

Revival 661

Chapter 661 Summary

Yang Jian hadn't had time to ponder why the human skin paper appeared here when the Ghost Child already ran over, snatched the human skin paper from the ground and stuffed it into its mouth, looking as though it was about to swallow it, which scared him into hastily instructing the Ghost Child to spit it out.

Setting aside whether the human skin paper can be eaten or not, swallowing it may have some undesirable effects on the Ghost Child.

At the very least, he would choose to keep the human skin paper before making a decision.

Even if the plan presented on the human skin paper is terrifying, at least some of the key information it contains is indeed useful and of great value.

He wasn't sure if it would be needed, but at least he couldn't feed it to the Ghost Child just yet.

The Ghost Child now had its cheeks puffed out, tilting its head slightly as it looked at Yang Jian, with the human skin paper still in its mouth, presumably not swallowed. Then, it slowly spat it out.

The human skin paper was crumpled into a ball, saliva-stained, and bore two rows of bite marks, no teeth, but impressions of gum lines left behind.

Yang Jian walked over with a grim expression.

As the instigator, Ghost Child seemed oblivious; it still tilted its head, watching Yang Jian, seemingly waiting for the next command.

Yang Jian ignored the Ghost Child.

He just looked at the human skin paper on the ground that had been spat out and roughly understood what was happening.

That residual dark green handprint on the human skin paper.

It meant that the human skin paper had been touched by the Ghost Child.

Based on the Second Stage Ghost Infant's murder pattern, it would kill anyone who saw and touched it. So the Ghost Child's loss of control earlier was because its Hungry Ghost nature was triggered, although this trigger wasn't mandatory. It only happened within a certain range and without its own command to restrain it, leading to the unconscious act.

"That was dangerous; the human skin paper was almost eaten," thought Yang Jian to himself.

He looked at the puddles scattered around and now understood what those represented; they were likely the remains of a ghost that the human skin paper had consumed back in Huanggang Village, the same ghost that had once been in the hands of Ye Jun from the Xiaoqiang Entertainment Club.

A terrifying kind of corpse water.

Live humans who came into contact with it would rot away in days, but before the resurrection of a fierce ghost, the controller of the corpse water could withstand all kinds of attacks without dying.

"Human skin paper, Ye Jun's corpse water... These things actually showed up inside this building, and it was while I was disconnected from consciousness," Yang Jian thought over carefully, a chill creeping into his heart.

Because this indicated one thing.

The human skin paper seemed to have the ability to move around.

However, this ability depended on other ghosts, and this strange corpse water was the ghost the human skin paper relied on.

"Assuming the human skin paper can control the ghosts it previously absorbed, then it must have emerged from where it was buried without my knowledge, invaded this building. It was just unfortunate that it encountered the Ghost Child and was attacked by it, causing the corpse water to be consumed by the Ghost Child, and it was left behind once again."

Yang Jian's gaze shifted slightly, feeling a bit frightened at that moment.

After all, he had held the human skin paper in his hands more than once, and at the beginning, he had even stuffed it into his pocket, nearly keeping it beside his bed to sleep with.

But if the human skin paper could move with the help of a ghost, then ever since it left Huanggang Village, it possessed this ability—it just so happened that it chose to act now.

Yang Jian fell silent for a moment, a chill spreading throughout his body from the soles of his feet.

It was a sensation he rarely experienced, but today it was especially intense.

"Wei Jing's eerie resurrection, Guo Fan being a trap of the Spirit Altar Ghost, followed by my invasion by the Spirit Altar Ghost, to Wei Jing's loss of control... all these incidents may seem accidental, yet if they are linked together, it forms a huge scheme with the presence of the human skin paper behind every incident."

"This first active move by the human skin paper is definitely not coincidental, it must have known what was happening in the laboratory, that Wei Jing and I would lose control, which is why it appeared in this building. It was just that it met the Ghost Child while preparing to do something."

"The Ghost Child was not part of its plan, an unexpected ghost that joined in, or perhaps the Ghost Child is neither a ghost nor a human—such a peculiar existence that the skin paper couldn't foresee, so it was nearly eaten by the Ghost Child."

Yang Jian had these thoughts.

"Wang Xiaoming once said, during the experiment, when abnormalities occurred, the spirit position where my consciousness resided started oozing blood, and my portrait was covered with fresh blood. This phenomenon reminds me of the Ghost Cabinet from before; it also bled... Is it the trade rule taking effect? That blood was resisting the unknown paranormal invasion on the spirit position."

"It's unknown whether the human skin paper was aware of this, but given the situation at that time, it made no difference whether it knew or not. My consciousness might still be alive, but without the ability to act, I could only watch everything unfold."

Yang Jian thought about many things, slowly unraveling each aspect of the incident, and a rather terrifying truth gradually surfaced.

The key point lay with the Ghost Child.

If it weren't for the fact that he had left the Ghost Child in the building, issuing an order to seal the building, Yang Jian felt that the human skin paper would have already succeeded.

As for its purpose, Yang Jian did not yet know, only that something extremely dreadful was bound to happen, and the chances of him coming back to life were exceedingly slim.

"This thing is more dangerous than I imagined. It's hiding, lying in wait, very dreadful. Its plan isn't just traps; all the plans seem to have some loopholes. Even if you succeed for a time, these loopholes will sooner or later manifest their intended effect."

"And by then it will be too late."

Yang Jian once again looked at the skin-paper scheme on the ground, feeling an urge to completely split it with the Firewood Knife.

But it seemed wasteful to use the Firewood Knife for this purpose again, although the scheme on the skin-paper was dangerous, it certainly did have its effects. Besides, one would only choose the skin-paper's plan when there's no other way out.

If he didn't choose the skin-paper's plan this time, Yang Jian was sure to die from the Eight-Tone Music Box's curse.

It was a choice between taking a huge risk with the scheme or choosing a sure path to death.

Anyone would know how to choose in this situation.

At this moment, Yang Jian thought of the last sentence on the skin-paper before resolving the curse, "Trust Wang Xiaoming."

Pondering over this sentence in light of current events, that's what was truly terrifying.

Because it was correct, Yang Jian indeed should trust Wang Xiaoming this time. If he had taken measures to guard against Wang Xiaoming before, those measures would directly lead to his own downfall with no chance of turning things around.

It was a psychological gambit, another trap beyond the other schemes.

This trap wasn't aimed at anyone else, it targeted Yang Jian alone.

"It's still the same old saying, as long as I still face dangers in the future, I will gamble with the plan on the skin-paper. Although I've won every time up till now, just one loss, and I'm done for," he murmured.

Yang Jian pondered for a long while.

He was internally conflicted, should he completely destroy this thing, or should he keep it despite the great risks?

After a good while, he sighed.

In the end, he decided to keep the skin-paper.

Although he knew it was wrong, the hope of survival overcame his fear of ghosts.

