he watched the spectacle unfold, with no intention of stopping it. He enjoyed seeing these so-called beauties scavenge like stray dogs in front of him, and just a few rounds of cards could make young men drink as if their lives didn't matter.

"Am I mad, or are they? It seems we're all mad, but some of us pretend, while others do not."

He thought, feeling rather pleased with himself.

A little later.

Two more fearless young men were invited into the private room, eager and looking to make a big win.

Zhang Jian put down his cigarette and said, "You all know the rules, so no more talk. Shuffle the cards. I'm a man who cares about fairness, so don't accuse me of cheating when you lose."

But just as the card game was getting underway.

"Sorry, friend, you can't come in here," came the voice of a security guard from outside the door.

"Bang!"

With a loud noise, the door to the private room burst open as a young man with an indifferent expression and an imposing attitude walked in.

"Who's that, you scared me," a woman exclaimed, jumping up reflexively.

"Don't move." Two security guards immediately rushed in, grabbing the intruder, ready to pin him to the ground and subdue him.

However, the guards quickly realized that something was off; the young man, who did not appear particularly strong, was surprisingly heavy, and they couldn't bring him down no matter how hard they tried.

"Zhang Jian?" Yang Jian's gaze was cold, devoid of any emotion, as he focused on the man sitting in the middle of the sofa—Zhang Jian.

Zhang Jian was visibly taken aback, seeming somewhat surprised. The wild smile on his face slowly faded, and he put down his cards. Clearly, he recognized the identity of the person who had suddenly barged in.

"Are these your bodyguards?" Yang Jian, confirming Zhang Jian's identity, then glanced at the two men beside him.

Zhang Jian flicked the ash from his cigarette and started to laugh again, "No, no misunderstanding, I don't know them. If you're not in a good mood, I don't mind if you make them disappear right now,"

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"President Zhang, I'm truly sorry. It was our negligence at work. We didn't expect this kid to actually force his way through. I'll take him away now," the two security guards hurriedly apologized.

"Look at them, these two idiots have no discernment at all. It's no wonder they're stuck being security guards their whole lives. And they dare to say they're my people? I admit, this is indeed my fault. I didn't expect such an important figure like you to visit my rundown place," President Zhang said with a sneer.

Zhang Jian stood up and walked over to the security guards, kicking each one fiercely.

The kicks seemed terrifyingly powerful, sending the two grown men flying out of the private room, crashing to the floor, coughing up blood, and wailing in pain.

Everyone else in the room was utterly shocked by this scene.

Is this guy even human? To be that strong?

"I'm here for you," Yang Jian said without turning his head, ignoring the two security guards and fixing his gaze on Zhang Jian.

"For me?"

Zhang Jian walked back and sat down next to the sofa, looping an arm around a female companion and laughing: "Although I quite admire you, as far as I remember, there's no connection between us, right? Of course, if you're here to have fun, I'm always welcoming. All expenses on me. If you need company, I can introduce you to a young and beautiful girl. No, one might not be enough for you. How about five? But any more than that, I fear you won't be able to handle."

"President Zhang, who is this handsome guy? Is he your friend, President Zhang? Why haven't we seen him before?" asked a bold beauty in a strappy dress.

After all, in their eyes, this man was at least on President Zhang's level – wealthy but much younger than President Zhang, and there could be a chance to get to know him better in the future.

"You don't know him? Ha ha."

Zhang Jian suddenly burst into laughter: "Yang Jian, did you hear that? They don't know you. They don't even recognize the infamous 'Ghost Eye' Yang Jian. Don't even think of claiming you're part of this world anymore. You're the only one who has ever dealt with an S-level incident domestically. If you were abroad, you'd be received by presidents."

"Received by presidents? Don't brag," the girl in the strappy dress said skeptically.

Zhang Jian took a deep drag of his cigarette: "You see, Yang Jian, no matter how fearsome or powerful you are, you're ultimately overlooked. People like us are so lowly that even security guards dare to stop us... If they knew our capabilities, they would only be kneeling and begging for mercy. So, this world has gone mad."

"Why don't you consider joining us? Try and see what it feels like to step on people. After all, you won't live long. Some people won't give you a second glance unless you cause a scene," he said, with a crazed look in his eyes, like a lunatic lost in his own world.

"It seems your mental state isn't very stable. That's good," Yang Jian replied unmoved, his gaze still calm.

"You think I'm insane? No, I haven't lost my mind. I'm more lucid than anyone else. The crazy ones are them," Zhang Jian retorted abruptly, his face contorted with ferocity as he violently grasped the neck of a female companion next to him, his strength so great there was an audible sound of bones crunching as he seemed ready to snap her neck.

