



Illusions, Lies, Truth Volume 3: **In the Name of God (Part 1)**

Original novel in Chinese by: [御我 \(Yu Wo\)](#)

Translated by [Prince Revolution](#)

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## Illusions, Lies, Truth Volume 3: **In the Name of God (Part 1)**

Original novel in Chinese by: 御我 (Yu Wo)

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## Prologue: Prologue

*It went like this. On the way to school, just as I was walking in through the campus gate, I saw an angel drifting behind a certain classmate, following him the entire way without leaving. I thought he was up to no good, but in the next moment, the classmate's face bumped into a ghost that was floating about, and that ghost got so angry that it rushed over and punched him several times. The classmate didn't feel it, but the angel behind him actually rushed out and sent that ghost flying with one smack!*

Yu Shu yawned widely and lazily said, "I thought that you'd seen angels way back?"

Jiang Ziya was chewing bread. As expected, homemade bread was on a whole different level. It was super delicious. Once again, he understood why Yu Shu had summoned House Keeper to life.

"That's different! I've only seen them drifting about before. I thought those were hallucinations. Don't even mention angels. I often saw UFOs racing in the sky! If I took all of that to be real, I'd have gone crazy a long time ago."

*They're illusions, not hallucinations.* Yu Shu followed his example and took out a cream bun to chew on.

Jiang Ziya immediately took back the bag that held the cream buns. He said protectively, "House Keeper gave these to me. If you want some, why don't you just tell him to make more?" He was currently

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forbidden to enter Yu Shu's apartment. It wasn't easy for him to order food.

"You think he can produce flour? Huh?" Yu Shu retorted, "This is my flour, my eggs, my sugar, my... Anyway, it's all mine!" *All right, I don't know what else is necessary to make bread.*

Jiang Ziya asked hopefully, "How about I get the ingredients ready and send it over?"

"How about I just have House Keeper marry you? What do you think?"

This time, Jiang Ziya didn't immediately yell, "No!" like when they had first met. Other than the fact that he was a guy, House Keeper was truly a great wife candidate who practically had no faults... *Well, omitting the part of "not being a human."*

Seeing this, Yu Shu cursed and stiffly said, "Can't say that anymore. If you actually said yes, I'd be in deep trouble and would even need to prepare the dowry."

*What dowry!* Jiang Ziya was speechless. Getting stuck with this kind of mom, House Keeper was truly pitiful.

"Oh, I think I can hear the garbage truck?" Yu Shu reminded him. The daily wait for the garbage truck was not a long period. If Jiang Ziya wanted to keep chatting, she didn't mind.



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Jiang Ziya had also heard it. He hurriedly said, "The angel this time actually rushed out to smack a ghost. Do you think there's anything wrong with my classmate? Could he also be a practitioner?"

After he finished speaking, Yu Shu rolled her eyes at him exaggeratedly. He rubbed his nose and asked, "No?"

"Of course, no!" Yu Shu snapped, "Haven't you heard of guardian spirits?"

Jiang Ziya hesitated. The term wasn't unfamiliar, but truthfully, it was all hearsay. He couldn't at all tell what he should or shouldn't believe in.

"Before, most guardian spirits were deceased relatives, such as grandpas or grandmas. Nowadays, angels and fairies are all over the place."

"It can even change... Ah!" Jiang Ziya suddenly remembered something and hurriedly asked, "Before, I often saw Heibai Wuchang at cemeteries and the like, but recently, it's been death gods. Is this kind of change the same?"

Yu Shu nodded as she said, "So you can be taught. At least you're not a blockhead."

*That second sentence is unnecessary, okay?* Jiang Ziya rolled his eyes at her.

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“‘Illusory familiars,’ like the name suggests, come from illusions of the mind, so they have always been changing along with people’s imagination. You don’t have to be too worried about them. They are nearly all harmless. At most, people catch sight of them, resulting in a few ghost stories. Even if a few of them cause harm, that mostly comes about because practitioners take advantage of them to do something bad. Most of the time, it has nothing to do with the illusory familiars themselves.”

Jiang Ziya nodded. Lu Yang had told him before too. Illusory familiars were an existence akin to cockroaches. When a practitioner captures a cockroach to disgust you, can you blame the cockroach?

“Rather, artifact demons are much more dangerous. Even an artifact demon that is still an illusion has the ability to cause harm. Once it becomes a lie, it goes without saying that it can kill a few people. Many unsolved murder cases and stories about evil spirits have come about because of them.”

Jiang Ziya felt awkward. It was like his family was being mocked, but all he could do was pretend he hadn’t heard it. *Can anything be done if Sis doesn’t want to give up?* It was just that after she brought Xiao Xue back home, Jiang Yu seemed like she forgot everything again. It was like she had really given birth to a pair of twins, and there was nothing strange about either of them—but everything was strange!

He hesitated for a moment but still decided to ask, “Yu Shu, do you think my sis knows about Jiang Jiang?”



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Yu Shu asked, bewildered, "What about Jiang Jiang?"

Jiang Ziya froze, confused. *Is Yu Shu pretending or does she really not remember?*

"Wait, what's with that look? Is there something wrong with Jiang Jiang, too?" Yu Shu frowned, but she couldn't at all remember what was wrong with Jiang Jiang.

*She really doesn't remember!* Jiang Ziya hurriedly said, "N-nothing, pretend I didn't say anything."

Yu Shu opened her mouth but closed it again. In any case, she would understand once she was home. She didn't need to ask right now.

"I hate going out!" She complained, "You better just come over to my place in the future. Call me beforehand. I'll just get those two to avoid you."

Jiang Ziya immediately nodded in agreement. He didn't want to see Yu Shu show this kind of confused expression again. It would make him suspect whether he was the only one who still remembered.

Yu Shu wished she could turn and leave just like that, but she had already stepped out, so she should diligently finish her task. "The garbage truck is already at the intersection. Anything else you want to ask?"

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Jiang Ziya thought about it and asked, "Other than illusory familiars and artifact demons, are there any other classifications?"

Hearing that question, Yu Shu hesitated. She was reluctant to answer, but she still bit the bullet and said, "Some apparitions are too powerful or incredible, so they might have some other names, but all in all, they belong to those two types."

"I can understand being too powerful, but what do you mean by too incredible?"

Yu Shu wasn't quite smiling when she asked, "Are you sure you really understand what 'too powerful' means?"

Jiang Ziya didn't dare to overestimate himself and hurriedly changed his answer. "No, what does too powerful mean?"

The garbage truck had already stopped. Because the contents of their conversation was too frightening, and they couldn't let themselves be overheard, they had stood in a corner that was a bit remote. If they didn't head over now, they would not make it.

Yu Shu took a step forward and stuffed the garbage bags she held in Jiang Ziya's hand. As she turned to leave, she tossed him the following words. "They're powerful to the point of you picking up incense to pray to them."

Jiang Ziya's eyes widened. *Picking up incense to pray to them... Gods?*

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"Boy, the garbage truck left. Aren't you throwing those?" An old person looked curiously at the young man whose hands were full with garbage bags.

"Ah!"

Jiang Ziya immediately turned his head and saw that the garbage truck was already at the next intersection. After that was a stoplight, and then it would drive straight away. He immediately ran after it.

"Wait for me!"

*I don't want to carry four huge bags of garbage home!*



The moment she closed the door to her apartment, Yu Shu gave a snort.

*Jiang Jiang, that "truth!"*

*Forgetting and remembering like this, it won't be strange if my brain gets fried one day!* She grabbed her head hard, hating this kind of feeling yet unable to do anything about it. It wasn't like she really could never leave her apartment. She'd have to wait for House Keeper to become a truth before she could possibly do that.

"Mistress." House Keeper offered a pot.

Just from smelling it Yu Shu could tell it wasn't coffee. She asked helplessly, "What the heck is this?"

"Chrysanthemum tea."

"Is lemonade out of season already?"

"No, but you are unwilling to drink warm lemonade. Drinking too much iced lemonade is not good for you, so you may only drink one glass a day. At all other times, the beverage will depend on your needs. Recently, you have partaken in too many inflammatory foods, so chrysanthemum tea is best."

"House Keeper."

"Yes?"

"Stop watching the Health Encyclopedia show so much. I'm begging you!"

"Last time, you told me to stop watching the news. Last last time, you told me to stop watching variety shows. Now, you are telling me I cannot watch Health Encyclopedia." House Keeper asked, troubled, "Then, what can I watch?"

Yu Shu held her forehead. She didn't know either what kind of show was suitable for a one year old child who was able to talk and cook. "Forget it, you can watch whatever you want."

"Understood." House Keeper smiled a bit and said, "Then, please drink your tea now."

Yu Shu looked at the warm chrysanthemum tea. *What else can I say? It's my son's care for me, so I can only swallow it down.*

"While you took out the trash, I followed your orders and researched the Jiang family's situation."

Yu Shu frowned, quietly listening as she drank her chrysanthemum tea.

"The Jiang family has lived across the hall for a long time, but they do not interact with others much. Therefore, the neighbors on the floors above and below all do not have much familiarity with them. At most, they know that there is a sister and brother pair. Older neighbors mentioned having seen a middle aged man before, but it has been a long time since he was last seen. I believe that that person must be the Jiang family's father. The neighbor on the floor below, on the other hand, indicated often seeing Jiang Qibing and knows that he is the current head of the family."

Yu Shu looked at House Keeper in shock. "Your research went so quickly? How is it that I don't know how friendly these neighbors are? Besides, don't they find it strange that you have appeared here?" House Keeper smiled a bit and said, "The cookies and bread I have recently been delivering have been very useful. They have told me that the children love it. At first, they were wary of me, but a few trips familiarized them with me."

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"I'm betting that your looks were more useful!" Yu Shu glanced up and down at House Keeper and cautioned, "I'm warning you, don't bring back any relationship problems. It's too troublesome!"

"I am already your 'boyfriend.'" Although House Keeper still had not grown used to this phrase.

Yu Shu snapped, "You think that in this age, people won't snatch you just because you're someone's boyfriend? Even with a dozen kids, that still might not be enough!"

"Who wants to snatch someone as boring as him?"

The black cardboard box by the wall emitted a faint light. Several thin lines flowed out to draw a door. Following that, someone actually opened the door and walked out. It was a man wearing extravagant, white priest robes, his golden hair so bright that he seemed otherworldly.

"Huh, what kind of special occasion is it for our Hold Keeper to actually grace us with his presence?" Yu Shu said sourly.

Ever since she placed a bunch of illusory familiars in Hold Keeper's barrier dimension, this guy rarely came out again. *Just what's so good about staying in there and watching a bunch of illusory familiars with insufficient IQ? Even coming out and arguing with House Keeper is better!*

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Hold Keeper gave a cold snort. "You haven't gone in for several days. We had a promise. You're going to give me my companions and a complete world for me to come out and become your son."

Yu Shu rolled her eyes and snapped, "Give me some time, okay? Even if I go in every day, that's no use. Those illusory familiars will become more intelligent through the baptism of time! More than me going in, why don't you pull a few of them out to play? But I'm warning you, don't bring all of them out at once. Our apartment isn't that big!"

"Then I'll take them outside," Hold Keeper immediately retorted. *He won't listen no matter what. This brat is not giving his mom any room to breathe!* Angered, Yu Shu shouted, "Go for all I care! Once those illusory familiars get hit by the sun, half of them will die on the spot. I'll be at the side watching you cry!"

Hold Keeper's face fell. He sat sullenly for a long while, but he still could not hold back the desire within him. In a rare occurrence, he asked submissively, "Can you really not make it faster? I'm really happy just looking at them, but when I speak with them, they can only say the same things over and over again. It makes me feel terrible."

Yu Shu berated, "Make it fast, my ass! If you like looking so much, go look at your gē! You have a readily available companion that you're ignoring, and you just want me to make you new ones. Just how spoiled are you trying to be? If you have to have knight companions, why don't you treat your brother nicer, tell him to wear armor, and carry a sword? There's your knight, see?"



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Hearing that, Hold Keeper twisted to look at House Keeper, his expression conflicted. The other retained his calm expression. Even if Hold Keeper wanted to argue with him, it was likely that no argument would result, but he was definitely better than “companions” who could only say a few words.

A bit unwillingly, he asked, “Are you willing to be a knight?”

House Keeper thought it over and said, “If Mistress finishes two manuscripts, then she should have money to order a set of armor and a sword to be made.”

Of course, he meant doll-sized armor. If they wanted life-sized helmets, they probably couldn’t even find someone to make that.

“After it’s made, would you be willing to wear it and be a knight?” Hold Keeper’s eyes shone, his words never far from the word “knight.”

House Keeper raised another condition and said, “If you don’t go out of your way to argue with me, then wearing armor is not a big deal.”

As for whether he counted as a knight after wearing it, that should not be too important. As long as Hold Keeper was fine with it, it was fine. House Keeper felt no need to look into it. All he wanted was for Hold Keeper to stop bothering him while he was doing his household duties.

“Deal!” Hold Keeper shouted excitedly. He immediately turned and said, “Then, Yu Shu, hurry and write. Write two... no, four books! I want a set of armor and a sword, too!”

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Yu Shu could even spit blood by this point. By raising illusions she had ended up raising two editors who directly demanded her manuscript in her very own home every day. *Can I be more pitiful than this?*

“Ah! Jiang Yu told me to go chat with her whenever. I’m heading over to visit!”

After saying that, she fled right away, completely forgetting that merely ten minutes ago, she had declared that she hated leaving her apartment.

Hold Keeper jumped up and shouted, “Hold it right there, you need to hurry and write!”

“No, I only just turned in a manuscript!”

“You...”

## Chapter 1: College Life Part 1—The Classmate with an Angel

***"Jiu Ge," as passed down, is a set of songs from the Xia Dynasty, of which different gods are worshipped. There are a total of eleven elegies, those being: The Great Unity, God of the Eastern Sky, Dong Huang Taiyi; The Lord within the Clouds, Yunzhong Jun; The God of the Xiang, Xiang Jun; The Lady of the Xiang, Xiang Furen; The Greater Master of Fate, Da Si Ming; The Lesser Master of Fate, Shao Si Ming; The Lord of the East, Dong Jun; The River Earl, He Bo; The Mountain Spirit, Shan Gui; Hymn to the Fallen, Guo Shang; and Honoring the Dead, Li Hun.***

*Jiang Ziya stared at this introduction, his eyes wide. Taiyi and Dong Jun?*

*Those that are too powerful have special names.*

***Like those that you have to pick up incense to pray to.***

*...My boss isn't human!*

*But, when I asked, Fu Jun clearly said that they're human and that I was thinking too much. S-So what in the world is going on now?*

*Jiang Ziya felt that this world was way too fantastical. He should just return to reality and go to school. Even if his boss really were a god, it wasn't like he could bless Ziya and help him win the lottery, so attending school obediently was the proper thing to do.*

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*Besides, attending class had another benefit. He had classmate Lu Yang there to ask, and he wasn't like Yu Shu who liked to play around with answering. Since he was full of questions, of course he should rush to find classmate Lu Yang!*

*As usual, Jiang Ziya parked his motorcycle in the university's parking lot. Just as he was thinking of going to the campus store first to buy some fried noodles and bread to eat with Lu Yang, to avoid having to brave the crowd during lunch time, he saw an angel drifting in front of the parking lot exit. The angel was rather familiar too; it seemed to be the very angel that had thrown punches at a ghost.*

*In the past, Jiang Ziya had at most only dared to sneakily glance at these things, but now that he knew he had Jiěfu backing him up at home, Lu Yang with his demon-hunting, evil-dissipating skills at school, the neighbor who was raising illusory familiars across from his place, and even his boss and Fu Jun at work... As he listed them out, he began wondering where he had gone wrong with his life. Why is there no one simple around me?*

*But with all that, my own truth-seeing eye doesn't seem to be all that special anymore? Jiang Ziya suddenly found his balance. "Since everyone is the same" was indeed the best balm.*

*Secure in the knowledge that he had back-up, Jiang Ziya walked super slowly. As he inched over, he secretly observed the angel at the exit. The angel was truly beautiful, so much that he could not tell if the angel were male or female. The upper body was very solid. If it weren't for the angel's appearance and clothes being unlike any*

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*common person's, Jiang Ziya would definitely have mistaken them for human. However, a glance at the lower body, and you would know that things were off—the legs were half transparent. If not for how the angel glowed faintly, making them appear holy, the angel was practically like a ghost.*

*Upon closer approach, Jiang Ziya saw a guy standing by the exit, holding a stack of flyers. The angel was floating serenely behind him.*

*Going by the guy's attire, he should be a college classmate. He should be that person whose face hit a ghost last time, right? Jiang Ziya couldn't quite remember what the other person looked like, but his attire was about the same, and the angel behind him was the same one, so it should be the same person.*

*The guy shyly held a flyer out to him and asked in a small voice, "Classmate, want to come watch a movie?"*

*Jiang Ziya didn't take it. Lu Yang and Yu Shu had warned him countless times. After entering the innerworld, there were many things he had to pay attention to, such as "invitations." Normal people didn't understand those things, yet that was actually safer. Even if they agreed to something, it wouldn't easily become an "invitation." But after stepping foot into the innerworld, agreeing to anything could result in serious consequences.*

*Therefore, no matter what Jiang Ziya did now, he was much more careful, deeply afraid that he would accidentally agree to an*

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*"invitation," and then his good friend and neighbor would join hands to blast him apart.*

*"Watch a movie?" He asked in confusion as he glanced at the angel out of the corner of his eye. The angel drifted behind the classmate's right side, gaze completely focused on the classmate, not the least bit interested in Jiang Ziya.*

*Seeing his interest, the guy perked up and quickly introduced, "Yeah, we're watching a series of horror movies. It's a club activity, so it's completely free! Want to come? It's such a rare opportunity. Register early so you'll have a spot!"*

*You're standing in the parking lot blocking people, and you call this a rare opportunity? Jiang Ziya took measure of this classmate. He was dressed like any other college student, just that he was wearing thick glasses, so he looked a bit like a nerd, and was not dressed fashionably like Lu Yang. But it wasn't too out there either. Jiang Ziya himself only won in the aspect that he wasn't nearsighted.*

*Curious, he struck up a conversation with him and asked, "What's your major?"*

*"Electrical Engineering. W-What about you?"*

*"Foreign Languages," Jiang Ziya answered off-handedly. He asked suspiciously, "Aren't engineering majors demanding? How do you have time for clubs?"*

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*The guy smiled. "I still have to have a hobby! I'm Jian Zhi. Want to be friends?"*

*"Jiang Ziya."*

*"...That Jiang Ziya?"*

*"Yeah, exactly that Jiang Ziya that goes fishing."*

*Jian Zhi laughed out loud. "Your parents are really amusing."*

*"They're really in need of a beating, that's what!" Jiang Ziya rolled his eyes several times.*

*"Hey, it's not bad. At least, when you introduce yourself, you don't have to worry about any awkward silences."*

*That's true. Offering his name was enough to make the entire class laugh.*

*At this time, the campus bell rang. Jiang Ziya scratched his head, thinking about how the professor of this course seemed to be quite satisfied with his assignments, while the only thing that wasn't satisfactory was how frequently he skipped class. As long as he attended class, the professor would be very satisfied. Being late wasn't a big deal, so he wasn't all that worried about it.*

*"It's class time!" Jian Zhi frantically stuffed the flyer in Jiang Ziya's hand and said, "Take this. Remember to come watch. Ah, ah, I'll write*



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*my cell phone number on it. If you're coming, give me a call. I'll definitely save an awesome seat for you!"*

*He then hurriedly took a pen out of his backpack and wrote down a string of numbers.*

*"I have to go now. There are even several screenings tonight. Remember to come!" Jian Zhi said again, worried.*

*There really must be a lack of people attending. Jiang Ziya didn't say yes but he didn't turn him down either. He waved his hand and said, "Bye!"*

*Jian Zhi didn't think much about it. In fact, since Jiang Ziya had taken the initiative to chat with him, and they had spoken for a bit, he thought that Jiang Ziya would show up. Therefore, he happily waved his hand to bid farewell.*

*Jiang Ziya watched Jian Zhi leave with his eyes. Suddenly, the angel halted and turned to give him a smile, as if the angel were a parent who was happy that their child had made a friend. Then, the angel hurriedly drifted after Jian Zhi.*

*...I almost thought I had been discovered. So, it's just "a parent's goodwill?" Luckily, thanks to being trained by his many years of experience, Jiang Ziya could remain calm no matter the situation. Otherwise, the angel glancing back and smiling at him would have definitely made him give himself away.*

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*It looks like it shouldn't be a bad illusory familiar? Jiang Ziya relaxed a lot more. He lowered his head to look at the flyer, which detailed a ghost story. There were also a few photos of ghost houses. The time and location of the screening of the horror movies was written at the very bottom. It looked to be fairly professional. Coincidentally, Jiang Yu had been urging him to find a club to join. A club where he could watch free movies seemed to be pretty suitable.*

*I'll go and take a look!*

*I should get Lu Yang to join with me, in case there's roll call or whatnot. Thinking of that, Jiang Ziya suddenly felt a bit guilty. He had helped write a lot of Lu Yang's assignments, but Lu Yang had also helped him with a bunch of roll calls. When it all came down to it, he really didn't know which of them was more serious about attending school.*



*"After class today, I'm going to pick someone up from the airport with my grandpa."*

*Lu Yang felt a bit frustrated. Jiang Ziya, who had never in a million years ever shown any interest in something like entertainment, wanted to join a club, yet Lu Yang wasn't able to be there to witness it. I will definitely regret it my entire life!*

*Jiang Ziya was a bit surprised. He asked curiously, "Who are you picking up?"*

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*"My parents. I'm not sure if both of them are coming back, or if it's just one of them. They're always changing their plans."*

*"Go already." Jiang Ziya waved his hands and said, unconcerned, "I'll head over and take a look first. If it's easy to join the club, it won't be too late for you to join later."*

*Lu Yang could only agree, but he looked at the flyer in disappointment. "Looks like there will be several screenings. I'll definitely go with you next time!"*

*"No hurry. If I join, I'll definitely drag you with me to help with attendance!"*

*Jiang Ziya took out the bread and fried noodles. Lunch break wasn't long. He had to ask his questions and eat too. He waved the two food items in front of Lu Yang and asked, "Which one do you want?"*

*"Fried noodles!" Lu Yang immediately snatched the fried noodles. Then, he tossed over two cans of drinks and some bags of snacks.*

*"I knew you're the Prince of Fried Noodles."*

*"And you're the Superman of Bread, Anpanman!" Lu Yang huffed in reply. "When is it ever not bread for you and fried noodles for me? Do you still need to ask?"*

*"Who knows if you'll ever be tired of being the prince and will one day want to become superman?"*

*Jiang Ziya sat down and opened a drink to go with the bread. Although he knew that eating bread all the time wasn't healthy, the short lunch break really made it so that he was too lazy to brave the crowd. Besides, he could just eat better for dinner.*

*As he ate, Jiang Ziya remembered that he had a bunch of questions he wanted to ask his demon-busting friend. He hurriedly inquired, "Oh right, are guardian spirits dangerous?"*

*Lu Yang asked cautiously, "Why do you ask? Did you come across something?"*

*"No, just that I saw an angel following someone around on campus. I went to ask Yu Shu and she said that it's a guardian spirit. But you know how lazy that woman is. She didn't even explain it clearly, just that guardian spirits are fairly harmless, so I don't have to worry."*

*Hearing that, Lu Yang relaxed and nodded as he said, "They're indeed fairly harmless. Just like cockroaches."*

*Thinking of that beautiful angel, and then thinking of cockroaches, Jiang Ziya seriously wished the comparison could be replaced with something else. Stop it with the cockroaches. I feel like every illusory familiar is going to sprout cockroach antennas on their heads at this rate.*

*"So, can guardian spirits really protect someone?"*

*Lu Yang admitted, "Nearly useless there."*

*Jiang Ziya was shocked. "But the angel I saw could punch a ghost."*

*"Oh, those are rarer, but not that rare. That 'ghost' wasn't dangerous, right?"*

*"Not at all, he couldn't touch anyone." Jiang Ziya thought about it and asked another question, "Should I be calling it an illusory familiar? It's actually not a ghost, right?"*

*"No need. When you say 'angel' or 'ghost' or whatnot, I can actually immediately understand what kind of spirit it is. Besides, whether they're ghosts or not depends on everyone's own definitions. Some people think those are angels and ghosts. Others think of them as illusory familiars. Some even think them to be artifact demons."*

*Jiang Ziya asked in shock, "I understand with ghosts, but even guardian spirits can be artifact demons?"*

*"Of course." Lu Yang nodded and solemnly said, "But those cases are rarer, and nearly all of them result in trouble, such as that person getting killed by the guardian spirit, or the friends and relatives around that person getting killed."*

*Bringing up the wrong topic, Jiang Ziya could only say in embarrassment, "That's why you're so against Xiao Xue staying at my place."*

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*Lu Yang gave a "yeah" and reminded him again, "You have to keep the cell phone I gave you on you at all times. Did you get all the functions down?"*

*Jiang Ziya frowned when the cell phone was mentioned. It was a new smart phone that Lu Yang had shoved at him, and he had forced him to learn all of the functions.*

*"Stop being so awkward about it. The cell phone isn't a gift. It's an advance on your salary. In order to hire a practitioner with the powerful ability to dismantle barrier dimensions, that expense could purchase a stack of smart phones as tall as you, all of the same brand."*

*Hearing that, Jiang Ziya could only rub his nose and let it go. He still owed Yu Shu a hundred thousand, so adding more to his debt didn't matter. He would just have to pay it all back slowly.*

*"If anything comes up, call me right away." Lu Yang said, unable to relax, "I'll call you every night."*

*"Yeah, yeah, yeah, I promise I won't have an affair, okay?"*

*Lu Yang immediately interrogated resentfully, "Then, where did Xiao Xue come from?"*

*"My sis introduced us."*

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*Hearing that, Lu Yang couldn't continue the joke. Once he thought of how they were a family with the truth-seeing eye, he really couldn't joke about it.*

*Having blurted that out about his sister, Jiang Ziya felt a bit vexed. He had already decided not to bring it up, to utterly forget about it like his sister, but he really couldn't forget about it, not when he saw strange things day in and day out because of his possession of the truth-seeing eye. But at the very least, he should not be bringing it up.*

*Lu Yang sighed. "Later, while my parents are home, come with me to the temple to meet my family."*

*"... I'm really meeting the parents?"*

*Lu Yang held his hands out to each side and helplessly said, "It's already gotten this serious. What else can we do?"*

*Although he was joking, there was worry in Lu Yang's eyes. Jiang Ziya could see it. He scratched his head and said, "I seem to be a very troublesome guy?"*

*"Yeah, so you better work hard for me!"*

*Jiang Ziya smiled while he said, "That's no problem."*

*"No problem? You have a huge problem!" Lu Yang huffed, "You have to work at the book store, help Yu Shu do miscellaneous chores, slay demons with me at night, and still maintain top scores with your*



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*schoolwork to qualify for scholarships. When will you have time to sleep?"*

*Yet, Jiang Ziya didn't feel it would be a problem. Those miscellaneous tasks for Yu Shu weren't much of a job. He could just buy those household goods that House Keeper requested on the way home from class. The book store wasn't that busy either. He could even study during downtimes. As for Lu Yang's side, truthfully speaking, he very much doubted that Lu Yang would give him much work. "You really will bring me on your jobs, right?" He couldn't help asking in worry.*

*Hearing that, Lu Yang knew right away what Jiang Ziya was thinking. He snapped, "I will! Gramps said to bring you with me. Since you've already taken a step in, knowing more will make it so that you're less likely to die mysteriously."*

*Jiang Ziya relaxed. Even though he had had the impression that Lu Yang's grandfather didn't care about his grandson's life or death the last time he visited Qing Wei Gong, seeing how Lu Yang was acting now, it didn't seem like he and his grandpa were at odds. It should just be that Ziya wasn't familiar with how that world worked—But when it all came down to it, Lu Yang had really almost died last time! When we meet, I have to emphasize this point. Jiang Ziya decided. He had to make Master Ah Lu understand that his grandson had almost kicked the bucket!*

*"So, what do your grandparents and parents like? I'll bring a gift with me. It's only polite."*

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*Lu Yang thought about it and said, "Macarons and chocolate, I think?"*  
*"Your mom likes sweets?" Jiang Ziya nodded. Even though he didn't know which store sold tasty desserts, he could just ask his neighbor House Keeper to help make them instead.*

*"My grandpa and grandma both like them."*

*"... Oh! Then what about your parents?"*

*"No clue. I've almost known you longer than I've known them."*  
*Jiang Ziya sympathized with him. "Same with my dad."*

*Lu Yang suddenly recalled something and said, "Oh right, Gramps said that among the practitioners in this city, there was indeed a pair of husband and wife that went by the name of Jiang. They were fairly famous in the past, though they were also very low-key, so he doesn't know much about them. He doesn't remember when he stopped hearing about them, but it's not strange for practitioners to suddenly disappear. He didn't pay much attention to it back then and doesn't know if that pair of husband and wife was your dad and mom."*

*I bet they are. Jiang Ziya had that feeling. But why is it that I don't remember anything odd going on with my parents? Even though he had been young back then, he had already had the truth-seeing eye. I couldn't have overseen any oddities, right? My memories of my parents are so fuzzy...*

*"Don't think about it!"*

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*Jiang Ziya jumped and raised his head, seeing Lu Yang place both of his hands on Ziya's shoulders.*

*He seriously said, "Gramps told me that your situation is a bit problematic. Before we make sense of it, don't ever attempt thinking about it. 'Forgetting about it' may very well be for the sake of protecting you two siblings. If you suddenly remember, who knows what kind of changes it will bring about? So don't even attempt it."*

*Hearing that, Jiang Ziya fell silent for a while before he asked, "Then, could an enemy of my parents have done this? I haven't seen my dad in a long time. Maybe he's already..."*

*"Impossible!" Lu Yang immediately cut him off. He shook his head and said, "Killing you is much easier than making you forget. Muddling someone's memory for the long term isn't easy at all. If an enemy of the family dares to kill your parents, then they would have gotten rid of you two siblings at the same time. There would have been no need to do something as complicated as making you 'forget.'"*

*Hearing that, Jiang Ziya felt that it made sense. Can it be any easier to kill my sis and me? Two bullets, and that would be an eternal farewell. Didn't the Zhang family skip to pulling out the guns last time? There really isn't a need to make it complicated.*

*At this time, his classmates began returning to the classroom in twos and threes, making it no longer suitable to discuss these matters. "Time to get ready for class." Lu Yang off-handedly cleaned up the trash on the table and took it to the trashcan.*

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*Jiang Ziya nodded and said, "It's so rare that you actually completed your assignment this time and didn't ask me rush it out during lunch break. The topic this time was pretty complicated. I was even worried that I wouldn't be able to finish writing the assignment during lunch."*

*"... Shit!"*

## Chapter 1: College Life Part 2— What Happened to the Promised Films Studies Society?

In the end, Jiang Ziya didn't give Jian Zhi a call beforehand. *Who knows if making a call would be an invitation?*

Even though he felt he was being too paranoid, the situation at home was complicated. *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.* It wouldn't be too late to enter Jian Zhi's number under his contacts after Lu Yang had taken a look at him and made sure there was nothing iffy about him. Besides, he didn't care whether or not he had a good seat to watch the movie.

