

## Revival 731

### Chapter 731 The Three Released Men

Although it was startling, it wasn't dangerous.

But the uniqueness of this ghost made Yang Jian feel like he nearly capsized because once he saw Zhou Lin's body turn into that of a ghost, he knew that this ghostly encounter was different from the supernatural events he had encountered before.

"That letter attracted a ghost that seemed to specifically target me. If that ghost had successfully invaded my body, I might have actually died here."

Yang Jian's gaze flickered, "So, is this the cost of opening that letter? To create a supernatural event targeting the reader. The danger is present, but the level doesn't seem to be very high... Maybe this is because it's my first time reading the letter. If I read it a second or third time, it might bring about even more intractable supernatural events."

It seemed the profession of a messenger was not as simple as he had imagined.

"Anyway, let's try and see if this ghost can be dealt with."

Yang Jian put aside other thoughts and decided to deal with the problem at hand first. This ghost might not kill quickly, but it was exceptionally peculiar and different from other ghosts.

"If I can't touch evil ghosts myself, then I'll have to rely on the Headless Ghost Shadow. I hope it can suppress this ghost."

He was cautious, not wanting to repeat the previous person's fate of being invaded by a ghost, so he conservatively chose the Headless Ghost Shadow.

A tall, black figure slowly separated from Yang Jian's body and stood behind him, looking like a headless corpse in the dim light.

As soon as the Headless Ghost Shadow appeared, it immediately walked towards the ghost that was still lying on the ground.

Since it wasn't himself approaching, Yang Jian's movements were a bit bolder.

The Ghost Shadow moved swiftly, and by this time, it had reached the side of the ghost. Just as it was about to invade, the body lying on the ground started to move again.

However, this time the surrounding anomalies disappeared—the strange wind stopped, the chilling aura dissipated, and the dimness covering the woods started to lift, as if night was retreating and day was returning.

"Hm?" This change made Yang Jian pause in his actions.

Immediately after,

The man lying on the ground, named Zhou Lin, touched his head and got up groggily, mumbling to himself, "What happened to me just now? I feel like I passed out."

"Am I alright? I remember being chased by an evil ghost just now."

It seemed he lost the memory of his unconscious period, only recalling falling while fleeing, then he didn't wake up again until this moment. He thought he had just regained consciousness from passing out, never considering the possibility that he had actually died.

"Resurrected?"

Yang Jian's expression shifted slightly.

He had just confirmed that Zhou Lin was dead; the body was cold, and the ghost had invaded his body. Yet, in an instant, he seemed to come back to life, completely defying logic.

Could it be that Zhou Lin had inadvertently become a ghost controller?

No.

That's impossible.

One certainly can't die first before becoming a ghost controller; how could someone who had become a corpse then fill that role?

However, the anomalies in the woods were indeed fading quickly.

The sky returned to normal.

Some rays of sunlight even penetrated the area, though it was only because of the changes in the environment due to Yang Jian's Ghost Domain that the others were not yet aware.

"What, what is this?" Suddenly, Zhou Lin turned his head and upon seeing the tall, headless black shadow so close to him, he jumped with fright and quickly backed away, horror returning to his face.

Yang Jian frowned.

He wasn't sure whether to act or to hold back.

Killing Zhou Lin was easy, but that might cause the ghost to invade a second person, and predicting the outcome of that was impossible.

Thinking this,

Yang Jian's gaze gradually retreated, and the tall, headless black shadow quickly sank down to become a shadow covering the ground beneath his feet.

He decided not to take any action.

"Is that your ghost?" Zhou Lin's eyes widened upon seeing Yang Jian's shadow, finding it inconceivable.

That shadow of Yang Jian was actually a ghost.

"So, is it over?" With the disappearance of the Ghost Domain, Zhao Li, the woman next to him, saw the surroundings brighten and immediately spoke with utmost joy.

"Where is the ghost? Where's the ghost?" Not far off, Li Yue also looked around nervously.

Yang Jian remained silent, looking very solemn.

He was observing this Li Yue, trying to see if there were any anomalies since the real ghost resided within this person's body.

But, on closer observation, the man seemed completely normal, showing no signs of issues.

"So you've resolved the supernatural event that just occurred? Impressive." Li Yue didn't skimp on praising, "Indeed, this level of danger seems too trivial for someone like you. If I had known, I wouldn't have tried to protect the letter and should've just given it to you."

Surviving such a supernatural assault naturally qualified him to read the letter.

"The letter, it's gone." Yang Jian stretched out his hand and showed that the crumpled letter had turned to ash, scattering with the wind.

It seemed that as the supernatural power that resided in it dissipated, the letter became useless.

Li Yue breathed a sigh of relief, "That's good news; it means our mission here is over. Without the letter, there's no need to deliver it."

"Is that so? What about your identity as a messenger?" Yang Jian asked.

"The identity of the messenger remains."

Li Yue's expression darkened again, "It's a curse from an Evil Ghost. Nobody can escape after becoming a messenger; at least, I haven't heard of any messenger who has succeeded. The only way to survive is to inherit that mysterious post office and take control there."

"As for how, I don't know; I only know that a messenger will gradually uncover more secrets in the process of delivering letters."

Yang Jian furrowed his brows, "The post office? Where is that place?"

"I'm not sure, I don't know that place, all I know is that sometimes when you open a door, or just walk along, you'll find yourself entering the post office, and it's the same for others. Some people have tried to use GPS to determine the location, but it's completely useless," Li Yue said.

"How do you become a messenger?" Yang Jian asked again.

Li Yue shook his head, "I don't know. It was an accident that I became a messenger. One day I was just at home watching TV when I heard someone knock on the door. When I opened it, there was no one there, just a letter on the ground."

"That letter was exactly like the one you had in your hand just now. Out of curiosity, I opened it... and just like that, I became a messenger."

"It sounds like someone is deliberately spreading this curse," Yang Jian said.

The person knocking on the door certainly wasn't a ghost; it had to be a human, perhaps another messenger distributing the curse, so it kept spreading without interruption.

Seeing Yang Jian stay silent, Li Yue immediately said, "Although one of my companions died at your hand, I don't blame you. It's quite fortunate that only one person died to complete this delivery task. But we can't stay here for long; we need to leave, and I hope that Yang Jian, you will let us go."

"If you are still determined to kill me, then I have no choice but to resign myself to fate. Not even ghosts can kill you. With your abilities, it would probably take only a few seconds to deal with us."

He was straightforward, not beating around the bush.

"Where to?" Yang Jian asked coldly.

"Back to the post office," Li Yue replied.

Yang Jian didn't care about the lives of these people. At his level, the life and death of a few individuals were indeed inconsequential. What he cared about was the person who was possessed by the ghost.

Should he make a move against these people and get rid of that ghost, or would it be better to do less than more, letting them leave?

"You all may go. Don't come to Dachang City again. If you have a similar delivery task next time, figure out a way to deal with it yourselves. Otherwise, if I see you here again, I will kill you on the spot. And when that happens, I won't give you any warning; you won't even see my face before you die."

Yang Jian said icily, sending them the severest of warnings.

A chill ran down Li Yue's spine; he knew that the man before him wasn't just talking big to scare them. It was clear that Yang Jian really wanted to kill them, to nip any potential danger in the bud.

But he didn't do it.

Perhaps he was wary of the messengers, or maybe he had other plans.

"Thank you, we will never appear in Dachang City again, not for the rest of our lives. You can be assured of that," Li Yue said.

Yang Jian said, "I didn't ask for your promises. You just need to do as I say. Also, I have a letter for you to open after you leave Dachang City," he added.

Then, he found paper and a pen on the corpse nearby, wrote down a note, and folded it.

"If you can't resist and open it before that, you won't be able to leave Dachang City alive."

The envelope-less note landed in Li Yue's hands.

Cold sweat broke out on his forehead, and he didn't dare to even think of opening it. It seemed even more terrifying than the previous letter.

"Get lost," Yang Jian withdrew his gaze and gestured with a wave of his hand.

"Zhou Lin, let's hurry," the woman called Zhao Li said, not daring to linger, and hurriedly left.

Before she left, she took one last look at Yang Jian, as if imprinting the image of this frightening man in her heart, vowing never to see him again for the rest of her life.

Because he was even more terrifying than a vengeful ghost.

Soon, the three of them left as if fleeing.

Yang Jian, carrying a body bag, stood at the entrance of the woods, watching them leave.

His gaze lingered particularly on the man called Zhou Lin.

His purpose was simple: let these people take the ghost away from Dachang City. As for what would happen afterward, he didn't know and couldn't manage. The world was already full of holes with traces of ghost invasions everywhere. He couldn't possibly deal with all supernatural incidents.

Even if there was an incident he could handle, he felt he should avoid it.

By not confronting it head-on, he minimized one more danger.

Who knew what special circumstances could arise, after all, ghosts were unpredictable.

After watching their car disappear into the distance, Yang Jian started walking back to the village with the body bag.

At that moment.

Driving away from the scene, Li Yue breathed a sigh of relief, "Damn it, what bad luck to run into the last person you'd want to meet in Dachang City. Who would've thought Yang Jian would come here? But how did he get the news about that bizarre corpse in the woods?"

"Li Yue, I feel like that Yang Jian is very unusual. He's nothing like the other ghost masters we've seen before. That look in his eyes when we left... cold, devoid of any living emotion, as if he was looking at three corpses. Also, did you notice? He used ghost powers more than once," the woman named Zhao Li said with her head slightly lowered, still visibly uneasy.

"Stop thinking about that man, we won't cross paths with him again."

Li Yue grimaced, clenching his teeth, "If it weren't for that letter, all of us would be dead by his hand. That man is too extreme. He talks about killing us as if there were no reason at all. Dealing with someone like that is more torturous than hanging."

"By the way, didn't that Yang Jian give you a note earlier? What does it say?" Zhao Li asked curiously.

"He told me to open it after leaving Dachang City." Li Yue's expression darkened slightly. "Let's just do as he asked and not complicate things further."

Soon.

The few people in the car fell into silence.

It wasn't until the car had driven far enough away from Dachang City that Li Yue hesitantly pulled the note out of his pocket.

It had a simple message: The ghost is in another man.

Huh?

Li Yue was taken aback at first, then realized the implication and looked at Zhou Lin in the rearview mirror.

In the mirror, Zhou Lin's half of the face was strangely foreign, not matching his own features, as if it belonged to another person. It was incredibly pale and covered with soil.

Li Yue's hair stood on end, and he was utterly horrified.

Meanwhile, Zhao Li sat beside him, unaware, still thinking Zhou Lin was the same as before, completely oblivious to the fact that he had already died once.

#### Chapter 732 Dying in a Dream

Due to the arrival of this group of people, Yang Jian was delayed a bit, and by the time he returned to the village, it was almost ten o'clock.

In his hands, he carried a body bag with a strange corpse inside. Not daring to be careless, he found other body bags in the car, as well as the Gold box, and stored the pieces of the body separately.

Two human heads, a pair of Dead Man's Heads, a half body without a head, with five legs.

What made him most uneasy was that one of the heads looked exactly like his deceased father, suggesting that this body might be his father's.

"Trouble follows another, it was okay when I didn't know anything, but now that I've learned some inside information, I've realized how deeply entangled I am with the supernatural events. Even when I was a child, a body suspected to be possessed by a malevolent spirit was bought near our village... All these years, I've been kept in the dark."