Even though Yang Jian had to gamble every time with the skin-paper to possibly survive, at least there was a chance to gamble. If he truly destroyed the skin-paper, then he wouldn't even have the chance to gamble again, and he might possibly die even faster considering he had watched many a spirit manipulator die before his eyes.

How could one survive in this cruel world without taking extreme measures?

Yang Jian packed up the skin-paper again, casting a glance at the Ghost Child.

This Second Stage Hungry Ghost was so dangerous, yet it was being kept by his side.

Though there was no problem for now, it was possible that the most dangerous thing beside him in the future would be the Ghost Child. Yang Jian felt that if he were to die one day, it would probably not be due to a supernatural event, but rather in the trap of the skin-paper or at the hands of the Ghost Child.

If he ever faced true danger, he would definitely seek help from the skin-paper or the Ghost Child.

Unaware of Yang Jian's peculiar look, the Ghost Child, with no new commands, regained its freedom and continued to wander around, clutching the rotting Dead Man's Head.

"It's time to leave this place."

Yang Jian once again put away the skin-paper, deciding to find a special pouch or box to stuff it in, then hang it around the Ghost Child's neck. That way, if the skin-paper tried to act again, it would have to play by the Ghost Child's rules, possibly getting eaten by it if anything unusual occurred.

Using ghosts to suppress other ghosts was a viable idea.

Even if there was a loss of control, at most it would be on one side, preventing an issue where both would cause problems simultaneously.

As Yang Jian was just stepping out of the building, he couldn't help but halt.

He had forgotten something.

The Ghost Rope in Wei Jing's hands.

"I left it in that room when I was imprisoning Wei Jing, and in my rush to leave, I forgot to take it with me," Yang Jian frowned, preparing to go back for it.

But he hesitated soon after.

It wasn't that he minded the trip, but he suddenly realized that he didn't have enough capacity to suppress it himself.

Ghost Shadow had taken control of Ghost Hand and Ghost Eye, then Ghost Hand, now possessing the abilities of a Ghost Envoy, further suppressed the soon-to-be-resurrected Ghost Eye, creating a good balance among the three. Adding the Ghost Rope would break his own balance.

This was the consequence of using the Firewood Knife those two times before.

"Forget it, the Ghost Rope isn't that important to me, and Wei Jing did try to help me when I was out of control, otherwise he wouldn't have been invaded by a ghost. If he's dead and the rope is taken, then so be it, but Wang Xiaoming said he still has a chance to live. If by some chance he does come back to life and finds out I took his item, it would be quite awkward," he reasoned.

Yang Jian did not turn back for the Ghost Rope.

For Wei Jing, who had once offered him some help, he didn't want to do such things.

Besides, there was a Ghost Scissors out there, currently of unknown whereabouts, possibly in the hands of Cao Yang.

That item was far more formidable than the rope, and he should be more concerned about that.

Chapter 662 Strange Emotions

Yang Jian returned to the suburban villa with the Ghost Child, feeling that he deserved a good rest. Although the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box didn't last long, it had tormented him for days—the feeling of listening to death's notes every single day was a terrible ordeal.

More than physical exhaustion, it was a spiritual torment.

Ordinary people might already have suffered an emotional breakdown or gone mad.

"It seems that Liu Xiaoyu has left." Upon entering the villa, Yang Jian found it deserted.

On the living room coffee table lay a pile of gleaming gold bars, compensation given by He Tianxiong that remained unaddressed, giving off an ostentatious air of wealth.

"I remember there is a small workshop in the basement of this house." Suddenly recalling something, Yang Jian picked up a few gold bars and headed to the basement.

The basement housed various smithing tools and molds, previously used by He Tianxiong to forge tools—by smelting gold and using the existing molds, anyone could create unusual instruments meant for containing malevolent spirits.

After all, his circle of friends was different from headquarters; without headquarters' logistical support, they had to fend for themselves. Unlike before, when Yang Jian could simply make a call, and the containment box for ghosts would be immediately sent from headquarters.

Yang Jian busied himself for a while.

When he came out, he held a hollow gold sphere in his hand, resembling a golden bell.

Inside this artifact, filled with human skin paper, was not a simple item; Yang Jian secured a sturdy gold chain around the Ghost Child's neck.

"Not bad, quite fitting."

Yang Jian looked it over and adjusted the chain size to ensure it wouldn't easily come off.

Taking a second look, it appeared rather well-matched—a fitting touch would be to engrave wishes for long life and prosperity on it.

This time, instead of placing the human skin paper in a box, Yang Jian welded the sphere shut, leaving no gaps. Entrusting the ever-watchful Ghost Child, who needed neither food nor sleep, he believed there was no way anything could escape.

Having completed these tasks, Yang Jian locked the Ghost Child in a room, ordered him not to come out, and then went to sleep himself.

Although staying with the Ghost Child was unsettling, Wang Shanshan's successful experience reassured Yang Jian that the Ghost Child was controllable and wouldn't attack living people for no reason.

He slept very soundly that night.

But waking up felt not so comfortable.

Around eight in the morning, Yang Jian's personal phone, which few knew about, rang beside his bed, indicating an important matter since phone calls were rare.

"Who is it?"

Yang Jian immediately opened his eyes and picked up the call.

"Yang team leader, it—it's me, I'm Chen Shumei, Xiong Wenwen's mother, we've met before," came a woman's voice from the phone.

Yang Jian quickly remembered, "Aunt Chen, what's the matter?"

Chen Shumei's voice sounded nervous and constrained, "I have something to discuss with you, are you available now?"

"Is it about Xiong Wenwen?" Yang Jian asked.

"Yes," Chen Shumei replied softly.

Yang Jian considered for a moment. Although Xiong Wenwen's mother had previously refused his request, her decision might have changed over the past few days.

"Alright, Aunt Chen, please give me the address, and I'll come right over."

"I'm at home right now, you should recognize the address," Chen Shumei said.

Yang Jian responded, "Okay, see you soon."

He thought it was still worth trying to recruit Xiong Wenwen, whose Premonition Ability was crucial—having him on hand could avoid many crises and save lives if used correctly.

"I should deal with forming the team before leaving this city and going back to Dachang City, gathering a group of capable ghost hunters will be helpful for my future."

It was his circle of friends that had changed Yang Jian's mind.

Although ghost hunters' life spans were mostly short, banding together could markedly increase their survival rates.

Yang Jian soon returned to the city center.

However, as soon as he entered the city area, he felt a disturbing sensation—his eyelids flickered incessantly, causing unease. The twitching wasn't from his own eyes but the flesh near his Ghost Eye.

This was a premonition.

"Today, something is very wrong with this city."

Sitting in the taxi, Yang Jian looked out the window.

The sky was gloomy and oppressive, filled with dark clouds. Despite it still being midday, the outside didn't seem bright, with a continuous drizzle and a chilly, damp air emanating a cold sensation.

"But I can't put my finger on what's wrong." Yang Jian observed his surroundings closely.

Everything seemed normal.

As always, there was hustle and bustle in the city—people going to work, traffic snarls—nothing out of the ordinary was happening.