He followed the directions on the flyer and arrived at the student union building. He hadn't thought it would be so populated here. Several students had formed a crowd in their approach, and they greeted each other as they got on the elevator and even waved for Jiang Ziya to quickly get in.

Jiang Ziya shook his head and looked down at the flyer. On it was written: "Basement, level one. Please take a right turn at the elevators, walk to the end of the corridor, and use the stairs to go down." Earlier, when he had read this, he hadn't thought much of it, but now that he had seen all the students take the elevator up, he started to feel something was off.

*But if the audio-visual room for watching the movie needs to be soundproof, it's not odd for it to be in the basement?* Jiang Ziya thought it over and felt he was worrying too much. The student union

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building was even livelier than the location of his classes. People came and went. Even standing in front of the elevator made him feel he was very much in the way. It would be too stupid to plan an ambush here.

After laughing at himself for jumping at nothing, Jiang Ziya walked directly to the end of the corridor indicated on the flyer. Looking at the deep staircase, he abruptly recalled when he had first discovered the strangeness of the twins and had wanted to get Xiao Xue out of there to throw her away. He had faced such a staircase then too...

But the situation was still rather different. At the time, the staircase had been so dark that he hadn't been able to see the stairs past a few steps. On top of that, the darkness had absolutely no increments to it, as if it were a steep cliff. Any closer, and he would have fallen into a bottomless pit.

However, the stairs in front of him grew darker the farther down it went, and he could faintly make out the flat intermediate floor where the stairs turned.

Suddenly, the staircase brightened, and a person stuck his head out to look up, crying out in surprise and elation once he spotted someone there. "Jiang Ziya!"

When that person had stuck his head out, Jiang Ziya had immediately noticed him for no other reason than the presence of the eye-catching angel, who was even glowing. Even if he didn't want to notice, he couldn't. He raised his hand and said, "Hey!"

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Jian Zhi rushed up and excitedly said, "I didn't get your call. I thought you weren't coming!"

"Oh, I felt that it's fine even if a seat isn't saved for me." Jiang Ziya tried his best to ignore the angel that was flying behind him joyfully.

"I get you!" Jian Zhi nodded and said, "Have you had dinner yet?"

"Nope."

"Awesome, we have snacks before the screening. Come on!"

Jian Zhi hurriedly pulled Jiang Ziya down the stairs.

*This club must really be unpopular?* Jiang Ziya wasn't concerned about it. After all, he had come in the first place with the intention of appeasing Jiang Yu. The less the club required, the better.

After arriving at the basement, he saw that the layout wasn't all that different from the floor above it. First was a great hall and then a long hallway to each side. Both sides led to several rooms.

The lighting was very dim, the surroundings fairly decorated. A few rows of chairs had been neatly lined in the middle. A white projector screen was directly ahead, the frame currently paused on the movie's title screen. There were even spider webs hung about the walls around them, as well as tattered cloth, ghost masks, and the like. He could tell that they were for the sake of creating a scary atmosphere, which had heart but wasn't all that polished.



"No club wanted to use the basement, so the school let us use it!" Jian Zhi happily said, "Isn't it awesome? We're allowed to use such a large space however we like. You can even borrow a room to watch films!"

"That is pretty cool." Jiang Ziya felt they could borrow a room for Lu Yang to show off his swordplay or something, but why would no one want to use such a large space? *Even though it's the basement, students shouldn't be so particular about it, right?*

There really weren't that many people present, just about twenty or so, and several of them were looking around, curiously observing their surroundings. They didn't seem to be old club members. Most were probably like him who had come to participate in the club activity.

Jian Zhi played host and said, "Come over and eat. The female club member responsible for preparing the snacks is super good at it. They're delicious!"

Jiang Ziya didn't hold back, following Jian Zhi over to the dining area. After all, he intended to join the club, so he wasn't freeloading. That gave him peace of mind.

"Jiang Ziya?" a girl exclaimed.

Jiang Ziya stilled and looked toward the person who had called out to him. *Isn't that girl standing near the soup and serving it no one else but Lin Zhixiang?*

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Lin Zhixiang asked a bit nervously, "W-Why are you here?"

Seeing her expression, Jiang Ziya didn't quite know how to respond. Ever since the supermarket incident, he had thought that this girl would seek him out, but she hadn't done so at all. It was like they had never escaped from the supermarket together, though she *had* been out of sorts at the time.

Lu Yang said this wasn't odd. After many people experienced this kind of thing, they itched to forget about it completely. First, they would avoid everyone involved, and then they would begin to suspect whether it had just been a dream. Following that, they would completely forget it was something that had happened in real life, writing it off as something from a dream, movie, or even a novel or comic.

However, with the kind of reaction Lin Zhixiang had, she probably hadn't forgotten?

"He's a new club member I roped in!" Jian Zhi said excitedly.

*Hey hey, I haven't agreed yet!* Jiang Ziya rolled his eyes, but seeing Jian Zhi doing his utmost to hint with his glances, and the angel behind him similarly following suit with a worried gaze, Jiang Ziya could only rub his nose and nod.

"You're joining?" Lin Zhixiang was taken aback for a moment. "Oh, it's fitting for you to join this club though."

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*Why is she saying something so strange?* Jiang Ziya frowned, but then he thought of the scary atmosphere around them. *All right, recent events have been a bit scary.*

"You know each other?" Jian Zhi asked curiously.

"Um, not really. She fainted one time at the school cafeteria, so my friend and I took her to the infirmary."

Jian Zhi took in their awkward expressions. *No matter what, that doesn't look like an expression someone would have when meeting one's savior?* He rubbed his nose and said, "I thought you were exes."

"Nothing like that!" Jiang Ziya protested.

Lin Zhixiang's face reddened. She understood that her attitude was inappropriate. She quickly explained, "That time, I woke up halfway and didn't have a grasp on the situation. I thought he was a bad guy, so I slapped him." As she spoke, she caught Jiang Ziya's eyes to clue him in.

"Oh..." Jian Zhi looked at Jiang Ziya with sympathy and said, "That sucks."

"It wasn't a big deal." Jiang Ziya could only follow along. Both of them were hinting at him one after another. He really didn't know what they were doing.

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Seeing that she had successfully bluffed her way out, Lin Zhixiang let out a sigh of relief. She quickly asked, "Want something to eat? You haven't had dinner yet, right?"

Jiang Ziya nodded.

Lin Zhixiang immediately got two plates of food and a bowl of soup together in a hurried manner. Jiang Ziya couldn't carry it all, so even Jian Zhi had to help him. "Come back for more if it's not enough."

Jiang Ziya lifted an eyebrow. *Are you stuffing me like a pig, or is this your way of thanking me?*

"Thanks." *I'll treat it as the latter. After all, we survived through a life-and-death situation together.*

Carrying a large amount of food, Jiang Ziya could only sit down first and eat dinner. If nothing else, this food was really quite delicious, even though it wasn't as good as the all mighty butler's handiwork across his place, but this quality was definitely on par with the common housewife's. It could give his sis a run for her money. Normally, if food that students prepared for club activities was fit for consumption, that was already good enough, not to mention being delicious.

Jian Zhi said while smiling, "Pretty good, right? Lin Zhixiang is a great cook. She always prepares the food for club activities."

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"You're not eating?" Jiang Ziya felt a bit embarrassed to be the only one gorging himself.

"Us club members have all already eaten."

"Oh." Jiang Ziya nodded.

"Take your time. I'm going to show the others around. If you have any questions, feel free to come find me."

"Speaking of that, how do club fees work here?" Jiang Ziya asked a fairly practical question. He was someone in debt. He had to haggle over every cent!

Jian Zhi's eyes brightened, and he lowered his voice to say, "If you join, I can help waive your fees!"

*...Just how badly do you need people?*

Suddenly, Jiang Ziya didn't dare to agree to join. *Is it so hard for clubs to get people to join nowadays?* Faced with double the hopeful expressions from both Jian Zhi and the angel, Jiang Ziya forged on and said, "Let me see if the club activities interest me first."

"Ah... I get you." Jian Zhi and the angel both appeared pitiful, as if they had withered.

Jiang Ziya felt like he was the guiltiest person in the world, but this club was so in need of members that even the club fees were waived.

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No matter how he looked at it, something had to be wrong. It was best for him to test the waters first. If no one was joining because it was too boring, then he could join and make up the numbers. But if it was because of some other reason, then he had to reconsider it.

Jiang Ziya ate so much that he was stuffed. Just as he finished eating the food on hand, the event this time was about to start. Not only had the number of people not increased, there were even fewer people than earlier. *Don't tell me they ran off after eating their fill? How ungrateful.*

Unfortunately, this guess seemed to be right. A few people who looked to be club members all had on depressed expressions. Jiang Ziya took a count. Those sitting on the chairs probably weren't club members. There weren't even ten of them, and that was the result after he had counted himself too.

Following that, the club activity officially began. A few club members took turns on stage to introduce ghost houses and some ghost stories from many different places. They showed several spooky photos, and then they also had several people verify them, proving that some of them were fake, but some of the rumors actually seemed to have truth behind them and could not be disproved.

Jiang Ziya nodded. They were doing a decent job. Telling some ghost stories before watching a horror film would definitely make it even scarier. It was just that using this technique on him was useless. Ever since he was small, just what hadn't he seen before? Besides, the

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glowing angel was floating by the podium. *I really can't feel scared at all...*

"Now, let us enjoy the film. It is said to be adapted from true events, based on real people. Of course, whether that's true or not is for you to decide."

Jiang Ziya greatly enjoyed the screening of the horror movie that followed. He didn't remember how long it had been since he had last watched a movie. *There doesn't seem to be anything bad about this club. Maybe everyone just likes clubs that require you to be more active?*

After the movie ended, he returned to himself and suddenly felt uneasy. He immediately turned to look. All of the club members were standing behind him, watching him with expectant eyes.

All of the other seats were empty.

Jiang Ziya felt very pressured...

Jian Zhi carried all of the club members' anticipation, walking over and asking, "Um, Ziya, what did you think of the club activity?"

"Uh, not bad." This was the truth. Jiang Ziya didn't feel pressured to say that. Occasionally coming to the club to watch a movie was indeed not bad, but could they stop collectively staring at him? *I feel like I'm getting forced into prostitution... No, I mean, getting forced into a club.*

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"Then, how about joining our club?" Jian Zhi gazed at him full of anticipation.

Jiang Ziya hesitated for a moment. It was just a club. Even if it was really very bad, he could just quit. The school didn't have a rule against quitting any clubs. Besides, everyone here was a student, and Lin Zhixiang was here, too. It shouldn't be an "invitation."

He nodded in agreement. "Okay."

"Hurray!" Jian Zhi was so moved that he had almost jumped up. The other club members likewise were full of joy and cried out, "We have finally reached the minimum number of club members required and won't have to disband... Ah!"

The club members abruptly realized that they had let slip the truth. They all looked nervously toward Jiang Ziya.

*So that's how it is. No wonder even the club fees were waived.* Jiang Ziya gave them an innocent smile, pretending that he didn't know what they were so frantic about.

Following that, the other people immediately brought a club application form over and had even prepared a pen for him. Then, they all surrounded him to watch, making Jiang Ziya feel like he was currently signing a contract to sell his body. Fortunately, what was written on the form was indeed "club application."



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"All you have to do is sign. You're majoring in Foreign Languages, right? The rest has been filled for you."

Jiang Ziya nodded and signed it, officially becoming a club member. He returned the application and asked off-handedly, "Is the club activity always a movie screening?"

Jian Zhi smiled until his eyes closed. He lowered his head to look at the application form. He casually answered, "Of course not. It's not like we're the Films Studies Society."

"... Then what society are you?" Jiang Ziya felt that he might have made a grave error.

Jian Zhi stilled. He looked at him guiltily and nervously said, "W-We're the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society."

*...No wonder you're going defunct!*

"You thought we were the Films Studies Society?" Lin Zhixiang asked in shock. "Didn't Jian Zhi tell you?"

Expressionless, Jiang Ziya shook his head.

Jian Zhi quickly said, "I didn't mention it, but it's on the flyer!"

*Where?* Jiang Ziya looked at him doubtfully. The latter hurriedly grabbed a flyer, but the room was too dim for the words to be read, so he immediately went to turn on the lights after that.

Before Jiang Ziya could even scrutinize the flyer, he discovered that there was something wrong with his surroundings. The floorboards were stained black and gray all over, the original color completely obscured. The four walls were mottled and stained with water residue, and water was even dripping from several places, and in more than one location, a bucket had been placed below to catch the water.

The rooms along the two corridors had no glass on the windows, and they didn't even have doors. The condition of those rooms was even worse than the great hall! *Why was there even a need to decorate? This place looks even more like a scene out of a horror movie without the lights off!*

Flustered, Jian Zhi said, "Before this, the basement was filled with junk and was leaking water, while the school didn't have anyone to deal with it, so they originally only asked us to clean it up, and they would give us the entire basement to use."

*As expected, there is no free meal in the world.* Seeing how the place currently was, he could imagine how horrifying the original condition was. No wonder no club wanted to take this place. Jiang Ziya looked at these ten or so people who made up this society, suddenly impressed by them. Cleaning up the entire basement with so few people must have taken them a lot of effort.

"We worked hard painting the walls! But the ceiling and walls are all leaking, so the paint job wasn't up to snuff for very long. The technician for fixing leakages said that this one is a difficult case and

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would require a lot of money, so we're still in the middle of requesting money from the school."

As Jian Zhi explained, he snuck a glance at Jiang Ziya's expression. They were really at their wit's end. Even though the school was grateful that they had cleaned up the basement, club rules were still club rules. They had to reach the minimum membership in order for the society to remain functioning. There was no exception. If Jiang Ziya was unwilling to join, then their society was really going to go defunct!

Jiang Ziya stopped scrutinizing his surroundings, lowering his head to look at the flyer. On it, in fancy lettering, was:

*Do you like the supernatural? Have you seen any paranormal activity without knowing what was happening, and you had no one to share it with? Come and join the society to study it with us.*

The font for "Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society" was different from the rest of the words, but if he hadn't known that this was the name of the club, he would never have put these words together in his head.

Jiang Ziya almost felt the need to vomit blood on the flyer. *Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society? You might as well call yourselves the Fraudulent Society!*

"Classmate..."

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Jiang Ziya lifted his head and saw a pasty-faced male classmate walk over. He was tall, skinny, and pale, with such dark eye bags that it was like he had been punched. His footsteps were rather airy, his entire person akin to the existence of a specter.

Jiang Ziya was a bit speechless. If he had met him on the streets, Jiang Ziya would definitely have treated him as one of those inexplicable existences and directly ignored him.

"Hello, I am the club president, Xu Xikai."

"I'm Jiang Ziya." Jiang Ziya gave his name, and the other person wasn't all that surprised. *Jian Zhi must have already mentioned it before.*

Xu Xikai had an inviting smile as he said, "Classmate Jiang, even if you don't participate in club activities, could you help us make up our numbers and not leave the society?"

Hearing that, Jiang Ziya thought it to be a pretty good deal. Of course, it wasn't that he would never show up, as he wouldn't be able to appease his sis like that. He had to at least be able to tell her what kinds of things the society did, but a society that studied supernatural phenomena—*I really wonder what kind of reaction Jiang Yu would have?*

With how his sis was like, he bet that she would only say that it seemed very amusing.

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Thinking of that, Jiang Ziya nodded in agreement. "I will come and participate in club activities, but I might not be able to attend often, especially on the weekends. I have work."

Jiu Ge Bookstore was busier on the weekends. He couldn't say the two words "Vacation please."

"No problem." Xu Xikai immediately nodded and agreed.

At this time, a ringtone sounded among them. The sound was very close. Jiang Ziya looked at Xu Xikai.

The other person reminded helpfully, "Isn't it your cell phone that's ringing?"

Jiang Ziya was taken aback until he remembered that this was the ringtone of his new cell phone. It was even a trendy song that Lu Yang had set for him. He quickly picked up the call. It was indeed Lu Yang on the line.

"How's the club?"

"Fine, I already joined."

"While you're at it, help me fill out an application, too? Or do I have to go in person?"

Jiang Ziya lowered his voice and said, "But this is the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society. Are you sure you want to come?"

"...You sure know how to pick them."

He couldn't refute that.

"Of course I'm going. Why wouldn't I go? Remember to help me fill out the form. Ah, the food's here. I'm off to eat."

Jiang Ziya echoed "enjoy your food" and then hung up. He said, "My classmate wants to join too. Give me another application form..."

Before he even finished saying that, President Xu and Jian Zhi both rushed over and hugged him without letting go. The way they looked at him was even more fervent than the way one would look at one's lover in the throes of love.

"Our savior!" Xu Xikai was near tears.

Jiang Ziya felt that Lin Zhixiang, who was standing to the side, had more of a right to call him that.

"You really are a good person!" Jian Zhi grabbed Jiang Ziya's hand tightly. "My judgment wasn't wrong!"

Receiving the good person award, Jiang Ziya felt defeated. These two grown men just had to look like they were on the verge of tears. He really didn't know how to react. He could only look around to see if anyone could help him.

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Lin Zhixiang laughed and walked over, pulling the two of them away to free him.

"So, what does the club do?" Jiang Ziya felt that he should learn more about it first. Then, he could discuss how to deal with it with Lu Yang later.

Xu Xikai seriously said, "We study all sorts of paranormal phenomena that cannot be explained."

"Can you be a bit more specific?" Jiang Ziya felt that this president definitely wasn't in charge of the everyday running of the club.

"Exploring ghost houses," Lin Zhixiang simply said.

"...That's clear and succinct."

Jiang Ziya glanced at Lin Zhixiang. He hadn't thought that she would enjoy exploring ghost houses. *What, you didn't feel that incident from last time to be scary enough?* If he didn't have an eye that he couldn't escape from, he wouldn't want to get involved with these matters.

Jian Zhi looked at him with expectant eyes and said, "We have an event coming up this Thursday even. Do you and your classmate want to come?"

"To a ghost house? Is it far?"

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"It'll be right at the school. We're researching school legends." Jian Zhi said a bit nervously, "But it starts at midnight. We've gotten permission from the school, so you don't have to worry about breaking school rules."

"All right, I'll participate. Later, I'll ask if my classmate wants to come, too."

Hearing about the location, Jiang Ziya nodded. *The location isn't bad. The school is such a familiar place. If there really were any scary ghosts or demons, Lu Yang must have already gotten rid of them by now, right?*

*It's just an outing at midnight. I'll go!*



## Chapter 1: College Life Part 3—It Was Destined

Lu Yang put away his cell phone and looked toward the person on the other side of the dining table, a bit happy and a bit frustrated.

“Is Classmate Jiang okay?” the man asked in concern.

“Yeah, he’s beyond okay. He even joined a supernatural studies society. I can’t believe him. Does he feel that there hasn’t been enough ‘supernatural’ stuff happening to him?”

The man smiled a bit, his green eyes and foreign face making him look rather charismatic, with features that were startling similar to Lu Yang’s, who sat across from him.

“Dad, tell me the truth. Will Mom really be able to return in the next few days?”

Lewis, whose Chinese name was Liu Yishi, was apologetic as he smiled and said, “Most likely not. I hear that the coffins in the tomb aren’t in good condition. Your mom will have to spend a lot of time just going over how to deal with that with the team on site. That’s not even considering how to actually solve the problem.”

Lu Yang stared at the roasted duck he had reserved as it sat on the table. Frustration simmered underneath his skin. He had originally thought that they would have a nice meal together as a whole family, so he had specifically made a reservation for a booth at this famous restaurant. He had been afraid they would sell out on the roasted duck, so he had reserved an entire duck, a huge one! And yet, his

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mom had not returned, and his grandpa had left in a fuss because of her ditching them, and his grandma could only follow after him to calm him down. He couldn't return the duck he had already ordered, so now they could only eat an entire fat duck with just the two of them, filling his stomach with duck grease.

"Sorry, sweetheart, your mom really wants to return to see you too. But the case was just too urgent. I hear that several lives have already been lost. It can't wait."

Lu Yang viciously tore into a duck leg and said, "Don't call your son sweetheart here in Taiwan. That's just too disgusting!"

*Besides, when are the cases ever not urgent? They're always urgent. If Mom doesn't have an urgent case, then Dad does. When will we ever be able to have a meal together as a whole family?*

"Yes, my baby boy," Liu Yishi said to express that he knew his error and would change.

*You're doing it on purpose!* Lu Yang rolled his eyes at his dad, but his mood had unexpectedly grown lighter. He nagged, "Hurry and eat the roasted duck. It won't taste as good once it grows cold."

Liu Yishi nodded. After eating several slices of roasted duck, he praised his son in his heart for choosing such a good restaurant. It had been a long time since he had such a good meal. For years on end, the married couple had been out solving stacks of cases that had piled up

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as tall as a mountain. Often, they didn't even have time to eat a hot meal.

Halfway through the meal, he slowly said, "That husband and wife who went by the name Jiang must be Jiang Shang and Yang Jiayin. Your mom and I knew them."

Lu Yang's chopsticks stilled in the air, but this news was not surprising. Given that they were practitioners that even his grandpa had heard of, they must have been somewhat famous. He asked in return, "You close?"

"Not very." Liu Yishi honestly said, "That couple kept to themselves. At the time, I didn't know why. After all, we met at several cases, and we always had a good time chatting then. Besides, we were both married couples, which is rare among our field. So, we wanted to further our cooperation and exchange of information, but they held back. I originally thought that Jiang Shang was just overly cautious, but now that I've heard about things from you, I finally understand what was going on."

Lu Yang's voice was nearly silent as he whispered, "The truth-see—" "No!" Liu Yishi's face darkened and he said, "Never let those words pass through your lips. You must also tell Jiang Ziya this: any and all possibility of his power getting revealed must be completely eradicated."

Lu Yang shuddered but nodded right away and then asked, "Then, should I not take Ziya with me on missions?"

"No, take him with you." Liu Yishi instructed in detail, "Your grandpa is right. Jiang Ziya needs to understand this world better. Besides, there are plenty of people who can see through demons and familiars, especially practitioners. As long as he is also a practitioner, that can explain why strange things happen around him. Then, other people would not grow suspicious as easily. After all, practitioners have all sorts of abilities and tools. You see, Jiang Shang and his wife had also clearly declared themselves as practitioners to conceal their innate abilities."

Lu Yang nodded to show his understanding.

Liu Yishi asked, "I wonder if the ability came from Jiang Shang or Yang Jiayin?"

"Seems to be the mother."

Liu Yishi nodded. However, his encounters with these two people flashed across his mind. *Jiang Shang didn't seem to be any more ordinary than Yang Jiayin...*

"Dad?"

Liu Yishi snapped out of it. Seeing that his son was looking at him in confusion, he smiled and said, "Let me see your Slay."

Lu Yang blinked, suddenly feeling a bit guilty, but he still complied and summoned Slay.

The moment he saw Slay, Liu Yishi flinched in shock.

It was actually so distinct, practically like a real sword, just that it was surrounded by faint fog.

Lu Yang himself knew that Slay wasn't in good condition... Well, "good" was the wrong way to put it, as he should say Slay was in "super good" condition, but it was excessively good, so much that he was alarmed!

Uneasy, he said, "Ever since Ziya looked at Slay, Slay's shape has become clearer and clearer. It's become more and more shocking the more time passes. When Gramps saw it, his complexion was terrible too. I asked him what was going on, and he only told me the three words, 'It was destined.' I really don't understand, but Dad, you know how Gramps can't reveal too much."

"It was destined?" Liu Yishi's face darkened.

*Does it mean it's bad?* Lu Yang thought of how his grandpa and his dad both had terrible expressions. *Neither reaction seems good.*

Liu Yishi thought about it for a long while before he finally said, "You have an innate familiar spirit. This is quite rare. It's probably only second to Classmate Jiang's power."

Lu Yang nodded. He had known. Had he been born to a normal family and not Qing Wei Gong, he would probably have been kidnapped by

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some practitioner a long time ago. Luckily, these powers were usually hereditary, or else kidnapping cases would occur a lot more than they did already.

Liu Yishi frowned and said, "You two both have rare abilities, yet you met and drifted together. I'm afraid that the result will either be great fortune or great misfortune."

Hearing that, Lu Yang's head began to hurt. He would rather they ended up in the middle. He didn't want to gamble on it turning out to be great fortune or great misfortune. Unfortunately, there was never a choice with these matters.

Liu Yishi seriously said, "Xiao Yang, what if I told you to stop hanging out with him?"

Getting asked such a question, Lu Yang froze. *Stop hanging out with Ziya?*

He frowned in consideration. Truthfully speaking, he and Jiang Ziya were classmates who had only gotten to know each other in high school. They were merely second years in college right now and had only known each other for no more than five years. Of course, their friendship was strong, but now that they were faced with great fortune or great misfortune that could endanger their lives, wasn't this question actually asking if he would be willing to give his life for Jiang Ziya?

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At this time, Lu Yang recalled what had happened already and abruptly felt that he was being stupid. He had already made such a decision! All the recent things that had happened had been out of his depth. If it weren't for other people butting in to help, he'd have kicked the bucket. And only now was he wondering if he would be willing to give his life for Ziya? He was being too stupid.

Lu Yang scratched his face and calmly said, "I don't want to tell Ziya that I'm not going to be his friend anymore. Is there no other way?"

Liu Yishi blinked his green eyes and admitted, "There is. Don't listen to me. I was just asking."

*"..." What should I do? I suddenly have the urge to beat my dad up?*

Liu Yishi admitted, "If staying together means you will meet great fortune or great misfortune, then staying apart might mean going down the paths of great misfortune or great fortune. What difference does choosing make?"