The others were startled by this sudden move.

"Tell me, do you love me?" Zhang Jian stroked the choking woman's face earnestly.

"Love, love..." the woman nodded repeatedly, nearly crying out of fear.

Zhang Jian smiled satisfactorily and let go: "Good, your answer pleases me. Here, this is for you."

Having said that, he kicked a bag of money at the woman's feet.

The other beauties playing cards were stunned by the spectacle.

That was such a quick turnaround, but how much could it be? A million? Two million?

Zhang Jian then asked, "Do you love me too?"

"Love, love..."

Everyone else was frantic, vying to shout first, fearing they'd fall behind the others, even the young men who'd been playing cards with them earlier.

What if men count too?

"Ha ha." Zhang Jian laughed uproariously, arms around the women.

Yang Jian, witnessing all this, slightly furrowed his brows with discomfort. He didn't say anything, merely speaking calmly, "Is your performance over? It wasn't great, but I guess it was somewhat thrilling."

"Huh?"

First confused, Zhang Jian's smile then froze on his face, and a strong feeling of unease rose within him.

He saw his surroundings slowly fading away.

First, the walls of the private room began to crumble, then the people began to disappear, the furniture in the room collapsed... The lights above had somehow turned a bloody red.

All the noisy sounds had vanished, as had all other sources of light.

This place, it was a world shrouded in red light.

"Ghost Domain?"

Zhang Jian suddenly stood up, staring at Yang Jian: "Are you here to kill me?"

A Ghost Dominator wouldn't use the power of ghosts without reason. Once used, it meant there was an unavoidable matter at hand.

With no one else left, Yang Jian's purpose must have been very clear, something anyone with sense could realize.

"Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to kill you. I'm just passing by Ping'an Tower and thought I'd bury you on the way, to spare myself some trouble later. I might be quite busy today, so I won't stick around for pleasantries," Yang Jian said offhandedly.

Chapter 543 Farewell

"Just take me out as a convenience?"

Zhang Jian's face immediately darkened upon hearing Yang Jian's words, this guy really dared to say it, with no hesitation, as if talking about something trivial.

Did he think he was insignificant?

Or did this guy become so inflated that he didn't take other spirit manipulators into account?

"Since you want to kill me, there's no rush in these few minutes, at least let me understand why. It seems to me like this is our first meeting, and nothing prior relates me to you." Zhang Jian asked seriously, while recalling the recent events in his life.

No matter how hard he thought, he couldn't figure out anything that would involve Yang Jian.

Was it because a friend of his was bullied by him while playing in this bar?

Or was it that someone had bribed Yang Jian to deal with him?

While pondering, Zhang Jian also took a careful look at his surroundings.

The scope of the Ghost Domain didn't seem large, only less than a hundred squared meters in size. If it really came to a fight, he might not necessarily lose to this guy...

Yang Jian suddenly smiled and took a few steps forward, "I too only met your circle of friends for the first time today, and yet became the target of your suppression. Some things don't need a reason to be done, just like ghosts need to kill, as long as the conditions are met, then it is death. It just so happens that you meet my conditions for killing someone."

Zhang Jian's expression faltered, and he couldn't help but step back, wary of Yang Jian while also realizing something, "I see, your issue is with President Fei's circle who wants to deal with you, so you want to take action first. But I am just a minor figure in that circle, to speak harshly, my life or death... wait, you're not here for me, you're after President Fei?"

He suddenly remembered that he was responsible for covertly protecting President Fei.

If he died, then President Fei encountering Yang Jian today would have no chance of fighting back.

"You're not as dull as I imagined, I indeed came for that President Fei," Yang Jian nodded.

"This matter can be negotiated. If you want to kill President Fei, go ahead, as for me, I'll act as if I never showed up today. I won't obstruct your actions, and I won't lift a finger to protect him," Zhang Jian immediately said, without hesitation, selling out President Fei.

Yang Jian's gaze shifted slightly, an eye not his own eerily watching Zhang Jian; "You guys planned to find an opportunity to take me down at the meeting, and as President Fei's bodyguard, would you not know about it?"

Upon hearing this, Zhang Jian's eyes narrowed slightly.

Yang Jian knew about this matter?

What a joke, the meeting took place barely two days ago, and those who attended were the core figures of the circle, making it impossible for any leak.

"It seems like you are aware of it, and since you do, you continue to protect that President Fei, your stance is quite clear. With that clarity, you are no longer unrelated to this matter, and that's why I came today," Yang Jian said emotionlessly, his voice colder than ever.

