

Revival 696

Chapter 696 Nagase's Suggestion

Hot Spring Hotel, a spacious room.

Yang Jian had changed out of his foul-smelling clothes and was dressed in a loose robe with a local flair, casually seated on the tatami. His gaze was cold and yet calm, devoid of even a hint of emotional turbulence, like a statue.

Keiko, wearing a similar robe, was kneeling beside him, head slightly lowered.

Nagase was also in the room, but he remained silent, merely smiling as he watched the television set that was successfully connected.

They were on a call with President Mishima from the Exorcism Club through the club's mobile phone, holding a small meeting.

The meeting was not initiated by Yang Jian but by President Mishima.

"We are already aware of the general situation. We would like to ask Mister Yang once again to take on the challenge and ensure the resolution of this Ghost Door Knocker incident. Please, this operation is very close to success, and we believe that with Mister Yang's abilities, he will definitely manage it,"

President Mishima, on his knees on the floor, pleaded earnestly from the video in the television set.

"The situation is not so simple. It's not just an ordinary supernatural event. According to my previous experiences, I should have been successful. However, I was interrupted by another supernatural event. I lost a decaying Dead Man's Head that I was holding. Of course, when I say this, I do not mean to ask for any compensation. Rather, I am indicating that the next course of action will be even more difficult,"

Yang Jian said indifferently.

"You also know the details of Sakai's death. Out of nowhere, he was killed by a ghost, with no time even to react. The pattern of these killings is terrifying."

"Moreover, I found the bodies of your club members in a private residence in Kobe City, dressed in suits, dead for several days, turning into a supernatural event. I suspect Mister Sakai was also aware of this. These phenomena indicate that the Ghost Door Knocker incident is actually a large-scale supernatural event made up of multiple incidents."

"It's impossible for me to deal with the door-knocking old man while under the attack of other malevolent spirits. Of course, a safer method would be to deal with each event one by one, leaving the most dangerous one for last."

"But Mister Mishima, your Exorcism Club has only paid for one supernatural event. Yet, you expect me to handle three, or even ten tasks. This seems a bit like exploiting an honest person."

He, of course, would not admit that the Dead Man's Head balloon incident in the Ghost Domain was his own doing. After all, the initial information about the Ghost Door Knocker had come out during his time

at No. 7 Middle School, and nobody could have predicted the changes that had occurred during the past half-year.

President Mishima's face on the other side of the screen stiffened slightly.

The reason he had spent a considerable sum to enlist Yang Jian was indeed partly due to this; the incident was too complicated. If you really wanted to handle it, you needed a team of ghost controllers, and even that might not be sufficient given the immense danger involved. Although not as perilous as a Class S supernatural event, it wasn't far off.

If it were just the Ghost Door Knocker as a single supernatural event, and only one malevolent spirit involved, the Exorcism Club would not be so destitute as to ask for outside help.

"President Mishima, Yang Jian's action has failed, and all this stems from your wrong decision. You've not only lost face for our Exorcism Club but also led us to lose fifty tons of Gold reserves, as well as Sakai, a ghost controller, and three pieces of Ghost Porcelain. Someone should bear the responsibility for all of this."

Suddenly, another voice appeared in the video. A balding man in his fifties with a slightly corpulent figure appeared, severely chastising President Mishima on the screen, showing no concern for the occasion.

"Right now, the supernatural event continues, yet here you are, doing nothing. I think you should take the initiative to resign as president," he said.

"Ichiro Minister, please show some respect. This is a very important video conference. If there's an issue, we can discuss it after the meeting ends," President Mishima immediately straightened up and retorted angrily at the suddenly appearing Ichiro.

"No, you should resign immediately, and I will recommend someone more suitable to fill your position," Ichiro said.

"That's impossible. I have confidence in resolving our current predicament, and if Mister Ichiro would cease causing me trouble, I think the operation would proceed much more smoothly," President Mishima said.

Yang Jian watched the situation unfold in the video conference and frowned, saying, "I don't understand what they are saying. Can someone translate for me?"

It seemed that there was a severe argument between President Mishima and another person, but due to the language barrier, it was not understood.

Keiko, who was beside him, quickly translated the argument for him.

Hearing the translation, Yang Jian gave a slight smile and said, "It seems there's no peace even in your Exorcism Club, struggling for power is unavoidable. My operation has encountered a small hiccup, and yet they couldn't resist seizing the opportunity to make trouble. If that's the case, let that man named Ichiro handle this matter. I can return the payment; that's not an issue."

"Business hinges on integrity, and although I am not a businessman, I still value honesty."

Nagase and Keiko by his side looked at him with some surprise, seemingly not expecting Yang Jian to actually speak of quitting.

"Is it because he's too disappointed with the actions of the Exorcism Club?"

Nagase thought to himself; "What a bunch of idiots. Those sitting in offices could never imagine the dangers we faced before. It's already very lucky to have survived, and now they're there busy fighting for power and influence, it's truly infuriating."

"If I were there, I definitely wouldn't be able to help but kill those idiots who have nothing but intestines in their heads."

He couldn't help but clench his fists.

He was angry for Yang Jian, as well as for himself.

Such a powerful man who could fight fierce ghosts head-on shouldn't be humiliated by such trash.

"I'm truly very sorry for letting Mister Yang witness this farce. Please don't take Ichiro's words to heart. He's utterly ignorant about the earlier events, only knows to calculate money and profits, and is a short-sighted fool."

On the video call, President Mishima was startled when he heard Yang Jian's words come through, and hurriedly apologized to Yang Jian.

The world had changed, and top ghost masters like these could almost determine the rise and fall of a country, their worth could not be measured by any amount of money.

Arrogance and stubborn prejudices could cause the Exorcism Club to lose its position in the future.

Mishima had long seen through this, which is why he arranged for the talented Keiko to be sent over, a gesture of goodwill and a very far-sighted investment.

If the object of this goodwill was someone else, Mishima might still hesitate, but Yang Jian was worth doing this for. The only person globally with real records of resolving S-grade events, he had taken out a whole circle of formidable foes, and incidentally slaughtered a Captain Level person. The headquarters' attitude towards Yang Jian was still friendly and amicable.

This was the value embodied.

Therefore, a humble stance and sufficient sincerity were necessary.

"You bastard, why do you show such respect to a failure? If he can't do it, let him get lost. I'll send Yamazaki there to handle it; with his capabilities, he's bound to succeed," blustered the corpulent Ichiro.

President Mishima said coldly, "If Yamazaki goes, he's sure to die. He won't even have a chance of making it out alive. Mister Yang was about to succeed but was interfered with by an uncertain factor. All members who had encountered that fierce ghost died without exception. Only Mister Yang survived and even protected Keiko, who is an average person."

"Do you have a brain, or is the struggle for power blinding you? This is about the survival of Kobe City, no, even several cities. In the face of survival, anything can be set aside. Ichiro, may I ask you, do you still have loyalty to this country?"

Anyone with half a brain could see, except for Sakai who died unexpectedly, the people involved in this operation survived, proving that Yang Jian still had strength to spare or was more than capable, even looking after ordinary people.

Whether it was Keiko or Mishima, these two women were like two touchstones.

They had no ability to resist fierce ghosts, and would die upon contact. If they both emerged unscathed, it indicated that Yang Jian was indeed extraordinary.

Watching them argue, and listening to Keiko's translation by his ear, Yang Jian couldn't help but smile.

Whether this was a comedy or a scandal, he was uninterested.

"You go on arguing, I don't care. I can wait patiently with you," Yang Jian said.

His mission this time was already complete. As for this supernatural event, he was still considering whether or not to deal with it. If that Ichiro interfered, causing Mishima's plan to halt, Yang Jian could happily go home.

"Get Ichiro out of here, and don't let him anywhere near the conference room again." It was at this moment Mishima made a decision and immediately ordered staff to escort Ichiro away.

"Bastard, Mishima, you're utterly disrespectful..." Ichiro yelled as he was kicked out.

Only then did the video call become a bit quieter.

Finally, Mishima said, "I am very sorry, Mister Yang. I hope you can forget the unpleasantness just now. Can we continue with the topic we were discussing?"