Yang Jian thought to himself, and after arranging the bodies, he prepared to head back to the old house.

"Where have you been since early in the morning? When I woke up, I didn't see you." As soon as he got back, Jiang Yan, who was playing with her phone in the hall, hurriedly stood up, her lips pouting slightly, looking extremely aggrieved.

"Where's my mom?" Yang Jian asked directly.

Jiang Yan replied, "Earlier, there seemed to be some incident in the village, your aunty and quite a few others from your family went to check it out. I didn't want to join the commotion, so I thought I'd wait here for you to come back."

"Did you have any dreams last night?" Yang Jian asked again.

Dreams?

Jiang Yan was startled for a moment, then shook her head and said, "No, I didn't dream. I took care of you for most of the night, and by the time I fell asleep, it was very late. Then I slept till nine o'clock without dreaming."

"Good, you didn't dream." Yang Jian nodded.

"What's with you all of a sudden taking such interest in me? Hehe, were you moved by me last night? I took good care of you. I was worried you might be sick when I got up, but you're special, you definitely won't get sick."

Jiang Yan giggled, then walked over and affectionately clung to Yang Jian's arm, her demeanor coquettish.

"This village isn't quite normal," Yang Jian said calmly, gazing at her.

Jiang Yan was taken aback for a moment, then she shrank her neck feeling a chill, and snuggled up against Yang Jian, whispering, "It's not haunted, is it?"

"Not sure, need to check it out. If you're scared, go back to Dachang City by yourself. There's no need to stay here with me," Yang Jian said.

Since Jiang Yan hadn't dreamed, she hadn't entered that dream world to be chased by ghosts, so it was confirmed she was clean and could leave.

"I'm not leaving. Wherever you are, that's where I'll be," Jiang Yan said. "I'm your girlfriend, after all. How can I abandon you and sneak away by myself? Now is the best time to prove our love."

As she spoke, she tilted her neck and looked firmly at Yang Jian.

Who knows where she got such courage from.

"Do you think it's a bit safer to stay by my side?" Yang Jian asked.

"Not at all, absolutely not," Jiang Yan denied immediately, but gazing at Yang Jian's unnervingly calm eyes, she felt a little guilty, "I admit, just a bit, only a little. After all, I feel very safe with you; it's always been that way."

"Considering your honesty, come with me to walk around the village and see what actually happened just now," Yang Jian said.

"Ah? But I haven't put on makeup yet?" Jiang Yan appeared pleasantly surprised.

"The first time I met you, you hadn't bathed for several days, trapped in the restroom. I bet you drank plenty of toilet water. Now you're so finicky? Let's go," Yang Jian said.

"Don't mention my dark past," Jiang Yan said.

Although he hadn't visited the village in a long time, anything that happened in this small village quickly became common knowledge. Just by wandering around aimlessly, Yang Jian noticed a group of villagers gathered in an open area in the village, discussing something.

"What happened in the village just now? I was out for a while and didn't get to know. Can someone tell me?" Yang Jian approached and casually asked an unfamiliar person.

"Isn't that Yang Jian? Haven't seen you in years, you've grown so much. You look just like your dad; it's like you were carved from the same mold. If only your dad hadn't died in a car accident at such a young age, what a pity," said an elder he didn't recognize, but this slightly aged man clearly knew Yang Jian.

Yang Jian's face remained expressionless, not responding.

The middle-aged man continued, "Indeed, something big happened this morning, I'm not very clear on the details, but it's related to your family. It seems like that kid from your family named Xiao Yuan committed a murder, using very brutal means, chopping off someone's head. The police have been notified, someone will probably come to make an arrest soon."

"Xiao Yuan? That wouldn't be the cousin you met in Yang Town before, would it?" Jiang Yan asked in surprise, speaking softly.

Yang Jian furrowed his brow, "Let's go and see."

The middle-aged man then said, "Yang Jian, this lady must be your girlfriend, right? Where is she from? Remember to invite me for the wedding feast if you two get married."

"Hehe, for sure, for sure," Jiang Yan smiled and replied politely.

But Yang Jian ignored the man; he moved swiftly and soon arrived in front of a three-story western-style building in the village.

This was his cousin's home.

At the moment, the somewhat spacious yard was filled with people. There were relatives from his family, some elderly people he didn't recognize, his cousin's parents... even the kids were joining in on the commotion as if many didn't understand the seriousness of the situation, just coming to join in the fuss.

"Let's go inside and take a look."

Yang Jian pushed through the crowd, planning to enter the house to see what was happening.

...

"Hey, what are you doing inside? You can't go in there." A man of about fifty hurriedly called out to Yang Jian.

"This place isn't your home, do I need your permission to enter?" Yang Jian glanced at him indifferently, without the slightest courtesy.

The man immediately said, "Zhang Fen, control your Yang Jian. How is he speaking like this? Is this a place for a child to mess around? He doesn't even consider the situation and is still causing trouble here."

Zhang Fen also felt that Yang Jian shouldn't be causing trouble at this time and was about to ask him to come back when Yang Jian had already walked into the building, unstoppable, with a willful demeanor.

"What's with the young people these days, aren't they afraid of escalating the situation? If they destroy the scene, they will have to take responsibility," the man said, too upset to speak. He felt disrespected by Yang Jian, a younger generation, who treated his words as if they were nothing.

It wasn't just about maintaining order; he also felt humiliated by Yang Jian.

However, Yang Jian didn't think there was anything inappropriate about his actions; he had always behaved this way.

Not only him, but Jiang Yan also didn't see anything wrong with his behavior. She was very clear that Yang Jian, as the person in charge of Dachang City and responsible for the neighboring towns and villages, was well within his rights.

If Yang Jian wished, he could formally enter and leave any place within his area of responsibility.

This was both a responsibility and an authority.

"It's on the third floor." Yang Jian looked up briefly. From the stench of blood coming from inside the building, he could roughly deduce the location.

"Then I won't go up. I won't disturb your work," Jiang Yan said.

Yang Jian replied, "Alright, you stay here."

With that, he immediately headed upstairs.

The higher he went, the stronger the stench of blood, and there were traces of smeared blood on nearby walls, likely made by someone with blood-soaked hands.

Soon.

Yang Jian arrived at a room on the third floor.

The room was locked tight, but the floor was stained with substantial bloodstains.

Yang Jian reached for the doorknob, and the locked room door opened.

He saw a blood-drenched corpse lying on the bed. It hadn't been dead for long, likely having died last night. The corpse's neck was a bloody mess, its head had rolled to the side, the eyes wide open with a dull lifeless gaze, and a blood-stained knife was still in the corpse's hands.

"It's her..." Yang Jian's expression darkened.

The dead person was the girl who had been with his cousin Xiao Yuan yesterday, seemingly named... Lin Xiaoxi.

Additionally, from the state of the death, it appeared to be a suicide.

She had chopped off her own head, and due to insufficient force, kept hacking until her neck was mutilated.

"She didn't survive last night's nightmare, did she?" Yang Jian thought to himself. "She was dragged away by a ghost in the dream and it was more likely than not that she was killed by the ghost in the dream, which then affected her in reality, turning on herself... My cousin Xiao Yuan must have been sleeping in the same room with this girl, and now she's suspected to be the murderer."

"This isn't an ordinary incident, it involves a supernatural event, a vengeful ghost killing people."

With that thought, he fell silent.

Yesterday, an introverted girl, today, a horrifically mutilated corpse. Humans indeed are too fragile in the face of vengeful ghosts.

Even he nearly failed.

Had it not been for that accident, he likely wouldn't have come to his senses either.

"But strangely, my cousin is still alive. Could she actually have succeeded in killing the ghost again and escaped the nightmare?" Yang Jian then hesitated.

Because he felt that things were not that simple.

Even the most reckless person, killing indiscriminately in dreams, wouldn't likely succeed every time.

So there must be some problem with Xiao Yuan, who had survived.

After understanding what had happened there, Yang Jian didn't linger and went downstairs.

A corpse wasn't worth lingering on.

However, when he returned to the ground floor, he saw that the outside had become noisy again, with a rather large disturbance.

"What happened now?" Yang Jian didn't care for this kind of quarrel.

Jiang Yan said, "It seems that the victim's family has arrived, and their emotions are a bit heated. Then they started fighting, others tried to break it up... that's about it. How's upstairs, any problems?"

She looked nervously towards the staircase.

"It's nothing, just a person who died, it's the girl from yesterday who was with my cousin, died quite miserably," Yang Jian stated calmly.

"That girl? What a pity, so young," Jiang Yan sighed regretfully.

Yang Jian added, "However, the culprit was herself, and it has nothing to do with my cousin."

Chapter 733 Settle Privately

"How did you manage to escape that nightmare last night?"

Amid the quarrel outside, Yang Jian found his cousin Xiao Yuan and asked her very seriously about her experience in the nightmare because he remembered that the ghost did not go after Xiao Yuan but chose to attack him instead.

Of course, it didn't exclude the possibility that Xiao Yuan was still dreaming after he had woken up.

Xiao Yuan's eyes were slightly open, as if she had lost her spirit, and she didn't listen to anyone else beside her. Her body and hands were still stained with blood as if she was the one who had done what happened before, while she herself seemed unable to recover from the recent events.

"There are things you don't want to talk about, but you have to. If we can't completely resolve this nightmare, incidents like today's will happen again. It's not just Lin Xiaoxi who died today; someday, your parents could die, everyone in the village could die, and I could die."

Yang Jian was still inquiring; he wanted to figure out the root of this nightmare.

Now many clues were cut off; the only lead was Xiao Yuan.

"Xiao Yuan, are you listening to me?" Yang Jian continued to ask, waving his hand in front of her.

"I don't know, I got separated from Xiao Xi, and then she died... I shouldn't have left her, if I hadn't, she wouldn't have died, I would have protected her."

Xiao Yuan suddenly burst into tears as she spoke, blaming herself for leaving at that time.

Yang Jian frowned and felt something strange.

You should know that in the dream at that time, it was Lin Xiaoxi who was first attacked and abducted by the ghost, and then Xiao Yuan went after the ghost, leaving only himself alone. How come it turned into her separating from the girl called Lin Xiaoxi here?

Was there a problem with her memory?

Or was it interfered with by the dream so that things were a bit unclear?

"How is she now?" Jiang Yan asked from the side.

"Not sure, she has some issues of her own, there are things I can't explain." Yang Jian said.

"What's happening outside, why is it so noisy?"

At that moment, he heard a group of people arguing and shouting outside, as though there was about to be a fight, with some trying to break it up and others crying out.

"I'll go check it out." Jiang Yan also heard the commotion outside and hurriedly went to see what was happening.

But before she could step out, the door was pushed open, and a crowd of people barged in.

"Where is the murderer? Hand over the murderer! Are you trying to shield a killer? I'm telling you, this won't end today, an eye for an eye, a debt must be paid; it's only right..." An angry voice rose, belonging to a man in his thirties filled with rage.

The people trying to calm the man couldn't stop him as he charged into the house, and upon seeing Xiao Yuan sitting there with blood on her, his eyes immediately turned red.

Without a word, the man charged over and picked up a small wooden stool from the ground, swinging it viciously towards Xiao Yuan's head.

If the hardwood stool had made contact, it would surely have been fatal.

"Stop it, what are you doing?"