Lu Yang frowned. *Were Ziya and I destined to meet? It feels so disturbing, as if it were arranged. I hate this feeling.*

"Can you explain it a bit more?"

"Of course, I'm not your grandpa, but since I'm not him, my words won't necessarily be accurate. I'm just making a guess based on my experiences. You must make your judgments based on your own situation."

Lu Yang nodded. Gramps saw too clearly, which meant he could not easily reveal what he knew, or else he himself would be pulled into the fray, and he would cause things to change. Even if originally the options were great fortune or great misfortune, once the situation spun out of control, with alterations added, only one option might be left. Moreover, what one feared was what would come true—more often than not, the result left would be great misfortune.

“You have Slay, and you have martial talent. If not for barrier dimensions, there would be few practitioners who could be your equal. Moreover, Jiang Ziya has helped strengthen your Slay. He himself is an expert at dismantling barrier dimensions. If the two of you partner up, you would have no weaknesses.”

Liu Yishi gave his own conjectures, “This is most likely what your grandpa meant by ‘it was destined.’”

Lu Yang nodded. *This should indeed be the case.* “Then by great fortune and great misfortune, it should mean whether I can protect him, so both of us will survive, or whether we’ll die together, right?”

“I don’t know, son. I really don’t know.”

Liu Yishi looked at his son yet was unwilling to say more.

*A destined meeting between the truth-seeing eye and an innate familiar spirit—is this only for the sake of surviving or perishing together?*



*There must be something even larger than that, an even heavier burden, an ordeal with unknown results still awaiting these two young men.*

"Following this, your mom and I will try our best to take turns staying in Taiwan, at least one of us."

Liu Yishi could not bear letting his son face this unknown "destiny." Even though Gramps was at home, Master Ah Lu had too many restrictions. There was little he could help with.

However, he didn't dare say too much either. His wife had always been more accepting of unpleasant matters. She might even respond with, "If it's destined to be, then we're probably useless anyway." Or she might say something along the lines of, "Who knows when something will happen? Do you plan on guarding our son his entire life?"

Hearing that, Lu Yang tried his best to keep his giddiness under control. He casually said, "Fine, besides, a bunch of cases have accumulated over here with Gramps. I can't finish dealing with them all. It's perfect if you two will be back to help."

"Taiwan has plenty of practitioners. How have so many cases piled up?"

Lu Yang shrugged and said, "No one wants to accept jobs that require a lot yet pay very little. Even though Qing Wei Gong's fees aren't all

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that cheap, if you want to hire a practitioner on the same level as us, then the fees would probably be at the very least five times our price.”

“Five times?” Liu Yishi was greatly shocked. “Five times your price, or five times your grandpa’s price?”

Lu Yang laughed. His parents had really been away for too long. “Of course, it’s five times Gramps’s price. Dad, don’t you know that I’m even more in demand than Gramps now? It’s because I’m quite a deal for what I ask, and people who know me can use their cell phone to commission me for a job!”

Liu Yishi nodded and said, “You’re still young. Work hard at it and accept more jobs. See if you can lower the price. This price is simply too outrageous. How can normal people afford this? We’re not in this business for the sake of becoming rich. It’s wrong to think that way.”

Lu Yang snapped, “I still need to go to school! I’m so busy at night that I don’t have time to complete my assignments. Even if I want to complete them, I haven’t cracked open my textbooks at all, so there’s a bunch I can’t complete! Recently, I’ve only passed all my exams with the bare minimum score required thanks to Ziya organizing the main points for me to cram. If I take on any more jobs, I’d have to kiss my diploma goodbye!”

Liu Yishi had no response to that, although he did feel that a foreign language diploma gained no advantages for the successor of Qing Wei Gong, unless Lu Yang wanted to go overseas to expand their reach.

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However, most likely because of how often he flew around overseas when he was young, Lu Yang grew up hating traveling abroad. After entering college, he no longer traveled outside the country and was determined to remain in Taiwan for university. The married couple could only leave him in his grandparents' care. Even though they missed their son at times, their son liked to go to school, which shouldn't be a bad thing, right?

"But sometimes, your Slay is truly very useful..."

Lu Yang rolled his eyes at his father. *Slay is more useful than your son. I'm going to grow jealous of a sword at this rate!*

At this time, a notification sounded from Lu Yang's cell phone. When he heard it, he immediately knew it was from Jiang Ziya, and he lowered his head right away to look at his cell phone.

Liu Yishi was not surprised. He went ahead and ate his duck bone porridge. His son had been a serious cell phone addict since a while back, but he and his wife were the cause of that. Back when they were abroad, they had just given their child a cell phone and had him wait for them in all sorts of places—hotels, restaurants, playgrounds, and the like.

*It's a miracle my son hasn't grown astray!* Liu Yishi felt that he had probably done everything by the book for raising a son—everything he was cautioned not to do. For his son to still grow up so proper, he really had to thank his ancestors... However, even if he did grow

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astray, his grandma and grandpa would've most likely hammered him straight, so there was never a possibility for him to grow astray.

**Grand Duke Jiang is Fishing: The club says that they're going to explore school legends in the middle of the night on Thursday. Since it's on campus, I said I'd go. It should be fine, right?**

Lu Yang lifted an eyebrow. *Not bad. He knows how to text now.*

**Slay Teeth Debris: Your home is much more dangerous than the school.**

**Grand Duke Jiang is Fishing: Shut up! So, do you want to come with?**

**Slay Teeth Debris: Of course. Sign me up.**

**Grand Duke Jiang is Fishing: OK.**

Seeing a sticker that was shouting "I'll wait for you" made Lu Yang smile. *He's a pretty fast learner.* Caught in the moment, he switched the camera to selfie mode and pulled his dad, who was eating his porridge, over to take a selfie. Then, he immediately texted it over.

Grand Duke Jiang is Fishing: That has to be your older brother, right? You're twins!



Liu Yishi grinned.

"I like this kid."

Jiang Ziya looked at the father and son photo, wondering why the mom was not in it, but then he recalled how Lu Yang mentioned that they might not both return. It looked like his mom flaked on them this time. He couldn't help but feel sorry for Lu Yang, but since Lu Yang was still in the mood to play around with selfies, then it probably wasn't that big of a deal.

Jiang Ziya put away his cell phone, opened the door, and casually said, "I'm home."

"Welcome back."

Jiang Qibing was the only one in the living room. He lifted his head to take measure of Jiang Ziya and said, "You're so early today. Weren't you supposed to be at the bookstore?"

"I spoke with the boss. I'll only be working there on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in the future. I'll be helping Lu Yang on all the other days."

Upon hearing that, Jiang Qibing frowned.

Jiang Ziya hurriedly said, "But I wasn't helping him today. I was just attending club activities."

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Jiang Qibing nodded and said, "That's what you should be doing. A college student should enjoy college life. What club did you sign up for?"

"The Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society," Jiang Ziya forced himself to answer.

When he heard the name of the club, Jiang Qibing looked at his brother-in-law and didn't know what he should say.

"I thought it was a films studies society and went to watch a scary movie..."

Jiang Ziya told him what had happened in detail.

Jiang Qibing chuckled. This sister and brother pair was so silly he really didn't know where to start with them. He said in a relaxed manner, "From what you're telling me, I don't think it will be too big of a problem. It should mostly just be students playing around. Since you're joining the club, you can even keep an eye on them and make sure they don't overdo it."

"Lu Yang also joined," Jiang Ziya deliberately mentioned.

"Then, there's even less of a problem." Jiang Qibing still found it hard to believe when he said, "I never thought that Lu Yang would be the practitioner going by the name of 'Slay.' He's very famous, and his fees are fair. It's just that if you don't have a way in, he is unable to be contacted. I hear that Slay is picky about jobs, frequently taking on

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fewer than ten a month, and most are located only within the city. He's quite unwilling to venture far."

"He just needs to go to school."

Lu Yang was a good student who obediently attended school. He just really had no way to complete his assignments. If he spent more time on his assignments, he wouldn't have time to sleep.

"I know." Jiang Qibing smiled wryly. "I never thought it would be because of school."

"Besides, he takes more than ten jobs a month. Some of them are pro bono, and some are cases from the police. I don't think those have been publicized. That's why he's so busy that he can't even complete his assignments."

Jiang Ziya thought of how Lu Yang would often come and laze around Jiu Ge Bookstore without leaving. He had probably been exhausted, lazing around there to rest, and finally leaving unwillingly. *Most of those times must have been to "subdue demons," I bet?*

"I see." Jiang Qibing nodded as he said, "He has it tough. This profession is not easy, and there's a lot..." He sighed and continued, "that a child should not have to know. I hear that Slay has been taking on cases for many years already."

"Yeah, he said that by the time he was ten, he was already killing demons with a casual flick of his hand." Jiang Ziya offhandedly tossed

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his backpack on the sofa and sat down. He asked, "Have they gone to sleep?"

"Yes, your sister headed in just now to coax Jiang Jiang... to coax both girls to sleep." Jiang Qibing stilled for a moment and changed what he was about to say.

The two of them glanced at each other but did not say anything.

At the present, Jiang Qibing had already learned of Xiao Xue's true identity. Before, Xiao Xue had disappeared for a period of time before being brought back by Jiang Yu again. This discrepancy was too big to keep under wraps. Therefore, after Jiang Ziya consulted Lu Yang, he decided to explain it to his brother-in-law once and for all. However, the two of them hadn't discussed it with Jiang Yu. Every time they brought it up with her, she seemed like she didn't understand what they were saying and only treated Xiao Xue as her own daughter.

This situation worried both of them. Jiang Yu had forgotten so completely. Was that good or bad?

The neighbor across from them claimed that that was how things should be.

***If not for one of you having that eye, and the other working at a demon-busting job, then originally both of you should have followed suit and forgotten. Who knows, maybe one day, Xiao Xue would become a truth! After all, a truth appeared among***



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***you out of the blue. It wouldn't be strange if another one appeared some day.***

Of course, she had only said that to Jiang Ziya. Jiang Qibing did not know that there was something wrong with Jiang Jiang too.

On his end, Lu Yang had returned home and asked Master Ah Lu, who only said, "Not a big deal."

This answer made both Jiang Ziya and Jiang Qibing sweat. If having a doll become a daughter wasn't a big deal, then for Master Ah Lu, just what needed to happen for it to be considered a big deal?

At this time, a notification sounded. Jiang Ziya could now tell that it was a notification from his own cell phone.

"Huh?"

Jiang Ziya looked at the notification on his cell phone, speechless.

**Detective Exorcist wishes to add you as a friend.**

*...Can someone come and tell me that this is definitely not Lu Yang's dad?*

## Chapter 2: Practitioner Part 1—The First Mission

“Gēge, good morning!”

“Yaya-gēge, morning!”

Jiang Ziya lazily walked to the living room and got attacked by two girls’ morning greetings.

“Morning, Jiang Jiang, Xiao Xue.”

Jiang Yu blinked and glanced in puzzlement at the clock on the wall. It was currently only seven. She hadn’t thought she would see her brother up so early. She asked in curiosity, “Why are you up so early? Don’t you have afternoon classes today? Even your brother-in-law is still sleeping.”

“I’m heading out with Lu Yang.” Jiang Ziya yawned widely. Yesterday, just as he was about to sleep, he received a call from Lu Yang to check up on him. He had hesitantly told him that he had a morning mission and asked if Jiang Ziya wanted to go.

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Of course, Jiang Ziya immediately answered in the affirmative. In fact, he was afraid he'd get ditched!

Jiang Yu nodded and didn't ask anything more. After all, the boys were probably going to play some kind of sport.

"I'll get some breakfast together for you."

"Help prepare breakfast for Lu Yang too and put it in a paper bag. I'll bring it and eat with him."

"Okay, help me look after the girls for a bit." Jiang Yu was immediately so excited that she almost rubbed her hands together. Two grown boys could eat quite a lot for breakfast. As a professional housewife, she was going to show off her skill!

Jiang Ziya wasn't surprised over how happy his sister was. She had always liked to cook. Although her skills weren't on the level of their neighbor, House Keeper's, normal people shouldn't entertain the thought of competing with someone who wasn't human.

"Yaya-gēge." Xiao Xue happily pulled on Jiang Ziya.

Right away, Jiang Ziya deliberately sat down on the sofa and lifted Xiao Xue onto his lap. He began to feed her breakfast. On the other end, Jiang Jiang was not jealous and was doing her best to use her little spoon to eat breakfast. If anyone tried to feed her, she would actually be unhappy about it!

Xiao Xue whispered, “Yaya-gēge, are you and Lu Yang-gēge going out to do *that*?”

Jiang Ziya felt that her phrasing was a little strange, but he wasn’t going to argue over a three-year-old child’s language. After all, they had already talked about not bringing up anything related to illusions, lies, and truths at home. Xiao Xue using “this” and “that” in substitution—was he supposed to blame a three-year-old child for having too small of a vocabulary?

“Yup.”

Xiao Xue scrunched her small eyebrows together. Worried, she said, “Then, be careful, Gēge.”

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"No worries, Lu Yang will take care of everything. I'm just there to look around."" He specifically emphasized those two words.

Xiao Xue nodded and seriously instructed, "Then, you have to hold Lu Yang-gēge's hand tightly and follow him closely."

"...That's a little hard."

Xiao Xue began pouting.

Jiang Ziya could only toss out the first part and promise, "I'll follow him closely."

Jiang Jiang, who had been quietly eating, lifted her small spoon and said, "That's how to be an obedient gēge."

Jiang Ziya felt helpless. One of them wanted to be spoiled, while the other was like a small grownup. Even though they currently looked identical, they were truly super easy to tell apart. Just by their expressions, he could determine who was who.

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A delicious aroma filled the air. Jiang Yu walked out of the kitchen, holding a large paper bag in her hands. She said, "Here, Ziya, take this."

Jiang Ziya took it. He had known that even lunch would be taken care of today. His sister always felt that grown men should eat a lot, so would stuff him like a pig. This time, there were even two pigs, so this bag of breakfast was three times the normal weight.

"Then, I'm off!"

The moment he opened the door, he was taken aback. The door across from them was also open, and in the doorway stood a person... to be more accurate, a familiar named House Keeper.

He wasn't wearing that laughingly proper outfit, rather a light-colored dress shirt and navy green jeans. He looked just like a normal person, a very handsome one. He was even holding a bag in his hand, and the delicious aroma from that bag did not lose to the bag in Jiang Ziya's hand.

The corners of House Keeper's mouth lifted slightly. "Good morning."

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*I didn't think we would meet like this.* Jiang Ziya forced himself to say, "Morning."

"I was just about to bring over some freshly baked bread and cookies to your place," House Keeper said as he took out some bread. He asked, "You have breakfast in that bag you are holding, yes? How about adding some bread to that?"

Faced with a temptation he could not turn down, Jiang Ziya could only obediently open the bag, letting House Keeper put something that looked like pie and several bread buns inside. He had a feeling that even dinner was now taken care of.

After he was done, House Keeper said with a faint smile, "There, I hope this time's quiche and cheeseburger are to your liking. Then... see you later?"

"Yeah, see you later."

Jiang Ziya felt that he couldn't dally any longer either. He was already hard pressed to make it on time to meet Lu Yang. After he gave his

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goodbye, he rushed down the stairs, but he only took a few steps before he was seized by a strange feeling.

***Thank you for accepting the invitation. We will definitely see each other again later.***

He abruptly turned his head. House Keeper was still smiling faintly. Seeing that Jiang Ziya was looking back at him, House Keeper even waved his hand in farewell, as if nothing was wrong at all. Rather, he even gave the intimate feeling of a friendly next door older brother. Even though his appearance was just as handsome as always, he no longer had the standoffish feeling like that of a magazine model.

“...” Jiang Ziya had a premonition. *This time, Yu Shu really will kill me, won't she?*



Guilty and perturbed, Jiang Ziya arrived at the promised time... half an hour late.

Even though Lu Yang was currently looking at his cell phone with his head lowered and didn't appear like he was fed up from waiting, Jiang



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Ziya still felt full of guilt. He was late on the very first day of the job.

This was too outrageous. He should be fired right away!

"Sorry, sorry! Something came up in the morning, and traffic was bad."

Lu Yang lifted his head. He wasn't very bothered. He had used the time to look over the information. "What came up? Is your family okay?"

"They're fine..." Jiang Ziya hesitated for a moment, but he still told him in detail about his encounter with House Keeper this morning. He was just too worried, yet he didn't dare ask Yu Su about it. She really would hack him to death with her sword!

Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him several times and snapped, "Haven't I told you many times not to accept invitations?"

"How would I know that even 'see you later' would be an invitation?!"

Jiang Ziya was about to go crazy. He had been so wary, yet saying a mere "see you later" had rendered all his hard work useless. *How am I supposed to guard against this? Should I just never speak again?*

Hearing that, Lu Yang frowned and said, "Even though he took advantage of the fact that you don't know much, that familiar was actually able to use a single phrase to secure an invitation with you? That's simply too powerful. Isn't he an illusory familiar? Even though he has accidentally become a lie, logically speaking, he still shouldn't be that strong."

Lu Yang didn't understand it, and he was also super worried, so he just called home to ask his dad. Since he was home for once, of course Lu Yang was going to take advantage of that!

"It's because Jiang Ziya helped him become a lie, so he can be considered half of a master. That's why it was so easy to secure an invitation. There's no need to worry too much about him. He's just an illusory familiar. If any problems actually come up, just use Slay to dispatch him. Ha..."

After saying that, Liu Yishi gave a large yawn and said, "I'm still jetlagged. I'm going to sleep."

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Lu Yang raised an eyebrow and looked at Jiang Ziya. The conversation just now had been on loudspeaker, so there was no need to repeat it.

"Can I slay him?"

"Yu Shu will kill you." Jiang Ziya felt it was best not to anger the neighbor across from him, or something even scarier than demons appearing would happen.

Lu Yang gave two hmphs and declared, "I'm not afraid of her."

"You don't live across from her!" Jiang Ziya huffed, "Besides, House Keeper has saved us before!"

If House Keeper hadn't reached out in time to grab him and Lu Yang, who had been about to fall off the building, the two of them would have become meat paste, so how would he even be able to use Slay to kill him then?

Lu Yang also felt he wasn't being honorable, but how could honor come into play with something like familiars? If one day, House Keeper actually caused casualties, whose fault would that be? He said, vexed, "Just pay more attention to him. If something goes wrong, he has to

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be dealt with. Otherwise, if he causes someone to die, you'll definitely regret it your entire life!"

Jiang Ziya nodded. He wasn't actually worried that anyone would end up dying. If House Keeper really were to kill anyone, he would start with Yu Shu, and Jiang Ziya didn't believe that she would die so easily.

Lu Yang didn't dwell on it any longer either. After all, the problem in Jiang Ziya's home was much more serious than a familiar who had become a lie. In comparison, House Keeper couldn't even be considered a problem and could even be helpful. According to his father, Jiang Ziya was half of a master to House Keeper. Even if the familiar wanted to rebel against his master, Yu Shu would be ahead of him.

"Breakfast?" Lu Yang only felt hungry after smelling the food.

Jiang Ziya handed the breakfast bag over. Lu Yang took it. After opening it, he laughed.

"Are you the reincarnation of a starved ghost?"

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"My sister is stuffing us like pigs, and House Keeper is at the side, giving her a helping hand."

"Let's eat it over the course of the day."

"That was my plan too..."

The two of them leaned against Jiang Ziya's motorbike to eat breakfast. As Lu Yang ate, he asked, "Have you looked at the information I sent you?"

"Yup."

Just thinking about the information gave Jiang Ziya goose bumps. He had thought that nothing would happen at school with Lu Yang there, yet their mission this time actually had something to do with the school. It was just two streets over at the abandoned school campus.

In fact, he had passed by the place several times before, but he had never given it much thought. He had thought it to be a construction site, yet it was actually an abandoned school campus.

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"Rumor has it that it was originally going to be a dormitory, but accidents kept happening during construction. In the end, someone even died, so the construction was stopped. This is one of our school legends."

Thankfully, Lu Yang was already on it. Otherwise, if the Supernatural Phenomena Society came to investigate it later and something happened, that would be bad.

Lu Yang shook his head and said, "I had police investigate it. Nothing like that happened. No one died during the original construction. It was purely a case of shady transactions causing the construction to stall for investigation. Later, because of fewer kids getting born, enrollment began to decline. The university already had plenty of buildings, so the plans for that campus ended up going nowhere. The rumor of something happening during construction most likely came about from the students' gossip later on."

Jiang Ziya was speechless. *So it's actually fake?*

"If that's the case, why are we here?"

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“Six homeless people have died there one after another, from illness, hunger, and the cold. One of them even died from nothing. That person’s heart simply stopped.”

Lu Yang lifted his head to look at the abandoned school campus. It appeared just like a construction site, but further observation would show the overgrown weeds within, as well as several buildings at different levels of completion.

“Because none of them were murders, and the deaths didn’t occur closely, the police didn’t have much of a reason to investigate. If not for the number of deaths accumulating, they wouldn’t have started to investigate. I know a policeman on the case. He thought that something was off, so he asked me to come take a look.”

“What did he feel was odd?” Jiang Ziya followed the rules of a newbie—ask when he didn’t know.

“A lot of stuff. For example, the person who died from the cold died in October.”

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People were more likely to die of heat than of the cold in Taiwan during October. Jiang Ziya immediately began to feel nervous. Something was wrong.

Seeing that, Lu Yang scratched his head and said, "Don't be too nervous. It might not be anything. Often, I investigate for a long time only for it to be nothing. Let's just head in and take a look first."

Jiang Ziya nodded right away.

Lu Yang took out a large ring of keys from his pocket and said, "I'm full. Let's go."

"Why do you have the keys?" Jiang Ziya was curious. *Could this be the rumored master key?*

"The university president gave it to me. Six people have died in a row at this abandoned campus. He's very nervous about it too. Even though the cases were all closed and deemed as accidents, if people keep dying, it would hit the news. The moment the police headed over, he handed over the keys."



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Lu Yang opened the old, rusty gates to the construction site and urged, "Come on in. Don't dally and draw any attention."

Jiang Ziya immediately flitted inside after him. As Lu Yang locked the gate, he took measure of their surroundings. The weeds were overgrown, so much that the road was nearly obscured. Several of the buildings were only half constructed. Only one building looked more complete, but the outside was just cement.

Lu Yang looked down at the information on his cell phone to ascertain which building it was.

"Which building do you think it is?" He turned his head to ask Jiang Ziya in curiosity. *Just how powerful is the truth-seeing eye?*

Jiang Ziya pointed at the building that was the most complete.

"... What did you see?" Lu Yang was taken aback. He had just asked out of curiosity. He hadn't thought that Jiang Ziya really would see something. *Isn't that too powerful? What need is there to investigate anymore? All he has to do is arrive at the place and take a glance!*

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Jiang Ziya rolled his eyes at him and said, "Only that building can have anything hidden inside. All the others are just steel frames. What other building could it be?"

"You're right." Lu Yang rubbed his nose. He was being too stupid.

The two of them headed toward that building.

"I feel like there's not much of a tense atmosphere. There are fewer odd things around here too!" Jiang Ziya scratched his head. Even though he knew that demons and familiars didn't just show up at night, the ones in the daytime still made him feel a lot less nervous.

"What odd things are there? Describe them to me."

"There are some fairies flying around in the air. There are huge flowers that look like Rafflesia flowers growing out of the vines climbing along that building's walls. A bunch of humanoid shapes are squatting in the thickest expanse of grass to our left."

Lu Yang felt that hoping Jiang Ziya could discover what was wrong was a pipe dream. None of the things that this guy saw with his eye were normal. How could he tell what was wrong? Lu Yang could only see the

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humanoid shapes squatting in the grass. He couldn't see the fairies or Rafflesia flowers or the like at all. But after Ziya mentioned them, he felt that there really was something off about those areas.

"A white, humanoid shape flitted across the window." Jiang Ziya suddenly gestured at the building and said, "Fifth floor."

"Do you think something's wrong?" Lu Yang didn't feel that a humanoid shape was anything to be alarmed about. There were even several squatting among the grass.

"His posture just now looked like he was looking at us." Jiang Ziya honestly said, "The kind of fellow that would pay attention to us is usually more troublesome."

Hearing that, Lu Yang frowned and said, "Let's go. We'll head in and take a look."

The two of them entered the building directly. It was rather empty inside, with only some random items placed by the wall. Among them, there were even blankets, hinting that the place was not short on

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homeless people who used it as their shelter. There was even a faint odor about the place.

"This odor smells like something rotten. Don't tell me there's a corpse?" Jiang Ziya's face was pinched. Even though he had seen plenty of ridiculous things, seeing an actual body would still be different, right? Even this odor made him want to retreat.

"This odor might have been left behind from earlier. Few people come here, and the bodies of those six homeless people all took a long time for anyone to discover. Besides, you think the university would spend a lot of money to thoroughly clean this place up?"

"Which floor was the body found on? Don't let me step on that floor, thanks."

Lu Yang shrugged and said, "One on every floor. The police found that strange too. It's like those people planned it that way, one floor per person. There are only eight floors to this building, yet none of the six have repeated a floor, each laying on one floor from the first to the sixth."

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"There are still two floors left?" Jiang Ziya asked warily.

"Yup, so the police hurried to have me come and take a look, afraid that the last two floors will get taken too. Ziya, help me see if there are any problems with the first floor."

Jiang Ziya walked all around the place, telling Lu Yang about everything he saw. The more Lu Yang heard, the harder he frowned. It wasn't that there wasn't anything suspicious. There were too many things that were suspicious. The building that appeared empty was filled with all sorts of spirits, and the walls were even coated with various graffiti. Jiang Ziya almost couldn't tell whether the graffiti on the walls was real or fake.

*No wonder this guy doesn't have many friends despite having such an easy-going personality. With the way things are right now, as long as he hangs out with anyone, not letting things slip is practically impossible!* Lu Yang could not help but lament.

"It doesn't sound like anything is particularly off. Let's head up," Lu Yang said helplessly.

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*I'll have to wait until Ziya knows more about these kinds of things before I can make use of his eye. He'll have to be able to tell what's off by himself.* With the second hand account, Lu Yang couldn't tell what was "particularly off."

"Okay."

After walking up to the stairs, Jiang Ziya looked at the crude staircase that didn't even have handrails. On the steps, several faces were currently moaning, their features super blurry. Only three holes were truly visible—their eye sockets and their mouth. It was a pretty disgusting sight, but it wasn't a strange one in the least bit. He pretty much saw moaning faces on all sorts of surfaces day in and day out. The most common surfaces were the ground, walls, and mirrors.

In order not to attract any attention, he often had to force himself to walk over them. As he did it again and again, he had grown used to it.

He tried taking a step. As he had expected, nothing happened. Jiang Ziya relaxed and followed behind Lu Yang as they headed up.

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The two of them had only reached the third floor when they suddenly heard a shriek from upstairs. While Jiang Ziya was still frozen, Lu Yang, who was ahead of him, had already begun rushing up. As he climbed, he summoned Slay into existence.

“Ziya, stay there!” After shouting that, he immediately climbed so far ahead that he vanished.

Jiang Ziya was rooted to the spot, anger coursing through him. He had come to help, not to be a bystander! He immediately followed suit and rushed ahead.

*Fourth floor, fifth floor, sixth floor...*

Jiang Ziya could only run after Lu Yang. This was a school building, its size enormous. He could tell that the shriek had come from above, but he couldn't tell the exact location, so he could only check every room out. Thankfully, the building only had dividing walls up between the rooms, not even windows, so running over easily revealed whether or not anyone was inside.

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On the way, Lu Yang also saw that Jiang Ziya had followed him. He hesitated for a moment before helplessly saying, "After we reach the sixth floor, I'll take the left and you take the right. Be careful. If anything happens, scream right away."

Not to be outdone, Jiang Ziya said, "If you get caught by a barrier dimension again, don't forget to scream too."

Lu Yang laughed. "Yes, yes, yes, I promise I'll scream like a girl shouting 'molester.'"

The two of them returned to the stairs in the middle. Just as they wanted to continue upward, they saw a figure running and rolling down the stairs, falling right in the middle of the staircase, huddling and shivering on the ground.

Lu Yang stood in front of Jiang Ziya. Slay was already ready by his side.

"Jian Zhi?"



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Jiang Ziya hadn't made out his face, but he had clearly made out the angel who had flown down, body and wings protecting Jian Zhi. He abruptly realized the identity of the white figure he had seen by the window.