"Since President Mishima wishes to continue, I have no objections," Yang Jian said. "After all, it was a significant sum that brought me here to help, and I owe your Exorcism Club some respect."

"I fully understand," Mishima breathed a sigh of relief.

What Yang Jian implicitly meant was that this bit of respect was due to the sincerity shown previously.

"The matter isn't so easy to resolve. I can deal with the Door Knocking Ghost, but only to that extent. However, I mustn't be interfered with. If I fail due to interference, President Mishima, you can't blame me for not putting in the effort," Yang Jian stated calmly.

President Mishima nodded his head.

He had heard Nagase's report before and indeed, it was quite regrettable.

At a critical moment, that head had flown away and become part of those heads in the sky. The balance between the ghosts was disrupted, forcing Yang Jian to retreat.

"Then please, Mister Yang, make a move once more. If there's interference again, I will bear all consequences," Mishima said through clenched teeth, making a promise.

Bad luck once doesn't mean the same for the second time.

Mishima chose to take a gamble.

He wagered his position as the president of the club.

Seeing this, Yang Jian's gaze shifted slightly, "Since President Mishima has said so, I will act once more. It's going to take some time and preparation."

"Is there anything I can help with, Mister Yang?" Mishima asked earnestly.

"A sufficiently sturdy box, and after the matter is finished, I will take the ghost with me," Yang Jian replied.

He pondered and decided to confront the Door Knocking Ghost once more.

Not just for the sake of this mission, but also to deal with this ghost once and for all.

"Understood. I will prepare immediately," President Mishima responded and nodded.

These requests weren't excessive; in fact, they were much less than anticipated. Yang Jian indeed had sincere intentions.

Soon, the video call ended.

At this moment, Yang Jian looked towards Nagase, "Do you have any good suggestions regarding that Door Knocking Ghost? If not, on the next operation, follow my orders unconditionally and execute them."

Nagase's face grew stern, and his smile gradually disappeared. He spoke seriously, "I've been observing the previous operation. Mister Yang's actions were flawless, without any vulnerabilities—the head, the black hand, and the shadows. The suppression from all three sides was complete, leaving no chance for the ghost to strike back."

"But the horror of that ghost was immense. It seemed the suppression wasn't completely successful, or an accident occurred before it could be completed, causing the three-sided containment envisaged by Mister Yang to fail."

Yang Jian didn't interrupt him and wasn't curious about Nagase knowing his personal file.

As a man of status, basic information about him was probably well-understood by now, short of advertising it to the world, so nothing was strange.

"Continue," Yang Jian prompted.

Nagase said, "I have a special idea we could try using bait to lure the ghost out, then create a trap, place a box, and make the ghost fall into it. If we close the box in time, we might be able to imprison it without making contact."

He laughed, thinking his idea was somewhat naïve, yet there was a space for feasibility—it simply required resolving a few issues.

"Not a bad idea," said Yang Jian with a light smile.

Dig a pit by the door, wait for the ghost to knock, then have the Ghost Master fall into the box voluntarily.

"However, it's not very feasible, making Mister Yang laugh," said Nagase, rubbing his head.

Because there was one significant, seemingly insurmountable problem.

That was, for the ghost to fall into the trap, it needed to return to reality and its exact position determined.

And to achieve this, one would need to suppress the Ghost Domain comprehensively and pull the ghost out of it. There might even be attacks from the ghost in the process.

If this couldn't be accomplished, the static trap wouldn't catch its prey.

"No, your method does have some viability, at least that's how I see it," Yang Jian nodded and said, "So let's pleasantly decide on this and proceed with your method, letting the Ghost Master actively step into the trap."

"Ah? Can it really work? But how do you lure the ghost to appear correctly?" Nagase asked somewhat surprised.

"I understand the ghost's pattern of killing and can use that to our advantage. Leave it to me to handle," said Yang Jian.

"Who will act as the bait then?" Nagase asked.

"Don't we have ready bait right here?" said Yang Jian calmly.

Nagase immediately looked towards Keiko, who was kneeling beside Yang Jian.

Keiko's face paled with fear, and she couldn't help but clutch at Yang Jian's clothes, pleading, "Please, no. I don't want to be bait. Mister Yang, Keiko will do anything you ask, but not this, please."

"The bait isn't you. Ordinary people should do what ordinary people do; this is a task for a ghost master," Yang Jian explained.

"Ah?"

At this, Nagase's face instantly fell.

So, he was the bait? And Keiko wasn't even being considered?

Keiko, initially shocked, then brimmed with surprise and joy. Looking at Yang Jian, her eyes filled with gratitude and emotion, as if she had received great care.

"Would you rather hide behind a woman? Besides, Mishima is already mentally compromised; only you are capable of undertaking this task," Yang Jian asserted.

"I understand," Nagase replied, wary and anxious, but he steeled himself to agree.

He would act as the bait to attract the Door Knocking Ghost.

Yang Jian was responsible for suppressing the ghost on the spot and locking it in the trap.

This was the best plan, avoiding direct contact. If it failed, the danger was minimal—only Nagase's life would be at risk.

Though it might seem cruel, such was reality.

Yang Jian was irreplaceable, while Nagase was in a position to be sacrificed.

"Then it's settled. Once the Exorcism Club's box is ready, we'll act," Yang Jian declared. "Now, there's time to rest a bit."

The plan was decided and wouldn't change further.

Chapter 697 Peril beneath the Calm

Three and a half hours had passed since the action at noon.

Yang Jian and the surviving Nagase, along with that Keiko, had taken a brief respite at the inn to calm their nerves and also to devise the next step of the action plan. As for the woman named Mishima, it had already been confirmed that she had... gone mad.

The reason was the immense mental strain she'd endured in a short span of time.

As for whether she could be cured or not, Yang Jian didn't care; it wasn't his responsibility.

In the quiet room.

Yang Jian sat motionless by himself, calmly observing the Ghost Child who was moving around the room.

The Ghost Child's whole body was wet, as if it had just taken a bath, its dark bluish skin looked exceedingly abnormal, and the funeral shroud it wore, though aged, was still intact.

Without the rotten Dead Man's Head in its hands, the Ghost Child seemed a bit unused to it, moving around more frequently than usual.

Yang Jian was constantly vigilant of the Ghost Child's condition; after all, it was a fierce ghost that could be fatal if it lost control.

"After my direct encounter with that old man earlier, I can be sure that there are at least three signs of ghosts reviving on that Door Knocking Ghost: livor mortis, Ghost Domain, and the knocking sound. If the old man had been a ghost tamer in his life, then it means he had at least controlled three fierce ghosts. Also, that black robe the old man wore seems to be out of the ordinary; my Ghost Hand struck it without causing any damage. Could it be another Ghost Cloth?"

He pondered, his gaze returning to the funeral shroud the Ghost Child wore.

"Suppressing a ghost of this level was somewhat forced given my condition at the time; I hadn't been as cautious as I should have, a bit overly confident."

"However, given the situation at that time, I made the best choice, something I do not regret, after all, to retrieve the coordinates inside the wooden box, it was inevitable to come into contact with the Door Knocking Ghost and face the danger once more."

Yang Jian thought to himself.

About half an hour later, Nagase's voice rang from outside, "Mister Yang, the items from President Mishima have been delivered to the designated location; we can start the operation at any time."

Whoosh.

At the sound, the Ghost Child hid away, finding refuge in the closet, but leaving a slim crack open, a pair of blood-red, eerie eyes peeking out.

The instinct to avoid the living was still there.

This indicated that the Ghost Child, after undergoing the paranormal event, was still in good condition, with no risk of losing control.

"I understand," Yang Jian's voice responded, and then he slowly stood up and walked out.

Nagase was already waiting at the door, his face somewhat tense, as he was to undertake the task of acting as bait this time; no one could be relaxed in such a situation.

"Mister Yang," Keiko said respectfully, bowing by his side.

"There's nothing left for you to do here, your mission is completed, you can go to Kobe City now," Yang Jian spoke.