"Am I overthinking it?"

Yang Jian shook his head slightly, "Let's not dwell on it. Whatever happens here is none of my concern; once I've handled some things, I'll head back to Dachang City. I've practically resigned from headquarters, and the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box has been resolved, so even if something does happen, it shouldn't involve me."

With this thought in mind,

he headed to the entrance of Xiong Wenwen's residential complex.

Yang Jian didn't bring the Ghost Child along; having that entity roaming around was still too dangerous, not for him but for passersby.

However, if he needed to summon the Ghost Child, it would be easy—as long as the Ghost Domain reached the villa, the Ghost Child could appear beside him instantly.

Upon reaching Xiong Wenwen's home,

before he could knock, the door swung open promptly.

"Yang team leader, you've arrived, please come in."

A mature and beautiful woman in her thirties opened the door, smiling, yet her expression was filled with worry and not a hint of joy.

"Hello, Auntie," Yang Jian nodded in greeting with polite formality.

As he entered and glanced at the empty living room, he asked, "Where's Xiong Wenwen? Is he still asleep?"

After Chen Shumei closed the door, the smile vanished from her face as she heard Yang Jian's question, "Xiong Wenwen hasn't come home yet... Yang team leader, please have a seat; I'll make you some tea."

Unaware that Xiong Wenwen had already engaged in a task involving the World of Ghost Drawing, Yang Jian assumed the boy had simply run off to play somewhere.

"That's alright; I heard from Auntie on the phone that you wanted to see me about something. May I know what it is?"

...

Chen Shumei handed a cup of hot tea to Yang Jian, then slowly took a seat, her face bearing a hint of guilt as she said, "I should apologize to Captain Yang for what happened last time. I was agitated and behaved rather rudely, I hope Captain Yang won't take it to heart."

Yang Jian waved his hand and said, "No problem, it was just a trivial matter; I didn't dwell on it."

"That's good." Chen Shumei clutched her cup of hot tea, seeming somewhat silent.

Yang Jian said, "Aunt Chen, feel free to speak your mind. I'm not fond of beating around the bush."

Chen Shumei hesitated for a moment before she slowly began, "Captain Yang, as I said on the phone just now, the main reason I asked to meet with you is still regarding Xiong Wenwen's matter."

"I'm aware of that. Apart from Xiong Wenwen, I believe Aunt Chen wouldn't actively seek me out to chat about personal matters," Yang Jian said.

Chen Shumei forced a smile, then said with some worry, "Here's the thing, Captain Yang. Not two days after you left last time, a team leader from our headquarters named Li Jun came to my house."

"Li Jun? I know him; I've dealt with him before, he's a decent person," Yang Jian nodded and said.

Although he and Li Jun were from different factions, he still had respect for a person with Li Jun's character.

"Li Jun told me that you had a fight with someone named Jang Shangbai recently, and there was a bit of trouble... At first, I was worried because the calls wouldn't go through, but now seeing that you are fine, I'm reassured," Chen Shumei said.

Yang Jian was somewhat surprised, "Li Jun even told you about that? But that's not really the main issue, right? Aunt Chen, you want to talk about Xiong Wenwen's situation, don't you?"

"Did Li Jun visit because there was a task, so... Xiong Wenwen went on deployment?"

"Yes, that's right, Captain Yang, you've guessed correctly. Xiong Wenwen left with Li Jun two days ago, it's been three days counting today, and there has been no news at all. I am really worried, so I wanted to ask Captain Yang for some information," Chen Shumei hesitantly said.

Ask for information?

Yang Jian's gaze shifted slightly as he examined Chen Shumei, "There's no need to hide it at this point; Aunt Chen, you're seeking my help to save someone, aren't you?"

Xiong Wenwen had left with Li Jun, and they were likely dealing with the Ghost Drawing incident. Now that it had been two or three days without any sign of them, and with the Ghost Drawing incident unresolved – the ghost drawing still stored in his previous villa was the best proof of that.

Being in the midst of a supernatural event for several days without any news...

Yang Jian knew very well what that implied.

"I indeed am asking Captain Yang to help bring Wenwen back. Before Wenwen left, he told me that if he encountered any trouble, I should call you for help," Chen Shumei said, mustering her courage with a steely resolve.

Yang Jian was silent for a moment before saying, "While it's nice to be entrusted with hope, Aunt Chen, you must understand that Xiong Wenwen is not my responsibility. He followed Li Jun, which means he joined Li Jun's team, and from now on, Li Jun is his superior, not me."

"You may not know the full inside story, but I am very clear; the situation Xiong Wenwen is involved in is extremely dangerous, and I am powerless."

Right now, Xiong Wenwen and their group were almost certainly inside the ghost drawing. If it were a common incident, Xiong Wenwen would have definitely called his mother by now. Yang Jian had been to the World of Ghost Drawing before.

It was extremely perilous.

He had dared to break in last time only because he had the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box; even then, he nearly died.

This time, Yang Jian had finally freed himself from the curse. If he were to enter the ghost drawing again, he might truly never come out.

The most important point was that in front of the ghost drawing, his Ghost Eye was restrained, and he couldn't use the Ghost Domain. Searching for people was difficult, let alone rescuing them.

"Captain Yang, don't say that. I know you must have a way. Please, help Wenwen. Once Wenwen comes back this time, I agree to let him join your team; I won't object anymore," Chen Shumei pleaded urgently.

Yang Jian shook his head and said, "It's not about that, but rather that I don't have confidence that I can bring Xiong Wenwen back. Even going there to save him could end in my own death. You can only trust Li Jun now, since there's still no outcome to this matter, and Xiong Wenwen might be alright. Maybe there'll be news in a couple of days."

He refused the request.

Xiong Wenwen was undoubtedly a good teammate, but the Ghost Drawing event was complicated, and Yang Jian was neither his guardian nor truly a teammate. He couldn't just barge into the World of Ghost Drawing for Xiong Wenwen's sake.

...

This was something Yang Jian couldn't do.

"But, but..." Chen Shumei

"Aunt Chen, I have other matters, so I won't disturb you any longer." Yang Jian interrupted her, preparing to get up and leave.

Not wanting to agree to her request and unwilling to get involved in this deadly supernatural event, he could only turn a blind eye and choose to extricate himself from the situation.

"Yang Captain, please wait, don't rush off just yet, stay a bit longer." Chen Shumei pleaded, grasping Yang Jian's arm, not wanting to let him go.

She knew that once Yang Jian left, it would be impossible for him to appear again, especially since she had lied to get him here this time.

Yang Jian said, "Aunt Chen, holding on to me is no use, I truly can't do anything about Xiong Wenwen's matter."

"Captain Yang, please think of another way. He's my only son; I don't want to lose him. I also can't find anyone else who can help, I only have your phone number. So, I hope that no matter what, you must help Xiong Wenwen. He's still a child, he shouldn't end up like this."