Dammit.

Zhang Jian felt like cursing at this moment, so Yang Jian had chosen to target him first.

"Moreover, there's no need for you to waste time. Even if I keep the Ghost Domain open while talking to you, it doesn't affect me much. I am far from a full resurrection of the Evil Ghost, so if you don't want to die, you might try to struggle a bit. Who knows, maybe you could escape my Ghost Domain." Yang Jian waited for Zhang Jian's counter-attack.

Li Yao's information didn't have the details of Zhang Jian's ghost, so he had to be more cautious.

Even a person who had subdued a ghost could instantly kill themselves, so the safest method was to probe a little.

Caution is something every ghost controller must possess.

Zhang Jian may have appeared arrogant when toying with ordinary people, but the moment he stepped into Yang Jian's Ghost Domain, he dropped that arrogant attitude and became extremely serious and vigilant, even immediately trying to stall for time by speaking.

Even if it only wasted a few dozen seconds of Yang Jian's time, it could increase his own chances of survival.

"Killing me won't do you any good, and if we really fight it out, I might die, but you won't feel good either. How about this, starting from today I'll leave this city, withdraw from our circle of friends, and I guarantee I won't leak any information about you. Let's shake hands and make peace. Of course, as compensation, I can give you some money and some assets from this place, the value of which will satisfy you,"

Zhang Jian's forehead was slightly beading with cold sweat; he felt Yang Jian's resolve to kill him was very firm.

Firm to the point of being difficult to persuade.

This was definitely not a good thing.

"Do you really think there's any room for turning back after I've already used the Ghost Domain?"

Yang Jian retorted, "If you had taken the initiative to say these words the moment I walked in the door, it is highly likely I wouldn't have killed you. But you knew that my arrival boded ill, yet you played dumb, even talking about joining our circle of friends, pretending to be completely clueless,"

"Do you really think I've survived up to this point by doing what? Since you fear me and don't dare to make the first move, then I won't be polite."

Having said that, his pale, bloodless and cold palm seemed to move towards Zhang Jian.

Zhang Jian immediately sensed something was off, and almost instinctively wanted to counterattack, but it was already too late.

He felt as if various parts of his body were grasped tightly by cold, ghostly hands, rendering him completely immobilized, and bruises like handprints appeared on his cheeks, while his neck was gradually twisting to one side under the influence of a terrifying force.

"Crack! Crack!"

Sounds of cervical vertebrae breaking emanated from his neck.

Zhang Jian's expression was fierce, his breathing rapid; he wanted to struggle desperately but was utterly helplessly. He couldn't even see where the ghost that wanted to kill him was.

Yang Jian stood calmly opposite him, watching as his neck was slowly twisted.

In the eyes of others, Zhang Jian was just standing there motionless, but in the eyes of Yang Jian, there were several hands of the dead on Zhang Jian's body. These hands held him tightly, like evil ghosts claiming his life.

"Not planning to use the abilities of your ghost?"

Yang Jian's gaze shifted slightly, "Or does he not have confidence to act now, waiting for an opportunity? After all, he knows I have subdued three ghosts... In that case, I'll give him a chance to kill me."

As a ghost controller, Zhang Jian appeared totally defenseless. He was in pain, fearful, his eyes widened, his neck twisted beyond ninety degrees, and his body convulsed subconsciously, yet he still could not move.

"It seems you are more fragile than I thought. Such a weakling was actually President Fei's bodyguard? Well then, you can go on your way in peace."

Along with his voice, came the sound.

"Snap."

A crisp cracking noise of broken bones rang out as Zhang Jian's neck was completely twisted, his head spinning around on his neck for two full turns before dangling down softly while his body lost the ability to move and stopped twitching.

"Waste of my time,"

Yang Jian spoke with a hint of contempt as he turned to leave, the red light around him gradually fading.

However, at that moment.

Zhang Jian, lying on the ground with his neck broken and no longer breathing, suddenly opened his eyes.

His body deflated rapidly like a balloon, leaving nothing but an empty sack of skin; meanwhile, the air filled with the putrid stench of decaying flesh, the overwhelming scent giving off the impression that one might suffocate on the spot.

"Yang Jian, you're as good as dead."

Zhang Jian's voice echoed around like that of an Evil Ghost, although his body was eerily motionless.

The thick odor of corpse stench came together, vaguely forming the outline of a person that enveloped Yang Jian's body and made its way into him through his mouth and nose.

Yang Jian's body shuddered and then went still.