"Then Keiko will wait here for Mister Yang's safe return," Keiko said in a very gentle tone.

"No need, after the matter is resolved I will likely leave directly by plane. You don't have to wait for me. I understand very clearly why President Mishima sent you; it was both a test and an act of ingratiation. But if you, as an ordinary person, want to live longer, it's best to stay as far away from the paranormal circle as possible," Yang Jian told her.

Keiko looked up at Yang Jian, wanting to say something, but before she could express it, Yang Jian had already turned and left.

"Nagase, it's time to go. If you survive this operation, you might consider working for my company," Yang Jian said.

He was making a move to recruit him.

Nagase laughed, "If that's possible, then I would be in Mister Yang's care in the future."

"Only those who survive are valuable; the dead are worth nothing," Yang Jian glanced at him, "Sometimes luck is also important, like for this operation, I was the one... So you have to perform exceptionally well as bait. If you can't manage that, then you won't have another chance."

"I understand that very well," Nagase replied.

If Yang Jian hadn't been part of this operation, Nagase would have died at that crossroad where the fierce ghost manifested during their first encounter.

Soon, the two men left the inn and headed towards Kobe City once more.

The Ghost Child followed them, creeping silently through the nearby streets, appearing now and then, asserting its presence, ensuring it was still nearby, never straying from the pack.

Meanwhile.

On the outskirts of Kobe City, an airport terminal.

President Mishima was here, closely following any developments in this paranormal event and ready to respond at any moment.

But inside this conference room, the squabble had only just died down.

The man named Ichiro had been driven out and was now venting his anger outside the airport, "Damn Mishima, this president is getting out of hand. He even had the gall to throw me out. It looks like it's time to teach him a lesson and let him know that the Exorcism Club isn't his to dictate alone."

"Go, tell that arrogant Tianye to come here. I have a favor to ask of him. Tell him to meet me in the carriage."

Suddenly, Ichiro spoke softly to one of his attendants by his side.

Immediately, the attendant hurried away.

Ichiro then returned to his own private car.

Soon after.

The Tianye who had almost had his head skewered by Yang Jian with chopsticks appeared with a gloomy face, and under guidance, he arrived at Ichiro's carriage.

"Mr. Tianye, I deeply regret what just happened at the airport. That Mishima has gone too far, bringing in such a formidable external assistance and no longer considering the core members of our Exorcism Club important. It's a national disgrace," Ichiro said directly and swiftly.

"The most infuriating thing is, Mishima's operation has clearly failed, yet he stubbornly trusts an outsider. I believe that if the mission is led by both Yamazaki and Mr. Tianye, the anomaly in Kobe City can be successfully resolved."

"So I plan to arrange a mission to enter Kobe City on my own initiative. I wonder if Mr. Tianye has the courage to take it on?"

Tianye immediately couldn't help but say, "Rest assured, Lord Ichiro. With me and the senior Yamazaki, this matter can definitely be resolved. President Mishima is a fool; he should never have trusted that bastard Yang Jian. Now that his operation has failed, this is our chance to show what we can do."

Tianye had previously been taught a lesson by Yang Jian, and he had a bellyful of fire.

Even though he had been suppressed, with Ichiro's words, his anger erupted once again.

"Very well, then I'll just go ahead and make a unilateral arrangement without going through Mishima," Ichiro said, smiling.

After discussing for a while longer.

Tianye left the carriage full of confidence.

Ichiro smiled and waved him off, clearly pleased with how the conversation went.

He didn't expect Tianye to succeed; all he needed was for the man to take a trip to Kobe City. If Yang Jian succeeded, Ichiro could take all the credit, as Yang Jian would leave after completing the task and would not dispute the narrative with Ichiro.

But if things failed, Mishima would be the one to roll, and Ichiro's reckless action would be seen as bold support.

Meanwhile, on the other side.

Yang Jian had returned to Kobe City once again.

"We're here," Nagase, holding the cell phone that had been in Keiko's hands, arrived at the set location.

In the middle of the street, a large crate was placed. It had been air freighted in, beyond which lay an extremely dangerous area, where even planes could crash.

"They really spared no expense," Yang Jian remarked, eyeing the crate taller than a man and giving it a knock; it was immensely heavy.

The opening was at the top, a specific request.

"This must be the old man's extravagant coffin," Nagase said. "But it's so heavy, how do we move it? Would we need machinery?"

"No need to move it; right here is enough," Yang Jian's eyes concentrated.

Ghost Eye suddenly opened.

Ghost Domain spread out.

The next moment, the giant crate sank into the ground, leaving only an opening exposed. Should anyone walking by fall in and the cover close quickly, they'd be trapped alive inside.

Yang Jian couldn't influence such a heavy crate, but he could change the position of other things.

He then glanced over.

The nearby buildings were altered, a small room materialized in front of the trap with its door perfectly aligning with the opening of the crate.

"The knocking is a curse, not just a means of killing. You will draw the ghost over by listening to this recording inside," Yang Jian said coldly as he tossed his cell phone to Nagase.

Nagase took it with some panic, his face showing a hint of astonishment, "Could it be like this? A curse spread by recording, drawing the vengeful ghost here?"

Yang Jian didn't speak, as he wasn't afraid of this secret being known.

For after today, only either Nagase or the Door Knocking Ghost would exist. If the operation failed and Nagase died, no one would know the pattern of the Door Knocking Ghost. On the other hand, if Nagase lived and the Door Knocking Ghost was imprisoned, this murderous pattern would lose its value and could no longer attract vengeful ghosts.

"Let's start right away. It will take some time for the ghost to arrive, and it may not be effective immediately, so keep playing the recording. I will end this all before the Ghost Door Knocker comes to kill you," said Yang Jian.

"I entrust everything to Mister Yang then."

Nagase looked at the small room on the street, bit his teeth, took the mobile phone with the recording in it, and bravely walked in.

"Alright."

Yang Jian said calmly.

Immediately, Nagase walked into the oddly placed small room. He glanced around at the wooden walls that seemed shakily on the verge of collapse, like a small part cut from some house.

After sitting down, Nagase turned on the phone.

The play button for an audio file appeared before him.

He took a deep breath.

Nagase played the audio file.

"Thud, thud thud!"

Dull, oppressive, giving one an almost suffocating sensation, the sound of knocking emanated from the phone.

At that moment, the curse belonging to the Door Knocking Ghost was actively released.

Only Nagase was the listener.

Yang Jian, along with the Ghost Child, withdrew to a distance, not wanting to be affected by the sound and targeted by the Door Knocking Ghost.

"We're not yet covered by the Ghost Domain of the Door Knocking Ghost, so it's safe for the moment. Now, all I need to do is wait for the most dangerous moment to come."

He subconsciously touched the back of his hand.

Below the skin was the contoured shape of an eyeball.

There was a risk of failure: not being able to suppress the Ghost Domain of the Door Knocking Ghost with his own.

But conversely, if successful in suppression, he could pull the Door Knocking Ghost out of its Ghost Domain and into a trap.

Therefore, the previous suggestion made by Nagase was feasible, though still very challenging. After all, suppressing the Ghost Domain of a ghost is not something an ordinary person can do; most tamers cannot withstand it, especially given that it covers almost half the area of Kobe City.

"I hope the source of the Dead Man's Head balloon incident doesn't come to disturb us," Yang Jian frowned.

This was his biggest concern.

The ghost that had already obtained a piece of the Dead Man's Head puzzle might now pose a danger no less than that of the Door Knocking Ghost, perhaps even becoming more strange.

Yang Jian stood on the roof of a building, waiting quietly.

The Ghost Child hid in a dark room downstairs, tilting its head slightly, hiding behind the curtains. Its red eyes were peering at the small room in the middle of the road not far away.

"Thud, thud thud."

The eerie knocking sound continued to ring from the phone. Alone, Nagase sat in that small room, forcibly enduring fear and unease, actively bearing the curse.

He stared fixedly at the door in front of him,

For at any moment, an old man might come to that door to knock.

If the door sounded, he would undoubtedly die.

Even the top ghost tamers might not be able to withstand such a terrible assault by a vengeful ghost.