"Please, don't, Lin Hui calm down."

People cried out, trying to hold the man, named Lin Hui, back, but in his blind rage, he paid them no mind.

Jiang Yan was taken aback, not understanding what was happening when she saw someone with red eyes charging forward, but when she realized the target was not herself, but her cousin Xiao Yuan behind her.

Facing the attack, Xiao Yuan still stood there dazed, lifting her head slightly to look at the angry Lin Hui without fear or any attempt to dodge.

However, the solid wooden stool stopped ten centimeters in front of Xiao Yuan's head.

A pale hand firmly caught the stool.

Boss Yang stood beside her, staring indifferently at the man named Lin Hui, "Calm down, though it is tragic that someone in your family died, it doesn't give you the right to harm others indiscriminately."

"Get out of my way," Lin Hui shouted, still irrationally angry, swinging his other fist straight toward Boss Yang's face.

But before it could reach him, Lin Hui froze in place.

A slightly blackened hand gripped his wrist.

This hand did not seem like that of a living person's, stiff and unnaturally cold, without an issue, and the most eerie part was that just being grasped by it made Lin Hui feel like he had lost control of his body, it had been stripped of all control, forcing him to stand rigidly on the spot, unable to move like the sleep paralysis experienced during a night's sleep.

Despite being conscious, his body could not move.

"Can you calm down now?" Boss Yang's gaze was fixed on him.

Those were eyes devoid of any emotional fluctuations, harboring an inexplicable weirdness and danger, as if they were looking at a dead person, a corpse.

"If you keep acting impulsively, I won't hold back next time, and something might happen that you will regret." Boss Yang continued.

Faced with this inexplicable phenomenon and the terrifying gaze of the man in front of him.

Lin Hui felt a chill invading his body, and his rage instantly disappeared, replaced by an inexplicable fear.

He didn't know this Boss Yang, but instinctively felt a lethal danger.

"This man has killed someone." Lin Hui suddenly thought, as though only a killer could emit such a dangerous aura.

"What, what do you want to do?" He stammered as he spoke.

Yang Jian slowly lowered his hand, his expression still cold and detached, "Although my actions might seem a bit like bullying, it seems that this is the only way to calm you down. You might have a bad temper, but mine is worse, so don't casually lay a hand on me—I've been restraining myself considerably."

He was a ghost controller.

As a ghost controller, he was bound to be somewhat unconventional.

Yang Jian too had unconventional methods. He wasn't a complete person, so he himself was a bit worried that he might lose control and use the power of malevolent spirits to kill this man.

"I've looked at the situation upstairs. The person named Lin Xiaoxi is indeed dead, and her death is somewhat inexplicable. What is your relationship to her?"

"I am her brother," Lin Hui said, "Murder demands a life in return, that's only fair and just."

"I know, but the person wasn't murdered by my cousin. It's a special case, and even when the investigators arrive, they will tell you the same. So no matter what you are thinking, today you only have one choice, and that is to talk privately with me,"

Yang Jian said calmly.

"I don't want this to turn the village sour. Although you might feel that I am somewhat humiliating, I still have to say this—name your price, take the body back and bury her. The officers who come to investigate will close the case for you. There's no murderer here, no killer."

"Name your price, my ass... I want her to pay with her life."

Lin Hui's anger flared up again, but this time he didn't attack Yang Jian, instead pointing at him and shouting, "Get lost! This has nothing to do with you. Every debt has its debtor, my quarrel is with her."

As he said this, he glared at Xiao Yuan, agitated and itching to make a move.

"Two million," Yang Jian stated flatly.

"Didn't you hear me? Get lost! Today, I only want to settle the score with her," Lin Hui said.

Yang Jian continued, "Five million. I've said it, the person wasn't killed by my cousin, that is an unchangeable fact. No matter how angry you are, it's useless."

The others were shocked when they heard Yang Jian offer to compensate five million.

That was a significant sum of money. Whether or not Xiao Yuan was the murderer, the mere amount was very tempting. Slightly greedier individuals might already be contemplating a private resolution. After all, the dead can't come back to life, the living still need to make a living, don't they?

Besides, anyone who could casually offer five million was determined to protect Xiao Yuan, making it very difficult to do anything to her.

"Just because you say she didn't do it means she didn't do it? Who do you think you are?" Lin Hui barked in rage.

However, at this moment, his fury had diminished substantially, whether because of the money or because Yang Jian made him feel fear. Either way, he no longer behaved like someone on the verge of murder.

"Yang Jian is in charge of Dachang City. Within the city, he can handle almost anything, including today's unusual event. His word is evidence, and it does not require your agreement," Jiang Yan said earnestly as she steadied her nerves and approached.

Yang Jian waved his hand, signaling Jiang Yan to stop talking.

The role of being in charge was too remote for the villagers; they were unaware of paranormal events, let alone the significance of the title "in charge."

"Wait for the investigators to arrive. You will see that I haven't spoken incorrectly, but for now, you need to wait here patiently," Yang Jian said.

"Fine, I'll wait a bit and see what you have to say then. If she really is the murderer, I won't let you off," Lin Hui said.

"When that time comes, do as you wish," Yang Jian nodded.

The scene was brought under control, and many breathed a sigh of relief.

After a short wait, two investigators arrived, quickly examined the situation, and assessed the body. Usually, they would detain the suspect and proceed with investigations, gather evidence, and file the case. However, this type of incident was not an isolated one recently, and if they followed through the entire procedure, many things would not get accomplished.

Thus, one of the investigators quickly informed both parties of their preliminary findings: "We initially determine this to be a suicide. No murderer is involved, but we do need to wait for the autopsy report for a final decision."

After delivering this information, the two investigators began recording statements on the scene, preparing to file the case.

Both of them were very clear that this was yet another bizarre death.

A similar incident had occurred in another village not long before, with the victim dying in much the same way, apparently by their own hand.

These incidents were to be reported up the chain; they were not something for them to handle.

"Did you hear that? Although it's not confirmed, it's almost certain. This type of incident in your family isn't unique; there have been more than just Lin Xiaoxi who died mysteriously lately," Yang Jian directed his words at Lin Hui.

At that moment, Lin Hui fell silent, no longer impulsive. He felt Yang Jian was right, for indeed there had been a number of mysterious nocturnal deaths in neighboring villages recently.

"Let's settle this privately. The incident happened here; you can't escape responsibility no matter what," he said after a while.

"You sure change your tune quickly," Jiang Yan scoffed, her contempt for the man clear in her heart.

If he had been steadfast in demanding a life for a life, it might have been one thing, but seeing no advantage to be gained, he immediately changed his mind, showing no sign of sorrow or grief, making it clear that he did not take Lin Xiaoxi's death seriously at all.

Yang Jian said, "If you want to settle this privately, that's fine. I'm a man of my word, five million, and we'll treat this as if it never happened. Don't hassle my cousin any longer."

"That's too much. That was before the case was filed. Now, I can negotiate for you, maybe save you a few hundred thousand," Jiang Yan came over and whispered.

Yang Jian glanced at her, "Do you think I'll have the chance to enjoy my money? Do as I say, give his family a sufficient settlement to avoid future trouble."

"Okay," Jiang Yan didn't press further and immediately started discussing the matter with Lin Hui.

Soon, the disturbance was over.

Lin Hui, as Lin Xiaoxi's family member, took the five million given by Jiang Yan and left without a word, disappearing quickly.

And Yang Jian earned a new nickname in the village, Boss Yang.

As for whether anyone behind his back was calling him a fool with more money than sense, that was something Yang Jian would never know.

#### Chapter 734 The Dream Affects Reality

...

The issue of cousin Xiao Yuan's murder wasn't settled until the evening. Although the family of the girl named Lin Xiaoxi had taken the money and fled early on, the villagers relished a good spectacle and always enjoyed commenting at length. Besides, the corpse needed to be dealt with; it couldn't be left in the room forever.

However, after this incident, Yang Jian gained a new reputation in the village as someone "silly with too much money."

Since the matter had nothing to do with him, he had foolishly thrown out five million to settle the situation. If that's not being silly with too much money, what is?

Of course, those villagers could never imagine that Yang Jian's gold in Dachang City was measured by the ton...

To him, money had become just a number on the books. With his current abilities and status, it wouldn't be difficult to earn even more if he wanted.

But for Yang Jian, thinking about making money at this time was incredibly foolish. He was currently focused on survival, deciphering the secrets of the resurrected specter, pursuing the truth, and finding a correct way to control ghosts.

After dinner.

Having nothing else to do, Yang Jian began to rummage through the old house, hoping to find some relics left by his father.

Some objects didn't possess supernatural power, so they couldn't be glimpsed using the "Ghost Eye." They had to be searched for slowly because the "Ghost Eye" would only react to anomalous things, yet some things weren't anomalous.

"By the way, Yang Jian, right after dinner ended, one of your uncles asked your mom for a loan of two hundred thousand to build a new house. Your mom asked me to see what you think," said Jiang Yan, walking over to where Yang Jian was crouching in a corner sifting through boxes and cupboards, and spoke softly.

"What are you looking for? Do you need any help?" she asked.

Without looking up, Yang Jian replied, "No need, I'm just searching casually. What did you say just now? About a loan?"

"Yeah, they must have seen how generous you were this morning and now they're all starting to have designs on you," said Jiang Yan with a pout, "Looking at them, it seems like they have no intention of repaying the loan."

"It doesn't matter. Given the current trend with frequent supernatural occurrences, it's uncertain how long most people will live," said Yang Jian indifferently. "If they're short of money, just lend it to them. It'll let them live a little happier for a few years. Who knows, they might die in a supernatural event at any time."

"You weren't like this before," commented Jiang Yan. "Since you agree, I'll loan them the money."

"Mhm, just make sure a promissory note is written," Yang Jian said.

"They obviously don't plan to repay, so a promissory note might be moot," mentioned Jiang Yan.

Yang Jian said, "The intention isn't to have them repay, but we should still have some protection. If one day they deny their debts, or start arguing with my mom, we can just sue them. If everyone gets along and stays safe, then there won't be any issues. My relatives aren't exactly the best, but some things just can't be helped for the sake of appearance."

"Hehe, makes sense," laughed Jiang Yan.

She knew Yang Jian was spending money for peace of mind. Although it was somewhat wasteful, it was also a straightforward way to handle things.

Jiang Yan left shortly afterward.

Yang Jian continued to search for anomalies.

Soon, he found an old photo frame with a very aged photo inside. The picture was somewhat blurred and black-and-white. It was a family portrait: him as a child, his mother Zhang Fen, and his father...

Wait a second.

Yang Jian took note of his father's appearance.

Despite the blurriness, it was still apparent that the face was unusually pale, the smile stiff, and the eyes dull and ashy—hardly resembling a living person, more like a recently deceased corpse.

But at a glance, it all seemed quite normal—after all, who would think of a corpse when looking at a photo?

Yang Jian fell silent.

In the photo, he was only three or four years old at most, and he had no memory of the photo being taken.

From this, he deduced that his father had died in a car accident when he was six years old, but a year prior, his father was already not normal. As for what had happened in that time, what changes had occurred, probably no one knew. The old house contained no such information, no notes, no records.

However, as Yang Jian was looking through some of the old objects...

"Tap, tap tap!"

There came a series of inexplicable footsteps from the ceiling above— the sound of leather shoes striking the ground, very distinct.