Tears swirled in Chen Shumei's eyes, a look of utter heartbreak on her face.

However, facing Chen Shumei's plea, Yang Jian's expression remained unchanged, with no variation whatsoever. Faced with such intense emotions, he found himself feeling somewhat alienated, even somewhat unable to comprehend.

It seemed that he himself had lost these feelings a long time ago.

Yang Jian looked at her, pondering for a moment, then sat down again and said, "Aunt Chen, let me put it this way. Assume that Xiong Wenwen is still alive. He is in a very dangerous place, and if I am to save him, I must also enter that dangerous place. This establishes a precondition."

"What if Xiong Wenwen is already dead? I might embark on a fruitless journey and could even lose my life there."

"No, no, Wenwen must still be alive, I'm sure of it. I can feel it," Chen Shumei hastily stated.

Yang Jian glanced at her and added, "Alright, suppose Xiong Wenwen is still alive. Then once I enter that dangerous place, I first have to find him. It's very possible that I could encounter danger and die on my way to him, and as a result, Xiong Wenwen might return safely, making my death in vain. Or suppose, I find Xiong Wenwen alive, it's not guaranteed that we both would be able to return alive; the chances of us both dying are quite high."

"So you understand, Aunt Chen, it's not that I am unwilling to casually rescue Xiong Wenwen, but the risks are simply too great, the variables too many. I am powerless, and to put it bluntly—though you

may find this hard to hear, Aunt Chen, please don't be angry—Xiong Wenwen's life is precious, but my life is also precious. Moreover, Xiong Wenwen is not my responsibility."

"Looking back, if Xiong Wenwen had joined my team from the beginning and had been under my care, this would not have happened."

Yang Jian's words were harsh, but very realistic.

"I can give you money, Captain Yang, around tens of millions," Chen Shumei said earnestly.

"Aunt Chen, this is not about money. Do you really not understand what I mean? The uncertainties are too great. If it were possible to decisively rescue someone, I think the headquarters would have acted already, without waiting for me to make a move," Yang Jian said.

He felt that Xiong Wenwen's mother simply did not understand what he was saying.

Or perhaps she did understand but was still begging him.

Chen Shumei bit her lip and said, "As long as you agree to save Wenwen, Captain Yang, I...I'm willing to be your woman...friend."

She wanted to say "woman," but the modesty in her heart just couldn't bring herself to say it, so she mustered the courage to put it more tactfully.

What it meant for her to be Yang Jian's girlfriend at her age was already very clear.

But for Xiong Wenwen, Chen Shumei was putting everything on the line, letting go of all dignity and reserve.

"..."

Yang Jian, usually expressionless, now couldn't help but twitch his mouth corner.

"Aunt Chen, you don't need to say such things. By saying this, it only makes me feel more embarrassed. If I don't save him, does that make me seem too cold-hearted and cowardly? And if I do save him, won't people in the same line of work laugh at me, saying I coveted your body, how lowly?"

"In reality, how many of us in this profession are still interested in women? If needed, there wouldn't be a shortage around us."

Chapter 663 Refusal

To tell the truth, Xiong Wenwen's mother, Chen Shumei, was indeed a very beautiful woman, mature, glamorous, and gentle in character. Although she was around thirty, for a modern urban woman, this age was not considered old at all and she remained full of charm and allure.

Under normal circumstances, she would undoubtedly have numerous admirers.

However, she was very unlucky. Her son Xiong Wenwen was a ghost controller and she herself was indirectly involved in the paranormal circle.

This circle was terrifying and cruel, where death was as common as a daily meal.

In this circle, a woman's beauty held no value whatsoever, because most ghost controllers were no longer normal humans, and after their bodies were invaded by ghosts, human emotions and desires gradually became indifferent.

Of course, the same applied to men's handsomeness; it held no significance either.

At that moment, Chen Shumei tightly held her palms together in anxiousness. Her face showed both shame and sorrow, having put everything on the line, even her dignity, to plead with Yang Jian, only to receive a heartless rejection in return.

Her beauty and figure, which she had always been proud of, held no attraction whatsoever in front of the young Yang Jian.

In fact, they were even less interesting to him than a cup of tea on the table.

But she had no choice, because Chen Shumei did not know many people in the circle, couldn't find anyone to help, and only knew Yang Jian whom she had met before and for whom she had a contact method.

Yang Jian wondered if he had spoken too harshly. He looked at the silent and ashamed Chen Shumei in front of him, then spoke again, "I can give you Cao Yanhua's phone number. He is the vice minister at the headquarters. Maybe talking to him about your situation could be useful. As I said before, I can't risk my life for the uncertain fate of Xiong Wenwen."

"If it were any other mission, I would have helped you out of consideration for Xiong Wenwen's Premonition Ability, but the case he is involved in now is too dangerous... So, Aunt Chen, let's end our talk here for today."

"Let's pretend that what happened just now never occurred."

Yang Jian wrote down Cao Yanhua's number, telling Chen Shumei to call him, but he wasn't sure it would be effective.

"Alright, I'm leaving."

His tone was resolute, showing no signs of change, merely leaving a phone number before preparing to stand up and leave.

"I, I'll see you out, Team Yang," Chen Shumei said somewhat absently as she stared at the phone number on the table.

"If there is any news from Xiong Wenwen's side, you can inform me. I know another way out of that painting, and if they're lost, they can come to me," Yang Jian offered a bit of assistance as he was leaving.

This help, to be honest, was neither here nor there.

Each ghost painting represented an exit; the headquarters had at least five ghost paintings, meaning there were five exits. The exit from the ghost painting in his possession was not particularly important.

"Okay, thank you, Team Yang," Chen Shumei said with a nod.

Even though Yang Jian had refused her request for help, she did not become angry or hold any resentment; instead, she was even more polite than the first time she had approached him.

Chen Shumei knew in her heart that her request had been a difficult one, otherwise Xiong Wenwen wouldn't have purposefully left a phone number before leaving last time. Perhaps Wenwen had already foreseen the danger at that time and she regretted not insisting on rejecting Li Jun's request.

Now it was all too late.

Yang Jian glanced at the worn and absent-minded Chen Shumei, then left without looking back.

To be honest, it was only a matter of time before Xiong Wenwen would experience such a thing.

From the day he became a ghost controller, it had been impossible for him to grow up as a normal child, healthy and learning; sooner or later, he would die from a ghost's resurgence or perish within a paranormal event.

"However, the fact that Xiong Wenwen has gone missing just proves that the ghost painting incident is starting to get complicated... I should leave here as soon as possible and should no longer linger," Yang Jian thought to himself as he walked through the streets.

Now that he had resigned, he was not obliged to take on such responsibilities, and orders from headquarters would no longer reach him.

While he had lost many privileges, he had also rid himself of a lot of troublesome affairs. If it were any other time, he guessed he would likely be dragged into this ghost painting incident.

"There are still some things I need to take care of before leaving here."

Yang Jian's gaze flickered.

He quickly hailed a taxi and said, "To Ping'an Grand Hotel."