"Only one chance, truly a dreadful task," Nagase sighed, looking somewhat disheartened.

His head bowed, the skin on his face began to peel off in chunks, revealing the hideous flesh underneath.

In haste.

...

Nagase picked up the fallen flesh and stuck it back onto his body, making himself look like a normal person pieced together—apparently a spirited and somewhat handsome high school student. But in reality, his body was already in a terrible state.

He resembled a malevolent ghost more than a living human.

"The erosion is getting worse. Is it the aftermath of the last operation?" Nagase was far from comfortable, yet he still managed to smile.

Wrinkling the skin can increase stickiness and prevent the flesh from falling off so easily.

But even if it did fall off, it wasn't a big deal—he could just pick it up and stick it back on.

However, as the revival of the malevolent ghost intensified, his body became more prone to falling apart. If this continued, he would soon become a rotting, flaking corpse, impossible to piece together ever again.

"Thud, thud, thud."

The knocking sound by his ear didn't stop, and it was still playing on his phone.

Enduring the ghost's curse required tremendous courage, not to mention the mental torment during this time was lethal. Keiko, the woman named Mishima, went mad from sensing the ghost's presence.

As time ticked away bit by bit.

The dreadful strangeness was bound to arrive as scheduled.

The sky nearby gradually darkened, a cold chill crept over, and a putrid smell of corpses began to waft through the air.

The Door Knocking Ghost's Ghost Domain was moving, now heading this way.

But the Ghost Domain was too large; the real ghost had not yet approached. Nevertheless, its effects were already manifesting.

Soon.

The Ghost Domain covered the area as predicted.

At that moment, Yang Jian once again entered Kobe City, which was hiding countless horrors.

"Something's off."

However, he frowned deeply, sensing something strange.

The dim sky was too clean.

People who had previously floated in the air had disappeared without a trace; not a single one could be seen. It looked as if the Dead Man's Head balloon incident had been resolved.

Yet, in fact, Yang Jian believed that his horrifying conjecture might have come true.

The ghost had selected a suitable Dead Man's Head.

Perhaps all the other heads were no longer important and were discarded.

Some terrifying ghost might have been nurtured into existence.

The current calmness felt like the tip of an iceberg, with real terror hidden and lying in wait.

"The rotting Dead Man's Head has indeed been snatched away." After searching around, Yang Jian still couldn't find a single head.

Even the most important head of the malevolent ghost had vanished.

"This isn't the time to think about this; let's try to deal with the Door Knocking Ghost first. Maybe without the Dead Man's Head balloon incident, it's actually a good thing for me. If the malevolent ghost has become more terrifying, it means the murder pattern may also have changed," he thought to himself.

About ten minutes later.

Yang Jian, spying from high above, saw a swath of even darker erosion approaching from afar; nearby walls began to rot, flake, and age. In the midst of that darkness, an old man in a black, retro-style long coat covered in death spots, with dead, empty eyes, walked slowly toward him.

Although he walked slowly, he approached quickly.

This was a strange phenomenon that only occurred within the Ghost Domain, where the nearby space was affected.

"I don't feel like letting you wander around anymore, old man—you're too dangerous. Let's end the experience from No. 7 Middle School right here; even though I don't know how you died, you've caused us a lot of trouble, so please lie down obediently in this coffin," Yang Jian murmured to himself, his own obstinacy also playing a part in this mission.

It was this dreadful old man that had destroyed his peaceful campus life and set him on the irreversible path of becoming a ghost controller, leaving him with only six surviving classmates.

If he didn't take care of this, Yang Jian figured he'd never be at peace for the rest of his life.

Chapter 698 The Severed Arm

The second time he had to face the Door Knocking Ghost, Yang Jian wasn't nervous; he had already earned the right to survive in the presence of ghosts, so he didn't feel as desperate as before.

Of course, he believed that truly desperate ghosts certainly existed in this world, it was just that he had not encountered one himself.

"It's very close."

Standing on the rooftop, Yang Jian saw a nearby street's buildings being eroded by darkness, where the terrible old man covered in corpse spots was hiding. However, this Ghost Domain wasn't very powerful. It could trap ordinary people and ghost masters without a Ghost Domain of their own, but it couldn't withstand the probing of his ghostly eye.

This was much easier than being in the ghost-painted world, so he was still fairly confident in his heart.

The knocking sound playing from the cellphone continued.

In the small room, Nagase was sweating coldly, his complexion pale, as he stared and listened to the eerie knocking sound, the moments before death's arrival—an utter torment.

"That ghost is nearby, it's about to arrive."

Nagase's body seemed to sense something too, and he tilted his head slightly in one direction, a strong unease approaching quickly. This unease was much worse than before, as if death was lunging straight at him; unavoidable, he could only silently endure.

"Hold on, you have to trust that Mister Yang, and you have to trust yourself. If you run away now, it will definitely be worse than staying in this small room to act as bait."

Nagase understood that if he couldn't hold on and ran away, not only would he offend Yang Jian, but he would also offend President Mishima of the Exorcism Club, and he still wouldn't be able to escape safely. The ghost would still target him, and then no one would likely come to his rescue anymore.

A clear consciousness is extremely important; it can make a person understand their predicament.

People just fear that under terror, they will act rashly without thinking.

As the cold sweat on his forehead kept dripping.

The lighting in the small house he was in was also getting darker, and the walls around him began to shrink, age, and then the plaster peeled off...finally rotting away, collapsing a bit.

The originally sealed walls suddenly broke and crumbled, and uneven gaps kept appearing and then widening. By then, Nagase could roughly see the outside situation through these broken gaps.

It was a small alley to the left.

Gloomy, oppressive.

The uneasy terror was coming from that direction.

But before he had time to observe more, Nagase suddenly stiffened, a chill spreading throughout his body.

A set of footsteps appeared next to the house. Though not loud, they were extremely heavy, step by step, as though made by a walking corpse, and at the same time, that familiar scent was smelled again.

The smell of a ghost.

Indescribable, a faint stench of decay mixed with a cold and rotting sensation.

"Has it come this quickly?"

Nagase turned to look.

His eyes narrowed.

The old man in the black robe with dark brown skin and corpse spots was walking step by step towards the front, not even looking into the house, just a profile showing in front of Nagase. He continued moving forward morosely, seemingly aiming to circle around to the front door.

"If it really wants to come in, this level of wall can't stop the ghost at all..."

Nagase's sense of dread peaked.

To know, he was less than five meters away from a real terrifying ghost.

Between them was just a wall as fragile as tissue paper, and now riddled with holes, allowing him a clear view of that dreadful figure inching closer.

Once it got near the door.

The ghost's attack would begin.

This was fatal.

...

Life or death hinged on this very moment.

Nagase had no way to defend against the Door Knocking Ghost's attack, all his hopes were placed on Yang Jian, not far from him.

"The plan is flawless, and the ghost has appeared once again," said Yang Jian, standing atop the roof, his expression darkening. The Ghost Eye dormant within him was stirring restlessly.

The maximum level of the Ghost Domain he could open was the fifth, while the sixth required the curse of the Eight-Tone Music Box. However, considering he had easily escaped the Door Knocking Ghost's domain at the fourth level, to fully suppress this Ghost Domain, probably the third or fourth level would suffice. This was still within his ability to endure.

"It's not time yet, I must act when the ghost reaches the door to knock," he thought.

Yang Jian didn't rush to use the Ghost Domain, fearing that acting prematurely might cause a change to the ghost's position or attract some unknown supernatural being.

So whether the plan succeeded was a bit a matter of luck.

"The Dead Man's Head balloon has yet to appear... That ghost seems to have vanished, it appears to have undergone some change after obtaining that rotten Dead Man's Head. Let's hope it doesn't cause trouble later, or this operation will fail again," he muttered to himself.

He worried because he knew just how formidable that rotten Dead Man's Head was. Yang Jian felt that if he became the target, he'd definitely need to suppress his own Ghost Domain, which would affect his ability to contain the Door Knocking Ghost.