The person on the ground stilled. He immediately lifted his head, staring at Jiang Ziya in a stupor. His entire person was dazed, as if he had been scared out of his wits.

Jiang Ziya clapped Lu Yang on the shoulder, asking him to move out of the way. Lu Yang shifted a bit, but only to the side. They walked up the stairs together.

"What happened?" Jiang Ziya knelt down to look at Jian Zhi.

Jian Zhi stuttered so much that he couldn't get a full sentence out. "T-There's... up the stairs..."

Not the least bit indecisive, Lu Yang said, "I'll head up and take a look."

Jiang Ziya made no move to stop him. If Jian Zhi could run down, Lu Yang wouldn't have any problems. *I better stand here and keep Jian*

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*Zhi company. He looks like he's about to pee his pants.* Even the angel to the side was flying around in a panic, those wings hitting Jiang Ziya in the face more than once.

In order to snap Jian Zhi out of it, Jiang Ziya didn't ask anything more about what was upstairs. Instead, he asked in curiosity, "Why are you here? This is an abandoned campus. You shouldn't be able to enter, right?"

"That's my question?" Jian Zhi shrieked, "I'm here to scout the place for our Thursday club activity!"

*Like I thought, the club almost came here to investigate?* Jiang Ziya wiped his sweat. *Fortunately, Lu Yang came here first.*

Jian Zhi asked in suspicion, "Jiang Ziya, why in the world are you here? And who was that?"

"Oh, that's my friend, the one I helped sign up with the club. We're here to..."

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Jiang Ziya couldn't think of a reason. *What logical reason is there for coming to an abandoned campus? If it was nighttime, I could say that it's a test of courage, but it's morning right now. Who would hang out at an abandoned campus first thing in the morning?*

Lu Yang's shout came from upstairs. "Ziya, come take pics with your phone. I'm calling the police."

"Okay." Lu Yang was definitely better at snapping photos with his cell phone than Ziya. This was more likely an excuse to get him upstairs.

Jiang Ziya lowered his head and asked, "You okay?"

Jian Zhi nodded right away. Following that, he said with lingering fear, "It's super scary. You best not look."

Jiang Ziya smiled but didn't answer. He headed up.

Lu Yang was standing in the great hall. He waved him over and said, "Just stand next to me. Don't come any closer."

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This warning was extraneous. Jiang Ziya didn't need to walk over to smell the frightening stink. He walked up to Lu Yang, the odor becoming even more prominent. He couldn't help but cover his nose with his hand, but even that didn't help. It was like that odor was burying into him through his pores, completely unstoppable.

Lu Yang helpfully said, "You don't have to look at the body, just look and see if there's anything odd with this room. Then you can head downstairs."

*How can you even speak?* Jiang Ziya only dared to nod, not daring to open his mouth at all. He felt that if he opened his mouth, he would probably puke.

He hurriedly swept his gaze across the room, afraid to look at the body against the wall for too long. Then, he hurried downstairs.

After that, Lu Yang slowly followed him down.

"The police will arrive soon. We'll probably need to go and give our statements. Don't worry. This policeman is an older guy that I know."

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Jian Zhi was floored as he said, "Thank god. I was afraid the police would think that I'm the murderer!"

Lu Yang smiled as he said, "He won't, but you can leave first. If I'm the one to discover it, the old man won't give me any trouble over it. It will make things easier."

"Really?" Jian Zhi was a bit suspicious and asked, "But won't I be treated as if I'm evading the law?"

Lu Yang laughed. "Don't worry. I think that was a homeless person who probably died from hunger or sickness. There won't be punishment."

Seeing him so relaxed, Jian Zhi unconsciously began to relax, too.

"You can leave first!" Jiang Ziya patted Jian Zhi on the shoulder and said, "This classmate of mine knows several policemen. Just leave it to him."

*Besides, your angel has been flying around nervously, wings hitting me in the face nonstop. I almost can't pretend that I haven't noticed.*

Jian Zhi had never encountered something like this before. He was so confused he didn't know what to do. Even though he felt it was strange that these two people had appeared here, when he heard that he could leave and didn't have to speak with the police, he only felt relieved. He hurriedly nodded his head in agreement, his feet so wobbly that it took several tries before he could get up. Then, he hurried down the stairs.

In regards to having someone flee the scene, Lu Yang was very used to it. After he counted to ten to himself, he turned and asked, "Was there anything odd with the place?"

Jiang Ziya nodded and said, "There was a large sigil on the wall. Did you see it?"

He had observed it in detail, feeling like it wasn't something that normal people could see. The bloody, circular design didn't look like graffiti, more like a cursed image that appeared in horror movies. He just didn't know if Lu Yang could see it. After several floors of investigations, Jiang Ziya had begun to be able to tell what Lu Yang couldn't see.

Lu Yang frowned, muttered, "Wait for me," and rushed up the stairs. Then, he immediately rushed down, his complexion terrible, giving Jiang Ziya a large fright.

"Hm, if you didn't mention it, I wouldn't have seen it. There are signs that the wall was been painted over. It wasn't a bad job at obfuscation."

Jiang Ziya was confused as he asked, "What does this mean? Have we come across a murder case?"

*My first mission, and it's a serial murder case. Isn't this too much of a thrill?*

"It's a murder case for sure." Lu Yang gave a cold laugh and said, "Murder cases committed by practitioners are mostly for 'performance assessments,' so they specifically pick homeless people and deliberately leave the bodies to see if they'd get discovered. Going by this situation, I'm guessing that if all eight floors get a body and no one discovers him, he would pass his test."

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Jiang Ziya felt that his complexion must be terrible. *Eight lives just for the sake of a performance assessment? Just what kind of sick and lawless situation is this?*

"I shouldn't have chosen this mission or gotten you involved." Lu Yang said, vexed, "I originally thought that this building just had an illusion wreaking havoc with it. It looks like my judgment was too poor."

Jiang Ziya hurriedly said, "We've already started investigating. You can't tell me to scram now. If I weren't here, you wouldn't have discovered anything strange about the wall!"

Lu Yang shook his head and said, "Even I shouldn't have gotten involved with this case. Gramps doesn't want me to interfere with conflicts between practitioners before I have enough experience. Don't tell me that after that thing with the Zhang family, you still want to take on other practitioners?"

At that, Jiang Ziya fell silent. He didn't even want to fight with illusions, let alone people. But if Lu Yang had to face these kinds of enemies, he wouldn't choose to turn and leave.



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Seeing Jiang Ziya's expression, Lu Yang sighed. "I'll tell Gramps about this later. We'll keep an eye out on the situation. Whenever I meet a practitioner, I always head home to report it first. Gramps will assess their skill and see if I should be given the responsibility. But you should be prepared. Eight to nine cases out of ten that involve practitioners all end up in Gramps's hands. Even if he doesn't take over, he might not allow me to take you with me. Your situation is too unique."

"I understand," Jiang Ziya said with a nod.

Lu Yang was rather surprised. He had thought that Jiang Ziya would insist on carrying out the mission with him.

"I'm here to help, not to make things hard for you." Jiang Ziya felt that he was truly a great burden. Even though his eye seemed useful, he was more trouble than he was worth.

Lu Yang raised an eyebrow. Just as he was about to say that this was a special case, he heard noises from downstairs. He shut his mouth in time.

"Xiao Yang, where are you?"

When Lu Yang heard that voice, he hurriedly shouted, "Hu-gē, I'm on the seventh floor."

A tall man merely took a few large steps to traverse an entire section of stairs as he rushed up. Behind him, tall, slim man could be seen nervously rushing up as well.

"You sure were fast, Hu-gē." Lu Yang greeted the tall man familiarly.

Hu Lican hadn't expected to see anyone else aside from Lu Yang.

Stumped, he looked at Jiang Ziya and asked in curiosity, "Who's this?"

"I guess my assistant. And who's that behind you?"

At first, Lu Yang had wanted to say his teammate, but it would be terrible if Jiang Ziya was misjudged as being able to take on missions by himself. At times because of being unable to solve cases with demons and familiars, these people would be persistent to the point of interceding him in front of Qing Wei Gong's exit, preventing him from going to class. Even though Hu-gē wouldn't do that, there was no guarantee that news of Jiang Ziya wouldn't get leaked.

"My partner. He's called Fang Da. I brought him here to meet you. In the future, if I'm too busy to pick up the phone, you can call him, too."

Hu Lican took measure of Jiang Ziya with a curious eye. The latter followed the principle of not speaking, snapping his mouth shut after he said "hello."

"Call him?" Lu Yang gave a snort. "I bet he'll be the one calling me. Weren't you the one who asked me to come here? Or else why would I be calling you? I said it before. I won't come in contact with anyone else. Are you going back on your word?"

Hu Lican quickly explained, "Fang Da has partnered with me for two years already. There won't be any problems."

Lu Yang snorted but didn't persist on that point. He was just reminding him not to bring any more people.

At this time, Fang Da nervously asked, "Hu-gē, is this smell..."

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Hu Lican nodded and told Lu Yang, "I'll take Fang Da up to take a look. Then, I'll come back and speak with you."

Lu Yang nodded.

Watching them head up, Jiang Ziya only then asked in curiosity, "Are they police?"

He could believe Fang Da was, but that guy called Hu-gē had a face full of stubble, and his attire was even more unkempt than Ziya's. Instead of a policeman, it would be more appropriate to call him a street hooligan.

"Plainclothes police." Lu Yang answered, "But I only know Hu-gē. He's called Hu Lican. He leads a small team. You can call him Hu-gē too, but never come in contact with them on your own. As long as I'm not present, don't respond to them, and never ever get roped into a case."

Jiang Ziya quickly nodded to promise him.

Soon after, Hu Lican and Fang Da came down.

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Hu Lican said in worry, "It doesn't look like there's anything wrong again. There are no signs of a beating. This is likely to be the same as before, the cause being hunger or the heart stopping. What's strange is that the condition of the body indicates that the death should have occurred at least three days ago, but police came to patrol three days ago, and they didn't find anything."

"It should be the work of a practitioner," Lu Yang said with a dark face.

Hu Lican roared, "A human did it?"

As they spoke, Jiang Ziya listened quietly. At the same time, he paid attention to Fang Da, who looked nervous and afraid of butting in. Fang Da was just like himself, probably because they were both newbies. Besides, Fang Da looked young, so he probably wasn't even that much older than him.

Jiang Ziya smiled at him. Fang Da stilled before he returned the smile, looking rather approachable, not at all like a cop, more like a businessman. It wouldn't be strange even if he were a teacher or had some other sort of profession along those lines.

“Ziya.”

“Huh?” Jiang Ziya snapped out of it and looked toward Lu Yang.

“Can you draw what the sigil looks like? After you finish drawing it, you can go. Leave the rest to Hu-gē.”

“Okay, then I’ll go look at it to draw it. The design is a bit complicated.”

Lu Yang shot him a worried look. Jiang Ziya took out a pen and paper, sucked in a deep breath, and rushed up the stairs, bearing with the smell. He focused on looking at the sigil on the wall. At this time, Lu Yang also walked over to stand quietly behind him.

Perhaps it was because there was something to keep him occupied, but Jiang Ziya began feeling that it didn’t smell as much. As he focused on drawing for a while, he caught something moving out of the corner of his eye. He glanced over in suspicion.

The corpse was currently wiggling, using hands speckled with green spots to brush along the ground. The legs also began twitching, and then the knees actually popped up, looking like someone trying to

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stand up. However, the corpse was severely rotten, so the actions were extremely sluggish and jerky, green and black liquid oozing down the sides as it moved.

Jiang Ziya was stunned. He tried to call out to the person behind him.

“Lu Yang?”

No sound came from behind. He abruptly jerked his head to look.

There was no one there. It was like he was the only one on the entire floor.

“Lu Yang!” Jiang Ziya shouted, but he didn’t receive any response.

*Is this a barrier dimension? When did I enter it? Where are Lu Yang and the others?*

He hurriedly stuck the notebook under his arms and turned around to run. But when he reached the stairs, he discovered that it had already turned into a dark, bottomless cliff...

## Chapter 2: Practitioner Part 2—I'll Help You See

*This isn't real. This isn't real...*

Jiang Ziya took several deep breaths and finally discovered what was wrong. *What happened to the stench that's so terrible that I was scared to even open my mouth? Even if I'm more used to it, I can't possibly take several deep breaths here, right?*

"This isn't real."

Jiang Ziya walked back and continued drawing the picture that was on the wall. The corpse actually stood up. First, it wandered all around the room it was in. Then, it even walked out of the room, circling around Jiang Ziya. However, there was no change in the smell. The closest the corpse got to him was twenty or so centimeters, and it looked like it was taking measure of Jiang Ziya.

After that, a strange, dragging sound came from behind him. Jiang Ziya froze. When he turned his head to look, an arm stretched out from the entrance of the dark staircase. Two rotting corpses crawled out and then stood up with the same stiff posture, slowly rocking back and forth while ambling to Jiang Ziya's side.

Jiang Ziya sucked in a deep breath, reminding himself that "no stench meant it wasn't real," and then he stopped paying any attention to those three walking corpses. He earnestly continued drawing.

After he finally finished drawing the picture, Jiang Ziya closed the notebook and turned around, preparing to head downstairs. Suddenly,



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from behind him came hurried footsteps. He jerked his head back and saw that one of the corpses had rushed forward. *What kind of rotting corpse has that kind of speed? You might as well call it a sprinter!*

With the opponent's attack came a strong wave of unease. Jiang Ziya felt that if he didn't run, he would truly get killed. He hurried toward the stairs not caring that it was dark. He rushed right down them.

The moment he stepped into the darkness, light burst before his eyes. Lu Yang and the other two people were still standing in the staircase. When they saw him, Lu Yang smiled and said, "Done drawing? Then, let's go."

Jiang Ziya's feet came to a stop. He halted a few steps down and looked at the three of them.

"Why aren't you coming down? It's time to go?" Lu Yang asked in confusion.

Jiang Ziya opened his mouth, no mirth in his tone at all as he said, "I don't believe that Lu Yang would have me stand and draw all by myself in a place where there's a corpse! What the hell are you?"

Lu Yang's mouth pulled into a wide smile, wider and wider, until his mouth pulled right apart, all the way to his ears. Blood dripped down his cheeks, and through the gaping chasm that was his mouth, white teeth could be seen...

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Jiang Ziya's face darkened. Even though this wasn't all that scary compared to all he had seen before, this time, it was a very familiar face, making him feel that it was a bad omen. Looking at it made his heart tremble with anxiety. He felt like Lu Yang might truly be in danger... *Blarghhhh!!*

He roared, "You're nothing! Don't you go around pretending to be anything!"

Sunlight suddenly streamed through the empty windows, shining on the humanoid figure, which immediately disintegrated into dust.

In an instant, all three of them vanished until no one was left. Jiang Ziya wasn't surprised. He had known it wasn't real. He frowned. The question now was, where had Lu Yang gone? Were the two policemen who had arrived earlier real or fake? When had they fallen into a barrier dimension?

"Jiang Ziya! Ziya?"

At this time, hurried footsteps came from upstairs, accompanied by Lu Yang's voice.

Jiang Ziya turned around. He watched as Lu Yang, Hu Lican, and Fang Da rushed down from the floor above. Only then did he say in shock, "So you were actually upstairs?"

Lu Yang said anxiously, "I followed behind you to go upstairs, but the moment we stepped foot onto the seventh floor, you disappeared!

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When I turned my head to look downstairs, even the stairs were gone. No matter how I searched, I couldn't find the exit!

"Then, these two guys came to crash the party!" Lu Yang glared at the two policemen.

*He was searching around on the seventh floor?* Jiang Ziya looked at the three of them. Then, he thought about the corpse that had crawled up and walked around him, followed by the two corpses that joined it later on. *Don't tell me that was the three of them?*

"I was also on the seventh floor earlier. I saw three corpses walking around. Was that you guys?"

Hearing that, Lu Yang stiffened and asked, "Did you stand there without moving?"

Jiang Ziya nodded and said, "Yeah, I was drawing the sigil that was on the wall."

To the side, the two policemen said in disbelief, "How can you still draw under those circumstances?"

Jiang Ziya didn't know how to explain it. There were always strange things happening around him. Just now when Jian Zhi had been there, an angel had kept hitting him in the face with wings!

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Lu Yang's expression turned extremely ugly. He coldly said, "I'm not going to class today. I'm going to head back to Qing Wei Gong. Ziya, help me take leave."

Jiang Ziya was taken aback. *How rare, this eternally obedient student actually wants to skip class.* "Okay."

"Can we still have the investigation team come over here?" Hu Lican was still wary of the paranormal phenomenon from just now. Even though it wasn't the first time he had run into something like this, and it was how he had gotten to know Lu Yang, this kind of shit was something he could never get used to. The newbie Fang Da was even shivering to the point that his teeth were clattering!

Lu Yang said impatiently, "No problem, as long as there're lots of people. If that practitioner can ensnare an entire team of police, then you don't have to seek me out anymore. Seal the case and call it closed. Better that than to have more lives lost."

Hu Lican rubbed his nose. He could tell that this brat was furious, so he didn't make a fuss over it. He just said, "Roger."

"We'll be leaving now." Lu Yang pulled Jiang Ziya, wanting to leave. He was choking with anger because of this first mission. He must be a moron to have chosen this mission for Jiang Ziya to join him on.

After walking halfway, Lu Yang couldn't help but turn his head in worry and warn them, "Hu-gē, you guys should follow me out right away. Don't wait here. When your people come here, make sure none of

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them end up by themselves. Don't have any of the police patrol at night. Let me keep an eye on things here."

"Can we patrol outside?" Hu Lican said helplessly, "There have already been six deaths before this. Reporters have already been eying this place. Now that there's a seventh victim, I don't think we can keep it under wraps anymore. If we don't patrol, I bet someone will sneak in. If you meet any reporters, I doubt you can do anything about them, right? I'm afraid that the eighth floor will also get its share then."

Lu Yang frowned. He really couldn't do anything about them. He could only say, "You can patrol outside, but don't stay stationed anywhere."

"Got it!"

After that, Lu Yang pulled Jiang Ziya to leave.

He was dragged all the way out of the building. Only then did Jiang Ziya ask in confusion, "What's wrong? Why are you so angry? Don't you get caught in barrier dimensions a lot? You even called me in amusement last time. You weren't angry then."

Lu Yang was silent for a while before he said, "Earlier, I couldn't find my way out, and I couldn't find any clues either. There was only the corpse that stood in the center of the room without moving. At first, I was afraid to approach it, afraid that it was a trap, but since I couldn't find the exit, and I didn't know your situation, I grew worried. When I saw that corpse start to move, looking like it wanted to go downstairs, I rushed after it with Slay..."

"So you were the one who chased me?" Jiang Ziya said in amusement, "Good thing I ran fast. If you had stabbed me, I would never let you hear the end of it."

"You're still laughing?" Lu Yang snapped, "I almost stabbed you for real!"

Seeing that Lu Yang had truly grown furious, Jiang Ziya no longer dared to laugh, afraid that the next thing out of his mouth would be, "you best not follow me in the future after all." Then, he could only listen to Lu Yang get stuck in another barrier dimension again with nothing he could do to help. One day, he really might be unable to get out.

Jiang Ziya asked, puzzled, "Ah Yang, but can Slay really injure me? I often bump into all sorts of illusory familiars and don't feel anything at all. I'd walk straight through them. Would your Slay actually kill me?"

Just like that angel's wings. Even though it kept hitting him in the face, Jiang Ziya actually didn't feel anything from it. He just felt a bit odd.

Lu Yang shook his head as he said, "No, at most, you'd be sick for a while. My Slay doesn't cause any true damage to real people."

*So it really can't?* Jiang Ziya rubbed his nose. He had truly felt his life to be in danger at the time. It looked like it was just his misperception. "Then, why are you so nervous? Even if you really stabbed me, all you'd have to do is get the day off for me."

Hearing that, Lu Yang frowned. Slay was appearing more and more like a real sword lately. Truthfully, he was no longer certain whether or not Slay was still harmless to humans. He hadn't tried. It looked like when he went home, he should try it on his dad—it wasn't that he was unfilial. Slay really couldn't hurt its master, so he could only use someone else as the guinea pig.

Jiang Ziya suddenly reached his hand out, catching Lu Yang off guard. Lu Yang was still stuck on why he had reached out when Jiang Ziya actually closed his hand around Slay and then gave an "ah," pulling his hand back right away.

Lu Yang's eyes widened. He couldn't respond immediately. Only when he saw blood drip down between Jiang Ziya's fingers did he grab his hand right then. He held Jiang Ziya's palm up to see. The blood all over the hand rendered him speechless for a long time.

Jiang Ziya said wryly, "You sure Slay really can't kill me? I feel like it's sharper than the kitchen knife at home. I only touched it gently."

"It shouldn't be like this!"

Lu Yang panicked. He had never thought that Slay becoming more real would have this kind of side effect. It was sharp enough to kill someone! Although it wasn't like he hadn't slashed any practitioners with Slay before, it had never caused any physical harm to them. More than slashing someone, it was more like he was cutting off the opponent's power. At most, they would feel weak for a period of time.

With one hand, Jiang Ziya found the keys in his backpack with difficulty. He tossed them to Lu Yang and said, "Drive me over to the school's infirmary."

Lu Yang could only nod. He put Slay away and swung his leg over the motorbike. He looked in vexation as Jiang Ziya wadded up a pile of napkins to stop the blood. "Don't be so stupid next time. If you used any more strength, your fingers might've gotten sliced right off."

Jiang Ziya rubbed his nose. He couldn't help explaining, "You're the one who said Slay can't hurt me. So I just wanted to test it out."

Lu Yang was also angry at himself for answering before he had figured things out. He angrily revved the engine and the motorbike zoomed forward.

"If you're giving it a try, can't you do it more gently? Why'd you use your entire hand?!"

Jiang Ziya could tell that Lu Yang was pissed. He didn't want to keep arguing over it, so he just admitted his wrong and apologized, "Fine, I was too careless. I'm a space cadet. It's not like you didn't know that already."

"You see random things day in and day out. How can your head not blast into outer space? I'm thinking you should just wear an eye patch over that left eye of yours!"



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"An eye patch? Do you want everyone to gawk around me?"

"Do sunglasses work?" Lu Yang knew that eye patches weren't realistic. It was practically announcing to everyone that something was off, attracting more attention.

"Nope. Glasses don't work either. Prescription, non-prescription, I've tried them all."

Lu Yang fell silent. After seeing random things for so many years, Jiang Ziya had probably tried everything he could other than "digging his left eye out."

"Ah Yang, Slay is so strong now. You won't have to be afraid of practitioners anymore, right?"

Lu Yang was full of worries, yet Jiang Ziya happily said, "Even though you still need to take cover when there's a gun, maybe someday, Slay will even be able to block bullets? Slay looks very mighty, a true flying blade! It's like a weapon that a deity would use. Blocking bullets probably isn't anything out of the question, right?"

Hearing this, Lu Yang almost wanted to cough up blood. He said, "Please, stop making it even mightier. Doesn't your hand hurt? I almost killed you in that building just now!"

The passenger fell silent for a long while, before his voice drifted over.

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“In the future, what you can slay and what you can’t, I’ll help you see it clearly. If I say to slay it, then you can slay it. I promise you there won’t be any mistakes!”

The corner of Lu Yang’s lips quirked up.

## Chapter 2: Practitioner Part 3—The Seven Wonders

The moment he took a step into the basement of the student union, Jiang Ziya attracted everyone's attention. Actually, he hadn't originally planned on coming today. After all, he had injured his hand, so doing anything would be inconvenient. Lu Yang had also told him to go home right after class. If it weren't because the injury wasn't serious and was fine after getting bandaged, that guy would even be overbearing and pick him up!

Jiang Ziya looked around once. There weren't a lot of club members present, approximately seven or eight, but there were a few that he recognized. Lin Zhixiang, Jian Zhi, and the club president Xu Xikai were all present.

Jiang Zhi was the first to rush over. He asked frantically, "I-Is everything okay? Did the police come?"

"Don't worry." Jiang Ziya reassured him, "The police did come, but it was just to take our statements. It's fine."

Jiang Zhi let out a deep sigh of relief when he heard that.

"What happened to your hand?" Lin Zhixiang suddenly asked next to them.

Jiang Ziya scratched his face but still chose to lie. "Just me being too nervous going down the stairs, so I fell. My hand gave the cement stairs a good wipe. It's just a scratch. The floor was really dirty, so I went to the infirmary to get it disinfected and bandaged to be safe."

Although that wasn't the truth, it was indeed just a small injury. The wound was quite shallow. The injury that Slay had inflicted was really pretty weird. After he wiped away the blood, what was left was actually not a sharp cut from a sword. Rather, it looked more like a bruise caused by a rough object.

Even Lu Yang didn't know why it was like that. Still, as a result, the infirmary nurse didn't ask all that many questions, treating it as if he had stopped his fall with his hand. If it had been an injury caused by a sharp object, he wouldn't have passed inspection so easily.

Lin Zhixiang forced a smile and asked, "Don't tell me you fell because you were so scared that your legs wobbled? Jian Zhi stuttered for a long time before he managed to tell us what happened. I never thought there'd be a murder case."

Xu Xikai said guiltily, "It's my fault. I shouldn't have stood Jian Zhi up."

*What do you mean by that?* Jiang Ziya looked at him in confusion.

Jian Zhi explained, "Our president was originally going to go with me, but something came up in the morning for him, so I went by myself."

"The gate was locked, so how did you get in?" Jiang Ziya felt that he had to get this clarified and tell Policeman Hu so that he could keep an eye on it. Otherwise, the eighth floor might also gain a body, and a practitioner who willingly harmed others would pass their test.

"Well, why did you go there?" Xu Xikai asked in confusion.

"This dean that we know sent us to check it out, something about wanting to see the condition of the building so that he could decide if we needed to get a cleaning company or if sending students to clean it up was enough."

Jiang Ziya and Lu Yang had already gotten their stories straight. Even though this excuse was terrible, they couldn't come up with anything better. Besides, even if they got suspicious, they wouldn't seek the dean out to verify their story. Even if they did ask about which dean it was, Lu Yang said he would be able to find a dean to corroborate their story.

Sometimes, he really wondered whether Lu Yang's family didn't just own a temple. *Maybe they also own the school and the police station and are pretty much a chain industry.*

"I see." Jian Zhi came to a sudden realization.

Xu Xikai asked suspiciously, "That's an unused campus. Why does it need to be cleaned up?"

"Who knows, something about an inspector and wanting to be prepared in case he suddenly wanted to inspect the abandoned campus."

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Jiang Ziya shrugged as he made up a story. In any case, the school had done plenty of dumb things without even including this one. Last school term, the school hadn't finished using their subsidized funds and thus bought a bunch of fish to put in the pond. In the end, there were so many fish that the pond was overcrowded, and the fish all died belly up.

"Should we cancel Thursday's school wonders exploration altogether? With something like this happening, it feels kind of wrong to still go out and explore."

The main reason Jiang Ziya had come to the club today was to make sure the club wouldn't choose to explore the abandoned campus anymore. Even though Jian Zhi had been scared witless and would definitely not want to go, it wasn't a sure thing that the other members would know better.

Xu Xikai shook his head as he said, "Of course we can't cancel it. In any case, that location had been up for debate in the first place. The gates are locked, so we would need to crawl through a dog hole to go inside, and it's the only place the school hasn't given us permission to explore. There are many who don't want to go there, so we can just take that off the list. The other places are all located in the regular campus, so there won't be any problems."

*So it was a dog hole?* Jiang Ziya nodded. It was fine as long as they didn't go to the abandoned campus. *Nothing should be coincidentally wrong with any of the other places, right?*

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"I still feel it's better to cancel," Lin Zhixiang said with a frown.

"Something like this happening before our club event is unlucky."

Xu Xikai was slightly unhappy as he said, "We planned for so long and finally got the school's permission. Who knows when we'll be able to get permission again? We are the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society. If we're scared to investigate just because of something odd happening, then why should we even investigate at all?"

Hearing that, the other members expressed their agreement one after another, and Lin Zhixiang didn't say anything else.

Jiang Ziya glanced at her, still confused about why she had joined such a society. *Does she want to find some answers after experiencing a supernatural event?*

After that, the other members arrived in twos and threes. Jiang Ziya had wanted to leave and go straight to Qing Wei Gong to get in Lu Yang's way so that Lu Yang wouldn't sneak off to investigate alone. However, hearing Lin Zhixiang mention that today's club meeting would go over the contents of the school wonders, he decided to stay. He should give it a listen. If he found any of the locations suspicious, he could ask Lu Yang to head over and take a look first. The campus didn't seem to be as safe as he had thought.