"Do you know why the people in my circle don't openly acknowledge me? Because I can invade the body of any ghost manipulator and replace them. The guy on the ground was just a body I previously occupied, and now, you're next,"

Zhang Jian's voice seemed to reverberate in Yang Jian's mind, his tone fiendishly mad.

He had only one chance to kill Yang Jian, and he had to wait for the right moment; otherwise, he couldn't possibly capture Yang Jian who possessed the Ghost Domain—he would just suffocate to death trying.

But once he found an opportunity, Zhang Jian believed he had a good chance of doing away with Yang Jian. After all, he was only human and humans could die. Plus, if he was lucky enough to control the body that commanded three ghosts, the next "Ghost Eye" would not be Yang Jian, but him—Zhang Jian.

Soon.

Zhang Jian's voice disappeared, and so did the nearly suffocating stench of death that permeated the air.

Everything seemed to return to calm.

Was it a success?

This thought arose in Zhang Jian's mind; he no longer felt the presence of Yang Jian.

But he also felt as if he didn't acquire a new body...

It was as though what he had just killed was not a living person, but an inanimate object.

"Ghost that invades bodies? Indeed, a very dangerous thing. If I'm not mistaken, that stench of death was the ghost itself. Ordinary people who smelled it would be killed instantly, right? You hid the scent very well, not letting it out at first for fear I might become wary."

However, in the next moment, Yang Jian's voice once again echoed in the room.

The instant he heard this voice, Zhang Jian's heart sank.

"How is this possible?"

Then Zhang Jian began to realize that the body of Yang Jian he had just invaded was disintegrating into a pile of dirt exuding foul odor, scattering on the ground.

The thick stench of decay lingered.

"Nothing's impossible. You were just in the first layer of my Ghost Domain. Now, welcome to the second layer," as the words were spoken, everything was once again enveloped in red light.

Not far away, Yang Jian stood emotionlessly, motionless, his forehead sporting an extra eye that gave off an eerie glow, like a ghastr scouring everything.

"Two layers of Ghost Domain?" Zhang Jian paused briefly.

Yang Jian continued, "By the way, I personally am in the third layer of the Ghost Domain. Unless your ghost can invade this layer, there's no way it can kill me. After all, my code name 'Ghost Eye' isn't for nothing. What you see in front of me might not really be there."

Within the third layer of the Ghost Domain, the nonexistent Zhang Jian reverted to his true form.

It was a highly decayed corpse, standing there as rotting flesh continued to fall off its body.

Black blood, broken skin, and putrid corpse liquid... that was the source of the foul stench.

This disintegrated rot was not precisely pieced together, but was in a state of fragmentation.

The only part left intact was Zhang Jian's head.

This state of erosion by the ghost suggested that revival wasn't far off, no wonder his mind was extremely unstable.

"Damn it,"

Zhang Jian's head, looking much like a resurrected Evil Ghost, was horrifically fierce, filled with resentment and hatred towards Yang Jian.

"There's no need to be angry, the gap between us is clear."

As Yang Jian spoke, another Ghost Eye appeared on his palm. He slowly raised his hand and placed it on his forehead, "Moreover, your ghost is of no value for containment. Such things are too unpredictable and inherently dangerous, so the best course is to have you disappear."

Upon finishing.

The fifth layer of the Ghost Domain activated instantly, and the gaze of the Ghost Eye, along with a beam of red light, enveloped Zhang Jian.

The next moment

The Ghost Domain vanished and so did Zhang Jian, along with the ghost that was eroding his body, leaving no trace behind.

"Even ghosts can be sent away, huh? Incredible," Yang Jian murmured as he touched the eye on his palm upon seeing the emptiness before him.

But he knew that the dispatched ghost hadn't died—it had just temporarily disappeared from the real world and might reappear later.

Whether it would resurface in the same place or elsewhere was unknown.

What was certain, though, was that Zhang Jian was definitively dead.

Chapter 544 Visiting and Paying Respect

"Although Zhang Jian only manipulated one ghost, his threat level to me still exists. As expected, it's always right to be cautious."

Yang Jian took the car keys and phone from Zhang Jian's remaining body and then left the place.

Before making a move, he had used Ghost Domain to take Zhang Jian deep underground, to prevent Zhang Jian from escaping and to avoid the ghost inside his body from causing any disturbances in the bar.

Should the fierce ghost within Zhang Jian have revived, at least a few hundred people nearby would have died.

When he walked out of the bar to the back door, Li Yao was already waiting by a car.

Li Yao wore sunglasses, changed her clothes and hairstyle, and performed a simple disguise. When she saw Yang Jian come out, she immediately smiled and said, "Much faster than I expected. It seems you didn't encounter any trouble. Although I don't know some key information about Zhang Jian, I believe he was not a threat to you."