"I'll leave the Ghost Child to guard against the appearance of other ghosts. At a critical moment, it can take the front. With the protection of the Ghost Shroud, it should be able to hold on for a while against most ghosts, unless they are particularly unsolvable."

Yang Jian's thoughts were clear, and his gaze was fixed intently on the Door Knocking Ghost, which was gradually approaching the door.

The ghost soon arrived at the door.

But there was a pit at Nagase's doorstep, inside which lay an open gold chest, forming a trap.

This trap was too simple, so simple that even a fool would know to avoid it and not step in.

But ghosts are different.

Ghosts follow a set pattern to kill, and their actions can be anticipated after they are understood.

The Door Knocking Ghost, with its somewhat stiff gait, continued forward, soon arriving at the door.

However, this terrifying, corpse-spotted ghost did not fall into the trap. The pit was clearly there, but a path formed above it, covering it entirely and obscuring the large chest, as though it had vanished.

Yang Jian knew the chest was still there, the trap was still there; it was just that the Ghost Domain had shifted out of reality. Since the ghost was in its own domain, it couldn't interact with the real world, which is why such a phenomenon of no intersection occurred.

What he needed to do was to bring the ghost back to the world of the living.

So suppression was necessary.

"It's starting."

Suddenly,

the feet of the horror-stricken, corpse-spotted elderly figure finally halted. The black robe's sleeve stirred slightly, and a rigid arm was raised.

The Door Knocking Ghost's murderous action commenced.

If the ghost knocked on this door, with only Nagase in the room, death was certain. If there were more people, they might stand a slim chance of allowing the first knock to kill someone else instead of them.

At this moment, the ghost could not be suppressed.

At least, Yang Jian in his current state couldn't do it, but in a mere contest of Ghost Domains, he hadn't lost many times.

This moment, he believed, was an opportune one.

Instantly,

The Ghost Eye opened.

Without any hesitation, a three-layer Ghost Domain overlaid, with red light quickly spreading from around him, the dim sky disappearing, starting to be replaced by his Ghost Domain.

It was a forceful invasion.

...

Yang Jian's Ghost Domain did not require any fermentation; once activated, it spread over a city in just one or two seconds, which was a huge advantage. The spread of the Ghost Domain was as fast as the sight of the Ghost Eye, making it an extremely unique and extreme form of ghost.

However, the Door Knocking Ghost's Ghost Domain was resisting, slowing down the covering speed, but in the end, it still enveloped the area near the Door Knocking Ghost and directly trapped it.

But.

As the red Ghost Domain approached the dreadful ghost, it began to fade, as if aging, decaying.

This old man carried an unseen supernatural power that interfered with the Ghost Domain's invasion and progress.

Its range wasn't large but was just enough to exceed the size of that trap; after all, how big could the gap of a chest be?

At that moment, the ghost's arm had risen and was falling towards the door of the room. Once the dry, stiff fingers touched the wooden door and the knocking began, the operation would be deemed a failure.

Because the ghost, after killing Nagase, would definitely leave, and without the trap, Yang Jian could not suppress it directly, the operation would surely fail.

"Four-layer Ghost Domain."

But the old man's movements were somewhat sluggish, and Yang Jian was a bit faster.

The four-layer Ghost Domain was activated, intensifying the invasion of the Ghost Domain.

Red light began to appear near the door, casting an exceptionally eerie and bizarre glow on the cold face marred with livor mortis.

"Not enough?"

Yang Jian's eyes flickered slightly.

Although the four-layer Ghost Domain had invaded, it was unable to strip the ghost from reality, indicating that the Ghost Domain's invasion was just shy of the last bit.

"No, not right, my Ghost Domain is decaying?"

Suddenly, he was shocked to discover that the red light that had just enveloped the old man was fading quickly. It seemed that the dense livor mortis carried some kind of incomprehensible, terrible curse that would intensify upon approach and accumulate over time with contact.

It was like... the wailing of Tong Qian's Ghost Face.

"Perhaps the most terrifying danger isn't the knocking but this decaying curse," Yang Jian thought, feeling a chill, yet without any delay.

The fifth-layer Ghost Domain was activated.

This was the maximum level of the Ghost Domain he could withstand at that moment, capable of banishing some lesser vicious ghosts from reality, though not permanently, as they would eventually invade back.

The activation of the five-layer Ghost Domain did not send the Door Knocking Ghost away.

But the ghost was covered with a thick layer of red light, as if it were soaked in blood.

"I'll send you back to reality."

Yang Jian's Ghost Domain suppression seemed to be forming, and he fixed the Ghost Eye's gaze steadfastly on the Door Knocking Ghost.

Although he was unable to send it away, the Ghost Domain belonging to the Door Knocking Ghost could not spread out, as it was pulled forcefully into reality.

And under the ghost's feet in reality was a trap.

It was an open chest.

"Thud!"

The next moment.

The ghost, about to knock on the door just a moment ago, lost balance and fell to the ground, precisely landing inside the previously buried chest, producing a dull sound.

"Succeeded."

Yang Jian's figure vanished on the spot, and the next, he appeared near the chest, and without hesitation, he kicked over the lid, wanting to seal the ghost away completely.

As long as it was successful, the operation could come to an end in a relatively easy manner.

The lid pressed down.

But the next moment, he felt resistance.

The old man maintained a posture of raising his hand as if, even though he had fallen into the trap, he still wanted to raise his hand to knock on that door; and this raised arm was like a stiff, icy steel pipe jammed in place.

"What kind of joke is this?"

Yang Jian put his entire weight down but still couldn't bend the Door Knocking Ghost's arm, a body that looked emaciated but contained incredible strength.

This strength didn't come from the withered body, but rather from an unknown supernatural force.

Moreover, the lid being pressed down even seemed like it could be flipped open at any moment.

Completely uncontainable.

"If the lid isn't covered, this ghost will soon break free..." Yang Jian's heart pounded; he had already seen the red light retreating inside the box below, giving way to a cold, dim environment.

The Ghost Domain of the Door Knocking Ghost was gradually re-emerging.

And the reason for this retreat was still that incomprehensible eerie rot.

The longer the resistance, the more terrifying the rot became.

The five-layer Ghost Domain was also being eroded. Although it would take some time, it ultimately couldn't resist.

"Nagase, if you're not dead, come over and help me press down this lid." While speaking, Yang Jian directly ejected Nagase from the room.

This was his Ghost Domain, where he was in control of everything.

Nagase had already seen the ghost fall in, his face showing a bit of joy and excitement, and he immediately pressed down on the lid with all his might.

However, from the not so large gap, an incomprehensible eerie force leaked, and in the world enveloped in red light, it seemed like a black spot had appeared, with the tendency to spread. The defeat of Yang Jian's Ghost Domain accelerated, and once it spread beyond this box, the ghost would be freed and be gone.

By then, all their efforts would be wasted.

Nagase's assistance didn't seem to make a difference; the lid still showed a faint tendency to be lifted.

In the end, Yang Jian even used the Ghost Domain to move a giant rock over and placed it on top, but he still couldn't cover that final gap of less than ten centimeters.

"It's not a problem of weight."

"Mister Yang, something is very wrong, the ghost is eroding us..." Nagase immediately widened his eyes as he noticed the appearance of cadaveric spots on the back of his hand.

Yang Jian's expression changed as he felt the trembling of the lid becoming more noticeable.

The erosion of the Door Knocking Ghost continued, and wherever it spread, the Ghost Domain of the ghost also expanded.

"Damn it, even now it won't let go, is it challenging my patience?"

Yang Jian didn't want to delay any longer; he clenched his teeth, and suddenly there was a rusty, eerie Firewood Knife in his hand. The knife was not at all sharp, the edge could be seen to be blunt and nicked, and it was stained with many unknown substances—soil, dried blood, and some flesh sticking to it—it looked somewhat creepy.

But the most terrifying aspect of this eerie Firewood Knife was its ability to dismember a ferocious ghost.

Yang Jian didn't plan to directly trigger the curse; he felt that doing so would result in unimaginable danger to himself. He just quickly grabbed the knife and made a swipe in midair.