Since he had decided to leave, Yang Jian planned to make sure that the teaming-up plan was set in stone and take away a few ghost controllers with him.

Soon.

He was back at Ping'an Tower, having contacted everyone over the phone along the way.

At this time, Huang Ziya, Zhang Lei, and Wang Jiang were already waiting in the hotel lobby.

"Captain, we're over here," Huang Ziya immediately called out, waving her hand.

Yang Jian walked over and said directly, "I'll cut to the chase. I've been sorting out some personal matters for the past couple of days and now I'm ready to go back to Dachang City. I assume you've all discussed the team-up already. I have a few spots open on my team, but joining my team will involve some reduction in your headquarters' authority."

"If nothing goes wrong, I'll be leaving today. Give it some thought and let me know."

"Of course, I'm following the captain to Dachang City. I don't fancy taking on the missions assigned by headquarters; they're too dangerous and you never know when you could end up dead," Huang Ziya was the first to respond.

Her goal as a ghost controller, like Yang Jian, had been just to survive. She had come here only with the intention of trying to solve the problem of ghost resurgences.

Having temporarily resolved her own issues, Huang Ziya naturally did not intend to stay any longer.

The college student Wang Jiang seemed hesitant and looked contemplative. Although he acknowledged Yang Jian's abilities and acknowledged him as a qualified captain, the idea of dropping a city leader position to become a team member in Dachang City was a bit difficult to accept at the moment.

"If I go to Dachang City, will my leader status be retained?" he asked.

Yang Jian responded, "You should have already checked my background and know that my situation is quite special. Although I am a team leader, I'm just holding the title, supervising a very small area, just in charge of the safety of Dachang City. If it were any other team leader, they would definitely have spare cities to assign to you."

"You still want to hold on to the leader position? Don't you know that being responsible for a city is a very dangerous thing?" Huang Ziya scoffed.

Wang Jiang fell silent.

He still couldn't bear to lose his position as the city's leader; after all, he had come to this city for this very reason, and it wasn't necessarily in conflict with joining Yang Jian's team. A team leader was in charge of many areas and many cities, and giving someone the status of a person in charge wasn't difficult.

"What about you, Zhang Lei?" Yang Jian did not say much to Wang Jiang.

He valued Zhang Lei.

This person's abilities were terrifying, but equally dangerous.

"I won't live long, unless I find a way to control a second ghost," said Zhang Lei.

The front of his shirt bulged slightly, and a horrifying human face emerged, with the vague outlines of limbs beside it, as if a corpse had grown into him.

If things continued this way, Zhang Lei would soon die, and his body would become nourishment for this ghost.

Yang Jian said, "Your power is too strong. The fiercer the ghost you control, the faster a Ghost Envoy dies. You haven't been a Ghost Envoy for long, and you haven't misused the ghost's power either. The speed of this revival has already surpassed my imagination... To control a second ghost, you need to apply, and even after approval, there's a period of waiting."

"Theoretically, there's not enough time."

Zhang Lei took a drag on his cigarette, frowned, and said, "I know. I might have made it if not for that incident with the base's Ghost Envoy last time, which disrupted my plans. The situation is worse than I'd imagined, and last night while I was sleeping, I already felt the ghost on my chest struggling, trying to break free from my body."

"In the next half month, I will certainly be killed by the ghost one night. Although I would like to go to Dachang City to avoid trouble, it seems I'm afraid I won't be able to leave."

Having said this, Zhang Lei sighed helplessly.

He had also come to deal with the revival of the malevolent ghost; being a person in charge was just a way to earn merits to apply for controlling a second ghost.

After thinking for a moment, Yang Jian said, "I have a spot that I can transfer to you. Call Wang Xiaoming and tell him these are my terms."

Wang Xiaoming had promised Yang Jian three conditions, and he decided to let Wang Xiaoming solve Zhang Lei's ghost revival issue.

If successful, Zhang Lei would be an extremely strong teammate.

"Can we make it in time?" Zhang Lei asked, looking at him with some astonishment.

"Let's try and see. If you die, then that's that. If you survive, come find me in Dachang City," said Yang Jian.

Zhang Lei's face, as pale as a corpse's, showed a few sparks of human excitement. He hurriedly stood up and said, "Thank you, Yang Jian, no, Captain."

"Don't mention it. We're just helping each other out," Yang Jian replied.

Wang Jiang, watching from the side, immediately became envious.

A spot given away so freely; that was quite generous. He immediately thickened his skin and said, "Captain, can you give a spot to me too?"

Yang Jian looked at him and said, "I only have one spot. You'll have to figure it out yourself, and you haven't joined my team either."

A straightforward refusal.

Wang Jiang was taken aback, then hung his head in disappointment but still didn't give up, "Then it's not too late for me to join now."

"No need. You're more suited to be the person in charge of a city," Yang Jian directly rejected him.

In choosing teammates, ability was one thing, but the most important factor was the trust relationship.

Wang Jiang had been hesitant and indecisive, with too many thoughts. Yang Jian did not want such a person on his team.

"By the way, where's Feng Quan? He's been missing for a while now, where did he go?" Yang Jian directly ignored Wang Jiang and turned to ask instead.

He remembered the last time Feng Quan left, he went to look for Tong Qian.

As a result, both of them disappeared without a trace. It shouldn't take this long to find someone, especially since Tong Qian was within the city limits. Now that he was leaving, Feng Quan and Tong Qian were two indispensable teammates.

One was a veteran Ghost Envoy with rich experience.

The other was an aberration that Yang Jian had personally created using the method from the skin paper.

"Not clear," said Zhang Lei and Huang Ziya together, shaking their heads.

"Captain, didn't you try calling?" Huang Ziya asked.

Yang Jian replied, "I lost my phone, I can't contact him at the moment. Use your phone to locate Feng Quan. I'll go and find him myself."

"Sure, that's no problem," Huang Ziya said.

She quickly took out a satellite positioning phone and tried to make contact, only to say, "My authority isn't enough; I can't locate him if he's too far away."

"Contact your operator. Have the operator report that I, Yang Jian, am looking for Feng Quan and ask them to provide an address," Yang Jian instructed.

Huang Ziya nodded and proceeded to do so.

The headquarters was very efficient in getting things done. In no time, an address was sent directly to Yang Jian's phone.

"I've received the message. I'm off," Yang Jian glanced at the message and immediately furrowed his brow.

The address had changed and was no longer in the urban area but in a small county town close to the city.

"Captain, do you want me to go with you? I don't have much to do right now, and I also want to meet this Tong Qian," Huang Ziya said as she flipped her long, thick black hair and stood up from the sofa with a radiant smile.

Yang Jian nodded, "Alright. Once we find Feng Quan and Tong Qian, we'll leave this place immediately. Zhang Lei, you go to Wang Xiaoming and sort out your situation. Be quick."

"I'm afraid of death myself, don't worry. I'll contact Professor Wang right now," Zhang Lei immediately began connecting with his own operator.