Hmm?

...

At this moment.

Yang Jian suddenly looked up, his body subconsciously tensing, and his Ghost Eye involuntarily opened.

Because at that moment, Jiang Yan had gone out, and his mother had not yet returned, leaving him alone in the house, and it was impossible for anyone to be upstairs.

Moreover, the noise came from that room... the room where his father's portrait was kept.

"What a joke, I've already checked; there was nothing wrong," Yang Jian immediately put down everything in his hands and dashed upstairs without hesitation.

He was nervous, but not afraid.

If a ghost really appeared, Yang Jian might be able to confront it head-on, not to mention he carried the eerie Firewood Knife, which could retaliate against even the most formidable ghosts.

When Yang Jian reached the second floor, his steps suddenly halted.

Because the door of the room on the far right... had opened.

The wooden door, which had been checked and locked several times, was now ajar.

This kind of phenomenon would go unnoticed by a careless person, who might simply think the wind had blown it open or that they hadn't locked it properly when leaving, but Yang Jian was different. He was certain that he had securely closed that room when he left, and Jiang Yan would definitely not wander into the room with the portrait.

"There must be something wrong; I just don't know where the problem lies. It was the same yesterday; the door opened by itself," Yang Jian said, his face solemn as he stepped into the room again.

The source of the footsteps was not found.

Everything in the room was arranged exactly as before, with no change.

Even his Ghost Eye detected nothing amiss.

If not for this, how could Yang Jian have possibly slept next door to Jiang Yan last night, as if he didn't care for his life?

"Things are getting weirder here. It started with a nightmare, then today I found two human heads, a dismembered body, followed by four guys who were supposed to deliver a message heading into the woods... And now, footsteps come from an empty room, suggesting a ghost might be lingering here."

"The most critical point is, I haven't been able to find the slightest clue from start to finish."

"It seems abnormal, but I can't find the source of the anomaly. Even scouring the entire village with my Supernatural Power yielded nothing," he continued.

Yang Jian was not hasty at this moment; he was pondering.

A terrifying conjecture surfaced in his mind.

Perhaps the source of the anomaly was not in reality, but within that nightmare.

During last night's nightmare, his cousin Xiao Yuan quickly pulled him away from the village, and he didn't even know the state of the village.

What if that nightmare was somehow linked to reality?

"If that's true, then the ghost causing the disturbance is in the neighboring room of the village in my dream," Yang Jian thought, and he was suddenly taken aback.

Because he had left his room during the nightmare last night, and if there was a ghost next door, it would mean he had been just a few meters away from a ghost... Had his cousin not promptly pulled him away, he might have encountered the ghost in a far too intimate manner.

Considering the state Yang Jian was in during his first nightmare, it was very likely that something would have happened.

"So, the ghost is in the dream, starting to slowly influence reality?"

After a long contemplation, Yang Jian came to this conclusion.

If the guess was correct, then the ghost could not be dealt with because you can't beat a ghost in a dream. Even if you manage to kill the ghost, at most the nightmare ends, but the ghost doesn't die.

Unsolvable.

Yang Jian thought to himself that this was an unsolvable supernatural event.

The ghost could not be imprisoned nor dealt with in a dream, yet it began to impact reality, luring the living into the dream. Even a ghost controller could not escape, and the nightmares would be much more frightening if the controller entered the dream.

It was a vicious cycle with no way out.

"If there truly is no way to deal with it, then I can only leave this family home first thing tomorrow morning," Yang Jian felt this was the only prudent method.

Because the supernatural event only occurred in this vicinity, there were no such phenomena in Dachang City, indicating that it was regional and could be evaded.

Chapter 735 Calling Someone at Night

Night fell once again.

The tranquil and peaceful village was once more enveloped in darkness, and only a few scattered street lamps were still casting their dim yellow glow. Some lights hadn't been turned on at all due to lack of maintenance.

Yang Jian hadn't left the old house during this time.

He had stayed in the room with the portraits, keeping watch for any movements, like a wooden statue devoid of needless gestures.

But unfortunately,

aside from the footsteps he had heard earlier, Yang Jian made no other discoveries.

He guessed that the nightmare was still ongoing, that the ghost from the dream had departed from this place and wouldn't be coming back for the time being.

"Yang Jian, what are you up to? I've been looking for you for quite a while," Jiang Yan said cautiously as she appeared in the hallway outside, peeking in.

She sighed in relief when she saw Yang Jian inside the room.

"What do you want from me? If there's nothing important, go to sleep. It's dark already," Yang Jian had already heard her approaching, so he wasn't surprised.

Jiang Yan walked in and said, "Well, I just wanted to report back about earlier. Guess how much money I've lent out in just a short while? Your relatives were like mad, I was nearly surrounded. Really, one shouldn't try to be too nice."

"You've handled it yourself, I'm not interested in such trivial details," Yang Jian replied.

"Trivial details? We're talking millions here," Jiang Yan said, "That's enough to support me for a lifetime."

"Where's my mom?" Yang Jian asked, ignoring her statement.

Jiang Yan replied, "She just went back to her room to sleep, on the first floor. Is there something you needed?"

"Nothing, just asking," Yang Jian answered.

At that moment, Jiang Yan walked over, wrapped her arms around Yang Jian's neck from behind, and said with a giggle, "It's so boring for you to sit here all alone. Why don't I keep you company? It's rare for us to have time together. Is it really okay to waste it like this?"

After speaking, she leaned close to Yang Jian's ear, appearing very affectionate.

Yang Jian remained cold as wood, completely indifferent. He glanced at her briefly, "I have a feeling that something abnormal will happen in the village tonight. I need to stay awake. You wouldn't want to end up like Lin Xiaoxi today, suddenly attacking yourself and chopping off your own head, would you?"

"Ah?"

Jiang Yan shrank back in fright, "Are you trying to scare me again?"

"I'm not trying to scare you. I was originally planning to leave Meishan Village overnight, but after giving it more thought, I decided there were more things I needed to handle, so I chose to stay one more day. It was rather reckless, because if something happens, it could involve you and my mom too."

Yang Jian fell silent for a moment.

"But then I worried if I sent you away, and you encountered danger in Dachang City, I might not be able to rescue you in time. So, after some consideration, I made this decision," he continued.

"Hehe, you really do care about me the most," Jiang Yan focused on the strange point and started chuckling happily.

She felt she had become important and was starting to receive attention.

However, Yang Jian still sent her off to rest in the next room in the end.

Because he needed to ensure that nothing troublesome would happen before their departure the next day.

However, as time gradually passed,

the night deepened.

Yang Jian still sat alone in the room, facing the portrait on the table, while also keeping an ear out for any signs of disturbance.

It was probably past eleven by now, and the majority in the village must have been asleep. It was very quiet outside, not a single peculiar sound to be heard, not even the rumble of a passing car.

In such a setting, one would believe that falling asleep would lead to a restful night.

But Yang Jian still did not sleep, he dared not sleep, afraid of having another nightmare.

However, around one in the morning, Yang Jian's expression shifted ever so slightly because he heard a noise—a person passing through the alley nearby, making a faint sound. Although light, it could still be heard if one listened intently in the silent night.

There was someone moving about the village at night.

But at this hour, could the person outside really be human?

Based on the direction of the sound, it seemed as if the person was about to pass by his own front door.

Yang Jian decided to go out and take a look, but just as he was about to stand up, he suddenly heard someone calling him from downstairs.

"Yang Jian, are you there?"

This wasn't the voice of his cousin Xiao Yuan, but that of a strange man, someone he had never encountered before, for Yang Jian had no trace of recognition in his heart.

But before Yang Jian could react, his expression flickered and the room underwent a drastic change.

The room quickly aged, and the lights flickered out at the same time as the room's layout completely changed.

Where there was once a table holding a memorial portrait, a single bed now stood, and several old items that didn't match the previous decor had appeared, as if the place had suddenly reverted to how it was over a decade ago, making all the furnishings seem very old.

Even more strangely, Yang Jian noticed a pair of used leather shoes beside the single bed.

The floor was now marked with several footprints, left by muddy soles.

"Damn it."

Realizing something, Yang Jian immediately left the room.

His expression then changed.

The village was no longer the one he knew but had become unfamiliar, with many of the buildings looking like they did more than ten years ago, the streetlights at the entrance had disappeared, and the sky was dim and oppressive, devoid of any light. Despite this, it wasn't dark; instead, one could clearly see the surroundings.

Was it a dream?

The nightmare had started again.

Yang Jian realized he was being pulled into a nightmare once more, but he found it incredible because he was certain he hadn't been asleep and was completely lucid. If this was a paranormal event named Nightmare, he should have been able to avoid it by staying awake.

Was it because of the person who called out to me downstairs earlier?

He discovered the commonality in both nightmare experiences.

The first time was when his cousin Xiao Yuan called out to him from downstairs, and the second was when a strange man's voice called out his name from downstairs.

Each time his name was called, he found himself plunged into a nightmare.

It happened in the blink of an eye, beyond the capability of keeping awake to resist. It was like a secret code to trigger ghostly events.

However, before Yang Jian could think any further—

The door of the neighboring room opened.

Jiang Yan, with somewhat disheveled hair, mumbled groggily, "Yang Jian, why did you call me out this late? I was still sleeping."

Yang Jian's gaze immediately shifted to Jiang Yan, and he became grave.

Had Jiang Yan been pulled into the nightmare as well?

Or was it possible that this Jiang Yan was fake, a ghastly apparition masquerading in her form?

"Why are you staring at me like that?" Jiang Yan asked, puzzled, blinking.

"I didn't call for you just now. The person who called your name wasn't me," Yang Jian said calmly.

Jiang Yan retorted, "How is that possible? I clearly heard you calling for me downstairs, asking me to come out. I'm so familiar with your voice, I couldn't possibly have misheard."

"Do you believe me, or do you believe a voice?" Yang Jian said coldly, "You were called by a ghost, and now you've entered into a supernatural nightmare. If you don't believe me, take a look around—you'll see that it's no longer the same as it was during the day."

"Huh?"

Only then did Jiang Yan take a closer look at her surroundings, and she was immediately stunned.

It indeed wasn't the same. Standing on the balcony and looking around, many buildings were different from how they were during the day, and Yang Jian, who supposedly called her from downstairs, was actually in the corridor. Things just didn't add up.

"Ah? Am I really in a nightmare? I can't feel at all like I'm dreaming; it's as if I've just woken up," Jiang Yan said in a mix of surprise and doubt, but seeing Yang Jian at her side, she felt somewhat less afraid.

Yang Jian said, "Can a supernatural dream be the same as an ordinary one?"

After observing Jiang Yan for a while,

he couldn't find any indication she might be a ghost, so he temporarily let his guard down.

At this moment,

it wasn't just Yang Jian and Jiang Yan.

One by one, people began to emerge from the other houses in the village. They were all villagers, and they seemed very confused because they had all heard a voice calling their names from outside.

The once deserted and quiet village began to fill with people.

"What kind of joke is this? Are so many people involved now?"

Yang Jian saw many figures; at first, he thought they were ghosts, but when someone greeted him, he realized they weren't ghosts at all—they were all people from the village he had seen during the day.

"This ghost is even more terrifying than before; it seems to have dragged an entire village into a nightmare. There's a trend of losing control... Could it have something to do with the corpse from the daytime?"