Using the Ghost Domain, he slashed at the Door Knocking Ghost's raised arm, ready to knock.

"Crack!"

That thin, cold arm broke off directly.

This was the last thing Yang Jian saw before the lid slammed shut with a bang.

Indeed.

Without directly triggering the curse, the Firewood Knife could still strike the ghost and inflict certain damage.

Chapter 699 People Who Have Designs

"Bang!"

A muffled thump echoed, the sound of a box being forcefully closed.

With that sound reverberating, the terrifying Door Knocking Ghost, which had been wandering for half a year, was finally imprisoned. Regardless of the identity of this old man marked with livor mortis, and no matter how horrifying it was, it ultimately fell into the trap.

The withered arm that was holding up the lid just moments before, had been forcefully severed by Yang Jian wielding the eerie Firewood Knife.

It was uncertain if the ghost, now missing its arm, could continue knocking on doors.

Perhaps from now on the Door Knocking Ghost would become a one-armed ghost.

Of course, the dismemberment by the Firewood Knife was only temporary; perhaps within that box, the ghost had already retrieved its severed arm.

"It seems my previous guess was not at all incorrect. The Firewood Knife can directly contact and dismember ghosts. If I use a handprint, or even a footprint, as a medium, I can inflict damage on ghosts regardless of distance, but then I would suffer a great curse from the Firewood Knife,"

"This curse previously required me to use a slot for suppressing ghosts to offset it. I swung the blade twice, once cutting the blood handprint in the mysterious room of the Caesar Hotel, and once on Fang Shiming's body."

"But this cut is different. I didn't use a medium but allowed the Firewood Knife to directly contact the ghost. The effect is still evident, but what will be the cost?"

Yang Jian looked thoughtfully at the rusty Firewood Knife in his hand.

Nagase had also noticed the strange object in Yang Jian's hand, his eyes showing shock because he saw the ghost's arm being cut off too.

This scene somewhat overturned his imagination.

In supernatural incidents, it was already difficult enough just to survive a ghost's attack, let alone resist, figure out a pattern, and eventually imprison the ghost—which only the most skilled ghost handlers could do.

Yet Yang Jian not only confronted the ghost head-on but also managed to inflict a certain amount of damage on it, forcing the ghost to retreat before a living person.

Incredible.

Unimaginable.

Nagase stood frozen in place, seemingly too overwhelmed by the stimulations of the day, or perhaps like a frog in a well, unable to imagine such a scene could occur.

"What an incredibly powerful man, even ghosts retreat before him."

"I haven't found anything wrong with myself for the time being; it seems quite normal," Yang Jian contemplated for a moment, checking his condition.

After he made that chop, he felt nothing unusual, as if he had simply swayed normally, a stark contrast to the sensations triggered by using a medium.

"Is there no consequence to bear? Or can my current state withstand the cost of using the Firewood Knife at close range? Or perhaps, the latent curse has not yet erupted and needs some time to brew."

He speculated, with dread in his heart.

Because supernatural objects all come with terrifying costs, from the Ghost Mirror, Ghost Cabinet, Eight-Tone Music Box, to even the Ghost Scissors, without exception, this was the case.

"Mister Yang, how are you? Are you alright?"

Nagase noticed that Yang Jian had been pondering for quite some time and, concerned that something might be wrong, couldn't help but remind him.

Yang Jian snapped back to reality, his Ghost Eye closing as the Ghost Domain rapidly dissipated, and then said, "I've locked the ghost in this box. This containment is not very stable and can go out of control at any moment. Inform President Mishima to send someone over to handle it."

He patted the box under his feet, the dull metallic sound echoing back, clearly conveying the solidity of the box.

Now wasn't the time to ponder these matters. Although the Door Knocking Ghost had been confined, this place was not absolutely safe. He needed to transport this object away quickly, lest other supernatural incidents strike. There were at least three differing supernatural incidents remaining within Kobe City.

The Cloth Ripping Ghost in the closet, the source of the Dead Man's Head balloons incident, and Sakai, where the fierce ghost revived.

And that was just the visible threats; who knew how many unseen horrors might be lurking?

"Alright, right away, I'll contact President Mishima."

Nagase wiped the sweat from his forehead, his complexion pale as a corpse's, but his expression was relieved, as if he had just skirted the edge of hell.

Hurriedly grabbing his phone, he began to take charge of contacting Mishima's side.

Suddenly,

Yang Jian sheathed the rust-covered Firewood Knife and stood up, his expression cold as he scanned around. It seemed as though, after the Ghost Domain receded, there was a suspicious gaze lurking nearby, secretly peering at him.

This feeling was not intense, just an instinct, a sixth sense.

Barely perceptible, he could not be certain.

"Is it an illusion? Or is there still some unknown paranormal event nearby?" Yang Jian furrowed his brow, subconsciously touching the back of his hand.

Should he activate his ghost eye again to confirm the situation?

He hesitated.

However, just at that moment, a car came speeding down the street nearby, recklessly weaving through traffic without any concern for hitting pedestrians.

"It should be someone arranged by President Mishima," Nagase said at that point, putting down his phone and gesturing, "Over here, we're over here!"

"Hide."

Yang Jian glanced at the Ghost Child nearby and commanded it to hide. He did not want too many people to know about this thing.

Although Nagase had seen it, hearing about something from someone else and seeing it with one's own eyes were two different matters.

Soon, the vehicle came to a stop.

There weren't many people, only three.

The one leading was a brawny bald man, followed by a gaunt man who was skin and bones, and a somewhat familiar fellow—the one, if not mistaken, was named Tianye, right, the guy Yang Jian had almost killed with chopsticks in the little tavern at the airport.

"It's Yamazaki," Nagase said with a change of expression upon seeing the strong bald man at the front, showing great concern.

"Who is he?" Yang Jian casually asked.

"He's one of our country's top spirit manipulators, roughly equivalent to the rank of a team leader in your country, and he's also one of the people deemed qualified to be recognized as a 'Jade,' holding a very high status," Nagase explained in a low voice.

"But he is a very tough and domineering person, so he's extremely dangerous, and even President Mishima can't interfere with his actions."

"Who is the other one? That skinny guy," Yang Jian asked, glancing over.

That kind of skeletal thinness was obviously not normal, and it must have been the influence of a Ghost Shadow, but the bald man named Yamazaki looked just like an ordinary person, showing no signs of abnormality. However, his aura was indeed oddly unsettling, indicating he was one of the more well-off spirit manipulators.

"I'm not sure. I don't have much contact with people like Yamazaki. I apologize for disappointing Mister Yang," Nagase said apologetically.

At that moment, the three people who had gotten out of the car approached, and the one named Yamazaki grinned, greeting, "Mister Yang, I'm honored to meet you. You have done very well this time. President Mishima made a very correct choice in asking you to handle this matter. You've worked hard, so from now on, please leave the rest to us three, and Mister Yang can go back and enjoy the care of Miss Keiko."

With that, his gaze lingered on the box at Yang Jian's feet.

The real ghost was locked inside it.

The danger was gone, and the timing was very clever this time around. He believed no one would arrive quicker than himself for a short while.

After all, getting close to Kobe City meant death before, and only special people had the qualification to enter here.

At this point, Nagase swiftly translated Yamazaki's words, practically synchronizing them so that Yang Jian could quickly grasp the implications.

After listening, Yang Jian's expression slightly changed, "I have no problem with you taking over. Kobe City is right here, and if you want to save people, you should have time. After all, there are still many survivors in this city, but this thing won't work."

He pointed at his feet.

"My item. This was agreed upon with President Mishima beforehand."

"Mister Yang might have misunderstood. Everything here belongs to Exorcism Club, including that box. I hope Mister Yang won't make things difficult for me. After all, we hold great respect for Mister Yang, and you have not been shortchanged a penny for your payment. Even with Miss Keiko, Mister Yang can take her if you wish," replied Yamazaki genially, still with a smile.

"But important items that were not part of the agreement cannot be taken away without reason."

Although the bald man named Yamazaki spoke politely and even with a smile, his eyes conveyed a dangerous warning, like a menacing gang member threatening an ordinary person.