People who manipulate three ghosts are rare in the headquarters, not to mention Yang Jian was an anomaly among those who manipulate ghosts.

"He won't appear in this world anymore, next is President Fei. When does he usually get off work?" Yang Jian asked directly.

"That depends on where you plan to deal with him."

Li Yao said, "Without Zhang Jian's protection, today he can disappear anytime he steps out of Ping'an Tower. However, I suggest you wait until he's a bit further away to make your move. After all, there are other ghost manipulators inside Ping'an Tower. While you can't hide the news of your action, they still don't know you're on the move."

"Hiding it a bit longer is always beneficial."

"Makes sense. Here are Zhang Jian's car keys and phone; you know what to do later." Yang Jian tossed the items to her.

Li Yao nodded, "I'll pretend to be Zhang Jian and follow President Fei by car. You find the opportunity. But we only have one day's time. If both Zhang Jian and President Fei disappear by the second day, people in their circle will definitely notice."

"One day is enough time for me to kill three to five key figures," Yang Jian said calmly.

"See you later then," Li Yao said with a smile, shaking the car keys.

Yang Jian didn't speak. He just turned and left.

Actually, dealing with an unprotected ordinary person did not require so much effort, but he felt it necessary to meet President Fei. Perhaps he could learn something, as being one of the decision-makers in their circle, Fei certainly knew more than an assistant like Li Yao.

At the top of Ping'an Tower.

A middle-aged man in his thirties, dressed in a suit, now spoke forcefully at the conference table, "The ghost painting incident has not been satisfactorily resolved by headquarters, which is a huge hidden danger. I believe the ghost painting incident is likely to erupt again. Moreover, after some investigation, there seem to be other forces behind those two missing ghosts in the ghost painting incident."

"It seems like someone doesn't want to see the ghost painting incident and Ghost Envoy incident resolved together, thus they used some unknown means to let those two ghosts escape. Otherwise, given the way ghosts move, they couldn't disappear without a trace."

"President Fei, are you suggesting that someone is sabotaging this operation from behind?" Jang Shangbai rubbed his head at the conference table. He was somewhat tired, obviously having been busy these last two days.

"I'm just speculating. If we can't doubt the unpredictability of ghosts, then we should directly suspect people," President Fei said.

"The ghost painting incident first broke out overseas, resulted in many deaths, and wiped out a top-level team of ghost manipulators. It's been a substantial loss for those countries. If someone wants to balance the power between countries, causing trouble at a critical moment fits the motive. And there's a lot of hidden information in the archives of the ghost painting incident..."

A young analyst spoke.

"Does that mean it's hardly likely to find that thing?" a person named He Tianxiong said.

"It depends on whether the ghost painting incident erupts shortly. If it happens to occur in our city, then human intervention is highly probable. Of course, this is also an opportunity for us," President Fei said.

"A paranormal event in our territory is not a good thing," Jang Shangbai frowned and said.

The circle of ghost manipulators had its own territorial divisions, such as Yang Jian's Dachang City and the ghost forum where Ye Zhen from Dahai City was.

This was done to prevent conflicts between forces and also for some strategic considerations. But when it comes to the best territory, it's none other than our city where the friends' circle is located.

Suddenly, President Fei said, "Yang Jian is still here, right? If the ghost painting incident really happens, then we can kill Yang Jian without hesitation, and blame it on the ghost painting incident. This way, we don't have to waste our energy on him and can finish before the team leader's plan is executed."

"That's one less trouble to deal with, not bad," Fang Shiming commented calmly, attending to his nails while responding.

"Furthermore, if the ghost painting incident does occur, it will consume a lot of manpower and resources from headquarters, which would greatly elevate our friends' circle's future status," President Fei continued. "If everything goes smoothly, from now on, we will be the country's top ghost-manipulating power, with unimaginable influence."

"Maybe we can also use this opportunity to pressure Minister Cao into using the Coffin Nail," Jang Shangbai chimed in.

That item capable of nailing a Hungry Ghost was incredibly important—any manipulator who got their hands on it could face paranormal events and go head-to-head with ghosts. If used well, it could even resolve a large number of paranormal events without any casualties.

But Cao Yanhua was too conservative, or maybe the consequences of dealing with the Hungry Ghost were too significant. Even when the Ghost Envoy incident erupted, he didn't consider using the Coffin Nail.

...

The meeting continued to discuss other matters and make some corresponding arrangements.

It wasn't until the meeting ended that President Fei returned to his own office to start on other tasks.