He thought back and the only thing that had been tampered with was that dismembered body.

He had meddled with the body, and as a result, this incident occurred at night; there had to be a connection, or he wouldn't believe it for a second.

Chapter 736 The Peril of Blending into the Crowd

"Has everyone in the village entered this nightmare?"

At that moment, Yang Jian realized the seriousness of the situation. He had not expected what seemed like a minor supernatural event to spiral out of control like this, and the extent of the affected area might not be limited to just one village, it could also include nearby villages and even the county town, all possibly under the influence of the malevolent spirit.

"Ouch!"

Jiang Yan cried out in pain as she looked at the bite mark on her slender arm and was suddenly struck dumb.

"It's no use. You can't break free from this nightmare through pain. It doesn't matter if you bite yourself, even if you were stabbed with a knife, you wouldn't wake up; plus, if you die in the dream, then you would really die in reality. Remember the girl called Lin Xiaoxi during the day?"

Yang Jian glanced at her and said, "She was killed by a ghost in her dream, and then under the influence of supernatural power, she decapitated herself."

"I see," Jiang Yan couldn't help but shiver at that.

"So what do we do? How can we escape this nightmare and wake up?"

Although she was uneasy, Jiang Yan remained relatively calm. After all, as an ordinary person who had experienced two supernatural events, her mental resilience was quite strong.

"There's a ghost in this dream, one that blends into the crowd. Find the ghost and kill it, and this nightmare will be over."

Yang Jian calmly stated, "But I'll take care of it. You don't get involved. Just go back to your room, lock the door, and stay there. Once I have taken care of the ghost, you will naturally wake up from the dream."

After saying that, he immediately prepared to go downstairs and leave the old house to search for the ghost in the village.

"Wait, wait."

Jiang Yan quickly grabbed Yang Jian's arm, looking pitiful, and said, "I'm scared without you by my side. Can you take me with you? I promise not to cause trouble. I can be very good."

"No way because I can't be sure whether or not you are the ghost in the dream."

Yang Jian said coldly, "The best course of action is to isolate you. If you're the ghost, you'll definitely leave this room. If you're not, then stay put and don't wander off."

His words were straightforward, and his suspicion of Jiang Yan remained.

"How could I possibly be the ghost? You're overthinking it. I just want to stay with you," Jiang Yan pouted, showing a trace of grievance.

"You don't have a choice."

Yang Jian was firm, "Get into the room, now. Remember, trust no one. If anyone calls you out, don't go. If someone breaks in, they're definitely not human, and don't hesitate to either kill them or figure out a way to escape by yourself."

"If you leave me alone, I'll definitely die of fright," Jiang Yan was unwilling to stay by herself, thinking that being with Yang Jian was the safest option.

This was a blind dependency.

"Nonsense. The first time I met you, you hid in the bathroom for several days and you were fine. Your mental endurance isn't that weak," Yang Jian said.

Although Jiang Yan was timid, she had the capacity to endure, otherwise she would have already become mentally unstable.

"That settles it then. I'm leaving."

Yang Jian did not linger. He left Jiang Yan alone and immediately went downstairs.

Jiang Yan wanted to hold him back, but she couldn't bring herself to say it out loud. She knew she couldn't stop Yang Jian from doing what he needed to do, so she reluctantly obeyed, retreating to her room and locking the door.

Yang Jian refused to take Jiang Yan with him because the circumstances within the nightmare were different from reality, and the more people around, the more dangerous it was.

After going downstairs, he glanced into another room.

The door was firmly locked, showing no sign of being opened.

That was his mother's room, and the scene within the nightmare was very close to the reality of the village.

"Did my mom also have a nightmare?" he hesitated, but couldn't be sure, so he looked around the past.

The arrangement of the room had reverted to how it looked over a decade ago, with an old wooden bed, a dressing table, several large wooden figures... It was clean and tidy, but uninhabited.

This phenomenon made him uncertain whether his mother had entered this nightmare.

He searched the kitchen.

Sure enough.

Yang Jian didn't find any kitchen knives or scissors. In this nightmare, weapons were very scarce; the ghosts in the dreams wouldn't give others much chance to fight back.

If there were a chance to obtain a weapon, it was very likely a trap, a snare laid out specifically for you by a vengeful ghost.

After leaving the old house, Yang Jian looked up at the gloomy sky and scanned his surroundings.

He could be sure that this wasn't his own dream.

Everything was unfamiliar to him, not the slightest sense of recognition, but this was both good and bad. At least the supernatural events he had experienced in the depths of his own dreams wouldn't surface, otherwise, this already dangerous dream would become even more eerie.

"If this isn't my dream, then whose is it?"

Yang Jian pondered, but his feet didn't stop; he headed towards an open space in the center of the village.

Quite a few people had gathered there.

They were villagers of the village.

Some were visibly anxious, some couldn't comprehend and frowned in thought, while others shouted loudly that there was a haunting, it had to be a ghost.

"There are a lot of people in the village, most of whom are villagers – that's certain, but I don't recognize many of them, so as far as I am concerned, any one of them could be a ghost. However, if that's the case, then it's a headache. Once the ghost hides, it's impossible to find them."

At that moment, Yang Jian felt a bit of a headache.

However, just as Yang Jian was about to walk over, suddenly,

he spotted a figure hiding in the shadows of a nearby alley, wearing a raincoat, holding a gleaming fruit knife that faintly reflected the cold light.

"Is that my cousin Xiao Yuan? She's in the dream too?" Yang Jian froze for a moment.

But then, he saw Xiao Yuan rush out of the alley, ready to kill the villager closest to her.

The villager, utterly unaware, was squatting on the open ground, chatting with others, discussing the causes of the day's strange events.

The ghosts hadn't started killing yet; they didn't realize the dreadfulness of the nightmare, so they weren't afraid yet.

Yang Jian's face changed dramatically, and he immediately rushed over, grabbing Xiao Yuan before she could kill the villager.

"Cousin, why are you stopping me?" Xiao Yuan tilted her head and looked at him, somewhat puzzled.

"What are you trying to do?" Yang Jian asked.

Xiao Yuan said, "Of course I'm going to kill him. With so many people around, the ghost should be here, right?"

"The whole village has come, and there's only one ghost. If you keep killing like this, the people will be wiped out before the ghost is touched. It's fine when there aren't many people, but with so many, your method won't work," Yang Jian said very seriously.

Because if Xiao Yuan continued like this, the people of the village would all be dead by tomorrow.

The cost was too high just to resolve a nightmare.

Besides, even after killing the ghost, today's nightmare would end, but it would continue the next day.

"If we don't kill them, the ghosts will, and they will delay our time, causing the ghosts to appear very late," Xiao Yuan said, her thoughts quite unique.

Yang Jian was suddenly at a loss for words.

What she said seemed to make sense, as everyone in the dream would be attacked by ghosts, and the later you are attacked, the greater the danger.

So strictly speaking, the fewer people having nightmares, the earlier the ghosts will show up, increasing the probability of you ending the nightmare.

"Once you start killing, chaos erupts, and things will become even more troublesome. Besides, you can't possibly kill everyone with so many people; someone is bound to fight back. By then, you'll have to guard against both the ghosts and the people. If that happens, this nightmare could very well last until dawn without ending,"

Yang Jian did not agree with Xiao Yuan's method.

It depends on the situation. Some situations are suitable for a killing spree, but not the current one.

Moreover, most of the people in this village have relatives who care about them, and Xiao Yuan's parents may well be in this nightmare.

"Then, Cousin, do you have any ideas?" Xiao Yuan asked curiously.

Yang Jian fell silent.

He really had no good ideas; he stumbled in the last nightmare,

"If we just wait, we'll all die," Xiao Yuan reminded him.

"..." Yang Jian's face darkened.

He didn't need reminding; he had experienced it once before,

But at that moment, from the silent village came a scream that was both full of terror and misery.

The sound was not far, very close in fact, likely just four or five houses away.

"Hmm?" Yang Jian immediately looked in the direction of the scream.

"It must be over there." Xiao Yuan reacted faster, donning a raincoat and clutching a fruit knife, she dashed rapidly towards the source.

"Has the ghost started killing?"

Yang Jian did not hesitate and immediately followed suit.

If they could successfully find the ghost, they might break the deadlock and avoid constantly being on the defensive.

Very soon.

Yang Jian arrived at the destination.

It was the entrance to an old house, where someone lay in a pool of blood with eyes wide open, a face frozen in despair and horror.

Dead.

The fatal wound was the neck, pierced by a steel bar as thick as a finger, and there were several other wounds on the body.

In the pool of blood were a pair of clear footprints.

Just before, the ghost stood here, ended the villager's life, and then left.

The direction of departure was down a dark, secluded alley.

Xiao Yuan had already chased after it, her footsteps echoing down that alley, and from the sound, it was evident the departure was swift.

Yang Jian chose not to pursue.

He knew that if Xiao Yuan really encountered the ghost, Xiao Yuan was more likely to win, so he needn't worry about her, a veteran of nightmares.

He looked at the body beside him.

Yang Jian squatted down and pulled the steel bar from the dead person's neck.

This was his only weapon in this nightmare.

To prevent his hand from slipping on the blood, he tore a piece of cloth from the body and wrapped it around the steel bar.

"Yang Jian, did you... kill someone?" a middle-aged man who heard the noise and came running asked uncertainly.

Yang Jian didn't even turn his head as he stood up. "Give your eyes to someone who needs them if you're not using them. Are you blind? The person was already dead when I got here, and I was still with you when the scream happened."

"Wait a minute..."

Suddenly, he observed the wound on the victim's neck.

Then he thought of the previous scream.

With such a wound, the blood would've blocked the throat, making it impossible for the person to scream.

And the blood on the ground was already cold; the person obviously hadn't just died.

So the scream heard just before couldn't have possibly come from this person as they died.

Yang Jian's eyes snapped to the red bloody footprints next to him, and his heart chilled,

The one who screamed was not human, but a ghost.

The bloody footprints on the road might have been deliberately left by the ghost to lure Xiao Yuan there.

"Damn, is Xiao Yuan in danger?"

Yang Jian's expression changed dramatically; he suspected Xiao Yuan was the ghost's target. The ghost probably already knew about this troublesome person in the dream, as Xiao Yuan had dealt with the ghost more than once before.

So this time, did the ghost want to take out Xiao Yuan first?

He couldn't afford to hesitate.

He immediately followed the direction Xiao Yuan had taken.

"Yang Jian, where are you going? Whether you killed the person or not, you can't just run off, we need to report this immediately," the middle-aged man shouted, clearly not yet grasping the gravity of the situation.

Yang Jian followed the bloody footprints and soon disappeared around the corner.

But shortly after he left,

Inside the old house in front of the corpse, an old wooden door slightly creaked open, revealing darkness. Yet behind that small gap, the bloodless, pale face of someone—unnervingly strange—suddenly appeared. They hid within, and though only ten meters away, they went unnoticed.

"Creak!"

At that moment, the door opened, and the person walked out,

However, that pale face had changed, now looking absolutely ordinary, like any typical villager with nothing particular about them.

And the villagers who had come to look at the corpse paid no attention to this detail.

Thus, a ghost had silently blended into the crowd.

Chapter 737 The Encounter in Dreams

"Hu! Hu!"