After most of the club members arrived, the meeting officially began. Mostly, it was Xu Xikai using the projector on the stage to introduce the legend of each location:

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In the bathroom on the third floor of the school administration building, if you wave at the large mirror, you will see that you're not actually the only one present. Then, you will be dragged inside and become another one of them.

Don't tell the anatomical model in the medical department, "You're so fake." If you do that, you'll take its place and turn into a real human body model.

Right at midnight, in the literature department building's east-facing classroom, you will see a student, who had previously committed suicide by jumping off the building, fall past the window, and that student will even smile at you. Whoever sees the smile will jump off from the roof at the same time the next day.

At three A.M. in the middle of the night, a bunch of people will often be playing basketball on the basketball courts. If you head over and indicate that you wish to join them, they will smile and say, "Okay, we're just about to change balls." You will see that the ball they were using is actually a human head dripping with blood...

The depth of the school's Pond of Meditation is only a meter and a half, but a student in the past had been bullied and gotten his head forcefully shoved into the water. Ever since he drowned, he can be seen floating in the pond in the middle of the night. If you make a wish after you hit him with a coin, your wish will come true, but after it happens, you will be dragged into the pond and become the next make-a-wish corpse.



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There are usually only twelve stacks of bookshelves in the library, but if you go at night and count them, you will count thirteen of them, with forbidden texts that shouldn't exist in this world filling the last.

After listening to six of the legends, Jiang Ziya felt that they were okay. He had been to some of these places before, like the Pond of Meditation. He hadn't seen a wishing corpse there. *There's only a mermaid there, okay? And quite a pretty one too!*

"Then, what's the legend behind the abandoned campus?" Jiang Ziya asked in curiosity. Even though he already knew it was the handiwork of a practitioner, asking wouldn't hurt. There might even be a connection.

Xu Xikai smiled and said, "With each floor you climb, shout 'I'm heading up to the second floor now,' 'I'm heading up to the third floor now.' When you reach the eighth floor and shout, 'I'm heading up to the ninth floor now,' you'll find the ninth floor."

Jiang Ziya stilled. *There's a ninth floor? Don't tell me that after all eight floors are filled, something even worse will happen?*

"Is there something on the ninth floor?"

Xu Xikai shrugged and said, "We could have figured it out, but we can probably only give up on that now."

Everyone chuckled at that one by one.

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"These are the seven wonders of our school." Xu Xikai smiled. For the sake of the projection, the lights had been turned off, leaving only the projected light illuminating his face and making him appear ghostly. "Even though we are now short one location to visit, we can still look into six of them. No matter whether they're real or fake, we'll find out Thursday night. Don't be late, everyone. Being on time is of utmost importance for all club members. We won't wait around."

After he finished introducing the wonders, the meeting came to a close. Jiang Ziya sat in his seat, thinking about the locations of those legends. Other than the abandoned campus, there wasn't anything wrong with the rest. They were all populated places, so he shouldn't have to ask Lu Yang to take a look beforehand.

"Jiang Ziya, you're also interested in the seven deadly sins?"

Jiang Ziya asked in confusion, "What?"

"This fell out of your pocket." Jian Zhi picked up a piece of paper and handed it to Jiang Ziya. He gestured at the picture on it and said, "This is the sigil of Belphegor."

"What's Belphegor?" *And why is your angel suddenly going crazy?*

The moment the angel saw the paper, a disgusted look came over the angel's face, all traces of amicability vanishing. An angry glare honed in on Jiang Ziya, the angel coming just short of rushing over to strangle him.

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Jiang Ziya didn't bat an eye as he said, "I just saw this drawing on the wall. I thought it was interesting, so I copied it down on paper. I have no idea what it is."

After he said that, the angel's expression gentled, and following that, the angel began drifting around, mouth moving nonstop, as if muttering absentmindedly... Ah no, the angel was giving a lecture.

Jiang Ziya genuinely wondered why this guardian angel hadn't simply taken the form of a mother. *Such nagging! You're not like an angel at all!*

"Belphegor is a devil," Xu Xikai walked over and said uncertainly, "but isn't very famous in Taiwan. Why would someone draw Belphegor's sigil?"

To the side, Lin Zhixiang was also listening in quietly. Who knew if she was simply curious, or if she just wanted to talk with one of them.

Jiang Ziya quickly said, "Who knows? Maybe it was just randomly drawn."

Xu Xikai smiled. "You're right, but it's best that you don't tattoo this on your body. Among the seven deadly sins, this devil represents sloth. Tattooing laziness onto your body is pretty laughable."

*You've got it all wrong. I'm not getting a tattoo!* Jiang Ziya swore to himself. He'd rather get a tattoo of Mickey Mouse on his body than

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ever get a tattoo of a sigil that he suspected had been left by a practitioner.

“What’s the seven deadly sins?” Jiang Ziya changed the subject and casually asked his question. He had actually forgotten to give this drawing to Lu Yang, who was probably still angry and had completely forgotten about it, too. He’d gone straight home.

“The Bible says that life consists of seven deadly sins: lust, gluttony, greed, wrath, envy, pride, and sloth. Each sin has a corresponding devil. The devil of sloth is Belphegor, which is the devil represented by the sigil in your possession.”

Xu Xikai tapped on the paper Jiang Ziya held.

Jiang Ziya frowned. Now he understood why the angel had gone crazy over there. *So, the angel saw the sigil of an enemy.*

*Seven school wonders and seven deadly sins?* Jiang Ziya felt himself begin to hate the number seven. *It can’t be so coincidental that the school wonders have anything to do with the Bible, right?*

Lu Yang had already said that it was the handiwork of a practitioner. *Isn’t that too big of a jump, a practitioner to a devil?*

Jian Zhi explained in a small voice, “Actually, the Bible extols the seven virtues. The seven deadly sins and devils and such mostly come from other books. They have nothing to do with the Bible!”

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Jiang Ziya looked toward Jian Zhi.

The other smiled timidly and said, "My family is Catholic. I-I'm not that religious."

*As if. You have an angel standing behind you, and you say you're not religious. Do you need God to be standing behind you or what?*

"You're Catholic, yet you joined the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society. Isn't that a little strange?" Jiang Ziya asked doubtfully. *From my impression, Catholics don't believe in stuff like this, right?*

Jian Zhi immediately responded firmly, "Because I believe in God, I'm here to disprove all rumors that can't be trusted..." He shouted fervently until then but soon discovered that he was being too passionate, so he ducked his head and said softly, "I mean, um, it's not good to trust supernatural stuff too much."

Jiang Ziya felt that Jian Zhi probably always tried really hard to control his various "preachings." To youngsters who were full of themselves, always spouting "God this" and "God that" was probably one of the easiest ways to lose friends. The effect was no worse than that of his left eye.

Jiang Ziya looked at the furtive President Xu. *Someone who would think of creating a Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society should believe in supernatural phenomena, right?*

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The pale President Xu said with a smile, "Our goal has always been to investigate the truth behind these supernatural phenomena. Whether it's to confirm them or to disprove them, it doesn't matter. In any case, be there Thursday night or be square."

He didn't know if he was just imagining it, but Jiang Ziya felt that when he said the words "confirm," he seemed to have glanced at Lin Zhixiang to the side.

Jiang Ziya looked toward Lin Zhixiang. The latter hadn't said a word. She seemed like she didn't have much interest in the topic of devils.

Lin Zhixiang had also noticed his gaze and said, "Jiang Ziya, I'm a little hungry. Want to get a late night snack together?"

Jian Zhi's expression changed.

Jiang Ziya felt himself sweating. Just as he was about to turn her down, he heard Lin Zhixiang say apologetically, "I want to apologize to you for what happened last time."

*What happened last time?* Jiang Ziya looked at Lin Zhixiang, feeling like she meant something else. She probably hadn't invited him for the sake of an apology.

"Okay, let me call home first."

Lin Zhixiang nodded. "Perfect. I'll clean up."

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Both of them chose to ignore Jian Zhi to the side, whose gaze looked like that of an abandoned puppy. Since they were going to talk about what had happened last time, then no one could join them, or else they wouldn't need to discuss anything at all.

Jiang Ziya walked outside and made his call. Right off the bat, he asked, "Lu Yang, where are you?"

"At home."

"For real?"

"For real."

"You didn't sneak out to investigate?"

"I promise I haven't cheated on you!"

Jiang Ziya was momentarily speechless. The tables had sure turned. Yesterday, it was Lu Yang checking up on him, and now it was his turn to check on Lu Yang's whereabouts. *Just when will these days of checking back and forth end? What a headache!*

"Good, because it's my turn to cheat on you."

"What?" Lu Yang said furiously, "You're not allowed to go anywhere dangerous, especially not to that abandoned campus!"

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"I really do mean 'cheating.' I'm going to have a late night snack with Lin Zhixiang."

"Huh?" Lu Yang asked hesitantly, "There hasn't been anything strange happening around her lately, has there?"

"No. She might just want to ask me about what happened last time."

"You have my permission then. But remember not to reveal too much. If she knows too much, she won't be able to forget, and that might not be a good thing. For ordinary people, if they can forget these kinds of matters, that's for the best."

"Okay, by your command, I'm going to head off and have an affair."

Out of the corner of his eye, Jiang Ziya saw that Lin Zhixiang had already slung her bag on and was walking out.

Lu Yang said with a chuckle. "Scram already! Stop bragging just because you've encountered a catch for once."

*What kind of catch is this?* Jiang Ziya was speechless. Even though Lin Zhixiang was pretty, when he thought of what they were about to discuss, even if the person sitting across from him was the celebrity Zhiling-jiějie, he would pray for this encounter not to happen.

"Ready to go?" Lin Zhixiang walked out and asked politely when she saw that he was still holding his cell phone.

Jiang Ziya hung up and nodded. He casually took the big bag Lin Zhixiang was holding.



"What do you like to eat?"

"Anything is fine." Jiang Ziya felt that eating wasn't the focus. It was fine as long as they could find somewhere to chat.

"No, really, what do you like? I really want to apologize to you." Lin Zhixiang said awkwardly, "You helped me so many times. I haven't even thanked you, and I even avoided you. I'm really sorry."

*So you really were avoiding me on purpose?* But Jiang Ziya couldn't blame her. If Lin Zhixiang could forget completely, it was better for her. But seeing how it was, it didn't seem like she would be able to forget. Now that he was thinking about it, there had been something odd about this girl since the beginning.

They should have a good chat after all.

"How about hot pot? I know a hot pot restaurant with private booths..."



After ending the call, Lu Yang received a text. He was puzzled as he opened the text. It was a photograph of a hand-drawn sigil.

*Oh, I completely forgot about it.*

Lu Yang rubbed his nose. He felt he had really gone stupid. He'd investigated for so long yet completely forgot this huge lead. However, this kind of drawing usually just had an auxiliary effect. It was possible

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that nothing would come out of it... *Wait, this drawing looks more like a Western sigil? There aren't a lot of practitioners in this country who would use such a drawing!*

Lu Yang immediately looked at the computer. On the screen, he had several windows open. The main window had a long list of names, with several photos to the side. Most of them were portraits, while some were mug shots, but even more were photos taken from far away and were unclear.

"Darling~~ Your gramps is back! Weren't you looking for him?"

"If you call me Darling one more time, we're through!" Lu Yang shouted, vexed.

**"Ok! Sweetheart."**

Lu Yang pretty much gave up on his dad. He glanced at the screen and simply printed the sigil out. He steeled himself as he set off to look for his grandpa.

After he walked out of the room, he approached the front of the temple. A few elders sat at the log table next to the temple hall, drinking tea. One of them was outfitted particularly strangely in a long robe. His stature was tall and robust, making him appear unlike an old man, but he didn't have fewer wrinkles than the stooped old man next to him. His stature and his face didn't go together at all. Lu Yang's grandma, Xiao Chun-sǎo, was currently steeping tea for him.

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"Good evening Grandma, Gramps, everyone," Lu Yang greeted all of the elders.

Each of the elders greeted him back with a smile one by one.

Master Ah Lu looked at his grandson and asked, "Wha' is it? My fo'igna son-in-law said you're looking for me?"

The fo'igna son-in-law Liu Yishi sat obediently to the side, not daring to utter any sort of response. Although he spoke Mandarin and Taiwanese even better than his mother tongue, and his son was already in university, to his father-in-law, he would always be the fo'igna son-in-law. It saddened Liu Yishi, but then again, his father-in-law didn't mean anything derogatory by those words.

"Ah, it's just that I ran into another case perpetrated by a practitioner." Lu Yang had also turned just as obedient as his father as he said, "I came to report it to you."

He placed the drawing he had printed on the log table.

Master Ah Lu furrowed his brows. "He left behind such obvious evidence?"

"No, Ziya was the one who saw this."

Hearing that, Master Ah Lu's brows, which had already been scrunched tightly enough to kill a fly, squeezed even more tightly together, resembling dry bark.

"Does anyone use this?"

"Very few in the country. Even then, they're all small fries. Even if you've encountered them, you wouldn't come and ask me about them." Master Ah Lu looked at Liu Yishi. "I believe that asking your dad will make things clearer."

Liu Yishi looked at that drawing and said a single word. **"Belphegor."**

Lu Yang looked at his father. "Is that the name of a devil?"

**"Yes, the devil of sloth."**

"Speak Chinese!" Master Ah Lu hit his son-in-law on the head. Under his son's mocking gaze, the pitiful father Liu Yishi, who had been hit by his father-in-law and ridiculed by his son, dejectedly changed the topic and explained, "This is the sigil of Belphegor. In unorthodox theology, he is the devil of sloth among the seven deadly sins."

"Unorthodox theology, is it?" Lu Yang muttered, "Since this is something uncommon, it should be easier to deal with, right?"

"Hard to say. The internet is too widespread these days. Some unorthodox teachings are even more well known than traditional teachings, and may have even surpassed the traditional, especially the malevolent type." Liu Yishi drew a cross in front of him in worry. He

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sighed. "God, why would people rather believe in the existence of devils and ghosts than Your presence?"

Lu Yang was too lazy to pay attention to his father. As the successor of a Taoist temple, he made it a habit never to comment on his father's religious beliefs.

"Gramps, seven people have already died. Are you taking over this case, or should I deal with it?"

Master Ah Lu was taken aback. He asked in suspicion, "As many as seven? It wasn't on the news."

Lu Yang explained the situation a bit.

"Homeless people, huh?" Master Ah Lu was silent for a good long while.

During this time, Xiao Chun-sǎo smilingly steeped a cup of tea for her son-in-law and her grandson and said, "Have some tea!"

"Okay." Liu Yishi obediently lifted the cup and drank.

Lu Yang sat down to drink tea. While Gramps was thinking, it was never a good idea to interrupt him. It was best to just let him think. They could just drink tea.

Xiao Chun-sǎo handed over two more small plates, with donuts and muffins crammed on them. This was a specialty of the Lu family. When

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they had tea, they would have Western desserts. Back then, Liu Yishi had depended on the various desserts he'd gathered from all over to win over his father-in-law. That was how he had been able to marry his wife—although it was more like he had married himself into the family.

Even his son's surname was Lu, though Lu Yang's English name was Luke Hunter, while Liu Yishi was Lewis Hunter. He had to clarify that he really hadn't married into the Lu family. *Sob, sob, sob.*

"Xiao Yang! What cases have you been on lately? Let's hear it." The other elders looked at Lu Yang expectantly, like children anticipating a story.

Lu Yang randomly talked about a few cases that weren't as scary. The elders hung on to his every word.

"What hogwash!" Master Ah Lu finally spoke, "This devil thing, I really don't understand it. I can't remember any strong people who use this kind of drawing in the country. But since there have already been seven deaths, he likely won't stop there. Fo'igna son-in-law, you happen to be knowledgeable about things like this. Go with Xiao Yang to see what's going on."

Liu Yishi quickly swallowed the donut in his mouth and replied, "Okay."

Afterwards, he looked expectantly at his son, hoping to receive a smile from him, or even the words, "I can finally partner up with my father. I've waited for this day for so long..."

Lu Yang had been looking down at his cell phone. When he lifted his head, he was immediately greeted by his father's sad face, almost scaring him to death.

"What?!"

Liu Yishi turned his head, about to go squat in a corner, when he heard his son say abruptly, "Dad, let's go."

He immediately nodded excitedly.

Lu Yang turned his cell phone around so his dad could see.

**Grand Duke Jiang is Fishing: Ah Yang, I feel you should definitely come over and listen to Lin Zhixiang's story.**

### Chapter 3: Existence's Bane Part 1—Natal Chart

"Bane of blood, bane of husband, bane of brood; a natal chart that tells of existence's bane?"

Lu Yang frowned.

Lin Zhixiang stared at Lu Yang. Then, she turned to look at Liu Yishi by the side, who even gave her a wink. Finally, she decided to turn and focus her gaze back on Jiang Ziya.

Jiang Ziya reassured her, "Don't worry. Lu Yang is very powerful. His family runs a temple, and he's even the temple's successor!"

Lin Zhixiang's expression was extremely odd, but Jiang Ziya completely understood her feelings. It really was an impossible feat to accept a monk with the looks of a model. Besides, there was even a foreigner dad sitting beside him. The oddity was practically enough to pierce the heavens.

She let her head drop and quietly said, "It's okay. I've already asked tons of people. No one has dared to help change my fate."

Jiang Ziya felt she really was pitiful. Both of her parents were deceased, her only brother ended up disabled, and her entire family chased her out. If not for her brother and one of her aunts financially helping her in secret, she would have had trouble even surviving up until this age. All of these many tribulations had come about from a fortune teller pronouncing her the bane of all existence. Whoever approached her would die!



“Lu Yang, is there really such a thing as bane of blood?”

Lu Yang said with a frown, “Yes, but it’s super rare.”

Just by looking at Lu Yang’s expression, Jiang Ziya could tell that he wasn’t being honest, but he didn’t question him further. If Lu Yang wasn’t clarifying it, it was most likely because it had something to do with the innerworld again, and Lu Yang didn’t want Lin Zhixiang to know. There was no going back after taking a step inside.

“Can my fate be changed?” Lin Zhixiang asked courageously, even though she had met disappointment after disappointment already. She had even considered whether or not she should just jump into a river before she caused her brother and aunt to die. If not for her brother stopping her again and again, tearfully saying, “Aside from my family, my little sister is all I have left,” she really would have done it.

“That depends on you. This will likely not be easy.” Lu Yang sighed as he said, “Do you know Qing Wei Gong?”

Lin Zhixiang shook her head.

“It’s on XX road. After you enter, look for Xiao Chun-sǎo. Tell her about your natal chart and ask to train at the temple. Then, make as much time as you can to recite scriptures there.”

“All I have to do is train?” Lin Zhixiang quickly asked.

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Lu Yang nodded. "It will take a long time, but as long as you have the perseverance, Taishang Laojun will have mercy on you."

"It's fine no matter how long it takes!" For the first time, dawn was in sight. Perseverance was nothing when she had even had a death wish in the past. *What's there to be afraid of?* "I-I'm going to head over right now!"

Lu Yang laughed. "The temple is already closed. You can go tomorrow."

"Okay, can I go in the morning? I can get up early every day and go there." Lin Zhixiang was so happy that she almost wanted to spin around in circles. She couldn't wait to go home as soon as she could to call and tell her brother.

"You can." Lu Yang nodded as he said, "Qing Wei Gong is already open by five."

"Then, let me take you home. Having to go to Qing Wei Gong at five tomorrow is really early." Jiang Ziya felt it was late right now, so it wasn't a good idea to let a girl go home by herself.

"N-No!" Lin Zhixiang frantically said, "Don't stay by my side for too long. It's dangerous. Like last time! You already stayed too long in the club each time."

"It's fine!"

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"What's fine? You nearly died back then at the supermarket because of me!"

*Uh, I don't think that can be blamed on Lin Zhixiang. It's my family's Xiao Xue who brought that trouble about.*

"I'll take you." Lu Yang stood up and said, "I am Qing Wei Gong's next..."

However, Lin Zhixiang snatched the bill and tossed out the words, "If either of you dare to follow me, I'll shout 'molester!'"

"..." Jiang Ziya and Lu Yang both expressed that they didn't want to grace the pages of the social news and could only watch as the girl ran off with the bill.

Still seated and unruffled, Liu Yishi sighed. "Letting a girl foot the bill and even leave by herself in the middle of the night is not what gentlemen should do."

*Is that our fault?* The two non-gentlemen were speechless.

"Sit." Liu Yishi nagged at the two children and said, "You haven't eaten much at all. The hot pot is still untouched. What a waste. Sit down and finish it."

Just listening to Lin Zhixiang's misfortunes and watching her try to keep the tears at bay, Jiang Ziya hadn't had the appetite to eat anything. Of course the hot pot was still untouched. That no tears had

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fallen in as seasoning was already more than one could hope for.

The three of them could only begin finishing off the food. It was fortunate that it was hot pot; all they had to do was reheat it.

Lu Yang asked in confusion, "How'd you end up talking about natal charts out of nowhere?"

Jiang Ziya shrugged and said, "At first, she just wanted to treat me to thank me, but soon after we placed our order, her sister-in-law called her saying that her brother was hospitalized. Her face paled so much that I was nearly scared to death. Thankfully, he just went to get an IV drip for a bad cold. I thought to give her a lift to the hospital so she can visit him, but she said that *she* definitely couldn't go, or else her brother would die. After that, she explained the entire thing."

After saying that, he couldn't help asking, "Lu Yang, is she really some bane of all existence?"

*Bane of blood, bane of husband, bane of brood; no one close to her will have a good end. This kind of natal chart is just too much. Better to not be born in the first place!*

"She's not. That fortune teller was problematic." Lu Yang said flat-out, "In all likelihood, Lin Zhixiang's talent caught the fortune teller's eye, so he wanted to take her away. That's why he claimed that she's the bane of all existence. Then, he led both of her parents to their deaths, so that after the child fell into despair, he could appear again with a new identity and take her in to raise as his own. This way, not only will

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no one ask after the child's whereabouts, the child will also treat him as her savior and only relative."

Jiang Ziya shuddered. *So this is the actual truth? That's way too evil!*

But after thinking about it, he thought something was off and asked in confusion, "But Lin Zhixiang is already in college. No one came to take her away. If not for her brother and her aunt helping her financially in secret, she would have starved to death."

"That guy probably kicked the bucket somewhere along the way, so he didn't come to take Lin Zhixiang away. Those kinds of practitioners who dare to harm others always gamble big. Whether it's getting bitten back by a demon, having an array backfire, or getting killed by a practitioner, none of those deaths would be strange."

Jiang Ziya asked in confusion, "But later on, Lin Zhixiang even gave many examples of her classmates, friends, and even coworkers at her workplace—anyone who was somewhat close to her—all experiencing misfortune. There were even several times when someone nearly died, scaring her so much that she no longer dares to become close with anyone."

"Child." Liu Yishi, who had been engrossed in eating to the side, said in a gentle voice, "As long as someone believes they are unlucky, they will truly meet endless misfortune. That's why everyone should have an optimistic outlook on life. Do you understand?"

Lu Yang nodded and said, "'Belief' is even more dangerous for

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someone with natural talent. Her parents' demise and her brother's disability were most likely the fault of the practitioner. But after that, it's more likely that she was 'cursing' herself, especially with her entire family hating her and believing that she is existence's bane."

*She's cursing herself?* Jiang Ziya's eyes widened. He hadn't considered that at all.

"She's probably pretty powerful. Even if she's come across one or two practitioners of some skill, they wouldn't dare to help her, afraid to get dragged down by her."

Jiang Ziya frowned. "Then, will telling her to train at Qing Wei Gong really have any effect?"

"As long as she believes it's effective, then it will be. But if it's too easy of a method, she won't be able to believe that her existence's bane natal chart of so many years is gone. That's why we must make it take a long time, and the method has to be a bit more difficult, to allow her to slowly disperse her curse on herself."

"Oh..." Jiang Ziya only understood some of it, but understanding it wasn't crucial right now. He pressed on, "So, if she perseveres with training obediently at Qing Wei Gong, she will be fine in the end?"

Lu Yang nodded.

Jiang Ziya relaxed. *That's good. I was nearly to the point of tears listening to her misfortunes.* And yet, with death hanging over any

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who approached Lin Zhixiang, he really didn't dare to use his own life to make friends with her. He still had a sister at home who would cry buckets over him!

After relaxing, Jiang Ziya was finally in the mood to eat hotpot. At that moment, he took notice of Liu Yishi and realized that he hadn't greeted him earnestly this entire time. He quickly said, "Sorry, Uncle, I didn't really introduce myself just now. I'm Jiang Ziya, Lu Yang's classmate."

"Just call me Liu Yishi." Liu Yishi said with a smile, "Or son, you can follow Lu Yang's example and call me Daddy!"

After saying that, Lu Yang hit him on the head. His own son grumbled, "We're not overseas. Stop randomly calling everyone your son. Obediently be an uncle!"

Liu Yishi rolled his eyes and said, "What, we're not overseas? Is there any son as disobedient as you in the country that would hit his dad on the head? Why don't you go and hit your grandpa on the head?"

Lu Yang indicated that he still wanted to live!

Liu Yishi knocked his son's head and said, "Eat your hotpot already, disobedient son. Do you want your old father to eat such a large pot of food all by himself?"

*Old father? Who would believe you with such a face!* Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him, but he obediently began to eat hotpot.

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Liu Yishi was already eighty percent full and didn't continue eating. He simply smiled as he watched the two grown boys.

Lu Yang was very used to it and didn't pay any attention to his father. Jiang Ziya didn't find it odd either. His twin sister and his brother-in-law often watched him eat with smiles on their faces, too. It was exactly like feeding pigs.

"You look very much like Jiang Shang." Liu Yishi opened his mouth and spoke only after he glimpsed the bottom of the hotpot.

Jiang Ziya stilled and asked, "You know my dad?"

"Yes, but we're not close. He and your mother are both practitioners. It's just that it's already been a long time since I've heard anything about him."

"It's already been a long time since you've heard anything about him?" Jiang Ziya began wondering if practically his entire life was a problem, yet he couldn't find anyone to confirm it. He was completely frantic, but he had to suppress it, so that he would not affect his sis and the twin girls at home.

Liu Yishi quietly thought back about their last encounter. Jiang Ziya didn't dare to disrupt his thinking, inwardly frantic as he waited.

"Eight years ago, we brought Lu Yang back to enroll in school and settle down. We stayed in Taiwan for a period of time. We had thought to seek Jiang Shang and Yang Jiayin back then, but we received no



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news of them, so we didn't specifically go out to find them."

*When there is no news of a practitioner, there's an eighty to ninety percent chance that it's bad news.* Liu Yishi hadn't wanted to hear of a loss, and since he hadn't been that close with Jiang Shang and his wife, he'd given up in the end after asking around for a bit.

"It was even earlier than that, possibly before the two of you were even born." Liu Yishi frowned, trying hard to remember as he said, "The last time we met, it might have been when the two of you were still in your mothers' stomachs. I recall that Lu Yang's mom and your mother joked around about how if you were both the same sex, you'd become sworn siblings, and if you were opposite sexes, you'd get married. Your mother laughed so much that she hugged her stomach and cried that it hurt, making your father glare at me several times."

Lu Yang rolled his eyes exaggeratedly. *Pledging your children to each other in this kind of age? No wonder she laughed so much that her stomach hurt.*

Jiang Ziya frowned as he said, "Our family suffered a traffic accident. My mother passed away then."

"What?" Liu Yishi froze and shouted, "Yang Jiayin got in a traffic accident and kicked the bucket?"

Lu Yang clobbered his dad on the head again.

Liu Yishi quickly amended his words. "Um, I mean, she passed away?"

When did this happen?"

"I don't remember. It was when I was very young."

Liu Yishi asked in detail, "Then, were you in elementary school yet? Or were you in kindergarten?"

Jiang Ziya furrowed his brows and said, "I don't think I was in either, so it might've been when I was five or younger?"

*Though, nowadays, there are plenty of kids who are sent to kindergarten before they're even three.*

"We can't be certain. Lu Yang didn't go to kindergarten. It's not strange for people like us who are always on the move not to send their children to kindergarten." Liu Yishi continued asking, "Then, what about elementary school?"

Jiang Ziya thought it over and said with conviction, "Yes, by then, Mother was no longer around, but my dad was still at home. After we grew up more, he would leave for extremely long periods of time before returning. In the end, he pretty much stopped coming home."