Some people, although carrying the titles of manager and president, were actually just on the payroll and didn't manage affairs; most matters were handled by him.

And from recent intelligence, he increasingly felt that the future was becoming more and more dangerous. Only by boarding the large ship of the friends' circle as soon as possible could he ensure his and his family's future safety.

What President Fei needed to do now was to make sure he wouldn't get thrown off this big ship.

Busy until four in the afternoon, President Fei reached the time to leave work.

He finished his last cup of coffee, sorted through the documents in his hand, delegated the remaining tasks to his assistant and secretary, and then prepared to leave work and head home.

Arriving at the underground parking lot, his driver had long been waiting for him.

"Take this route home today," President Fei instructed as he sat in the car and plotted a course on the tablet in front of him, then said.

"Understood, President Fei," the driver immediately started the car.

For safety reasons, President Fei always chose different routes home, and the car was picked randomly, all to ensure that his whereabouts were not leaked, and he would regularly switch among several residences.

It couldn't be helped.

Although he had strong backers after joining the circle of friends, he had also offended quite a few people. In short, being cautious never led to mistakes. He was just an ordinary person and couldn't afford to mess with the ghost manipulators.

President Fei then sent the route to Zhang Jian via text message, asking him to prepare to follow and provide protection.

After President Fei's car left Ping'an Tower,

Li Yao, sitting in Zhang Jian's car across the street, received the text message.

"Is President Fei just circling around this area?" Li Yao looked at the route, somewhat speechless, but still started the car and proceeded to follow.

President Fei slightly opened the curtain and only relaxed when he saw Zhang Jian's car trailing behind.

Today, there were no issues.

"However, Zhang Jian's mental state has been getting worse and worse. I need to find a new bodyguard. It's very dangerous to use the same person for a long time." President Fei pondered in his mind, "Next month maybe, after this period is over, we'll see."

The car meandered slowly through the city, with many of the routes being repetitive.

After circling around for more than half an hour, President Fei's car finally headed to a somewhat old residential area in the city.

It was hard to imagine that President Fei from the circle of friends would actually live in such a place.

"Flash the car lights three times, you can go back," President Fei got out of the car and instructed the driver.

"Yes, President Fei," the driver, not understanding the reason but accustomed to it, flashed the car lights three times and drove away.

President Fei hadn't walked far when he saw Zhang Jian's car still parked there motionless, which immediately made him frown.

Flashing the car lights was the signal for Zhang Jian to drive back. Normally, Zhang Jian would have eagerly stepped on the gas and sped away, yet today, there was no movement.

"Was that just a secret signal?"

Seeing President Fei stop and look in her direction, Li Yao in the car instantly felt something was off. Her expression changed slightly, she thought for a moment, then gently pressed the gas pedal, starting to move the car slowly.

When President Fei saw the car moving, he turned his gaze away, not thinking further, and went straight into a nearby residential building.

"Is all that alertness really necessary?" Li Yao breathed a sigh of relief, "But why hasn't Yang Jian shown up? Doesn't he plan to take action? We've been following this long."

"Forget it, I'll leave this place for now, so as not to be seen by President Fei," she decided.

She drove away, planning to find a place to pass some time, convinced that if she had followed in her car, then Yang Jian must have followed as well, though when he would appear, she didn't know.

President Fei arrived at a window in the stairwell of the second floor, and after he saw Zhang Jian's car actually leaving, he went downstairs, came out of the stairwell, and walked towards the residential building opposite.

He couldn't let Zhang Jian, who was mentally unstable, know his exact location.

Perhaps Zhang Jian was protecting him now, but there might be times when he'd think of killing him.

"Dealing with these dangerous people, one has to be careful," President Fei inwardly sighed.

He came to the door of an apartment on the third floor, took out his keys, and unlocked the door.

But as soon as he opened the door, something seemed amiss with President Fei's expression.

There was an extra pair of shoes at the door, not his own, a pair of athletic shoes that a young person would wear, and they were men's.

"Could it be..." President Fei had a bad feeling brewing inside him.

"Time to wash your hands and eat. Today I've made your favorite Osmanthus Fish, Xiao Bao, go serve your uncle some rice," a woman's voice came from inside, seemingly speaking to someone.

"No need to be so polite, I can do it myself," a man's voice responded.

President Fei immediately became furious; his wife knew enough about his work that she would have informed him in advance of any visitors, and there wouldn't be any random people coming over to have dinner at their home.

Without even taking off his shoes, he stormed into the house.

As he had only taken a few steps, he caught sight of a young man wiping his hands, smiling as he walked out of the washroom.