Yang Jian panted heavily. His physical strength in the dream wasn't as good as he had imagined. After desperately chasing for a while, he began to falter.

Moreover, it was different from the nightmare of yesterday.

The distances in the village remained the same; if not for the different buildings, this was Meishan Village, exactly as it was over a decade ago. It was impossible to distinguish which was real and which was the dream.

He quickly found Xiao Yuan.

But Xiao Yuan was standing in an open space, slightly dazed.

"Did you catch the ghost?" Yang Jian didn't approach. He still remained cautious.

Xiao Yuan paused for a moment before turning her head, her eyes revealing a bit of confusion; "It seems like it's not here, I got it wrong."

Got it wrong?

Yang Jian's expression changed. How could that be possible?

Wasn't the ghost coming for Xiao Yuan?

If his guess was right, the ghost should be nearby at this time, plotting to attack Xiao Yuan. But she wasn't attacked.

This suggested his earlier judgment was wrong.

"If it's not coming for Xiao Yuan, then who is the ghost targeting?" Yang Jian froze for a moment at this thought.

He found his judgments in the nightmare were all wrong, never correct once. As long as it was related to the ghost in the dream, he could never anticipate the ghost's actions. It was the same before, and it is the same now. Could it be that the ghost knew all his thoughts?

No, that couldn't be right.

If the ghost knew other people's thoughts, then it wouldn't have been killed in the dream.

"Anyway, I'm certain of one thing—the ghost must still be in this village and hasn't left," Yang Jian abruptly lifted his head and looked at Xiao Yuan, seriously asking.

"Xiao Yuan, last time you pulled me away from the village because you didn't want the ghost to invade. What would happen if the ghost did invade the village?"

"Did I say that? I don't remember," Xiao Yuan touched her head, a bit confused.

"... You forgot?" Yang Jian looked at her, feeling that she wasn't lying and probably had a memory issue.

Or perhaps, there were some secrets about her that hadn't been discovered yet.

"Let's not worry about that for now; the urgent matter is to end this nightmare. Otherwise, if the ghost continues to kill, a significant number of people will die," Yang Jian said.

He couldn't control other places, but he had to manage this village.

Suddenly, Xiao Yuan slightly turned her head towards the direction they came from.

Yang Jian smelled it too.

It was a strong smell of blood, appearing suddenly out of nowhere.

Immediately afterward.

Yang Jian realized something and quickly returned to where he had been standing.

The village's open ground had been crowded with villagers, but now it was empty, and there were several fresh corpses on the ground. They appeared to have died not long ago, and they met their deaths in the same way, with their throats pierced. However, this time, the wound did not retain the murder weapon, only a mangled opening.

And that was only what was visible.

In the unseen dark corners, there were still traces of blood. In just the short moment of disappearance, there was no telling how many people had died.

"The ghost was in the crowd just now, it never left. That blood footprint on the ground was a distraction, nothing but a distraction," Yang Jian took a deep breath, sensing the gravity of the situation.

Not long after the nightmare began, the first victim appeared.

Then he and Xiao Yuan were temporarily misled to leave, and the ghost began to kill without any scruples. In just a short period of time, the silent ghost had already killed at least a dozen people.

If they didn't find a way to deal with it, by morning the entire village would likely be doomed.

"That's what I'm saying. Even if we don't kill them, they will still die. If only you hadn't stopped me just now, Cousin. The faster they die, the greater our chances of success," Xiao Yuan said, looking regretful.

Yang Jian's gaze darkened, "It's true, but there's a difference between us killing and the ghost killing. The ghost can kill without restraint; we can't. Moreover, if we started killing while the ghost is doing the same, do you think tonight won't be chaotic enough?"

"With so many dead, the remaining people must know something's wrong by now. They've probably all run back home to hide. This makes the situation even worse because whether they've encountered the ghost or not, whether they're dead or not, we don't know. It would be hard to find the ghost here unless it reveals itself."

"But we are not the ghost's preferred targets. By the time it comes for us, it will probably be nearly dawn. Facing the ghost before daylight, we likely won't have much chance of winning."

Headache.

At this moment, all that Yang Jian felt was a headache because even though he knew of the ghost's presence and its killing pattern, he just had no way to deal with it.

It was hard to pinpoint the ghost's identity.

Last time he overcame his fear, trying to kill all the way, but he was sneak-attacked by the real ghost and almost died.

Although the ghost itself wasn't particularly threatening, in this nightmare, it became extremely frightening. And there was no direct evidence to show that surviving one nightmare meant there wouldn't be a second.

Xiao Yuan had probably experienced nightmares more times than one could imagine.

"Ta, ta ta."

However, just then, footsteps suddenly sounded nearby on the village road—crisp footsteps of leather shoes hitting the ground. The sound echoed off the houses on both sides of the narrow path, particularly clear.

"Someone?" Xiao Yuan immediately brandished her fruit knife and turned towards the direction of the sound.

Whose footsteps are these?

Yang Jian sharply startled, the sound of these footsteps was too similar, almost identical to the eerie footsteps he had heard from upstairs at home during the day while searching for old objects.

No.

After listening carefully and discerning carefully, he could assert.

The two sets of footsteps came from the same person.

But, was this really a person?

"Xiao Yuan, don't act rashly, this thing is out of the ordinary," Yang Jian said with a solemn expression.

Xiao Yuan seemed to have sensed something as well. She just stared with her round eyes at the narrow path and did not rush over to start a fight.

The sound of leather shoes on the ground echoed for a moment, then a silhouette was reflected on the wall next to it, entering Yang Jian's field of vision, but then the footsteps ceased, and the person in the alley stopped and did not continue forward.

"Stopped? Why? Does it know we're aware of it, or is there some other reason?" Yang Jian fixed his gaze tightly on the path, waiting for the next change to occur.

He was not a Ghost Master in his dream, so he did not have the luxury of trial and error.

A single misstep could mean death at the hands of a ghost.

The shadow on the path paused for about several tens of seconds, then started to move again.

The sound of leather shoes on the concrete resounded once more, but this time the figure did not continue forward, it actually turned to leave.

"That thing wants to leave? We can't let it go; the one in the alley is very likely a ghost lingering nearby, definitely not a living person."

Yang Jian's expression changed and he hurried after it without hesitation.

Despite the danger, he could not miss this opportunity, otherwise the ghost might start killing again, and who knows how many would die next time.

His speed was swift, his actions rapid.

Having dashed down the alley, Yang Jian saw a figure turning a corner, and there were a few footprints on the ground, those prints with yellow mud on them, as if just walking through a field.

"This person's speed is abnormal; the footsteps aren't fast, but the leaving speed is very quick," said Yang Jian, his expression shifting slightly as he sped up but failed to catch up.

It was always just short of catching up, but it felt as if he could catch up the next moment.

A delicate distance was maintained between them, at first glance, it felt like fishing. The ghost was luring Yang Jian away, or perhaps leading him somewhere.

Yang Jian quickly realized this but didn't choose to stop.

The danger of the ghost in this nightmare was not great. Xiao Yuan had succeeded in breaking from the nightmare, which meant she had killed a ghost before, and he believed he could do the same.

In a one-on-one situation, Yang Jian didn't think he had no chance of winning.

"This is leading out of the village." Suddenly, he found he had followed the figure to the outskirts of the village.

Glancing back midway, Yang Jian didn't see Xiao Yuan following, behind him was no one.

Ahead, a densely dark forest loomed into view.

A dirt road that shouldn't be in the village meandered into the woods, which existed in reality as well, it was the Sandy Forest where they had dug up half a corpse during the day.

The ghost walked on the road, leather shoes stepping on the somewhat muddy surface, leaving footprints and getting covered with mud.

"Deliberately leading me here?" Yang Jian chased from behind, gripping the only weapon in his hand, a rust-covered steel bar.

As long as this makeshift weapon penetrated the ghost's body, today's nightmare would end.

Suddenly.

Just as about to enter the forest, the ghost's footsteps ahead suddenly stopped.

Yang Jian's eyes narrowed sharply, but he didn't stop as a result.

A duel, that's all.

He had no reason to shrink back in fear.

So Yang Jian continued to run forward.

At this moment, the distance was quickly closing; the eerie impossibility of catching up from before did not recur.

"I can make a move." Yang Jian surveyed the surroundings.

Nothing unexpected arose to interfere, it was a good opportunity for a one-on-one fight, with a chance of winning as well.

However, just as he was about to get close, the person standing in front abruptly turned around, facing Yang Jian.

The moment he was ready to strike, Yang Jian suddenly froze, his footsteps stopped abruptly, his face showing either horror or astonishment.

The ghost in front of him had a very familiar face.

This face bore a resemblance to Yang Jian, but even more similar was the one in the portrait of his father in the old house... no, perhaps it should not be said to be similar, it should be said it was the face on that portrait.

"What kind of joke is this?" After realizing this, Yang Jian's pupils contracted sharply.

Could it be that his deceased father was the ghost?

Was the source of this supernatural event the resurrection of a fierce ghost after his father's death?

Chapter 738 The Man Who Should Have Died

Yang Jian had never expected that after chasing out of the village, the ghost he'd finally catch up to would bear such a face.

The face was the spitting image of his father's portrait, sharing a striking resemblance with him.

This bizarre encounter in a nightmare made Yang Jian feel as if he had found his long-lost father, unfamiliar as he was, yet it stirred his heart and he couldn't gather himself to fight right away.

In the dream, he wasn't affected by his own ghost shadow, Yang Jian here was emotional, a perfectly normal person.

"I must act quickly," Yang Jian's reason was urging him to end this nightmare as soon as possible.

He was quickly recovering from his astonishment, ready to take out the person before him.

However, the figure in front of him, covered in mud, wearing outdated clothes, and looking exactly like his father from the portrait, suddenly opened his mouth and spoke, "You're more excellent than I had imagined."

"Hm?"

Upon hearing these words, Yang Jian's pupils shrunk sharply, his heart almost jumping out, and he couldn't help but back away several steps.

The ghost before him had actually spoken.

This completely overturned his worldview, shocking him profoundly, even more, terrifying and unbelievable than any supernatural event he had encountered before.

"The ghost is still in the village, to be precise, I'm not a ghost." The person before him spoke again, seemingly noticing the shock in Yang Jian's eyes.

"What exactly are you? My father's portrait? A mutant with living memories, or... are you my father?" Yang Jian stared intently at him, still gripping the rusted steel bar he was using as a weapon tightly in his hand.

Should anything unexpected happen, he would fight without hesitation.

The person before him had a cold, somewhat wooden expression, not like a living person, "To be precise, I am neither a portrait nor a mutant, and certainly not your father... I am a memory that exists in this nightmare, no, that's not a sufficient description. I should be more like a ghost with living memories... just incomplete."

"What?"

Yang Jian was still gripped by astonishment.

A ghost with living memories?

In an instant,

he thought of an experimental direction that Wang Xiaoming had been doggedly pursuing. That fellow was attempting to create the perfect ghost master through various methods.

And the perfect ghost master was exactly a ghost with living memories.

How terrifying would a ghost become with the thoughts of a living person?

It was unimaginable.

Not to fear the resurrection of fierce ghosts, not to die, not to fear any supernatural events, even to use some strange objects without any cost, and to keep contending with real fierce ghosts indefinitely.

Even the most ordinary ghost, if able to be perfectly mastered, could instantly surpass the current Yang Jian.