His words were fine, but the tone was off.

"I'm not one to beat around the bush, and I'm not really good at being diplomatic. I haven't been beaten down by society since school, and I have a bad temper. So, you can call me Mister Yang with a smile, but I can only scold you coldly, calling you a bastard," Yang Jian said with an icy and abrupt tone.

"You want this thing? Come take it with your life. I don't mind solving a few members of Exorcism Club here while I take care of the Door Knocking Ghost."

"I've even dared to kill our country's head team leader; do you think I care about you?"

Listening to Yang Jian's words, Nagase felt the tension he had just calmed flare up again. He looked at Yang Jian, his mouth moving slightly. If he translated these words, both parties could very well start fighting.

But he had no choice; he braced himself and translated nonetheless.

After all, Yamazaki wasn't a fool. He could probably guess what was being said from the tone of voice.

As expected, as soon as the words were out.

Yamazaki's face stiffened, and his smile began to fade, followed by a sinister gaze fixed on Yang Jian, seemingly enraged by his remark.

"You bastard, how dare you speak to Mister Yamazaki like that?" Tianye, standing nearby, immediately bellowed with fury.

"A man whose life isn't even in his own hands has no right to speak, so shut up or I'll make you disappear from this world," Yang Jian glanced over with zero tolerance for this person called Tianye.

He had already spared him once last time for the sake of the Exorcism Club's face.

But face could only be given once, giving it twice only devalued it.

If it really came to blows, Yang Jian wouldn't hesitate to send this guy packing.

Though Tianye was arrogant, he wasn't foolish; he felt the chilly stare of each ghost eye on Yang Jian watching him, as if something terrifying would happen the next moment.

At this moment, he dared not speak out, even with Yamazaki backing him up.

But after this brief intimidation, Tianye felt his conduct was too humiliating and undignified, and he became annoyed and angry, thinking of stepping forward to prove he wasn't afraid.

However, Yamazaki extended an arm, stopping Tianye in his tracks.

Yamazaki, though fierce in appearance, wasn't reckless, "Don't be rash, the other party is Yang Jian, known as 'Ghost Eyes,' and your attitude will only come across as even more disrespectful."

Tianye said nothing but wore an ugly look as he glanced at Yang Jian before retreating a few steps.

"He's a dangerous fellow," Yamazaki said, squinting slightly while sizing up Yang Jian.

He too felt the dangerous aura emanating from Yang Jian.

However, that wasn't the point; the point was that this guy had acted twice, attracting the Door Knocking Ghost two times. Although it was contained the second time, the combat against the ghosts was definitely real.

To be in such good shape after two encounters, with no injuries or signs of ghost resurgence, was indeed extraordinary.

According to Yamazaki's plan, he intended to kick Yang Jian while he was down, to take advantage of Yang Jian's weakened state, to retrieve the box containing the ghost from his possession, and then to claim credit for resolving the paranormal event himself.

As for Yang Jian.

Yamazaki had no plans to start a conflict, hoping he would just take the payment and leave without being a hindrance.

However, he hadn't expected such an assertive and even arrogant attitude from Yang Jian.

"He isn't just bluffing, he's really prepared to act. Though there's a chance he's feigning strength, it's very small, his condition is too good," Yamazaki assessed the situation, realizing his plan was likely to fail and thus not wanting to let things deteriorate further.

Yang Jian grew impatient, "If you don't want to come to blows with me, then just go back to wherever you came from and don't get in my way. My tolerance for you is limited, and maybe the next moment I'm in a bad mood I'll wipe you all out. Then I'll just tell President Mishima you died in a paranormal incident; who would know anyway?"

At that moment, Yamazaki laughed, a cold, chilling, unsettling laugh as he looked at the box at Yang Jian's feet, seemingly making a decision.

"Mister Yang, please calm down, we don't have such deep animosity between us, do we?"

"Since Mister Yang has plans, we can only follow Mister Yang's wishes."

"Moreover, we are here just to do a job, not to bear any malice towards you, Mister Yang. Let's pretend that earlier incident never happened and avoid any strange misunderstandings. Right now, I still need to assess the situation in this city, so let's end today's matter here, and we shall take our leave."

He chose to compromise and retreat.

After apologizing and excusing themselves, this person called Yamazaki led the other two back to their car, then they took another road towards the city center.

"What a disgusting guy, trying to reap the benefits without the work, not even considering whether he's got the ability," Yang Jian watched coldly as they left without making a move.

It wasn't that he didn't dare, but the situation hadn't escalated to the point where action was necessary.

A fallout wouldn't be good for anyone.

Yet one's stance had to be firm, for to step back would be to lose.

"Lucky there was no fight, otherwise it would've been a big hassle."

Nagase sighed with relief and thought to himself, "But if they really had fought, the chances of Yamazaki losing might have been higher."

Reluctantly admitting it, but after witnessing Yang Jian's abilities, he believed in him even more.

After they drove into Kobe City.

Inside the car, Yamazaki's face looked particularly grim. Although he had chosen to back down, it didn't mean he had swallowed his pride; especially since Yang Jian had insulted him as a 'dog,' which had really gotten under his skin. He feared he might have actually lost control and started a fight if he stayed there any longer.

So reason told him that he had to leave.

Otherwise, the situation would spiral out of control.

"Yang Jian didn't pay too steep a price to contend with the fierce ghost, this isn't a good opportunity, Mister Nagase made the right choice," the scrawny man who was driving said.

"I know, within the Exorcism Club, both I and Yang Jian were rated as having the potential to become 'Jade', but there is only one Jade, and I'm not yet ready to shatter here," Nagase replied, his eyes closed and his figure seemingly shrouded in darkness, somber to the point of being terrifying.

"Mister Nagase is also not certain he can handle that Yang Jian?" Tianye asked in surprise.

"No, he's just hired help. If I went up against him, the end result would be two pieces of jade both shattered; even if not shattered, they'd already have developed fractures. That's why it has to stop here. My concession doesn't put me at a disadvantage, after all, it was just a probe, no loss if it can't succeed," Nagase explained, his expression gradually returning to calm, but still fierce looking.

"Since we can't fulfill our purpose this time, we can't let this operation yield nothing. After all, I do care about face, so let's just resolve a random supernatural event and go back... Stop the car, let's start investigating from here."

Soon, the group stopped at the crossroad where Yang Jian had lit the Ghost Candle before.

Three people got out of the car intending to observe something.

But quickly they noticed something abnormal.

It was a person, someone walking on the road with their back turned, looking as though they were about to leave on another street, vanish into some corner of the city.

"Stop." The man named Tianye shouted loudly.

Nagase frowned but did not stop Tianye's reckless action, considering the most dangerous ghost to be with Yang Jian at the moment. Even if there were some remnants, he believed he could handle them.

This shout was intended for the living because only they turn their heads when they hear sounds; the dead or ghosts wouldn't bother with Tianye.

However, the next moment.

The person ahead stopped, then whirled around violently.

It was a half-decayed dead man's head with a pair of eerily pale eyes, the corners of the mouth slightly upturned as if about to split open or as though it was about to speak.

The almost hesitating appearance of this half-decayed dead man's head was even more spine-chilling.

A ghost?

At that moment, the three of them were startled. This was too coincidental.

They had just gotten out of the car when they encountered a malevolent ghost wandering in the city.

"Let's just conclude this matter with it," the emaciated man suggested.

However, before Nagase could speak, Tianye simply collapsed to the ground with a thud.

A head severed from its neck rolled on the ground and rolled towards the figure ahead, Tianye's eyes wide open on the head, but consciousness was gone, with no signs of life.

The ferocious ghost turned its head back, and instantly killed a ghost master.

Yet the attack did not cease.

The ghost's gray-white eyes shifted, as if focusing on a new target or refocusing.

"This is bad."

Nagase was horrified, feeling an immense crisis welling up from within, as if he himself was about to be slain by this ferocious ghost.

The ghost was looking at him.

Once targeted, Nagase thought he might die as Tianye did, unknown and helplessly against the ferocious ghost's attack.

Run!