Chapter 664 Leaving the City

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"Master, could you please take us to Xiao'an County?" Yang Jian was still as stingy with his abilities as ever, choosing to take a taxi.

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The taxi driver heard the request and hurriedly said, "That far? No, I won't go. If I take you there, I'll definitely return with an empty car and end up losing money. You should find another ride."

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Yang Jian said, "I'll pay extra, ten thousand."

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"Get in," the taxi driver immediately agreed.

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"Why did you not hesitate at all to give that spot to Zhang Lei? Is he that important?" In the car, Huang Ziya was still thinking about what had just happened and couldn't help but ask.

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Yang Jian looked out the car window at the city: "It was my decision; you shouldn't ask too many questions."

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"I won't ask if you don't want me to," Huang Ziya pouted, "But what about Xiong Wenwen, hmm? I haven't seen him, and you think highly of that kid. Having him with us would be a great boost to the team's overall strength."

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"He was taken away by Li Jun. By now, he's probably... dead," Yang Jian considered for a moment before saying.

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Huang Ziya exclaimed in surprise, "Li Jun dared to snatch someone right from your hands?"

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Yang Jian glanced at her, "It wasn't Li Jun. It was Xiong Wenwen's mother who refused me and then got persuaded by Li Jun, so he joined Li Jun's team. I just came from Xiong Wenwen's house."

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"Does his mother regret it?" asked Huang Ziya.

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"Of course."

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Yang Jian said, "Li Jun and I have different philosophies. I just want to survive better, while he's willing to die for the headquarters and tackle all sorts of difficult issues. Hence, Xiong Wenwen would likely die quickly following him. His mother will regret it sooner or later; I just didn't expect it to be this soon."

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"It's a pity. It would've been better if his mother had chosen for Xiong Wenwen to follow you at the start," sighed Huang Ziya.

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"There's nothing to pity; following me isn't necessarily a hundred percent safe," said Yang Jian.

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While they were talking, the taxi driver was acting quite sneaky. He kept looking back at them through the rearview mirror, his gaze lingering on Huang Ziya as if he were attracted to her. The look of amazement in his eyes almost caused several rear-end collisions.

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"Driver, have you never seen a beauty like me before? But if you keep driving this way, my captain is going to be very unhappy. So please focus on the road, because I certainly don't want any trouble en route," Huang Ziya said with a smile as she turned her head.

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It sounded like a reminder, but in reality, it was a warning.

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"Cough cough, sorry, sorry," the taxi driver's face reddened, and he quickly apologized.

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"Captain, what are you staring out the window for? You've been doing that since just now. Are those buildings outside more attractive than I am?" Huang Ziya said again.

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Yang Jian frowned and said, "Something's not right with this city. It's been like this since the morning, and the feeling is getting stronger now."

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"Really? I don't sense anything. It's just gotten a bit overcast, but that's pretty normal for the middle of winter," said Huang Ziya.

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"That building up ahead, the thirteenth floor, the window on the far left, take a good look," Yang Jian's eyes suddenly sharpened.

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Driven by curiosity, Huang Ziya leaned forward and looked up at the building ahead.

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It was a very ordinary commercial building.

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On the thirteenth floor of that building, a few windows were open, but at the window on the far left, a figure stood indistinctly. At first, Huang Ziya thought it was her eyesight, not being able to see clearly. But as the taxi continued forward, and another person appeared at the adjacent window, her eyes suddenly narrowed.

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Although separated by just one window, Huang Ziya could see clearly. Next door stood a man in a suit, wearing black-framed glasses, holding a cup of coffee and gazing into the distance, while the person Yang Jian referred to, standing by the leftmost window, remained blurry, indecipherable, with no discernible features. One could only vaguely make out, through the figure's silhouette and the color of the clothes, that it was likely a woman.

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Moreover, that woman stood motionless in front of the window, like she was frozen, the room behind her dark and without light, gloomy and eerie.

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At first glance at the windows on that wall, they almost looked like old frames of paintings, and the woman was the subject within the frame.

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"Yes, a ghost painting..." Huang Ziya covered her mouth, nearly exclaiming aloud.

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Yang Jian leaned against the car door, resting his head on his hand while staring at that spot, "It must be, another painting. And the thing inside has already stepped out, which means it's invading reality."

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"Why would this happen? Isn't headquarters constantly sending people to deal with it?" Huang Ziya spoke in a subdued voice, her body tensed.

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An S-grade paranormal incident, also known as Unsolvable Level in the community.

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For the exorcists caught in it, survival itself is challenging, let alone resolving the incident.

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As a novice, Huang Ziya wouldn't dare to get involved in such matters.

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"If it were that easy to handle, the foreign team wouldn't have been wiped out," Yang Jian calmly noted, remembering the corpses scattered throughout the building in the ghost painting world.

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The phantom footsteps on the wooden stairs, the Door-blocking Ghost sitting in the room... these ghosts are likely what remained after the exorcists died.

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These things are enough evidence of what happened inside the ghost painting.

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"So, does it look like we're actually sneaking away under the guise of searching for Feng Quan and Tong Qian?" Huang Ziya whispered, feeling like a thief in her guilt.

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She thought her captain was so smart.

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To come up with such a good excuse.

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Yang Jian glanced at her, "How can that be called sneaking away? I've already done my part here; the training base's situation was handled by me, and when Wang Xiaoming's operation got trapped, I rescued him. Later, I even dealt with several paintings for free... Isn't it only fair that they take their turn?"

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"Being a captain and not participating in a few S-grade incidents, how can you inspire confidence? In my view, next time, Cao Yang, Li Leping, and Leuk San won't be able to escape. If it weren't for Jang Shangbai, who I dealt with already, he would certainly need special attention this time."

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So his act of slipping away was done with a clear conscience, not feeling guilty at all.

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"That makes sense," Huang Ziya suddenly smiled, squinting her eyes, "So this time I'm just reaping the benefits?"

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"It's not about basking in glory, this matter is never going to fall on you newcomers, the headquarters isn't that foolish. They will definitely send top people to handle it," Yang Jian said with a slight shake of his head.

"Hold on, I'm going to make a phone call."

Something suddenly occurred to him, and he immediately picked up his phone and dialed a number.

Yang Jian needed to contact Miao Xiaoshan.

At that moment.

Miao Xiaoshan was playing cards with her roommate Liu Zi and Sun Yujia in their dorm room to pass the time. They had been forced to suspend their classes because of the incident last time, so they had recently been quite relaxed. They had originally planned to go play badminton today, but the poor weather made them cancel.

"Dudu dudu."

Just then, Miao Xiaoshan's phone rang.

"It's Yang Jian, look, Yang Jian is calling," said Liu Zi, whose sharp eyes caught the caller ID. She exclaimed in excitement, tossing aside the playing cards and grabbing the phone.

"Quick, tell Yang Jian that Sun Yujia and I want to invite him to dinner, and also, I want to ask him to go sightseeing in the city..."