"When was the last time you saw him?"

Jiang Ziya froze and said uncertainly, "High school, I think?"

Seeing how uncertain he was, Liu Yishi frowned and said, "I will investigate the matter of your parents, but before that, don't think

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about it too much. Learn more about the matters of the innerworld from Lu Yang.”

Jiang Ziya could only nod.

At this time, an unfamiliar ring tone sounded. Liu Yishi fished out his cell phone and glanced at it. He immediately said excitedly, “Your mom is calling me. I’ll be on the phone.”

Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him.

After Liu Yishi bounced out of the private room, Lu Yang immediately apologized to his friend, “Sorry, my dad’s always like this. He’s a bit insensitive. Don’t hold it against him.”

*He actually blurted out that someone’s mom got in a traffic accident and kicked the bucket.* Lu Yang felt utterly defeated by his father.

Jiang Ziya shrugged and said, “Your dad is pretty amusing. That’s good, it’s more relaxing.”

“What’s good about it? He’s always so silly and even boasts about being an amazing exorcist detective.”

Jiang Ziya smiled and asked, “Lu Yang, you have your parents’ numbers, right?”

Lu Yang blinked. “Yeah.”

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"Earlier, when I was thinking back, I suddenly realized that I don't even have Dad's number."

When he heard that, Lu Yang fell silent. He had guessed this a long time ago, or else wouldn't everything be cleared up if he just made a call?

"Say, under what sort of circumstances would a father not even leave his phone number to his son and daughter?"

Jiang Ziya felt that he should be prepared for the worst.

But, what exactly had happened to their family for it to become like this? And how was it that he had never even thought about it in the past?

Lu Yang patted him on the shoulder and said, "Your dad is a practitioner. Anything could have happened. He might even just be hiding from a demon or familiar, not wishing to get the two of you involved."

Jiang Ziya forced himself to smile.

"Maybe."

### Chapter 3: Existence's Bane Part 2—Brothers

"Haa~~"

After a huge yawn, Yu Shu lazily walked to the living room and lay on the sofa, waiting for breakfast... *Or is it lunch? Whatever!*

House Keeper walked out of the kitchen and asked with a faint smile, "You have woken up quite early today. I am just about to make lunch! May I ask if there is anything in particular you wish to eat?"

Yu Shu looked at her eldest son, who was truly captivating with such a handsome face. Plus he had a good figure to boot. Getting to see such a hottie first thing in the morning was such a blessing to her eyes!

"You."

House Keeper blinked and said with a smile, "I am afraid that I do not yet have that kind of `function.'"

*...He actually understood me! Last time, didn't he respond with, "I am sorry. The material I am made of is hard resin. Your teeth might fall out from the attempt"?*

Yu Shu was practically shocked awake. She jumped right up from the sofa and asked, "Have you seen Jiang Ziya lately?"

House Keeper stilled but could only say, "Yes."

Yu Shu felt she was on the verge of coughing up blood. She snapped,

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"You went against my orders and purposely sought him out?"

House Keeper explained frantically, "It was not so. I was merely bringing over freshly baked bread to the neighbors. Jiang Ziya does not have classes around that time, so he is usually still asleep. I do not know why he woke up so early that day. When I opened the door, I happened across him."

"And?"

"And?" House Keeper asked in confusion.

"How'd you meet him all the other times?"

House Keeper quickly answered, "I only saw him that one time."

Yu Shu narrowed her eyes dangerously and said in suspicion, "Swear that you aren't lying to me."

Unexpectedly, House Keeper immediately swore, "I swear that I am definitely not lying to you. Ever since Mistress gave the command, I have only seen him once."

Yu Shu only half believed him. If he had only seen Jiang Ziya once, he couldn't have changed so much. If Jiang Ziya possessed strength of that magnitude, then why was he even attending university? He should just create spirits and conquer the world!

"Then, what in the world made you change so much?"

House Keeper opened his mouth, but then he shut it again.

*You don't want to say it, but you don't want to lie either, huh?* Yu Shu gave a cold snort. *At least you didn't lie to my face. You still have some conscience.*

"Spit it out! Or are you trying to betray me, your master?"

House Keeper frowned. He could only bite down on his teeth and clench his fists in order not to reveal everything.

Seeing that, Yu Shu was stunned. *He can actually disobey me in my home?* Perhaps it had to do with how she wasn't forcing the issue, but as her illusory familiar, being able to resist to this point was already no easy feat.

All of a sudden, she felt conflicted. *It's like my child has finally grown up... But gods, my kid is only a year old!*

"Why are you forcing him?" Hold Keeper walked out from the box in the corner. He said, displeased, "I can tell you."

"Hold Keeper!" House Keeper cried out in alarm, "You must not say it!"

Yu Shu looked toward House Keeper, her heart growing cold. She hadn't thought that it would be House Keeper who would be unwilling to say it. She had thought that House Keeper and she were closer!

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"Why keep it under wraps? It's not like we can disobey our master. I'll say, why are you so guarded against Jiang Ziya?" Hold Keeper mocked, "Don't you feel that the 'mother' is way scarier?"

*The mother?* Yu Shu froze.

"Jiang Yu!"

*Shoot!* The light had really blinded her from the truth. She had guarded against all contingencies with Jiang Ziya, yet she had forgotten that pretty much eight or nine out of ten times, those who could create "daughters" were always the parents. At most, Jiang Ziya was just support, while Jiang Yu was the main force!

Despite this, she had let Jiang Yu enter her home however she pleased, and she would drag House Keeper and Hold Keeper over to chat inanely with them. She'd always say, "You brothers are so handsome. How about finding your younger brother a girlfriend?"

"I'm such an idiot!" Yu Shu was vexed.

Hold Keeper agreed, "You always have been."

"Why didn't you warn me?"

After Yu Shu shouted that angrily, she saw helplessness grace one face and disdain the other, as if looking at an idiot. Right then, she felt that she really was being an idiot. Jiang Yu was capable of helping them "level up." *There's no way these two guys would tell me about it!*



*These two are already powerful enough to keep things from me?* Yu Shu's head hurt so much that she felt even rich coffee wouldn't be able to save her anymore.

"There's entirely no need for you to be so concerned, right?" Hold Keeper snorted. "I've seen your computer before. Don't all the members of that illusion raising forum wish for their illusory familiar to become a lie? You're the only one so cautious about it. I don't know what you're trying to prevent!"

"That's because none of them have a 'truth' living across from them!" Yu Shu bit out, "It's already ridiculously difficult to have an illusory familiar become a lie. Of course they'd want their illusions to become lies. They don't have to worry at all that their illusory familiars could one day become truths!"

"Do you really detest the idea of us becoming truths to that degree?"

Yu Shu froze.

Hold Keeper glared at her coldly and growled, "Jiang Yu wishes for her daughter to be true. Why don't you want your sons to become truths? Do you really think of us as your sons? Or do you actually just want obedient subordinates?"

Yu Shu opened her mouth, but she didn't know how to explain it.

"Hmph!" Having not received an answer that proved him wrong, Hold

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Keeper felt angry and disappointed. He turned and rushed right into the cardboard box.

House Keeper looked at the sullen Yu Shu, and then at the box Hold Keeper had rushed into. He hesitated for a moment but still chose to remain.

At the moment, Yu Shu had a headache just from looking at her son. She waved her hand tiredly and said, "House Keeper, you can go and cook."

Only after she heard House Keeper's departing footsteps did she allow herself to think about "that notion."

*Letting my sons become truths?*

*How could I not want that to happen?* She knew she shouldn't think about it, yet she couldn't help but possess such a desire. When she had originally created these two children, she had already known that she could never suppress the desire to let them become truths. She'd just passed it off as an impossible wish, so there had never been a need to overly worry about it.

Yet, House Keeper had become a lie out of the blue, and it was only a matter of time before Hold Keeper would turn into a lie as well. Under the almighty power of her neighbors, turning into truths was actually possible...

*Those who made their children into truths were almost always the*

*mother.*

*Other than Jiang Yu and Jiang Ziya, am I also to blame?*

The aroma of rich coffee hit her, and Yu Shu lifted her head. She saw House Keeper put down a cup of coffee and look at her in worry.

"Jiang Ziya and I made a promise that we will see each other at least once more." House Keeper explained somewhat frantically, "But I did not make a promise with him because of wanting to become a truth. Jiang Yu would be enough for that. I j-just..."

Yu Shu said understandingly, "You have always liked him a lot."

House Keeper hesitated for a moment. He lowered his head and said, "If you are my mother, then he is... he is..."

*Your father? Yu Shu was speechless. Wonderful. Both "parents" are now in the picture!*

House Keeper said softly, "The invitation has already taken effect. I will see him once more, and then I will not seek him out again. Please do not be angry at me."

"Whatever, you don't have to avoid him anymore." Yu Shu felt that it was probably unavoidable. She even felt that Jiang Yu had done it on purpose. When Xiao Xue had gone missing, she had known to come here to search for her. After Xiao Xue had returned, she'd completely forgotten everything again. *That kind of memory is practically*

*superhuman intelligence!*

"The Jiang family's situation is too complicated. You and Hold Keeper both need to be careful. I don't want you to get taken advantage of."

House Keeper nodded.

Yu Shu gestured at the cardboard box and said, "Help me talk that bastard around. He's always been difficult. It'd be bad if he turns even more stubborn and paranoid."

"As you wish." House Keeper was about to enter the box. He suddenly turned his head and asked to test the waters, "How about letting Hold Keeper become a lie?"

"You sure are a good older brother."

Yu Shu realized that these two guys didn't have as bad of a relationship as appearances indicated. Even though the two of them had joined hands to keep her in the dark, she didn't feel angry about it at all. Her sons were truly a good pair of brothers. As the mother, she really couldn't muster any anger over that.

House Keeper lowered his head, not daring to say too much.

"Whatever happens, happens." Yu Shu lazily said, "With Hold Keeper's personality, it would never be possible for him to remain an illusion forever. He doesn't resemble an illusion at all!"

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"I understand!" House Keeper smiled happily. "Then, I will go and console him."

As she watched House Keeper walk into the cardboard box, the doorbell rang. Yu Shu grumbled, "It just had to be now," as she climbed up from the sofa in resignation and walked over to open the door.

"Yu Shu!"

Jiang Yu walked in cheerfully and was even holding a pot in her hands. She held it and presented it like her pride and joy and said, "I made a pot of pork belly. Have some! It's been stewed to perfection this time. I guarantee it's delicious!"

Yu Shu silently stared at her.

Jiang Yu was confused by the stare and asked in bewilderment, "What, why are you staring at me like that?"

Seeing the person before her show an innocent and confused expression, Yu Shu sighed and helplessly said, "I must be too lonely to become friends with you."

"... I should be the one saying that!"



"I'm off!"

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Jiang Ziya passed by like a whirlwind.

Jiang Yu, who had been feeding her daughters, asked in surprise, "So early again today? Didn't you return very late last night? Wait, don't you need breakfast?"

"Nope, Lu Yang said that his dad will cook a serving of breakfast for me."

"... Liu Yishi?"

Jiang Ziya stilled and stopped in his steps. He turned his head and asked doubtfully, "Sis, what did you just say?"

Jiang Yu was in the middle of bending over and using tissue to mop up the applesauce that Jiang Jiang had accidentally dripped on the floor. When she heard her brother's words, she straightened back up and asked in confusion, "What?"

*I must've heard wrong?* Jiang Ziya changed the topic and said, "Nothing, I'm heading out. The club has an event going on. It's a night activity. I won't be coming back until early morning."

Jiang Yu blinked and asked doubtfully, "Leaving early and returning late. You seem very busy. You'd better not be secretly working! Or I'll definitely ground you!"

"I'm really not. If you don't believe me, you can ask Lu Yang!"

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Jiang Yu snorted twice. "He'd definitely lie for you. There's no use asking him."

Jiang Ziya began laughing awkwardly. "I really am not secretly working."

*Helping Lu Yang doesn't count as work!*

Jiang Yu relaxed and nodded. "Fine, off you go. You went out of your way to get up early. Don't make them wait for you."

Jiang Ziya nodded. The moment he walked out the door, he was stumped into a stupor. The two brothers across from them were actually standing by the door, looking every bit like they were blocking his way!

*Even if I agreed to the invitation, it shouldn't be buy one get one free?*

"Y-Yu Shu is still sleeping, I hope?" Now, Jiang Ziya could only hope that Yu Shu wouldn't find out about this.

House Keeper smiled faintly and said, "Mistress has already permitted us to meet you."

Hold Keeper snorted. "What time is it? There's no way she would be awake. You think too highly of her."

"Yu Shu is actually willing to let you two meet me now?" Jiang Ziya doubted it greatly. *Don't tell me House Keeper is making it up?*

House Keeper happily said, "She has also given permission for Hold Keeper to become a lie. Could you please call his name?"

"I don't at all believe she agreed." Hold Keeper turned his head away.

Jiang Ziya was a little speechless. "Just calling a name isn't effective. I've called Xiao Xue so many times, but she hasn't become a lie. I really don't know how I should call out the name for it to take effect."

"I also feel that this point is rather strange." House Keeper hummed for a while before saying dejectedly, "Perhaps we must wait for the right opportunity."

Even though Hold Keeper had turned his face away, he was still obviously paying close attention to their conversation. Once he heard that Jiang Ziya didn't know what to do, he could not keep disappointment from showing up on his face.

Not knowing what to do, Jiang Ziya said, "I-I need to go."

"Please take your time." As usual, House Keeper waved courteously as he saw him off.

Jiang Ziya fled as if his life depended on it.

After he walked his motorbike out, Jiang Ziya turned to gaze at his own apartment building, his feelings in turmoil. He decided that he needed to make time to clear things up with Yu Shu, in order to avoid



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being tricked by House Keeper and Hold Keeper. If that was the case, then the day Hold Keeper became a lie would be the day that Jiang Ziya died.

Right after he climbed on his motorbike, a text arrived on his cell phone. Jiang Ziya lowered his head to look. His face paled, and he immediately shot off on his bike.

Soon, he arrived at the abandoned campus. Lu Yang was standing by the gate, his face dark as he said, "Park your motorbike farther away so that people won't notice it."

Jiang Ziya immediately parked his motorbike on the other side of the street and walked over.

Lu Yang urged, "Come in quickly. It'll be difficult for us to enter the later it gets."

Jiang Ziya dashed inside the abandoned campus with him. He waited until Lu Yang locked up the gates before he asked him as they walked, "Another murder happened?"

"Yeah." Lu Yang's face was pale as he said, "I miscalculated. I thought that he wouldn't do anything again so quickly, as lengthening the time in between would decrease the suspicion. The previous six murders spanned a whole year. I hadn't thought that this time, he'd take action immediately!"

Jiang Ziya frowned. Taking action so soon after the previous death was

truly risky. *I wonder why he did that.*

"Is it another homeless person? The building reeks. Why would any homeless people come here? Did they all get kidnapped?"

"It's not." Lu Yang said in a quiet voice, "The deceased this time looks very young, and the attire looks like that of a student's. It's very likely to be a student from our school, but the face was completely destroyed, so we haven't found out the identity yet."

Jiang Ziya's expression also changed. Even though it was likely that he didn't know the student, he still felt uncomfortable hearing that it was a student from his school.

"And it's a girl, too."

"What?" Jiang Ziya was taken aback. The discomfort grew even more. "Eighth floor?"

"Yeah."

The two of them climbed up to the eighth floor. Hu Lican and Fang Da were already waiting there. When they saw that Jiang Ziya had arrived, they let out a sigh of relief.

Hu Lican even urged, "Hurry and finish up. Now that an eighth life has been lost, the previous seven murders will definitely get revisited. Such a big case isn't something that I can wave off by myself."

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Jiang Ziya hadn't even been able to take in the condition of the corpse, as he was staring in shock at the figure standing beside it. She had tears running down her face, her expression extremely confused, as if she didn't understand what had happened. She looked just like a powerless girl who needed help.

To the side, Fang Da misunderstood and came over to comfort him. "Even though the face was carved up like this, going by the condition of the corpse, it should have been done after her death. She most likely died from a few slices. She didn't suffer too much."

Lu Yang asked Jiang Ziya quietly, "Can you see it?"

"Can't you?" Jiang Ziya asked in return. He had thought that Lu Yang could see things like this, like ghosts, demons, and such. He just couldn't see the stranger stuff, like fairies and the like, even though if he pointed it out, Lu Yang seemed to be able to see faint images.

The conversation between them made Fang Da retreat three steps, his face pale from fright. Captain Hu even rolled his eyes at him and scolded, "Idiot, what do you think they're here for?"

Lu Yang didn't pay attention to the peanut gallery and said, "Of course I see it. That's why I'm asking you. It's very blurry for me, I can't make out the features at all. You take a close look and describe it to the police later. They have personnel who specialize in drawing portraits. As long as we know how the deceased looks, we can discover their identity."

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Jiang Ziya said helplessly, "There's no need. I know who she is."

Lu Yang froze. "Is it a classmate from our department?"

"No."

"Someone from the club?"

"No." Jiang Ziya sighed. "No need to keep guessing. It's Li Yao. Do you remember her? She's the girl who was with Lin Zhixiang the first time we met her."

Lu Yang said in shock, "It's her? It's actually her?" He frowned and asked doubtfully, "Could this have something to do with Lin Zhixiang?" "Li Yao," Jiang Ziya suddenly called out, "do you still remember me?" The figure who had originally been sobbing quietly froze and slowly turned to look at him. The tears flowed harder and harder, until even the rims of her eyes tore, and blood mingled with her tears, covering her entire face. Finally, the path of the tears turned into slices from a blade, her originally pretty countenance smeared by the blade marks.

The bewildered girl turned into a wrathful spirit right on the spot. She opened her mouth wide and gave a piercing shriek, as if protesting against the unfairness of life.

Lu Yang muttered "shit" and reprimanded, "Why did you call out to her?"

Jiang Ziya stared and said, "I-I just wanted to ask her what

happened.”

“Do you know that you were calling her spirit just now?” Lu Yang was about to go crazy. He hadn’t thought that Jiang Ziya would suddenly call out to her; Lu Yang hadn’t even had time to stop him. This was his oversight. Logically speaking, a normal person’s call wouldn’t have such a huge effect, but Jiang Ziya had never been normal. This single call was more effective than even a relative’s or the murderer’s.

Fang Da trembled as he spoke, “What in the world happened? Why is the wind suddenly so strong? It shouldn’t be this cold in this kind of season...”

*Even normal people can feel it so clearly!*

“Get out, all of you!” As Lu Yang shouted, he grabbed Jiang Ziya and backed out of the room. This was the scene of a crime, after all. If it got destroyed, he would not be easily let off the hook, even if he knew several policemen.

He shouted, “Hu-gē, go downstairs!”

Hu Lican nodded. Having experienced this a few times, he didn’t ask for any clarification. He grabbed his side’s greenhorn and immediately dashed downstairs.

The wrathful spirit’s appearance grew clearer and clearer. Even Lu Yang could clearly see that face full of scars, except that such an appearance could no longer be made out to be Li Yao’s.

He summoned Slay as he took measure of the other party's strength. Logically speaking, a wrathful spirit that had just been created wouldn't be too strong, but Lu Yang didn't dare to underestimate it. There were too many factors this time, and it even involved a murder case by the hands of a practitioner, as well as Jiang Ziya's call. This really wasn't an ordinary situation, so he couldn't assess it as he usually did.

The wrathful spirit dragged its feet and walked over with the support of the wall. Long nails screeched across the wall as they scraped by, accompanied by a screaming voice. The shrieking from both sources practically pierced straight into their heads.

Seeing such a situation, Lu Yang frowned. No one would believe them if they claimed that this was a wrathful spirit that had just been born. Even the famous female ghost dressed in red was no stronger than this.

Seeing Li Yao's wretched state, Jiang Ziya's heart thumped painfully. *She wasn't like this originally. It's all because of my call that she actually became like this.*

"Sorry, I-I didn't know I shouldn't call out to her..."

*No, I knew it very clearly. Ever since I was a kid, haven't I always tried my utmost to ignore these demons?* If he caught the eyes of any of them, they wouldn't leave him alone after that, let alone if he actually called out to them. In the past, he would never have dared to

do something like this.

Jiang Ziya suddenly wondered whether or not he had been too fearless lately. Because he had Lu Yang, Yu Shu, and even the boss, he no longer treated all the weird things he saw with his eye as anything noteworthy. From glimpsing an angel to calling out to Li Yao now... He sank deeply into his shame.

Lu Yang glanced at Jiang Ziya. He opened his mouth, originally wanting to tell him to go downstairs and leave, but after he gave it some thought, he felt that it was better to have him stay here and clearly witness what a true demon looked like. Then, he'd stop being such a huge space cadet just because he had an artifact demon at home, making his caution toward demons plummet, while his sympathy blasted into overdrive instead.

"Back up to the wall. Don't interfere any more than this."

Jiang Ziya did as he was told. He didn't know what else he could do in any case. If he could stop hindering Lu Yang, that would already be a blessing.

Lu Yang looked at his own sword. Slay's visibility was to the point that it nearly couldn't get any clearer than this. One day, if even the mist disappeared and Slay turned into a real sword, he wouldn't find it strange. Ever since he was a child, he had always wanted to clearly see his beloved sword. Now that he was almost able to directly touch the sword, his feelings were extremely conflicted.

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“Natural order of Heavens and Earth, disperse the foulness from the air; mighty gods of the eight cardinals, cut down demons and bind evil...”

Lu Yang’s righteous and stern incantation gradually drowned out Li Yao’s wretched shrieking. The originally ominous gusts of wind began to weaken until they completely dispersed. The wrathful spirit’s footsteps grew heavy until it was nailed to the spot, unable to move ever again.

This made Lu Yang relax a lot more. It seemed that even with many factors coming into play, a wrathful spirit that was just born still wouldn’t have too much power.

With Slay pointed at Li Yao, Lu Yang commanded, “If you let go of your wrath and quickly leave this mortal world, I shall assist you. If you persist in your ambivalence, then your only outcome is turning into ash!”

In actuality, Lu Yang knew that few spirits would drop their hostility and ascend with him forcing them like this. However, as was his custom, he went through the motions. His gramps always said that the heavens loved all life. To put it simply, it was giving them a chance. After all, it only took ten seconds, and he could take the chance to prepare himself.

As expected, the wrathful spirit had no intention of giving in. Instead, it had grown used to the influence of the incantation, its body trembling as if it was about to break free. Seeing that, Lu Yang didn’t



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plan to drag this out any further. The situation was too out of the ordinary. Giving the other party five seconds was plenty.

“Let the evil impurities dissolve away, let Taoism last for all eternity, let this imperial decree of Taishang Laojun...”

“Lu Yang, stop!”

Jiang Ziya suddenly got in between Lu Yang and Li Yao. It was obvious that he was protecting the wrathful spirit with both arms held wide, like he was protecting a fledgling.

“Out of the way!” Lu Yang was angry and frantic. A wrathful spirit was only a few steps behind Jiang Ziya. If it broke free of his influence... He immediately growled, “Jiang Ziya, get away from there. What’s going on with you today?”

Jiang Ziya shook his head and gestured behind Lu Yang. The latter abruptly snapped his head back, and only then did he discover that a man was standing behind him. Right then, his wariness rose to the max.

“Who goes there?”

The man was wearing an ordinary dress shirt and dress pants. He looked to be a normal office worker around thirty years of age. He walked by Lu Yang and didn’t seem to notice him.

Lu Yang narrowed his eyes dangerously. *This person appeared way too*

*out of the blue. He's probably a demon, too.*

Slay spun around in the air, the target changing. The blade turned from the wrathful spirit to the man who had appeared out of nowhere.

"No!" Jiang Ziya cried out. He moved over and stood behind the man's back to protect him.

Lu Yang looked at him, so angry that he nearly wanted to drag him off to Jiang Qibing and tell him to ground Jiang Ziya for the rest of his life!

"Ah Yang!" Jiang Ziya said resolutely, "Believe me. We agreed that I'd help you see, didn't we?"

Lu Yang froze. After he thought about it for a while, Slay slowly lowered and halted by Jiang Ziya's side. Lu Yang said in worry, "Come over here."

Jiang Ziya nodded. He looked at Slay, still worried. Without thinking, he reached out to grab the sword. Of course, this time he went for the hilt, but before he could touch it, Slay dodged to the side. Jiang Ziya could only rub his nose and give up, walking directly to Lu Yang's side. Lu Yang stared with wide eyes at this scene, finally witnessing Jiang Ziya fail in grabbing the sword. He sighed. *I don't know if I should feel happy or disappointed.*

Seeing Slay follow him over to Lu Yang's side, Jiang Ziya relaxed. He even leisurely said, "Your sword has quite some personality and is even unwilling to be held!"

Lu Yang didn't know whether to laugh or cry as he retorted, "Have you ever seen me hold Slay?"

When he heard that, Jiang Ziya was surprised. But afterwards, the scene in front of him stole his attention, so he wasn't able to pay any more attention to Slay's condition.

The man walked toward the wrathful spirit, as if he couldn't see the other's frightening face. He said with a smile, "Yaoyao, Uncle is here."

The wrathful spirit glared at him, still restrained by Lu Yang's incantation. Even though its hands had broken free of the restriction and could somewhat move, the feet were still rooted to the spot, so the wrathful spirit's long, bloody nails couldn't harm him.

However, the man showed no fear. He walked step by step toward the wrathful spirit until he was finally within reach of its hands. The wrathful spirit perked up, long nails shooting forward, nearly about to scratch the man's face off.

"Yaoyao."

The nails stilled. Just a bit further, and they would have been able to touch the man's eyes, yet the man didn't seem to be able to see those two hands. He just smiled as he called out, "Yaoyao."

The wrathful spirit stared at the man. Slowly, its large mouth closed, and the endless tears gentled. Finally, there were only sobs. She

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lowered her head, crying as she huddled into herself. Her figure actually began to shrink until eventually, she looked like a seven to eight year old child. She pounced toward the man.

The little girl sobbed and complained, "Sob, sob, sob, Uncle, you promised to take me to the amusement park. Why didn't you show up?"

"Aren't I here now? Sorry, I ran into car problems on the way." The man smiled as he patted the little girl on the back.

The little girl stared at her uncle and asked in puzzlement, "Did you show up?"

"Silly girl, aren't I in front of you right now?"

The little girl stilled. Then, she showed a bright smile and nodded as she said, "Yup."

"It's time for us to go," the man reminded her.

The little girl tilted her head and asked in confusion, "Go where?"

"To the amusement park."

The little girl's eyes shone, and she shouted, "Then, can we play for a very, very long time?"

"You can play for however long you want."

“Yay!”

The man linked hands with the little girl, ignoring Jiang Ziya and Lu Yang the entire time. Without any consultation, he led her to the room. The room’s outer wall was no longer a wall with a hole for the planned window. Instead, it was a tunnel, and a starry sky could be made out within, like it was a different world.

“Where’s the amusement park?” The little girl suddenly stopped.

The man stilled and said gently, “It’s right inside!”

The little girl stared with wide eyes but was unwilling to take a step further.

Seeing the situation, Lu Yang slowly walked forward. Slay was already in the air again, ready to strike at any moment.

Jiang Ziya opened his mouth to say, “Lu Yang, let’s ride the Ferris wheel first. I hear that lots of people want to ride it, so there’ll be a long wait. After that, let’s ride the merry-go-round, and then your favorite, the rollercoaster.”

*Yeah yeah.* Lu Yang rolled his eyes. *Why don’t I know that I love riding rollercoasters?* Still, he said, “Rollercoaster first. No one wants to ride the Ferris wheel.”

Jiang Ziya smiled. “Who says? Everyone wants to ride the Ferris

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wheel.”

Under the starry sky, an amusement park slowly appeared, as if thick fog had suddenly parted. There was a Ferris wheel, a merry-go-round, and a faraway rollercoaster, with happy shouts coming from the ride.

The little girl immediately rushed inside and happily shouted, “Uncle, Uncle, I want to play on that!”

The man turned his head to glance at Jiang Ziya, giving him a small nod to express his gratitude. Then, he walked inside.

At that moment, a notification sounded inappropriately from his cell phone. Jiang Ziya had a sudden premonition. He silently dug out his cell phone and looked at it.

**Master of Fate<sup>1</sup> wishes to add you as a friend.**

Jiang Ziya tilted his head but could only press accept. While he was at it, he typed: **Thanks.**

**Master of Fate: I am the one who should thank you.**

Jiang Ziya smiled. Just as he was about to put away the cell phone, notifications sounded one after another.