"You are... Yang Jian?"

However, as he recognized the person's identity, President Fei's pupils shrank violently, his blood ran cold in an instant, a creeping chill spread from his feet throughout his body, giving him a feeling of complete weakness, and without even realizing it, he collapsed onto the floor.

Chapter 545

President Fei, slumped on the ground, had lost all of his usual composure and steadiness. Now, in his eyes, there was only fear and an inexplicable chill that kept seeping out from within him.

Yang Jian.

He was well aware of the weight the man before him carried. He had perused countless files and intelligence about him, from his experiences in resolving various supernatural incidents to his personal preferences and lifestyle... After all, the better you understand the enemy, the better you could craft specific strategies to combat them.

However, once President Fei truly understood, he came to a conclusion: Yang Jian was an extremely pure individual.

Because he was just a high school student and hadn't yet entered society, he hadn't adopted the well-known societal values.

Profit above all.

Perhaps he might pursue some wealth, but he wouldn't compromise for the sake of profit.

Moreover, after becoming a ghost whisperer, the emotions that living people have would gradually fade away, and even disappear in the end.

A person unaffected by profit or emotion was both pure and terrifying.

Yet today, this very Yang Jian stood before him, in his home, and had even met his wife and child.

Just the thought made President Fei feel as though he was about to endure a hellish nightmare.

Yang Jian wiped his hands and looked at President Fei with a smile—a smile that was merely a facial gesture, devoid of any emotion or warmth, creating an inexplicable sense of dread in one's heart, much like the grim reaper extending a greeting.

"So you're President Fei," he said.

The casual greeting felt like it was tearing President Fei apart.

President Fei's throat moved as if he wanted to say something, but he found he lacked the strength even to open his mouth, managing only to tremble his lips slightly.

"Who could it be at this time? I just heard someone at the door," however, a woman's voice came from the kitchen.

Immediately after, an intelligent and virtuous woman wearing an apron and holding a spatula walked out.

It was Wann Yue.

President Fei regained some composure. He quickly turned to look, fearing that his wife had already encountered misfortune. After all, for someone like Yang Jian, killing would not carry much of a psychological burden. Killing one person was no different than several—it was like stepping on a few bugs, merely by chance.

"Please, spare my family, whatever it is, come at me. I can do a lot for you, definitely worth two lives. Let them go," he said urgently.

He struggled to rise but instead knelt on the ground and clutched tightly at the hem of Yang Jian's pants.

President Fei was clear in his heart, the moment Yang Jian appeared in his home, he knew that his secret had been exposed.

The circle of friends that was to deal with him had leaked the information, and Yang Jian was planning to make a preemptive move to clear the scene.

It was in line with his character. Back in Dachang City, the Xiaoqiang Entertainment Club set up by Wang Xiaoming's brother, Wang Xiaoqiang, disappeared just like that. Even with Wang Xiaoming's personal negotiations, he couldn't save Wang Xiaoqiang from being killed when Yang Jian decided to act.

Without a word, Yang Jian simply put away his indifferent smile and calmly looked at him.

"Mommy, I'm hungry. I want to eat," then, a boy's voice rang in the room.

A very delicate-looking boy, about six or seven years old, curiously walked out.

This was President Fei's child, Fei Xiaobao.

With his wife and child present, President Fei's emotions surged. While holding onto Yang Jian's pant leg, he shouted towards his family: "Get out of here, leave this place, go back to our hometown and never come back in this lifetime. Don't worry about me, and don't inquire about my affairs in the future... just go..."

He knew this might be the last time he would see his wife and child, equating his words to a last will.

However, President Fei was also clear that if Yang Jian decided to act, Wann Yue and Xiao Bao would not be able to escape. But he didn't care. He was gambling that Yang Jian would let them go. At least for now, Yang Jian hadn't made a move, so there was a possibility of getting away before he changed his mind.

The intelligent woman called Wann Yue appeared to be startled by President Fei's hysterical screaming, showing fear on her face, and then made a move that President Fei could never have anticipated.

Wann Yue quickly pulled Xiao Bao behind Yang Jian, with a look of panic.

President Fei's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Xiao Yang, who is this man? Should we call the police?" Wann Yue, looking wary at President Fei, seemed to be facing an intruder who had abruptly entered her home, thinking of calling the police as her first response.

Upon hearing this, President Fei froze completely. He saw in Wann Yue's face an unprecedented sense of estrangement and distance, as if he had become someone else. His wife, usually very affectionate, didn't seem to recognize him at all.

Not only that, he also saw a hint of fear in Xiao Bao's gaze behind him.

Was this fear of himself?