Miao Xiaoshan took the phone, her eyebrows slightly furrowed. "Yang Jian generally doesn't call me. The last time he mentioned that if he called, it must be something important. Forget about asking him out to dinner."

"You have to seize the moment, just mention it if the opportunity arises," Liu Zi said.

"Yang Jian saved me last time, I really should thank him," Sun Yujia added shyly from the side. "But don't misunderstand, Miao Xiaoshan, I just genuinely want to thank him, nothing more."

Miao Xiaoshan hushed, "I'm answering the call."

Immediately, Yang Jian's voice came through the phone, "It's me, Yang Jian."

"Yeah, I know," Miao Xiaoshan replied softly. "Yang Jian, are you calling at this time for a reason?"

"There is something."

Yang Jian said, "I don't want to see you get into an accident, so I suggest you leave the school for the next few days. Whether it's taking a leave of absence or suspending your studies, just get out of this city. You can go back to Dachang City, or stay with relatives. In short, do not stay at the school. Come back after some things are settled."

He believed that the ghosts from the ghost paintings had already begun infiltrating every corner of the city. That meant any place in the city might be in danger from now on.

Even if the painting at the school had been dealt with by Yang Jian, it did not mean that other ghosts from the paintings wouldn't appear there.

"Is it that serious?" Miao Xiaoshan was somewhat shocked.

"Not sure, maybe it's not as serious as I imagine, but I'm just taking some precautions. Also, I will be leaving here today, so if something happens to you, I might not be able to get there immediately. Oh, and remember to keep that candle safe, it can save your life in a dangerous situation," Yang Jian said.

Miao Xiaoshan nodded, "Okay, I understand, I'll start packing and leave on leave in the next few days."

"Okay, let's leave it at that for now," Yang Jian said and hung up the phone immediately.

"What did Yang Jian say?" Liu Zi asked curiously, her eyes wide with interest.

Miao Xiaoshan replied with unease, "Yang Jian told me to leave the school, to leave this city, and stay somewhere else for a while. He's afraid there might be danger here, and he's leaving too."

"What? Then what are we waiting for, pack up and go," exclaimed Liu Zi, jumping out of bed and immediately starting to look for her phone to contact her family.

This was, after all, very important inside information.

"Shouldn't we ask for leave first or something? Just leaving like this doesn't seem right," Sun Yujia said, clearly anxious.

"Leave first, then ask for leave. We're not having classes now anyway, so it's fine," Liu Zi said.

Miao Xiaoshan nodded, "You're right. But have you decided where you're going?"

Liu Zi replied immediately, "I have a plan. My family bought a villa in a nearby city where we hardly ever stay. We can go there and live for a while. Miao Xiaoshan, don't go back to your hometown, come with me. It's better to have someone to look after each other..."

She felt that she had to take Miao Xiaoshan with her, otherwise she wouldn't feel secure.

After all, Miao Xiaoshan had such a significant person backing her up.

"Didn't expect you to care so much about others. From the sound of it, that was a girl on the phone, right? Is she your girlfriend, Captain?" asked Huang Ziya with a smile in the car.

"No, she's just a normal friend," Yang Jian replied.

"I don't believe that. Would a 'normal friend' be worth your concern?" Huang Ziya questioned.

Yang Jian said, "If you like to ask so much, why not just get out of the car now? Why bother accompanying me on this trip?"

"Since you don't like me asking too much, I'll stop," said Huang Ziya as she ran her fingers through the thick hair on her cheeks and began to fiddle with the cheap crystal necklace around her neck.

The taxi driver, listening to their conversation, felt confused as most of what they were talking about made no sense to him; he just focused on driving.

As the taxi left the urban area, the unease in Yang Jian's heart finally began to dissipate.

Simultaneously, his twitching eyelid returned to normal.

"The range is astonishingly large," Yang Jian noted as he looked at the map. It was only after they reached the outskirts and got on the highway that the abnormal feeling completely disappeared.

This indicated that the effect of the ghost paintings was more extensive than he had imagined.

After all, this city was much larger than Dachang City.

Chapter 665 The Heavy Fog

Yang Jian watched as the bustling city behind him gradually became distant, and the unease in his heart slowly calmed down.

He had slipped away.

After sensing that something was wrong in the city, he decisively took off, even temporarily abandoning the plan to find Cao Yang and reclaim the Ghost Scissors. He felt that the matter could be postponed for a while since having Cao Yang in possession of the Ghost Scissors wasn't a bad thing, as there was no conflict between them.

However, even if Yang Jian hadn't resigned in advance, he would have refused to get involved in this ghost painting incident.

It was simple.

His Ghost Eye was restrained by the ghost painting, rendering him unable to use the Ghost Domain. Once he entered the world of ghost paintings, there was a good chance he wouldn't be able to get out, especially since, at this time, he didn't have the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box for protection.

If he had the curse, he might have given it a try, since, without fear of death, one dares to take on anything.

"I wonder if the Ghost Cabinet's trading rules are still in effect?" Yang Jian pondered, thinking of another curse.

The trade with the Ghost Cabinet was mandatory; it couldn't be refused. He had tried to reject the tasks from the Ghost Cabinet in the past, but the consequence was an abnormality in the Ghost Cabinet, releasing malevolent ghosts from the cabinet doors below, likely to hunt down the trader.

But this time, to resolve the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box, Yang Jian obtained a seven-day protection term from the Ghost Cabinet.

The seven days hadn't passed yet.

Yang Jian was still within the protection period.

As he pondered, time also ticked away bit by bit.

The taxi driver concentrated on driving, silent on the road. After more than two hours, the vehicle entered the territory of Xiao'an County. This small county wasn't far from Big J City—if driving, it took about three hours. It was just that, due to its more remote location and lack of development, not many people were willing to go there.

"Young man, we're in Xiao'an County now. Where would you like to get off?" the taxi driver asked at this moment, then couldn't help but peek at Huang Ziya through the rearview mirror.

The more he looked, the more stunning he found her; he couldn't believe there was such a beautiful girl in the world.

Perfect to an unbelievable extent, as if she didn't belong to this world at all.

"Just stop somewhere in the center of Xiao'an County," Yang Jian said.

"No problem, but could you pay the fare we agreed on upfront?" the driver asked, stealing glances at Huang Ziya.

Yang Jian said, "I'll transfer it to you on my phone, ten thousand yuan, you won't miss a single cent."

He quickly transferred the money to the driver, who got excited after receiving the ten thousand yuan, feeling lucky to have picked up a rich second generation with such a generous handout.

"Eh, what the heck? It's getting foggy?"

However, as the driver was heading towards the county town, he noticed a white fog starting to appear on the road. At first, he didn't pay much attention, but as the vehicle continued toward the center of the county town, the fog grew thicker, eventually affecting visibility. He dared not drive too fast and had to slow down.

"It was fine just now, how did the fog get so thick all of a sudden? Strange. I've never seen fog roll in so quickly," the taxi driver muttered to himself, carefully watching the road.