**God of the Eastern Sky wishes to add you as a friend.**

**Lord of the East wishes to add you as a friend.**

Jiang Ziya was speechless.

Lu Yang stuck his head over to look. He said unhappily, "So it was him. Truthfully speaking, I'm starting to regret giving you a cell phone."

"You should have regretted it before you gave it to me!"

**Immortal Lady He<sup>2</sup> wishes to add you as a friend.**

"And who in the world is this?" Jiang Ziya was about to go crazy. He hadn't given anyone his number, yet a bunch of people wanted to add him as a friend. *What's with this popularity!*

"My mom."

"..."

## Notes On The Chapter

<sup>1</sup> **“Master of Fate”**: Otherwise known as Si Ming, who first shows up as a death god in V1C1P1. The name, 司命 (sīmìng), means to command fate.

<sup>2</sup> **“Immortal Lady He”**: He Xiang (何仙姑) is one of the Eight immortals in the Taoist pantheon. She is often depicted holding a lotus flower.



### Chapter 3: Existence's Bane Part 3—The Society

After walking out of the building, Lu Yang indicated to the two policemen standing on guard outside the building that they were done, letting them know they could call support to come and process the homicide scene.

Lu Yang briefly said, "The female student's name is Li Yao, a math major. Her identity should be easy to look up, but there's no way to find out who the murderer is. However, it should be a practitioner. My dad will support your investigation. When he's not around and you need to be in this building, you must have at least three people present."

Even if Qing Wei Gong had the ability to discover the identity of the practitioner, they could not bring the practitioner to justice. They still needed the police to find evidence. Only then could the practitioner be sentenced.

"Got it." Hu Lican suddenly thought of something and said in embarrassment, "Xiao Yang, I don't think I'll be able to apply for a subsidy for you this time. This case is too big. I can't go under the radar and get a subsidy using some other reason."

Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him and said reluctantly, "You owe me hotpot next time!"

Hu Lican immediately agreed. He understood the price of practitioners very well. Hotpot was nothing. Even treating him to a buffet of king crabs would be well worth it!

Fang Da was already looking at them as if they were great masters. Jiang Ziya rubbed his nose and avoided that gaze. This time, he really felt very guilty. If he hadn't called out, things probably wouldn't have become so complicated.

After that, the two of them walked straight to the building where they had classes. It wasn't time for class yet, so they were the only ones in the classroom. Lu Yang pulled out the bag of breakfast from his backpack.

"Let's eat."

Jiang Ziya expressed difficulty in complying. Even though there hadn't been a nauseous stench like the day before, it was someone they knew this time. The heaviness in his heart was no easier to accept than the stench, leaving him with no appetite at all.

Lu Yang took out a box and placed it on the table. With no room for refusal, he said, "Soft-boiled egg, salad, and boiled chicken. My dad knows exactly how to cook food so that we'd be able to stomach it after taking care of a case. After taking two bites, your appetite will return. You slept late last night and got up early today, and you still have classes later. You had best eat well."

As a newbie, Jiang Ziya could only obediently follow orders. He picked up the box and began to eat. It was just like Lu Yang claimed; after taking two bites, he discovered that he really was hungry, and so he began to take larger bites.

Lu Yang then took out an insulated bottle and said, "Chicken soup. My grandma made it. Drink it later."

Jiang Ziya gave it a glance. "Is this how you get by?"

Lu Yang shrugged and said, "I've always had a strong constitution. Do you believe that I can go three days without sleeping, and still be full of energy?"

"I believe you." Jiang Ziya nodded. Ever since high school, he had witnessed Lu Yang's stamina. Of course, he'd recently gotten to know it even better... He couldn't help but ask, "Just how many cases do you take on in a single month?"

"Hm?" Lu Yang gulped down the boiled chicken meat and rubbed his chin as he said, "The number varies. But all the cases together, large or small, come out to be at least fifteen, I think?"

"That many?" Jiang Ziya was a bit shocked. *Doesn't that mean that every two days, you have to take care of a case that makes you unable to stomach your food?*

"My gramps and dad even want me to accept more." Lu Yang huffed, "They think I'm Superman!"

After complaining, he tore into the chicken salad.

Jiang Ziya quietly ate the chicken salad and chicken soup.

"Why aren't you saying anything?" Lu Yang frowned. "I was at fault, picking the wrong mission from the start. This one wasn't suitable for newcomers. It's like I took you to fight the final boss right off the bat."

Jiang Ziya shook his head and said, "No, I was wrong. I shouldn't have randomly called out."

Lu Yang shook his head and said, "You're a newbie. Of course you'd make some mistakes. You just need to be more careful in the future, and it's important to remember that when I'm not with you, you'd better remember to pretend those demons and ghosts don't exist. Don't provoke them!"

Even though he wasn't being blamed, Jiang Ziya still felt troubled. He hadn't thought that his call would actually turn Li Yao into a wrathful spirit. *She was originally fine...*

He asked worriedly, "Will Li Yao be okay?"

"She's already dead. How would she be okay?"

Jiang Ziya stilled but quickly explained, "I mean her ghost."

Lu Yang frowned. "I've said before that those aren't really 'ghosts.' It actually depends on the person. There are some people who believe they're illusions."

Jiang Ziya frowned as he asked, "So ghosts are actually considered a

type of illusory familiar?"

"In general, they would be considered as artifact demons."

"Where's the 'artifact?'" Jiang Ziya was even more confused.

Lu Yang huffed, "Did you forget the corpse?"

Jiang Ziya came to a sudden realization. "So, ghosts are actually artifact demons?"

"Not necessarily." Lu Yang explained in more detail, "Some 'ghosts' aren't the result of homicide, so there wouldn't even be a corpse. Instead, they would originate from rumors, such as Hanako-san of the Toilet. These belong to the illusory familiar type, although these kinds of spirits usually don't cause much harm. At most, they just get seen by people, giving rise to some ghost stories."

Jiang Ziya thought it over and asked, "Then, there's an eighty to ninety percent chance that the ghosts from the school legends are illusory familiars?"

"Yup."

"No wonder you're not against the school wonders investigation event," Jiang Ziya mumbled. Then, he abruptly recalled something and said, "Oh, right, the legend behind the abandoned campus is that the building can have nine floors."

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"What!" Lu Yang froze and hurriedly asked, "Tell me the actual content?"

Jiang Ziya told him in detail what he had learned at the club. First, he told of the legend behind the abandoned campus. Then, he briefed about all the other school wonders in one go.

Lu Yang frowned and asked, "Have you been to any of those places before? Have you seen anything?"

"I've been to the Pond of Meditation several times, but there isn't a wishing corpse there, just a mermaid that often leaps to the side of the bank to sunbathe. I've also been to the east-facing building of the Literature Department, but never exactly at midnight. I haven't seen anyone jump off the building. I haven't been to any of the other locations much."

Lu Yang held his cell phone, briefly wrote a text describing the legend behind the abandoned building, and sent it directly to his father.

"Is the night investigation today?" Lu Yang said gravely, "Then, let's get to the bottom of this tonight to prevent trouble in the future."

"You're not going to the abandoned campus tonight?"

"No, my dad will take over that side. He's older, so Hu-gē will have an easier time passing him off as some sort of inspector or consultant to sneak him onto the scene. Even if anyone got suspicious, it's not like he's in the country often. On the other hand, I'm a student at this

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school. If a reporter found anything strange, they could easily discover my identity.”

At this time, the sound of a notification came from Lu Yang’s cell phone. His expression suddenly turned a bit odd.

“What is it?”

Lu Yang just turned his cell phone around to show Jiang Ziya. To his surprise, on the screen was written:

**Master of Fate, God of the Eastern Sky, and Lord of the East wish to add you as a friend.**

Jiang Ziya asked in confusion, “Don’t you already have Fu Jun’s number from a while back? Why haven’t you added him as a friend?”

Lu Yang rubbed his neck. As he added them, he said, “I’d only entered Fu Jun’s number. We didn’t exchange messaging info. I only exchanged numbers with him so it’d be easier to contact you. Before this, I didn’t even have the boss’s number, let alone this Si Ming person.”

Among the three, the most polite was evidently Si Ming, who sent a message immediately after getting added.

**Master of Fate: Pleased to meet you.**

Lu Yang sent a smiley face back and sighed, “I really wonder just who

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Jiu Ge are. Sigh, forget it, my gramps already told me not to provoke them. They're truly a strange bunch."

Jiang Ziya asked, "Jiu Ge refers to a group of gods. Did you know that?"

"Yup." Lu Yang glanced at Jiang Ziya and said with a laugh, "Don't tell me you actually believe that your boss is a god?"

"... What else should I believe? Si Ming can ferry away souls. Isn't he some sort of death god?"

Lu Yang laughed. "What he does and what I do with Slay result in pretty much the same. Why aren't you treating me like a god?"

Jiang Ziya was speechless. "How is that the same? She looked like she went to heaven."

"I can also help Li Yao 'ascend.'" Lu Yang said unhurriedly, "But I haven't done that in a long time. The process is very troublesome, and the risk of failure is high. I'm not like Si Ming who can determine how they want to die, and I don't have the ability to change my appearance. I only have Slay. Besides, do you really believe that was Li Yao's spirit?"

"If that wasn't a spirit, then what was it?" *Even if it's an illusory familiar or an artifact demon, it's still a ghost, right?* Jiang Ziya was a bit confused.



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Lu Yang asked tentatively, "If you helped a spirit 'ascend,' then met him again for some unknown reason, and then used Slay to exterminate him, only to meet him again for a third time... Would you still believe that to be the person's spirit?"

Jiang Ziya didn't know whether it was a ghost, or whether it was a ghost that couldn't be exterminated. It was really hard to determine.

"How did you deal with him in the end?"

Lu Yang honestly said, "I handed the case to Gramps. At the time, I didn't have the capability of dealing with him."

"What about now?"

Lu Yang thought it over. "I should be able to now. There are probably few ghosts that the current Slay can't exterminate."

*All thanks to you.* Lu Yang felt very conflicted, especially after having seen Jiang Ziya try to grab Slay today. He had a feeling that sooner or later, it would become possible.

"Oh, that's good then." Jiang Ziya nodded.

Lu Yang asked in curiosity, "What's good?"

"We'll have a good night investigation."



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Lu Yang arrived at the club's location for the first time as a member of the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society and had no comments about the walls mottled like those of a ghost house.

Unexpectedly, Lin Zhixiang was actually present as well. Jiang Ziya had thought that she wouldn't attend anymore. Her initial reason for joining the club had just been a desire to figure out whether or not unexplainable happenings truly existed in this world, and using that to clarify what in the world her existence's bane's natal chart truly was.

"Hello." Lin Zhixiang looked at Lu Yang a bit nervously. She hadn't seen him when she went to Qing Wei Gong in the morning, but she kept hearing from the elders about a "Xiao Yang." Even though they hadn't brought up anything substantial, she could tell that this "Xiao Yang" was nothing to sneeze at.

When he saw Lin Zhixiang, Lu Yang frowned. He had already told Jiang Ziya not to mention what happened to Li Yao for now. They should complete tonight's night venture before bringing it up to prevent something else from happening. However, the latest they would be able to put it off would just be until tomorrow, as Lin Zhixiang was likely to hear about it.

A female student had died in the abandoned building, and eight people had actually died in the same building within a single year. This case was too large; the mass media would definitely report on it. It was already no easy feat for the police to keep it under wraps for a day.

Another person close to her had died. It was going to get even harder

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for Lin Zhixiang to believe that she was no longer the bane of all existence.

Jiang Ziya also saw Jian Zhi and his angel. The moment Jian Zhi saw Lin Zhixiang greet Lu Yang, he immediately stared at Lu Yang as if he had seen a great rival. The angel floating behind him was even holding a small bow with a red heart as the arrowhead.

*Can I please request Jian Zhi to just confess to Lin Zhixiang already! Jiang Ziya felt that this situation was really frustrating. Isn't Lin Zhixiang too oblivious? Everyone can tell that Jian Zhi likes her. She's the only one who hasn't noticed—then again, if I were foretold to be the bane of all existence, I probably wouldn't care about a small matter like someone having a crush on me.*

"Welcome, new member." Xu Xikai walked over.

Following his response to the club's location, Lu Yang similarly had no comments in regards to this pale club president who looked like a ghost. He then took another look at the scarce ten or so club members around him. Every single one of them was a bit odd. There was someone who was wearing a whole bunch of crosses around the neck, someone whose hand gripped a Buddha statue, and even someone who had plastered a bunch of charms over a bag—*Hey, you do know that one of the charms is for giving birth successfully, right?*

Lu Yang's head hurt a lot. *Just how bad is Jiang Ziya at choosing a club? You can't make a worse choice even if you rolled dice to determine it!*

Xu Xikai counted the people present and nodded as he said, "Twelve people. That's everyone. Let's pay our respects or say our prayers first. Then, we'll go to the Literature Department's east-facing classroom. We have a time constraint with having to be there at twelve o'clock sharp, so it's the first location."

*Only twelve?* Jiang Ziya looked at the number of people there. Indeed, there were fewer now than on recruitment day. *Looks like not everyone wants to participate in this kind of event.*

Some of them made offerings, some of them prayed, and some of them recited sutras. In some ways, it really was a harmonious gathering of religions.

Lu Yang lit up incense with one fluid motion and handed some to Jiang Ziya. Then, facing the incense burner, he recited scriptures and bowed to give his respects. After that, he walked forward to place the incense. His actions were both respectful and graceful. No one could resist looking over. Jian Zhi was also staring with wide eyes, unable to even muster up any jealousy. He said, stupefied, "How can you make paying your respects look so majestic?"

"How is it majestic?" Lu Yang said smilingly, "It's just that the actions are practiced."

*His family runs a temple. How can he not know how to light incense?* Jiang Ziya retorted to himself. Then, he bowed and paid his respects, thinking to hand the incense to Lu Yang so he could place the

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incense while he was at it, yet he was actually turned down.

“Place it yourself.” Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him. “Placing the incense is also part of the procedure.”

Jiang Ziya gave an “oh” and obediently walked forward to place the incense himself.

Xu Xikai watched with great interest and sighed, “I didn’t know that paying your respects is also an art. In the future, I will remember to place the incense myself.”

Lu Yang glanced at the other person but didn’t want to respond. He had never liked to reveal that his family ran a temple. In the past, even Jiang Ziya hadn’t known about it.

Xu Xikai reminded once more, “Everyone, remember to never ever use anyone’s name during this entire venture.”

After everyone responded, he then declared, “Let’s depart.”

They walked through the school in the middle of the night, extremely unaccustomed to this kind of silence.

“The school in the middle of the night really makes me uneasy.”

Someone muttered that, and everyone else showed agreement on their faces.

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"It feels so grim, like something might appear each time we turn a corner."

"I know, right!"

Even though that was what they said, after having the silence broken, their moods were no longer as tense, and they began to chat normally.

Jiang Ziya once again felt there was no need to feel uneasy at all, as Jian Zhi's angel was too eye-catching. With such a huge glowing entity around, how could it feel grim at all? He would never go with Jian Zhi to a scary movie, even though he never watched them anyway. Reality was scary enough, so there was no need to spend two hundred something yuan to seek something scary at the movies—it wouldn't be scarier than reality in any case.

Jiang Ziya lowered his voice and asked Lu Yang, "Can you see Jian Zhi's guardian spirit?"

Lu Yang gave a "yeah" and said, "I see a bunch of light."

"It's an angel."

"Ah, my dad would love that. Guardian spirits are becoming rare. Most people nowadays don't believe in them anymore, especially divine types of guardian spirits like angels. Most can only be found by the sides of super duper religious people."

Jiang Ziya asked curiously, "Then, why haven't I seen an angel behind

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your dad? Isn't an exorcist a religious person?"

Who knew what Lu Yang thought of, but he laughed and said, "Don't worry, you'll see sooner or later."

*I'd rather not.* Jiang Ziya felt that this guy's smile was too mischievous. He must be waiting for Jiang Ziya to make a fool of himself.

"Then, what about your guardian spirit?" Jiang Ziya even glanced behind Lu Yang in curiosity. Of course, there was nothing there. After all these years of acquaintance, if Lu Yang had one, he would have seen it already.

Lu Yang looked at his friend as if he were looking at an idiot. He suddenly felt that he had made friends with a moron. *Is it too late to break off our friendship?*

"Should I summon Slay and have him turn nine times nine times to remind you?"

"... No need." Jiang Ziya abruptly felt that he was too stupid. He quickly said, "I thought that guardian spirits were all humanoid or animals."

Lu Yang rolled his eyes at him, but seeing how Jiang Ziya only had a smattering of knowledge, he still gave in and explained, "You don't have to think of it in such complicated terms. Guardian spirit is just one way to call them. It mostly refers to the spirits that stay by a

person's side for a lengthy time."

When he heard that, Jiang Ziya also wanted to ask why he didn't have a guardian spirit. But after thinking it over, he realized that almost no one present had a guardian spirit, so it wasn't weird if he didn't have one. So, he didn't ask.

As the crowd chatted quietly in both excitement and nervousness, they finally arrived at the Literature Department's east-facing classrooms. Xu Xikai used a key to open one of the classrooms and led everyone inside.

Xu Xikai said helplessly, "Since the legend doesn't specify which classroom it is, I just asked for permission for the classroom with the largest window."

Lu Yang asked, "Where did these legends come from?"

Xu Xikai explained, "Some of them are tales that have been passed around for a long time. Some of them are rumors spread by word of mouth among the students. It's nearly impossible to figure out the source."

Lu Yang frowned. "I don't believe I have heard of these school wonders before."

Jiang Ziya hadn't heard of them before either, but he felt that it was very normal that he hadn't. To a student who had to work part-time and who was on a scholarship, looking into where he could work at



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school was much more useful than looking into school wonders.

"I bet you don't frequent the school's message boards much?"

Lu Yang shrugged and admitted, "I don't even have an account."

"That's why then. A lot of these tales have been passed around on the message boards."

Lu Yang nodded to show his understanding.

Seeing that he had no more questions, Xu Xikai turned toward everyone and said, "Let's begin preparations. We only have twelve minutes left."

Following that, they began to set up all sorts of camcorders. The club's newcomer duo had nothing to do, so they chilled by the side. Lin Zhixiang looked at the duo, as if she really wanted to join them but was afraid that she wouldn't be welcome.

Lu Yang waved her over, and she immediately walked up to them, without a care that she appeared just like a lovesick fool who was crushing on Lu Yang.

"Let's exchange phone numbers." Lu Yang took out his cell phone.

Lin Zhixiang froze, but when she looked at Lu Yang's expression, she understood that this had nothing to do with hitting on her. It was most likely purely because of her natal chart. She hesitated for a moment,

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but when she recalled going to Qing Wei Gong and hearing the inadvertent praise from the elders whenever they brought up “Xiao Yang,” she finally handed over the cell phone number that practically no one knew.

As the two of them exchanged numbers, Jiang Ziya glanced toward Jian Zhi, who had let his head drop, and even the angel behind him was depressed with a drooped head, cupid bow vanishing without a trace.

*All right, against a love rival like Lu Yang with his mixed-blood and model looks, it is indeed very easy to give up on life.*

Jiang Ziya gave it some thought and felt that it might not be a bad thing for Jian Zhi to give up on her. Before Lin Zhixiang solved her misfortune of being existence’s bane, she probably wouldn’t dare to fall in love at all. Besides, Lu Yang had said that this matter might take a long time...

Jiang Ziya clapped Jian Zhi on the shoulder. *For the sake of your life, you should switch to a different girl.*

Great minds really did think alike, as Jian Zhi lifted his head and looked at Jiang Ziya to resolutely say, “No!”

Jiang Ziya lifted an eyebrow. He hadn’t thought that Jian Zhi, with his timid personality, would be so determined in the face of an expert-leveled rival like Lu Yang. *He must really like Lin Zhixiang.*

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"Ten minutes left. Please take your positions."

Lu Yang walked over to Jiang Ziya's side and was even glared at by Jian Zhi several times. He looked at him in confusion. Only then did Jian Zhi avert his gaze.

Lu Yang looked toward Jiang Ziya in confusion. *Your lips twitched several times. Don't think I haven't noticed!*

"Look at the window. What are you looking at me for?" Jiang Ziya said, trying not to laugh.

When he heard that, in addition to how Jian Zhi and Lin Zhixiang had more or less both taken notice of them, Lu Yang could only look toward the window. Other than the ten or so club members present, there were also camcorders, cameras, and even infrared cameras. Their equipment was exhaustive.

However, Lu Yang didn't feel they would be of much use. They couldn't compare to Jiang Ziya's naked eye.

"Five minutes left. Please remain quiet following this."

As time passed second by second, everyone waited with bated breath.

At last came the final countdown. *Ten, nine, eight...*

It was twelve o'clock sharp.

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## Notes On The Chapter

The April Fools version can be found [here](#).

## Chapter 4: School Wonders Part 1—Step by Step

“Yawn!”

Lu Yang gave a big yawn and said, “Time to head to the next location, yeah?”

After he said that, everyone finally relaxed completely.

A whole fifteen minutes had already passed since twelve. Even claiming that their watches were off couldn’t pass muster. Nothing had happened. Not even a bird had flown by, let alone someone falling.

There was just an angel flying around, according to Jiang Ziya.

“Did you see anything?” Lu Yang asked Jiang Ziya lazily, as if he were joking around.

However, Jiang Ziya knew he wasn’t joking around, just that he was being watched by Lin Zhixiang and Jian Zhi and could only ask in a flippant tone.

“Nothing.”

“Same here.” Lu Yang turned to look out the window again but glanced at Jiang Ziya out of the corner of his eye. The latter shook his head lightly.

Xu Xikai didn’t appear disappointed. As he always said, he just wanted to confirm whether it was real or false. The actual result, truth or

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sham, didn't matter much. He said, "Looks like this legend is just a 'legend.' Let's go. The next location is the closest one to here, the Pond of Meditation. We still have many places to visit. Let's clean up quickly."

Having met failure right off the bat, everyone was downhearted as they cleaned up. However, someone suddenly cried out in alarm, "Oh my god! The infrared camcorder caught something!"

Lu Yang looked toward Jiang Ziya, who frowned and reflexively looked toward the window.

A shadow fell past from above with extreme speed, so fast that the actual shape couldn't even be discerned. All that could be seen was a mouth stretched into a wide smile.

Jiang Ziya's eyes bugged out.

"It's true!" Everyone surrounded the small camcorder and replayed the video again and again, becoming restless.

Lu Yang calmly pulled Jiang Ziya over to look at the replay. A black shadow had been caught falling down at a quick speed in the video, but it was blurrier, and the smile couldn't even be seen.

Lu Yang glanced at Jiang Ziya. This time, the latter nodded.

Someone asked doubtfully, "Could it just be something that fell from above?"

"But we were all staring at the window just now. There was nothing!"

"That's true..."

It was chaotic for a while until Xu Xikai said, "Everyone, for now, use your cell phones to make a copy, in case something happens to the file. Then, we should head to the next location. We don't have much time."

Hearing that, they took out their cell phones to record the video. Someone even immediately uploaded it to their club's website, and even Lu Yang naturally took out his cell phone to record it.

He also pressed send, but it wasn't to upload it. Rather, he was sending it to his father.

"So weird." Jiang Ziya thought about it again and again. Before the recording, he hadn't seen anything at all. *It was recorded first, and then I saw it?*

Seeing that he received no response, Lu Yang put away his cell phone and clapped Jiang Ziya's shoulder as he said, "Don't think about it for now. Let's get through all of the locations from the wonders first."

"The new member is right." Xu Xikai said, "Let's go."

The group began to switch locations.

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The Pond of Meditation was just a small pond with a small bridge in the middle. Even fitting twelve people on it was difficult, let alone several camcorders along with them. They could barely move. This time, they couldn't even make it to ten minutes before they couldn't stand it anymore.

"I feel a bit stupid." Someone laughed.

"I know... I'm going to wait by the side of the pond. I mean, the Pond of Meditation is so small. It's just as clear from over there as over here—"

"Ahhh, something is in the water!"

Suddenly, someone shrieked. Everyone immediately looked over at the pond... A koi fish flipped around, as if mocking the people on the bridge, and then leisurely swam off to a different location in the pond.

"..." One after another, they cuffed the guy who had randomly shouted.

Lu Yang wasn't very concerned. He had even spent an entire night plastered against a roof before. This bit of a tight squeeze was nothing. It was just that Jiang Ziya might not be able to handle it. He lifted his head to glance at Jiang Ziya, who was staring intently at the surface of the pond, not even daring to blink.

*Seems like there are no problems there.* Lu Yang rubbed his nose, only to discover that Lin Zhixiang, with her small stature, was almost being



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squished off the bridge. She was using both of her hands to cling onto the bridge, her face red from the effort.

Lu Yang moved behind her, silently creating some space. Lin Zhixiang turned to look and showed a grateful expression.

Several people began moving off the bridge, complaining, "I-I can't. It's too hot!

Now that there were fewer people on it, the bridge was finally not as crowded.

Seeing that his good friend was still staring at the pond so intently, Lu Yang laughed and patted him on the shoulder. He said, "Relax. Your eyes are almost falling out."

Jiang Ziya turned and said with a sigh, "Nothing's there." *Other than a mermaid sleeping deep in the pond.*

Xu Xikai said, "Try playing the infrared camcorder."

Those words immediately shook everyone awake. *That's right. Wasn't it the infrared cam that caught something on film just now?*

Unfortunately, there was nothing this time, only an occasional ripple across the tranquil surface of the pond due to the wind.

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"Seems like this legend is fake." Xu Xikai smiled as he said, "No need to feel disappointed. If all of them turned out to be true, that would be too terrifying."

Sparse laughter sprinkled among them, but they couldn't help feel a bit disappointed. After all, what had been caught earlier on film couldn't even be seen clearly. That it had appeared at all was suspicious.

A guy laughingly said, "Since it's a wishing corpse, then how about I make a wish right now?" After he said that, he dug out his wallet from his pocket, took out a coin, and tossed it into the pond.

"I hope I won't be disappointed by the rest of the itinerary."

Someone said uneasily, "You sure about this? The legend behind the wishing corpse is scary. If the wish comes true, the person who made the wish will take the place of the wishing corpse."

"I mean, nothing appeared, right?"

"I guess..."

"Let's clean up and head on out. The next one is the legend of the mirror in the bathroom of the school administration building."

As they cleaned up, Jiang Ziya was finally able to relax. He rubbed his eyes. Only now did he feel that his eyes were so dry, they were about to tear up.

Lu Yang patted him on the shoulder and said with a chuckle, "Let's go. Don't forget to blink later. This is only the second legend. Don't wait until after you look at six of them. You won't be able to open your eyes at all by then."

Jiang Ziya also felt a little foolish. He awkwardly gave a "yeah."

At this time, the sound of rushing water suddenly came from behind them. Jiang Ziya froze and slowly turned his head. He looked at the pond. Something white had drifted to the surface.

Lu Yang had been walking when he discovered that his friend hadn't followed. He had only said "Zi—" before he remembered the taboo of using anyone's name. He quickly swallowed down the rest of the name, but then he found out that Jiang Ziya was currently looking at the surface of the pond, as if he had seen a ghost. Lu Yang looked toward the pond, faintly seeing a white figure floating in the water.

*It actually appeared?*

Lu Yang stared suspiciously at that figure that looked like a person yet not.

"Why aren't the two of you mo—" Puzzled, Jian Zhi was halfway through his question when he abruptly realized they were looking at the pond. He immediately looked over as well and gave a shocked yelp, shatteringly sharp in the silence of the night.

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The group in front all halted and turned to look at Jian Zhi, nervous and suspicious. If he was playing a joke shrieking like that at this kind of time, they would probably even have the urge to murder him.

"In the pond..." Jian Zhi gestured at the pond and couldn't finish the rest of his sentence. The pond was still with nothing in it. He stared with wide eyes. Then, he looked at Lu Yang and Jiang Ziya, as if they were his saviors.

"You saw it just now, didn't you? The two of you stopped to look at the pond. You must have seen that there was a person there?"

"Might've been a plastic bag." Lu Yang calmly said, "I didn't see it very clearly earlier."

"There really is a wishing corpse?" The guy who had just tossed in a coin asked nervously.

Someone to the side shouted, "Oh my god. You just made a wish, too!"

"It was probably a plastic bag!" Lu Yang said with conviction.

"It wasn't." Jian Zhi angrily said, "If it were a plastic bag, it wouldn't have disappeared so quickly!"