But the person before him now said he was incomplete.

"So what are you exactly now?" Yang Jian stared at the mutant who looked exactly like his father's portrait.

The person continued with a deadpan face, "You could consider me someone who has been dead for over a decade, or perhaps, just another ghost in this nightmare."

"So, you are not my father?" Yang Jian asked again.

The person's face was calm and numb, as if in thought or perhaps in reminiscence, "A person exists by their memories, and my memories stopped over a decade ago; and I am well aware that I've died. Can someone who's been dead for over a decade still be considered your father?"

"So you could say that I'm a mutant with your father's memories."

He did not admit to being Yang Jian's father, but he did not deny it either, because he was what remained of Yang Jian's father after his death, a segment of memory that should have vanished but instead survived in this nightmare-fueled Meishan Village due to the power of the supernatural.

Yang Jian's gaze flickered slightly; he was starting to grasp the meaning behind the words of the person before him.

He himself did not know what he was.

If put more abstractly, this was an obsession of the dead, accompanying the nightmare.

"Now is not the time to dwell on this question. I think you must have many questions, and I don't have much time to give you; the ghost has been searching for me, so ask whatever you wish to know and I can answer for you," the man said.

Yang Jian's gaze sharpened, and he directly asked, "How did you die?"

"After experiencing some unknown supernatural events, I was eroded by a fierce ghost, so I thought of a special method, but it failed. Thus, I died and became what I am now. If I had survived, perhaps I could have become the perfect master of fierce ghosts, rather than being trapped in this endless nightmare," the person spoke.

"I've encountered someone called Old Qin, who said he was the one who hit you with his car," Yang Jian continued.

"Old Qin? He's not dead yet? He's a very mysterious person, I don't know much about him," the person recalled woodenly, "He drove a supernatural bus, trying to stop the resurrection of fierce ghosts, endlessly transporting them from reality back to some strange place."

"Day after day, year after year, never resting, and that job could only be done by him. I once had the chance to become the next bus driver, but my failure meant that Old Qin had to choose someone else."

Yang Jian was slightly surprised.

He had not expected that the old man from the headquarters had been silently contributing for so many years.

"Was he successful?" the person asked.

"It must have failed. I went to see that eerie bus, and there was a driver on it, but he was already dead, a corpse," Yang Jian said.

Only at this moment did he suddenly understand why he had seen a dead man acting as the driver when he got on that supernatural bus.

It turned out that the man couldn't hold on anymore, and one day he died on the bus, which then led to the bus being without a driver.

"Old Qin was right, there's no stopping the resurgence of malevolent ghosts; he did his best," the man said slowly, obviously having experienced a lot in the past.

Yang Jian then asked, "There's a body near the village, cut into three parts, along with two human heads. What is that about?"

"That's the body of a ghost. Once the ghost from the nightmares kills me, it will go and reclaim its own body. When that happens, the ghost will awaken from the nightmares, and once awake, it can pull reality directly into the nightmares—a supernatural event with no solution. And those nightmares will get more dangerous day by day. With your current ability, you won't even be able to survive the first day's nightmare," he said.

At that moment, the man turned and walked into the forest. Yang Jian's expression shifted slightly, and he followed.

"If it weren't for Old Qin driving the bus and knocking that ghost unconscious, there would be no way to deal with it. A lot of people would have died," he said.

"Knocked out cold?" Yang Jian immediately understood.

It was Old Qin who, driving the supernatural bus, had hit the ghost, causing it to crash.

It was just that kind of crash was not complete, or rather the ghost was gradually waking up from that crashed state, which is why this supernatural incident occurred.

"Burying pieces of the ghost's body in three different places outside the village serves as a form of protection for the village. The ghost doesn't have that many thoughts; it's looking for its body, yet it senses three different locations. What would the ghost do in this situation?" the man said, walking into the dim forest.

The light around them suddenly became gloomier.

Yang Jian hesitated for a moment but still followed. He said, "If three identical targets appear at the same time, the ghost is likely to keep wandering."

"Exactly, hence the ghost keeps lingering around the village, and that's why I hid inside the village and avoided the ghost's attacks," the man explained. "The ghost is looking for me and its body, but it has not succeeded. This situation has continued until now... Tonight, the balance was broken."

"During the day, I found those bodies and put them together, and that might be why the balance was disrupted," Yang Jian said, his gaze flickering.

He put the bodies into body bags, cutting off the ghost's sensing ability.

So the ghost no longer lingered near the village; instead, it came straight for the man in front of him.

The calm had been shattered by himself.

"I knew that the balance would be broken sooner or later. Leaving the body there was a lure, hoping that someone would discover it, could find it. After all, anyone who finds the body is definitely related to the supernatural and might be able to solve the current predicament," the man continued.

It seemed like he had been waiting for this day all along.

Or perhaps he also wanted to be liberated.

After all, not everyone can endure the relentless fight with a real ghost in nightmares for so many years.

"There was an extra head among the bodies, whose is it?" Yang Jian asked.

"One is the ghost's, the other is mine. I became an aberration because of that head. If that head were gone, I wouldn't be able to appear in the nightmares," the man said as he continued to walk deeper into the forest.

Yang Jian observed his surroundings; this was his third visit to this forest, and it was different from during daytime.

The area had expanded.

It was as if boundless and had become denser.

One could get lost here, unable to see the outside scene.

"Did you save me from the last nightmare?" Yang Jian asked.

"You could say that. Someone like you shouldn't die in this nightmare. You have more important things to do. Besides, your being here means my task is already complete. What happens next is up to you," the man said.

"What do you mean?" Yang Jian frowned.

The man did not speak, his steps coming to a halt once more.

In front of them, a small wooden hut appeared.

The hut wasn't damaged or collapsed; it looked exactly the same as it did over a decade ago, with no changes whatsoever.

"What is it?"

Suddenly, Yang Jian saw a shadow at the doorway of the hut. As he approached, the shadow moved.

Only upon a closer look did he realize.

It was a large black wolfhound, whose eyes lacked the wildness of a beast and instead held an indescribable eeriness.

"Why would there be a dog in the middle of nightmares?" Yang Jian exclaimed.

Could the ghost actually pull a dog into the nightmares?

The man walked over and petted the dog, saying, "After all I've been through, I eventually died at the hands of this ghost. I couldn't just die for nothing; I had to achieve something. This dog is my greatest accomplishment."

Yang Jian asked, "Is it special?"

"It's not special right now, but if you can manage it, it can replace the ghost and become the source of this nightmare," the man said, his tone filled with a touch of seriousness.

#### Chapter 739 Requirements for Replacement

Yang Jian encountered this "father" in his nightmare and got a lot of information, resolving many doubts in his heart. He roughly understood the whole story, although many details were left unexplained, it didn't matter, because he knew that his father must have gone through a lot during his lifetime.

He was uninterested in those experiences.

What he cared about was some truths, not the details of some supernatural events.

However, the situation before him was even more bizarre.

To think that a large black wolf dog had also entered this nightmare was simply unimaginable.

This was the first time an animal had been involved in a supernatural event, and although Yang Jian didn't know how the person before him had done it, he was sure that he had used his own methods and conducted many attempts...

Yang Jian recalled the pile of dog bones buried in the woods in reality.

His father used to raise dogs in those woods while he was alive.

Those dogs disappeared overnight after growing up, not because they were sold, but because they died.

The cause of death was most likely various bizarre experiments until he finally succeeded in bringing this dog into the nightmare.

"But, should I believe the person before me..."

Yang Jian still had doubts in his heart. Although many questions had been answered, his vigilance had not dissipated as a result.

After becoming a ghost with living human memories, a person certainly no longer possesses personal feelings, let alone any compassion, and it is even less likely that they would take extra care of you because of some blood relations from when they were alive. If that were the case, it would have been an arrangement made while they were still living. After more than a decade of being eroded by the supernatural, it's impossible to predict what they might become.

"You don't quite believe my words, and it's normal for you to have reservations about me," that person said, noticing Yang Jian's thoughts, and spoke with an expression as impassive as a dead man's.

Yang Jian didn't dwell on this topic, saying instead, "We're short on time, what do you want to do?"

"I've already arranged this nightmare. All that's needed is a bit of external help," the person replied.

"What external help?" Yang Jian asked.

The person glanced at the large black wolf dog beside him and continued, "Ghosts can affect reality through dreams, and conversely, reality can also affect dreams. That corpse is the key. After you leave this nightmare, within one day, you must find a way to leave some clear marks on the body of the ghost."

"Ordinary means won't work. It requires some supernatural power. Since you've harnessed a ghost within your body, you should know the method."

"After the marks appear, the ghost in the dream will be easily distinguished, and it will no longer be able to hide."

Yang Jian frowned, "What's the use of that?"

"This is only the first step. Besides, you also need to piece together the body of the ghost. This is quite difficult; the ghost's body was initially dismembered using some extreme methods. Now to reassemble it, it's not something that can be achieved simply by some supernatural power. If you can do it, then please make it happen within one day," the person explained.

Yang Jian's gaze shifted imperceptibly.

He immediately thought of the method the Headless Ghost Shadow used to piece together corpses.

"And then?"

The person paused, his wooden dead face looking at Yang Jian, seemingly lost in memories, and said slowly, "Old Qin was right. After my death, I'm more important than when I was alive. I didn't understand his words before, and even retorted, 'Why don't you go die?' Now it seems he was right."

"What did Old Qin say?" Yang Jian asked, his expression shifting.

This mascot of the headquarters has been living since the Republican era, born with the ability to control ghosts, an anomaly among anomalies. And what he has experienced and understood, nobody knows, shrouded in mystery, probably even my father didn't know enough when he was alive.

"He probably won't live much longer. No matter how special a dying person is, it's not important. What matters now is you," said the person.

"If you can leave a mark and reassemble the corpse, by no means should you place the corpse in Gold's box to isolate it from the ghost's senses. Just put the body somewhere uninhabited, and the last step is the most crucial."

"The body will be at risk of awakening. You must watch the body and use all means to ensure it doesn't wake up, not even its eyes opening once. The reason the ghost pulls people into dreams at night is that during the day, the ghost's eyes are open."

The person made rather demanding requests.

Leaving a mark on the body was already difficult, to say nothing of piecing together the ghost's body and ensuring it couldn't wake up.

This required absolute suppression.

Yang Jian looked at his left hand.

The Ghost Hand didn't exist in the dream; his current left hand was nonexistent, leaving him a one-handed disabled person.

"How long do I need to watch the body?" Yang Jian asked.

"Maybe a few days, maybe more than a dozen days... If I succeed, then the body will gradually decay. When you see signs of decay on the body and the extent of decay exceeds one half, then the plan will have been successful," the person replied.

Yang Jian asked, "What happens after success?"

He didn't quite understand the purpose of his actions, but he knew in his heart that he was helping the person in the nightmare through that corpse in the real world.

"After success, I will disappear, and the ghost will be completely replaced. It will become the source of the nightmare," the person pointed to the large black wolf dog beside him and said.

"Why choose a dog instead of you?" Yang Jian asked with a frown.

If a rational person can control a ghost, aren't they no better than a dog?

The person continued, "Part of the ghost is me, and since I can't control the ghost, I certainly won't let the ghost control me, but a third party can..."

"Others in the dream could also be candidates for controlling this ghost, like Xiao Yuan," Yang Jian said, mentioning a name. "She has lived in this nightmare for quite some time."