Huang Ziya, sitting in the back, toyed with her black hair beside her ear, her face showing a hint of strangeness: "Captain, this fog is not right, is it? I remember looking through Feng Quan's file last time, wasn't his code name... Ghost Fog?"

She had just finished mentioning 'Ghost Fog.'

The taxi suddenly braked hard, coming to an abrupt stop, but still bumped into the car in front, causing a fender bender.

The thick fog obscured even the headlights, making it feel like they were groping in the dark.

"Let's stop here; we're getting out," Yang Jian immediately opened the door and got out, frowning at the heavy fog.

It was indeed Feng Quan's Ghost Fog.

He had encountered it before and had a certain impression of it.

Huang Ziya came over, not daring to stray too far from Yang Jian, then said, "Do you think Feng Quan created this? If it's him, under normal circumstances, he shouldn't use the power of malevolent ghosts like this, especially over such a large area—it's not a small effect... Maybe he's in trouble, it could be that a malevolent ghost has awakened."

"It's not the awakening of a malevolent ghost. Feng Quan's condition hasn't deteriorated to that extent. He has achieved a balance between two ghosts; he won't die that quickly," said Yang Jian, very certain.

"Then Feng Quan must be in danger," Huang Ziya surmised.

Yang Jian scanned their surroundings: "Then let's find him."

"Wandering through such a large area of thick fog can be very dangerous, we might encounter ghosts. Captain, do you know the killing pattern of Ghost Fog? Tell me in advance so I can be prepared," Huang Ziya said with a hint of anxiety.

Yang Jian took a few steps forward: "The killing pattern of Ghost Fog is simple. You mustn't move around. When you do, it stirs the surrounding fog, which is a signal to the ghosts in the mist. The more you move, the stronger the signal, and eventually, the ghosts will appear around you and kill you."

"So, the only way for ordinary people to survive the Ghost Fog is to stand still, not moving an inch. The Ghost Fog moves, so you just need to wait quietly for a while, and the fog will drift to another place. Of course, some unlucky folks might still encounter a ghost in the thick fog, even if they sit still, and then be killed."

"When facing the Ghost Fog, luck and composure are very important, but I'm certain that Feng Quan is not dead. Therefore, there are no ghosts in the thick fog; Feng Quan himself is the source of the fog."

Yang Jian's pace quickened, "Keep up, I need to find Feng Quan as soon as possible."

As he walked, the ghost eye on his forehead had already opened. At this time, he wasn't stingy with the ghost's power and used the ghost eye to lead the way.

The thick fog around them was gradually permeated by a layer of red light, and the fog that was tinted with the red light was being forced back, creating an empty space around them. Within this area were only him and Huang Ziya, excluding ordinary people from being drawn in.

In fact, the Ghost Fog is also a kind of alternative Ghost Domain, but it was no match for Yang Jian's ghost eye and couldn't erode his ghost domain, only being suppressed.

As his vision cleared, Yang Jian began to search for anomalies within the thick fog.

He saw people lost in the fog, as well as many accidents where vehicles had collided with nearby telephone poles, but eventually, his gaze locked onto the source of the Ghost Fog. It was a small, few-story building with a sign hanging outside, unclear in its letters, but probably a small hotel. The Ghost Fog was thickest inside that building, as even his ghost eye couldn't penetrate it; his vision was completely blocked at the doorway of a room on one of the floors.

Of course, this was also because Yang Jian had only opened three layers of the Ghost Domain and hadn't excessively used the power of the ghost eye. Otherwise, the Ghost Fog wouldn't have been able to block his gaze.

"It's here."

The next second, Yang Jian and Huang Ziya were already at the bottom of the building.

"I can't see anything around me at all," Huang Ziya looked around. She discovered that Yang Jian's ghost domain could only cover the two to three meters surrounding them before everything turned into a blank white expanse.

"As long as I can see, that's enough. We're just looking for a person; there's no need for a grand display of force," Yang Jian said and walked straight into the building.

Following the staircase, he quickly arrived at the door of a room in the hotel.

The door was open, and a rotten smell wafted from inside. The environment was moist, and droplets of water hung on the walls, clearly affected by the Ghost Fog.

"Better to be cautious," Huang Ziya whispered a reminder as she saw Yang Jian ready to push the door open.

Without a word, Yang Jian put strength into his palm, the lock broke, and the door swung open.

Before even stepping in, he saw that in the middle of the room, there was a large grave mound, occupying the entire room with old, dark, and stinky soil. That rotten smell came from this Grave Soil, and at the very top of the mound, a human head was eerily perched.

The head was covered in rotten Grave Soil and looked battered, but he could faintly recognize that the person on the grave was Feng Quan.

"Feng Quan, how did you end up like this again? You enjoy burying yourself that much?" Yang Jian didn't enter. He frowned and asked seriously.

In such a state, he himself couldn't assert whether Feng Quan was still alive.

As his words fell,

The head on the grave twisted a bit, making crackling sounds of bones, and then turned to look over, "Brother Tui, it's you, huh? I knew you would definitely come looking for me, and you're a bit quicker than I expected... I ran into a bit of trouble, was almost done in, and had to wimp out like this."

The room's grave mound trembled, and a pair of decaying hands emerged from within, pushing aside the adjacent Grave Soil.

Struggling and writhing, Feng Quan frowned, "Brother Tui, give me a hand. I'm stuck and can't get out; that thing is grabbing me again."

There was a ghost in the Grave Soil trying to drag Feng Quan completely into the grave to bury him, but as it wasn't yet time for fierce ghosts to resurrect, Feng Quan could still resist.

"What exactly happened? Tell me in detail."

Yang Jian reached out his hand, which was pitch black and extremely cold. Grasping Feng Quan's rotting hand, the accumulated Grave Soil in the room collapsed instantly.

Feng Quan felt a great relief and stood up from the soil in an instant.

Under the suppression of the Ghost Hand, the ghost in the grave was instantly defeated.

Feng Quan dusted off the soil on his body, "It was probably because of Tong Qian. I was attacked by another ghost master. This place is a trap; I almost got killed and had to play hide-and-seek. I buried myself and covered the area with Ghost Fog to hide. Ordinary guys couldn't find me."

"But I knew you, Brother Tui, would definitely be able to locate me."

"Who would dare to strike the leader so fiercely?" Huang Ziya widened her eyes in shock.

Yang Jian remained calm, "Don't be surprised. The identity of the leader can only intimidate newbies like you. When you really encounter ruthless characters, they won't hesitate to kill, not just a leader but even a team captain. Fang Shiming from the friend circle is the best example. What? Feng Quan, did you encounter someone from the friend circle?"

He calculated the timing, thinking it might be the aftermath of the last friend circle incident, as Feng Quan's departure and his own attack happened around the same time.

"I'm not sure. I almost died out of the blue. The opponent had Tong Qian's satellite positioning phone, and I was lured here," Feng Quan said.