"No need to call the police, perhaps he just walked into the wrong door. I'll handle this; you can rest assured. Please take the child inside for now," Yang Jian said, looking back.

Wann Yue thought for a moment, then nodded with some concern, "Then be careful, if anything happens, I'll report it immediately."

After speaking, she hurriedly took the child and returned to the house.

Seeing this scene, President Fei no longer had the strength to clutch at Yang Jian's trouser leg; he seemed utterly deflated, his lips trembling as he asked, "What, what have you done to my family? They don't even recognize me anymore."

"I didn't do much, just made your wife and child forget about someone like you," Yang Jian explained calmly.

"After all, if a person is dead, the knowledge would certainly distress and upset their family greatly; the best way to soothe such pain is through forgetting."

"In their memory, there is no husband, no father, just a man who died irresponsibly long ago, while I am here visiting as a good friend."

"You..."

President Fei didn't know what to do; his eyes were filled with inexplicable horror.

"You should thank me, as I consider my actions merciful. It's charity for destroying such a happy family as yours. If you'd like to kneel and thank me, I would gladly accept," said Yang Jian.

Chills ran down President Fei's spine as he replied with a trembling voice, "How can you say that? Are you even human?"

"I am the same kind of person as you are."

Yang Jian remained indifferent. "If I had been killed by someone from your social circle, perhaps at some point in the future, in some unseen place, a mother would cry her heart out for her dead child. You are a father to someone, and I am a son to a mother. None of us are orphans; we all have families."

"It can't be that your family members are humans, but mine are not."

President Fei fell silent for a while before finally saying, "I understand... How do you want me to die?"

"That depends on whether your death has any value," replied Yang Jian. "After all, people change. Maybe I'll change my mind at some point."

"I will hand over everything I have to you, and I promise not to hide anything," President Fei said in desperation.

Yang Jian nodded, "That's not bad."

"But all the data isn't here, I can tell you the location, you'll have to go get it yourself," President Fei immediately disclosed an address.

"As expected, someone like you would surely have prepared a more comprehensive set of information as a contingency. I've noted the address and hope you're not deceiving me," said Yang Jian.

President Fei didn't respond because he didn't dare deceive Yang Jian; he couldn't bear the consequences of lying. Yet he still kept one card close to his chest, not revealing the content of today's meeting, since it wasn't recorded and hadn't been implemented yet. If it actually happened in the future, it would be hard to trace back to a dead man like himself.

"So, how will you deal with me? If possible, I'd like to die far from here," he said.

Yang Jian glanced out the window, "That building across the street looks pretty tall, about six or seven stories."

"I understand," President Fei stood up, walked out of the room with a look of despair, and headed outside.

He tried to look back, but saw nothing; only the frightening Yang Jian remained behind him.

As President Fei walked out the door, preparing to leave, something suddenly came to his mind, and he said, "Li Yao is your person, right?"

"Hmm," Yang Jian didn't hide it, "Have you suspected it?"

"No, just guessed it now. Only three people from the social circle have really had contact with you. One is Gao Zhiqiang, whom you've already taken care of, one is Jang Shangbai from the headquarters meeting, and the last one is Li Yao, who tried to manage public relations with you from the beginning. Li Yao is the most suspicious because she's just an ordinary person, and it's easiest for someone like you to control her after contact, since you can even manipulate memories."

Though President Fei spoke the truth, he still felt a shiver down his spine.

This ability of Yang Jian had never appeared in any records, nor had it been displayed before. Now, he couldn't be sure if Yang Jian truly controlled only Li Yao, or if there might be others in Ping'an Tower.

"You are indeed a smart man, but it's a shame smart people need to have the abilities to match; otherwise, they don't live long," Yang Jian remarked.

"When did you control Li Yao?" President Fei asked, "At least let me understand when I started to lose."

"The first time I went to Ping'an Tower. She was my person not long after her shift ended," Yang Jian said casually, as if it were a trivial matter.

Li Yao had quickly become useless as a pawn; there was no need for secrecy anymore.

President Fei's pupils constricted slightly. "Did you need to act so quickly? At that time, the social circle hadn't had a conflict with you yet."

"Otherwise, how do you think I'm still alive?" Yang Jian's brows furrowed slightly as he spoke.

President Fei didn't ask further; he knew where he had lost. It wasn't a lack of intelligence or caution, but an underestimation of the opponent.

Should he have expected as much from someone who had resolved an S-class supernatural event?

"Moreover, as an ordinary person, you need to understand your place. Some matters are beyond your station, just like Li Yao's was."

"Got it, won't happen in the next life."