Without hesitation, he felt he had come across something terrible, turned around, and fled without another word.

But as Nagase turned, he froze in his tracks.

There was also a person standing on the street behind him, similarly with their back turned to him, but then that person seemed to notice something and began to turn around to look this way, the neck also sporting a half-decayed head of a dead man.

The person ahead and the one behind seemed to be identical, with no discernible difference.

Chapter 700 New Wound

"The Door Knocking Ghost affair is over."

In a makeshift office inside an airport near Kobe City, a very excited voice rang out.

The declaration came from Wang Xin, the leader of the Exorcism Club, who seemed to exhale a breath of relief after speaking, a sense of indescribable ease throughout his body.

The other club members, hearing this, also stood up, equally excited.

"Thank goodness, this nightmare is finally over."

"Is it true? Leader Wang Xin, is it really over?"

"An unbelievable day, we have finally been liberated."

Aside from also feeling a sense of a burden lifted, even those of mature and steady years couldn't help but show excitement and joy.

At this moment.

President Mishima also emerged from a small office nearby, his face wearing a smile, in a very good mood, as he had already guessed the success of the plan after receiving Nagase's phone call; Yang Jian, whom they had invited at a great cost, indeed had not disappointed.

An intricate supernatural event that had troubled them for so long was actually resolved within a single day.

Such ability was terrifyingly strong.

"President, are we supposed to prepare a celebration banquet now?" Wang Xin asked.

"We should prepare, organize it, but the most important thing right now is to enter Kobe City and finish some remaining work. There were a lot of details in Nagase's phone call; the custody of the ghost is unstable and requires careful inspection and transport back here," President Mishima said, though happy, he still remained calm and collected.

"Alright, I'll arrange it right away," replied Wang Xin and immediately walked away.

But at that moment, a club member hurried in from outside, approached President Mishima, and whispered something into his ear.

President Mishima's smiling face instantly turned grave and gloomy, as if suppressing a rage with no outlet.

"Damn it, that Ichiro is an absolute bastard; he actually sent Yamazaki and others to find Yang Jian. What are they trying to do? The affair has just ended. If irreversible grave consequences are caused due to human interference at this point, even Ichiro's death wouldn't be enough to atone for his sins."

It was only now that President Mishima received the news that Yamazaki had led two people to Kobe City immediately.

This made him feel a strong unease.

Because Mishima knew that Ichiro's actions were aimed at him; once Yamazaki obtained the Door Knocking Ghost from Yang Jian, the credit for Kobe City's operation would likely be attributed entirely to him, and he might also be held accountable for the expenses of this operation.

But it wasn't just that which angered Mishima.

What infuriated him was that, due to Ichiro's shortsightedness and selfish actions, they might provoke someone they shouldn't have, and for short-term benefits, ruin his plan to entice and cooperate with Yang Jian.

"It's stupidity that makes one want to vomit."

"Prepare immediately, I'm going to Kobe City," President Mishima cursed under his breath and then commanded.

"President, there is still a dangerous supernatural incident there," a club member immediately reminded him.

"Don't worry, Yamazaki has already entered Kobe City, and with Yang Jian still there, even if there is danger, they should be able to manage. Now that the Ghost Domain is gone, even ordinary people could easily enter the city area. Also, we can't be the slightest bit negligent with the custody of the Door Knocking Ghost; I must go there myself to feel assured," President Mishima said.

"Okay, I'll prepare right away."

The happy news hadn't lasted long before another troubling issue for Mishima arose.

He didn't know the situation there and couldn't judge what would happen after Yang Jian met with Yamazaki. If the Door Knocking Ghost, which they had finally managed to contain, were to be released again, he felt like killing someone.

Because if the ghost got released, Yang Jian certainly wouldn't care.

As for whether Yamazaki had the ability, Mishima didn't know.

But in his heart, he felt that Yamazaki probably wasn't as capable as Yang Jian, after all, Yang Jian had handled the supernatural incident entirely on his own.

Mishima, Keiko, Nagase, and that deceased Sakai were just extra people, rather bluntly put, cannon fodder. They weren't much use, just there to lend a hand when necessary; the real powerhouse from start to finish was only Yang Jian.

Soon, several vehicles quickly left the airport and headed towards the city.

Meanwhile.

Yang Jian took this time to reinforce the box under his feet, preventing any supernatural power from leaking out. Because even the slightest crack could allow the ghost to escape its confinement, especially since the Door Knocking Ghost was from the Ghost Domain.

"Mister Yang, are we just going to wait here?" Nagase sat on the ground nearby, grabbed a drink from the vending machine, and took a big gulp.

He already felt physically and mentally exhausted without having done anything.

It was the result of too much shock and fear.

"Of course, we absolutely cannot allow any accidents with the ghost. I'm planning to take it back to Dachang City. Also, at some point earlier, I felt something lurking around here, watching me in the shadows. Although I have no evidence, I have reason to believe there's another ghost lingering nearby."

Yang Jian spoke calmly. His Ghost Domain might have manifested, but his Ghost Eye was still nervously scanning around for any irregularities that could appear at any time.

Meanwhile, the Ghost Child was also wandering nearby.

Yang Jian had given it a new command; to immediately run back to him if it found a ghost.

So, if the Ghost Child suddenly came running, it meant that it had found a ghost—this would serve as a good warning.

"Get me a drink," Yang Jian suddenly said.

Nagase paused for a moment and then replied, "I'm terribly sorry, I was so careless. I don't know what flavor Mister Yang prefers. We have oolong tea and juice..."

"Juice will do," said Yang Jian.

Nagase quickly handed him a bottle of fruit juice.

Yang Jian reached out to take it but felt a vague pain in his arm, as if something had brushed against it and caused a bruise.

After taking the drink, he frowned and examined his arm.

On his slightly unhealthy-looking skin was a bruise that appeared out of nowhere, looking very much real. The skin there seemed necrotic, as if it had been dead for a long time, for it was already turning black, suggesting it was on the verge of rotting.

The pain seemed to originate from an area of healthier skin that was affected.

"This wasn't there before; the wound appeared within the last ten minutes. What's going on? Could it have been that man named Yamazaki secretly using some bizarre method against me? No, that's unlikely. The wound isn't fatal. If Yamazaki were to act, such a minor action would only intensify the conflict and be pointless."

"Besides, the location of this wound is very peculiar, precisely like the spot where I struck the Door Knocking Ghost earlier."

Yang Jian's expression grew grimmer at the thought.

This was a side effect of the rusty, ominous Firewood Knife.

It couldn't be a coincidence.

Otherwise, it was just too convenient.

The necrotic black flesh seemed to run deep into the bone, visible on the other side as well.

This meant the wound went through Yang Jian's entire arm.

Most importantly, the injured arm was not the one with the Ghost Hand; it was his relatively normal right arm. Yang Jian also remembered that the arm he had severed from the Door Knocking Ghost was its right arm as well.

The same location, the same wound, the same arm.

These three similarities explained everything.

"Could using the bizarre Firewood Knife at close range also result in similar injuries to oneself? The body doesn't show clear signs of being slashed by a knife, but this wound appears over time... in about an hour. Right now, it's still unclear whether this wound will worsen," Yang Jian's face darkened.

"So, this is the price to pay?"

At that moment, Yang Jian fully grasped the peril of the Firewood Knife.

At a distance, through a medium, attacking humans and ghosts would come at the cost of a slot to suppress a ghost.

Up close, using the Firewood Knife to slash a ghost would cause harm to the corresponding part of the user's body. The severity of the harm would depend on where you struck the ghost.

Arms and legs could be tolerated, but the head... If the ghost controller also suffered such a fatal wound, it was likely death would follow.

"If slicing a ghost means that part of my own body starts to rot, then indeed, only a ghost could use this Firewood Knife. A living person couldn't bear such a curse; one slice and you would rot to death," Yang Jian contemplated as he merged the Ghost Shadow into his body, attempting to expel this cursed influence.

Only a ghost could fight a ghost.

This saying hadn't changed to this day.

If the curse of the Firewood Knife appeared on the body, then the abilities of other ghosts should be able to deal with it.