"Xiao Yuan?"

The person replied, "Are you talking about the girl with the knife? She is an accident, and one shouldn't gamble on an accident. As for the others, they are simply not worth it. In comparison, I trust a dog more, and that was prearranged, not a spur-of-the-moment decision. After all, humans are too unpredictable, whereas animals are a bit more stable."

"Xiao Yuan is an accident? How so?" Yang Jian inquired.

"It's not important."

The person didn't answer about Xiao Yuan. Perhaps he felt that, in the face of over a decade of waiting, Xiao Yuan's situation was inconsequential.

"You should leave now, go end today's nightmare. When you wake up tomorrow, you'll have a lot more to deal with, so don't waste any more time here."

Perhaps having said enough, he didn't wish to prolong the conversation.

For the nightmare wasn't over yet, and ghosts before dawn are particularly dreadful.

"Can I trust what you're saying?" Yang Jian stared at him. "How do I know that following your method will definitely succeed?"

"You have a choice, but just this once. After today, I will die, and it will replace me. As long as you do what you need to do, this nightmare will cease to appear. If successful, one day, this dog will come looking for you," the person explained.

Instead of letting a person control the ghost in the nightmare, this individual had already chosen a dog from within the nightmare as his preference.

Clearly, he trusted a dog more than a person.

Or perhaps, the person had other plans and secrets he was not disclosing.

"Let's end today's conversation here. Do what you must,"

Having said this, the person turned and entered the small cabin.

The cabin door shut, and only a large black wolf-dog crouched at the entrance, its eerie eyes fixed on Yang Jian, seemingly with a hint of hostility.

"Is that it?"

Yang Jian was hoping for something more useful, for some news, but in the end, all he got was a task to assist a dog in controlling a ghost.

Not only was the outcome unknown, but he also had to take on the risk of a malevolent ghost awakening.

Even though he might resolve the supernatural incidents of the nightmare, there might also be even more serious consequences.

After a short pause,

Yang Jian eventually left the woods. He did not have time to waste, the village was still haunted by ghosts. As time passed, the more ferocious the ghosts became, the more passive his position grew.

And his cousin, Xiao Yuan,

This existence, which even he couldn't explain, and why she lingered in nightmare after nightmare, remained a mystery.

"Go back,"

With no hesitation, Yang Jian turned and walked away, feeling that his meeting with this man was rushed, addressing only urgent matters, and much important information was left unrevealed.

He returned to the village quickly, carrying a slight regret.

By now the sky over the village had changed.

It had grown even darker.

The nearby houses were all cloaked in shadows, but the surroundings were still visible.

This change indicated that the nightmare had moved to the next phase, or perhaps the phase after that, and the threat of the ghost had increased.

The village, once somewhat lively, now lay deserted and silent. Here and there, some corpses could be glimpsed in the corners, their bodies cold and stiff, lying dead in pools of blood for quite a while, showing that the ghost had continued killing in the time that had just passed.

People were still being targeted by the ghost and dying in this nightmare.

Yang Jian recognized the bodies. Although the people were strangers, he had seen some of them during the day and remembered them slightly.

"How do I even begin to search?"

He looked around, not knowing how to start, without a single clue.

The village wasn't large, but it wasn't small either. Finding the location of the ghost was indeed difficult.

But no matter how difficult, he had to search and end this second day's nightmare as soon as possible.

Yang Jian took a deep breath and began searching the village quickly, all the while hoping for some progress on Xiao Yuan's side. Having gone through nightmares one after another, she might be able to provide some help this time.

Chapter 740 The Same Person

The village, shrouded in darkness, had become dangerous.

Yang Jian wandered through the village, without seeing a soul or hearing a single sound. It was eerily quiet, devoid of any noise, not even the screams that precede death.

Yet it was in this silent village that an unknown ghost lingered.

Under such circumstances, an ordinary person would be petrified after standing here for just a minute or two.

But Yang Jian was unlike someone who was untroubled, far from being scared, he was actually very anxious, hoping to immediately find traces of the ghost.

"There's a light over there."

Suddenly.

After making a round, Yang Jian finally spotted a distinctive place, a house with a lit doorway, the only one in the entire village where darkness prevailed without a hint of light elsewhere.

As he approached, he realized the light was coming from the village's ancestral hall.

From a distance, it seemed like there was someone standing at the entrance of the ancestral hall, but due to the lighting, it was difficult to see clearly. All that was visible was a vague silhouette moving back and forth under the light, seemingly restless.

Someone was moving about outside at this hour?

"Is it the ghost?"

Yang Jian frowned and decided to go over and check.

He fixed his gaze on the figure pacing outside the ancestral hall and quickly approached, intending to end this nightmare as swiftly as possible.

However, just as he was halfway there, from a nearby alley, a tense voice suddenly called out, "Yang, Yang Jian, is that you?"

Hm?

Yang Jian abruptly stopped in his tracks.

He immediately looked in the direction of the voice, his eyes narrowing at once.

Out from the alley came Jiang Yan, covered in blood, her hair dishevelled, and her expression terrified.

"Jiang Yan? What are you doing here? Didn't I tell you to stay in the room and not to run out?" Yang Jian instinctively tightened his grip on his weapon, ready to attack at any moment.

In this nightmare, anyone could be the ghost.

Having parted ways with Jiang Yan, encountering her again meant she could possibly be an imposter.

"I, I was attacked and nearly died, then I ran away from home," Jiang Yan said with a whimper, glancing down at her still-bleeding lower abdomen.

The blood on her was her own.

"Who attacked you?" asked Yang Jian.

Jiang Yan was still tense. "It was, it was you, but I know it couldn't have been the real you. It must have been the ghost, the ghost found me. As soon as it knocked on the door and called my name, I knew something was wrong. Then I desperately ran away. I didn't know where to go, so I just found a place to hide."

"Do you think I should believe you?" Yang Jian said.

"I'm scared too, and I don't know if you're the real Yang Jian. But I saw you heading toward the ancestral hall, and I was worried about you, so I didn't want you to take a risk. There are ghosts over there, a lot of them. I saw many people die there," Jiang Yan cried as she spoke.

She clutched her abdomen, her face pale, the wound worsening nonstop.

Although injured, Jiang Yan hadn't died immediately. However, with such wounds, she was unlikely to live until the next morning.

Yang Jian hesitated at this point.

He couldn't tell if the Jiang Yan before him was the ghost unless he went back to their home to compare right away.

But that would be a waste of time.

"If you can still walk, come with me now. Don't worry about the wound. If this nightmare ends, none of the injuries will matter. But if it continues, the ghost will come to kill you, and you won't survive until dawn," Yang Jian said coldly.

Jiang Yan bit her lip and nodded.

"Keep your distance. If you try to leave or get too close, I'll attack you," Yang Jian added.

He couldn't afford to make a mistake.

Because if he killed Jiang Yan here and it turned out to be a mistake, the real Jiang Yan would be doomed.

"Can we not go to the ancestral hall? It's really dangerous there," Jiang Yan said, following him with a hint of fear.

Yang Jian remained silent, continuing to walk forward.

But as he proceeded further, his expression gradually became more serious, for now, he had a clearer view of the figure pacing at the entrance of the ancestral hall. Although he couldn't see perfectly, judging by the clothing and stature, it looked remarkably like... Jiang Yan.

Initially, he wasn't entirely certain, but now he was convinced.

The person who had been standing under the light at the entrance of the ancestral hall was Jiang Yan.

And while Yang Jian saw Jiang Yan at the entrance of the ancestral hall, she saw him too.

"Hey, Yang Jian, over here, hurry this way, the village isn't safe anymore. We've all taken refuge here," the Jiang Yan at the entrance of the ancestral hall beckoned, urgently beckoning Yang Jian to come over.

"Two Jiang Yans?" Yang Jian suddenly turned to look back.

Behind him, Jiang Yan's face was pale, and it was unclear whether it was because of excessive blood loss. She looked at Yang Jian and also at the person in front of the ancestral hall, her expression somewhat panicked.

At this moment.

The Jiang Yan in front of the ancestral hall was running towards them.

"Is the ghost targeting me this time?" Yang Jian looked around and his complexion immediately changed.

This time the ghost's method was even more absolute than the first nightmare. To have two identical people appear in one nightmare made it clear that one of them must be the ghost.

But right now, which one is the ghost?

Is it the injured and bloodstained Jiang Yan standing behind him, or the Jiang Yan running over from the entrance of the ancestral hall?

He had left the village for a while, so it was impossible to distinguish under these conditions.

Moreover, in the dream the ghost seemed to be able to know others' memories, which meant there could be no flaws in its disguise. The only flaw was that the ghost would try to kill you, while the other people in the nightmare would not.

At this moment.

Yang Jian still had one option, which was to retreat temporarily.

But this was the worst choice because once he retreated, the real Jiang Yan would definitely be targeted by the ghost, and he would also miss the chance to kill the ghost.

"I must take action first."

Yang Jian took a deep breath at this moment, looked around again, made his observation, and suddenly turned and charged at the Jiang Yan behind him.

He moved so quickly, almost without any hesitation.

A rust-covered sharp steel rebar pierced through her chest.

"Yang Jian, what are you doing..." The blood-soaked, pale-faced Jiang Yan behind him widened her eyes in disbelief.

"I'm not sure if you're the ghost, but the best choice is to kill both of you. Hesitating will not end this nightmare."

Yang Jian remained calm and unmoved, staring intently at her before pulling out the steel rebar, turning, and rushing towards the other Jiang Yan who was coming from the entrance of the ancestral hall.

"Ah!"

At this moment, the oncoming Jiang Yan stopped dead in her tracks when she saw what was happening. Her face gradually changed.

It turned gloomy and stiff, then she turned to leave.

"Thinking of leaving now? It's too late." Yang Jian had already charged over. He was prepared when he turned and stabbed Jiang Yan, planning to keep both of them there.

If it was the ghost, it would definitely reveal a flaw.

So as long as he inflicted injury without killing, he could end the nightmare before the real Jiang Yan died from her wounds.

It was because of this thought that Yang Jian did not hesitate to strike.

The one turning to leave could be determined now, that was the ghost.

The ghost was rapidly leaving, perhaps sensing danger, or perhaps Yang Jian's actions directly disrupted its plan, making it feel unable to start, forcing it to retreat.

It didn't seem to be moving fast, but in reality, the ghost was pulling away.

This feeling was very strange.

The ghost was affecting the surroundings—it was the most unfair part of this nightmare, almost like cheating.

The ghost was leaving, heading into the ancestral hall.

Yang Jian pursued it from behind, seemingly just a bit away from catching the ghost, but that small distance kept increasing.

"Bang!"

The door was blown open, and the ghost ran into the ancestral hall.

Yang Jian also entered the ancestral hall.

But in that moment, he lost sight of the ghost for just a second or two because the view was blocked by half a door.

Afterward.

Yang Jian's expression darkened.

There were quite a few people in the ancestral hall, gathered together at least twenty to thirty, all villagers from the village.

The figure of that Jiang Yan could no longer be found.

The ghost had once again managed to blend into the crowd.

"Truly seeking death, thinking that blending into the crowd makes you safe?" Yang Jian stared at the crowd, closed the ancestral hall's back door, and bolted it.

Without slaughtering this ghost, no one here today will leave.