Lu Yang was stumped.

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Jiang Ziya suddenly chuckled and said, "It was a fish, a huge, white koi. Just now, the entire thing was floating on the surface, looking just like a person. It gave me a huge shock, but then I realized there was actually a fish tail where the feet should be. The size was insane. Didn't you see it clearly?"

When he heard that, Jian Zhi froze. *Come to think of it, the proportions just now really weren't that of a human. Could it really have been a fish?*

Everyone relaxed and scolded Jian Zhi one by one.

"Are you trying to scare us to death?!"

"Take a closer look! Wasn't there already a fish scare earlier?! It's not like you don't know there's fish in the pond!"

Jian Zhi opened his mouth, but in the end, he didn't explain himself. Although he didn't want the others to think that he had made a mistake, he subconsciously felt... he should just treat it as having seen incorrectly!

He awkwardly apologized while scratching his cheek, "Sorry!"

They just berated him half-heartedly. Truthfully, no one blamed him, and the guy who had thrown the coin even breathed a sigh of relief, glad that Jian Zhi had admitted that he had been mistaken.

"Let's head to the next place."

They set off at a rather quick pace. Lin Zhixiang turned to look at Lu Yang and Jiang Ziya, spotting that they were walking in the very back. Understanding that they wanted to speak to each other, she just pulled Jian Zhi to the front so as not to disturb them.

Lu Yang asked Jiang Ziya in a quiet voice, "What was it?"

"The mermaid died and drifted to the surface. Then, she sank back down. There was even a coin on her forehead. Was the coin that had been thrown earlier one yuan?"

Lu Yang's face darkened, and he nodded.

*If the mermaid died, does that count as the wishing corpse?* Jiang Ziya hadn't thought of it like that, and he didn't want to see it either. He had been coming to school for over a year now and would always see her as he passed by. Now, she had suddenly died. He felt disturbed and saddened, and he even hoped that the mermaid was just playing a prank on them to scare them.

But he knew she wasn't.

The mermaid had drifted to the surface face-up, eyes wide and glassy, appearing so wronged.

"Someone made a wish. What should we do now?" Jiang Ziya asked worriedly.

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Lu Yang was also worrying over this point. Logically speaking, school wonders should at most only involve a bunch of illusory familiars and wouldn't cause anyone to lose their life, but there had already been eight lives lost at the abandoned campus. Now, they had only investigated two school wonders so far, and both of them were actually true?

"We'll keep an eye on it for now." He lowered his voice and said, "If it can't be helped, then we'll interfere and disrupt the remaining itinerary. This way, his wish of 'not getting disappointed' wouldn't count as coming true."

Jiang Ziya nodded. Now that there was a way to solve it, he finally didn't feel as nervous anymore.

After arriving at the bathroom of the school administration building, Xu Xikai said, "Since the legend mentioned seeing a huge group of people in the mirror, I thought it should be a very large mirror. Only the bathroom on this side of the school administration building uses large, long mirrors. The others only have individual mirrors. As for which floor, that can't be determined, so I just picked a floor that was the easiest to ask permission for. I hope that it's here."

They looked at the entrance to the bathroom. Someone said with a dry laugh, "The bathroom in the middle of the night really isn't a place I want to enter!"

"Should we turn on the lights?"

"We shouldn't, right?"

"But it's so dark. What can we even see if the lights are off..."

Xu Xikai said, "Let's head in first. If it's too dark, we'll turn on the lights."

The moonlight was rather plentiful this night, and the bathroom had a large window facing outwards. Even with the lights off, it wasn't so dark that they couldn't see their fingers if they stretched their hands out. After discussing it for a moment, they decided not to turn on the lights.

The large group set up their camcorders and silently looked at the mirror. This situation was beyond odd. Even Lu Yang, someone who often ran out in the middle of the night to slay demons, wondered what kind of club activity this was. No wonder Jiang Ziya had said that this club was about to go defunct!

"Can we hurry it up? Is it just a 'hello,' and then we can leave? I'm about to pee myself because of the me in the mirror!" A girl grasped both of her arms as she said, "The reflections of us in the mirror look so scary. Don't you feel the reflections don't even look like us? I feel like she's glaring at me."

"If you're about to pee yourself, the toilet's behind you."

"Like I'd dare to use it!"



"You don't have to close the door..."

Xu Xikai gave a cough. "Then, shall I give the greetings now?"

They began to feel nervous.

Xu Xikai took a deep breath and said, "Hello, everyone."

They all looked at the mirror. No one extra had appeared.

"Good evening?" Xu Xikai tried a different greeting.

As before, there were no more and no fewer in the mirror.

"Nice to meet you?"

After several minutes passed, Xu Xikai turned his head and asked, "What about the camcorder?"

The person operating it replayed the scene and gave a negative.

Unexpectedly, no one felt all that disappointed this time. Earlier, the wishing corpse business had already given all of them a scare. Inside their hearts, they rather wished that the remaining itinerary would be disappointing instead.

Xu Xikai nodded and said, "Then, let's go. We have to pick up the pace. Following this will be the medical department and the basketball courts. The library is the farthest, so it will be last."

The group could not wait to leave the bathroom. The bathroom in the middle of the night was really too eerie. Even though nothing had happened, it still felt wrong.

Before leaving, Jiang Ziya felt a gaze on them. He turned to look at the mirror, eyes widening. He couldn't help but grab Lu Yang, who had walked ahead of him.

"Don't worry about it." Lu Yang glanced at the mirror. There really were figures inside of it, and even a whole bunch! He quietly said, "There are a lot of illusory familiars in mirrors. It's pretty common, especially in bathrooms. They're nearly always there."

Jiang Ziya said in a quiet voice, "They're our reflections."

"...That's not odd either."

"But I feel that something's off." Jiang Ziya looked at the mirror but couldn't say what was off about it—everything was off about it!

"Is there someone extra?" Lu Yang just wanted to know if it matched the school wonder.

Jiang Ziya took a look and didn't see any unfamiliar faces. Even though he wasn't all that familiar with the club members, not counting himself, Lu Yang, Jian Zhi, Lin Zhixiang, and Xu Xikai, there were only seven others. They weren't hard to remember.

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He double checked and shook his head. "There aren't any unfamiliar faces."

Lu Yang nodded. "That's good then. This way, we won't have to interfere with the itinerary. The bathroom is already a 'disappointment.'"

Jiang Ziya hesitated for a moment but still nodded.

The medical department was in a separate campus. They had to leave this campus first. When they got to the streets and left the school, everyone inadvertently gave a sigh of relief.

Even though it was already past two, there were many shops selling late night snacks about, as expected of an area near the campus. There were even students inside eating the late night snacks. It didn't feel desolate at all—much better than the eerie campus behind them.

Someone lamented, "Man, I never knew that the school could be so scary."

Xu Xikai laughed and said, "All in all, we didn't receive any decisive evidence either."

Hearing that, no one could say whether that was a good thing or a bad thing. Anyone who would join a supernatural studies society was more likely than not hoping to prove the validity of the supernatural. Only a strange guy like Jian Zhi would join for the sake of disproving the

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supernatural. But if something strange actually happened, they would all still rather it didn't...

Lu Yang heard the sound of a notification. He lowered his head to look at his cell phone, only to discover that the video he had sent to his father earlier had failed to send, and so he tapped to resend it.

"Boys, come and sit inside!" A female shop owner welcomed them warmly, "One table is perfect for your number!"

Jiang Ziya lifted an eyebrow. *I'd hope so. Twelve people at one table would be so cramped. We're all guys too, with only two girls.*

Xu Xikai urged them, "Let's hurry. There's not much time left until three. The time limit for the basketball courts is three. Before that, we still have to go to the medical department first."

The rest laughed as they said, "Thought we could have a late night snack first. It smells so good!"

Walking along the big streets, the atmosphere wasn't as stifled as earlier. The group lightheartedly walked over to the campus of the medical department.

Jiang Ziya and Lu Yang followed the group to the medical building. This was a location unfamiliar to them both. It was the farthest from the campus where the literature department was located. Normally, they didn't have any classes that required them to come over here either.

One of the guys sighed in appreciation. "President, you're way too powerful. You were even able to borrow the medical building?"

"Just a room with a model." Xu Xikai said, "It's all about connections. I know a few students from the medical department, so it wasn't hard."

"The model is fake, right?" someone asked uneasily. "It's not a real person, right?"

Xu Xikai patted the other person's shoulder and promised, "Relax. It definitely isn't real. The medical department would never lend me a classroom with an actual body. Even their own students wouldn't have an easy time borrowing one."

Hearing that, the other person relaxed.

Jiang Ziya looked toward Lin Zhixiang and asked in concern, "You okay?"

*She's a girl, after all, so she might be more scared?*

Lin Zhixiang nodded. "I'm okay. I'm not scared."

As he looked at her, Jiang Ziya frowned. He couldn't help feeling anxious, his gut feeling of something being off growing even stronger.

"What is it?" Lin Zhixiang looked at him, flummoxed. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Jiang Ziya hesitated for a moment. He shook his head and said, "Nothing. I just don't like this kind of club activity after all."

Lin Zhixiang smiled as she said, "I can see that. The two of you are so nervous. Nothing has happened, really, and we're almost done. Bear with it a bit longer! Most club activities are actually just watching a movie or using the internet to research information on ghost houses. We rarely investigate in person."

Lu Yang patted him on the shoulder. Jiang Ziya also felt that he was being too nervous. Compared to the eight lives lost over at the abandoned campus, the oddities that had happened over here weren't worth mentioning. Truthfully speaking, it wasn't much different from what he usually saw everyday with his eye.

Jiang Ziya relaxed and nodded.

The group soon arrived outside the medical building.

"It's the first floor again." Xu Xikai opened a door and explained, "They didn't dare to lend me any floors above. There are too many dangerous things within. I was only able to borrow a general classroom from the first floor. Fortunately, there is a model there, too."

The group entered the classroom. A single glance revealed the anatomical model standing by the podium. The plastic model looked

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rather old, and it wasn't high quality either. The reflections in the bathroom had been much scarier.

As before, they set up the camcorders. The group didn't know what to do after that.

"Do we just watch the model now?" Someone asked hesitantly. "But this legend requires saying... to the model. If that phrase isn't spoken, then nothing will happen, right?"

"You're so fake."

The group froze. Jian Zhi had actually told the model exactly what the legend dictated.

## Chapter 4: School Wonders Part 2—The Forgotten People

“Why did you say those words?” Lu Yang demanded, “Don’t you know what the legend says?”

Jian Zhi asked in confusion, “If I don’t say it, how would we disprove the legend? We agreed from the start that I would say these words.”

“When did we decide something like that?” someone asked, puzzled.

“Huh? Didn’t we say I would handle this legend?” Jian Zhi looked like he was confused, too.

“No way...”

Lu Yang was practically about to explode. At first, he had thought the club to be somewhat proper, given that they had prayed and made offerings before setting off, so nothing serious should happen. Yet they had actually deliberately assigned someone to test the legend out?

“Don’t continue any further!” Lu Yang snapped, “If I knew the club activity would be so absurd, we wouldn’t have participated at all. Lin Zhixiang, I’m leaving with Jiang Ziya. Are you coming with us?”

He purposely called out to Lin Zhixiang. If enough people left, the remaining ones wouldn’t want to continue further. They already looked to be very tense. If half of the people left at once, the club activity would be disrupted.

“Okay.” Lin Zhixiang also felt that something was off. She hadn’t heard



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that someone would be assigned to test the legend out. She could not help but glance suspiciously at the president.

Xu Xikai quickly explained, "I didn't! If you don't believe me, you can ask Jian Zhi. I didn't tell him to do it!"

The group looked at Jian Zhi one after another. The latter nervously said, "It was a message sent to the group. Weren't we supposed to check the one we wanted to test? I saw that the anatomical model was the only one left, so it was the only choice I had."

"There wasn't a message like that!" Xu Xikai spluttered, "If you don't believe me, go look at the sender of the message. It definitely wasn't me!"

The group looked at each other, their expressions weird.

Lu Yang pulled on Jiang Ziya and said, "Come, whether or not the others leave have nothing to do with us anymore."

Jiang Ziya was still taking measure of the anatomical model. As he turned to look at the rest of them, he abruptly felt that something was wrong.

Lu Yang saw that his expression was odd and immediately pretended to look at the group in anger, allowing Jiang Ziya more time to look.

Jiang Ziya surveyed the group. *Wrong, wrong, everything is wrong!*

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Jian Zhi couldn't help but draw a cross over his chest. With a pained face, he prayed, "God..."

Jiang Ziya finally realized what was the most wrong.

*Where's the angel?*

"Jian Zhi."

Jian Zhi turned and looked at Jiang Ziya, asking in puzzlement, "Huh? What is it?"

Jiang Ziya looked at Jian Zhi. There didn't seem to be anything off about him, but the angel behind him had disappeared. *When did such an eye-catching angel disappear?*

He had been worrying the entire night, feeling that there was something off the entire time. He hadn't noticed the whereabouts of the angel at all. *Just when in the world did the angel disappear?*

*Was it when Jian Zhi told the model "You're so fake?" No, this classroom is so dark. If the angel was still around then, it should have been really obvious, so...*

His shoulder was suddenly patted. Jiang Ziya looked over at Lu Yang.

"Everyone's leaving."

Only then did Jiang Ziya notice that everyone was looking at him.

"Oh, let's go." The more he thought about it, the more his head hurt. He also felt that it was best to leave quickly.

The group left the medical building, pretty much in no mood to talk. Lu Yang purposely walked in the very front with Jiang Ziya to lead the way. Everything was too *off*, so it would be better for him to lead them to prevent them from being brought to the locations of the remaining two school wonders.

*Thump, thump...*

Behind them, Xu Xikai let out an "oh" and softly said, "The basketball courts are on our way out."

The group frantically looked to the side. Indeed, wasn't the area beside the trees the basketball courts?

Around five or six figures stood under the shadows of the trees and laughingly said, "Want to play together?"

*It's the exact same as the legend!* The group was practically scared out of their wits. *Are all the legends going to happen today without fail?*

*I don't care anymore!* Lu Yang was truly angry now. Just as he was about to summon Slay without a care to vanquish all of these things before them...

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"Huh? You're not part of our major, right?"

Several guys holding basketballs walked out from the shadows of the trees. They looked at the group in surprise and asked in confusion, "Why were you walking out of our department?"

The members of the Supernatural Phenomena Studies Society all stared at the guys in front of them in a stupor. They seemed to be... normal people?

Xu Xikai asked in suspicion, "W-Why are you playing basketball so late?"

A guy rubbed his nose and said, "Is it late? After we finish, we'll be just in time for breakfast. After eating, we can cram, and then go directly to class."

*What about sleep?*

Lu Yang turned to glance at Jiang Ziya, who shook his head.

Only then did Lu Yang relax and say, "Sorry, we were just doing a club activity. We're already done, so we were about to leave."

The other person asked curiously, "What kind of club activity would bring you to our department?"

"Night venture."

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The guys stilled and laughingly said, "A night venture to our department? Ah, got it, it was to investigate the school wonders, right?"

"Exactly." Lu Yang nodded. Right now, all he wanted was to quickly lead this group away from the school and have them all go home right away. Then, he still needed to discuss with Jiang Ziya what exactly had happened.

"Then, were you chased?" The guy asked with a smile.

"Chased?" Jiang Ziya asked, confused.

"By the anatomical model!"

The mention of the anatomical model made Lu Yang want to turn and glare at Jian Zhi, but he snapped, "No! Nothing happened!"

"Why so angry?"

Lu Yang really couldn't be bothered to explain. He tossed out the words, "We're leaving," and then led everyone away.

Seeing that, the guys from the medical department also realized that this group wasn't very happy, so they rubbed their noses and watched them walk away.

"Really, why the ugly complexions?"

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"Bet they were scared out of their wits by the anatomical model."

"Please, that super fake model? Even if it really were to chase me just like the legend says, I wouldn't be scared of it, okay! Besides, you just have to run around in the building once and you'd be fine."

"I would hope so. If it really were to chase you, I bet you'd piss your pants..."

"Let's split."

Xu Xikai said in frustration, "It was my fault. I didn't plan it well."

"It wasn't really your fault..."

The group consoled him but didn't dare to say more. No one really knew just who was at fault. In a normal night venture, no one really anticipated encountering anything supernatural, thinking it would probably be super boring. However, in actuality... Now, they would rather this activity have been beyond boring!

"Let's go for now." Xu Xikai said, dejected, "I-I'm going to see if there's anything odd caught on film. I'll notify everyone in a club message later."

No one dared to respond, practically wanting to resign from the club. Xu Xikai probably understood it, too. He hurriedly said, "Club adjourned," and everyone fled.

As he watched the departing figures, Jiang Ziya froze.

"Ziya, let's go." Lu Yang had his head lowered to look at his cell phone as he patted Jiang Ziya's shoulder and said, "Let's go to the abandoned campus. My dad hasn't responded this entire time. I don't know why. I want to go take a look."

"...Seven, eight."

"What?" Lu Yang lifted his head to look at Jiang Ziya, who was so spooked, it was like he was possessed.

"Plus us two, there are only ten people!" Jiang Ziya's breath grew short. He shook his head, trying to clear his thoughts. "Why is there only Lin Zhixiang left of the girls? That's not right at all!"

"What's wrong with ten?" Lu Yang asked, confused.

Jiang Ziya grabbed Lu Yang's shoulder and blurted, "Think about it. Just how many girls did our group start with?"

"Girls? Wasn't it just Lin Zhixiang..." Lu Yang stilled. *Wait! No, I think I heard a girl other than Lin Zhixiang speak.*

His face immediately darkened. "Just how many people did we have?"

Jiang Ziya tried his utmost to recall it. "I'm certain that a girl disappeared. She spoke in the bathroom, saying that she was about to pee herself. And she even asked if a 'hello' was all that was needed, and then we could go?"

"Shit!" Lu Yang rushed out, "She gave the greetings, and she even said it before Xu Xikai! Hurry, we're going back to that bathroom!"

They glanced at each other and shot off. They rushed right back to that bathroom. Jiang Ziya wasn't as fit as Lu Yang. By the time he reached the bathroom, all he could do was gasp.

Lu Yang surveyed the entire bathroom. There was nothing wrong outside the stalls, but there were several stalls with closed doors, which gave him a foreboding feeling. He walked over and opened them one by one, until he opened the final one and angrily let slip, "Shit!"

A girl sat just like that on the toilet, all four limbs limp, yet her neck was pulled backward to the point that it was lying across the toilet tank. Both of her eyes along with her mouth were stretched to the extreme, as if she had seen the most horrifying thing on earth.

Lu Yang thoroughly remembered her now. She had been in the group in the beginning, yet she had disappeared when they had left the bathroom, and he hadn't noticed it!

*I was with them, yet this kind of thing still happened...*

Lu Yang practically wanted to slap himself several times. If Jiang Ziya hadn't seen through it, Lu Yang would probably have gone home foolishly and not known that a death had already happened!

Lu Yang walked out of the stall, only to see Jiang Ziya stand in front of



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the mirror, his body frozen in place. This sight scared him to death. He called out in a strangled voice, "Ziya!"

Jiang Ziya turned, looking dazed, as he said, "Lu Yang, he's not in the mirror."

"What?" Lu Yang asked in confusion, "Who's not in the mirror?"

"The guy who made the wish at the Pond of Meditation!" Jiang Ziya frantically babbled in a high voice, "He's not in the mirror's reflection. The mirror didn't reflect anyone extra. Someone was actually missing. It's missing the guy who made the wish! He had already disappeared by then! We started with twelve people!"

Lu Yang mumbled, "The Pond of Meditation..."

He paled and pulled Jiang Ziya. They once again shot off, rushing to the pond.

A corpse was floating in the pond, face up, a one yuan coin stuck in the middle of its forehead. The pose was exactly the same as the mermaid that had died.

Lu Yang opened his mouth and fell to the ground on his butt, unable to say anything. He asked, shaken, "Ziya, were we really only twelve?"

"Yes." Jiang Ziya pulled on him and said, "Let's go. Jian Zhi's angel disappeared by the time we were at the anatomical model. I can't remember when. We have to find Jian Zhi."

"Jian Zhi..." Lu Yang knocked on his own head, hard, and said with certainty, "He was still there when we parted earlier."

Jiang Ziya knew that, too. "Yeah, so we might still be able to save him."

Hearing that, Lu Yang jumped right up from the ground. "Let's go!"

"But the problem is, where?"

Lu Yang looked at Jiang Ziya.

"Do we find Jian Zhi, or do we go to where the anatomical model is?"

Lu Yang took a deep breath and said, "I'll go to the anatomical model. You find Jian Zhi, but don't overdo it. If you find anything to be weird, protect yourself first. You got that?"

Jiang Ziya smiled. "Relax. I would never leave my sis by herself."

"Good." Lu Yang patted Jiang Ziya and said, "Come. We can't waste any more time. Let's split up! We'll keep in contact with our cell phones."

Jiang Ziya nodded and watched Lu Yang leave. He also began walking, to the place where everyone had split up. At the same time, he called Jian Zhi, but the call wouldn't go through. With no other choice, he could only ask Lu Yang for Lin Zhixiang's number.

"Hello? Who is this?"

"Jiang Ziya."

"You shouldn't have saved my number. I am the bane of all existence. Don't you understand—"

Jiang Ziya stopped in his tracks. There were feathers on the ground, snow white feathers that were faintly glowing.

"Do you know where Jian Zhi lives or where he might be?"

He followed the feathers as he spoke with Lin Zhixiang.

"Jian Zhi lives in the dorms. I don't know where he is right now. Why are you asking?"

"Something went wrong with the night venture. I suspect that something might happen to him. Can you help me find him?"

Lin Zhixiang sucked in a breath and said, "I'm nearby the dorms. I can head over right away."

"Are you able to enter the guys' dormitory?"

"Don't tell me you don't know. It's difficult for a guy to enter the girls' dormitory, but don't you know how easy it is for a girl to enter the guys' dormitory?"

Jiang Ziya indicated that he lived at home, so he had no idea the difficulty for either situation.

“Go over and take a look. If you can actually find him, it would be best to take him somewhere with lots of people.”

“Okay.” Lin Zhixiang hesitated for a moment and asked, “Then, are you coming over?”

“I have another clue over here. If it doesn’t pan out, I’ll head over. Pay attention to your own safety. Don’t end up by yourself. If anything comes up, call me or Lu Yang.”

“Okay.”

After ending the call, Jiang Ziya began to search by following the feathers. He had a feeling that he would find Jian Zhi if he found the angel, even though when he last saw Jian Zhi, the angel had not been by his side.



Lu Yang rushed straight back to the medical building. Even though he didn’t have a key, it was not a big problem for him. He directly broke a window to enter. Things were urgent; a little bit of damage in return for a student’s life—even the university president would thank him.

After rushing to the anatomical model, Lu Yang looked at it but didn’t find anything different about it. He didn’t know where to start, so he

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just summoned Slay to his side to stay on guard.

Slay flew around the anatomical model, but nothing happened. Normally, demons and familiars were extremely afraid of demon-slaying spiritual swords.

Lu Yang hardened his heart and directly snapped off a finger from the model, but nothing happened. It was just plastic. He had thought that maybe “something” was inside, but nothing was there at all.

Frowning, there was nothing else he could do. As a precaution, he simply destroyed the anatomical model completely.

His cell phone went off. Lu Yang didn’t even look at it before he answered. “Ziya?”

“It’s Lin Zhixiang.”

“Oh, what’s up?”

Lin Zhixiang hurriedly said, “Jiang Ziya told me to find Jian Zhi. I’m at the guys’ dormitory right now, but his roommate says he hasn’t returned. I tried to call Jiang Ziya but the call didn’t connect.”

Lu Yang paled and quickly asked, “Did he tell you where he was going?”

“No. He just said he had a different clue.”

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Lu Yang felt that his head was about to explode. He had told Jiang Ziya to find Jian Zhi. *So where the hell did he go?*

He quickly rushed outside, tapping his cell phone without a pause. Jiang Ziya really didn't answer.

A few students walked over to him, but Lu Yang couldn't care less about them.

"It's you?" The other person asked in a strange voice. "Hey, why did you return? And what's the hurry? Don't tell me the anatomical model is chasing you?"

Lu Yang didn't pay him any attention. He turned to leave.

"Then, all you have to do is run around in the building once. It won't chase you any more after that!"

Lu Yang froze. He turned and asked, "What did you say? What exactly is the legend of the anatomical model?"

"Isn't it that if you touch the anatomical model in the middle of the night, it will start moving and chase you wildly? But all you have to do is run around the hallways of the department, and it will obediently return to its original spot." The university student laughingly said, "Haven't you noticed that our building is a square shape? Probably, there was a senior who liked to run in the hallways in the middle of the night, so this legend came about... Hey, classmate, you okay? Your face looks terrible."

*It's different!* Lu Yang's face turned ashen. The school wonder that the club had detailed had clearly said that you couldn't tell the anatomical model that it was so fake, or else you would take its place and turn into an anatomical model.

*Wait, come to think of it, aren't these school wonders way too bloody?* Logically speaking, school wonders didn't have to involve people dying. Getting chased around by an anatomical model, like what this person before him mentioned, was much more like a school wonder. However, the school wonders told by the club were pretty much all deadly. That in itself was already a red flag.

He tried to recall those wonders. He remembered that the first one was the east-facing classroom: if you saw the student that jumped off the building smile at you, the next day, you would jump at the same time...

Lu Yang froze. Nearly all of the wonders they had experienced had come true. *Why hasn't the first? Is it because no one saw the smile of the student who jumped? You can't even tell it was a person in that video... Jiang Ziya!*

If there was anyone who could see the "smile," it was definitely Jiang Ziya!

"Shit!"

He shot off, rushing to the rooftop of that building. Even though the

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dictated time was the same time of the following day, these school wonders were practically breaking the speed limit. You turn your back and someone's dead. *Who knows if the foretold time would be accurate or not!*



## Chapter 4: School Wonders Part 3— That Angel, That Demon

As he picked up the feathers, Jiang Ziya found that he had strangely returned to the location of the first school wonder. *Did the angel disappear so early on?*

A sudden flash of light made Jiang Ziya lift his head to look up at the rooftop of the department building, only for him to discover a figure standing beside the fence of the roof.

“Hey! Careful!”

Jiang Ziya shouted a few times, but the other person didn’t react at all. The only thing Jiang Ziya could do was begin to dash toward the roof. As expected, all the doors were open on the way there, as if someone had gone ahead of him.

He rushed straight to the rooftop, gasping for air. It felt like he had done a whole month’s worth of running today.

He tried pushing the metal door to the rooftop, and it swung open just like he thought it would. The moment he walked in, Jiang Ziya’s gaze was drawn by the most eye-catching thing there—the angel.

The angel was not hovering in the air like usual and was instead kneeling on the floor. It was struggling violently, as if tied down by an invisible rope, and its face was full of anxiousness. Even the angel’s eyes had reddened, its beautiful face twisted in fury—still, there was no escape.

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Jiang Ziya peered closely, and only then did he discover that a circular sigil had been drawn on the floor around the angel. The shape was very similar to the drawing on the wall of the abandoned campus.

*If the angel is here, then was the person I saw earlier Jian Zhi?*

Jiang Ziya looked toward the edge of the building. Like he had thought, a figure was there. As he made his way over, he shouted, "Jian Zhi, it's Jiang Ziya. Don't be reckless. No matter what you're seeing now, don't move for any reason..."

The angel, who hadn't ever made a sound before, spoke up with a hoarse voice, "N-no Jian Zhi."

Jiang Ziya froze and turned his head to look at the angel. Tears streamed down the angel's face, hands seemingly plastered against a formless cage that the angel could not escape from.

Jiang Ziya abruptly began to feel suspicious. *Who caged the angel? Are the school wonders capable of doing this?* But there was no school wonder about anyone getting captured.

"Ziya!"

Following the shout, Lu Yang shoved open the metal door. Upon seeing the situation, he yelled in shock, "Don't move. Not even an inch!"

Jiang Ziya froze and asked in confusion, "Why are you telling me that? Shouldn't you tell that to Jian Zhi instead? He's already standing

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outside the fence. Don't you see him?"

Lu Yang carefully said, "I don't see Jian Zhi at all, just you standing on the edge of the building. Don't move. I'm coming over right now."

*Since when was I on the edge of the building? I haven't even reached Jian Zhi's side!* Doubtful, Jiang Ziya turned his head to look, only to discover that there was nothing in front of him. Below was the far too distant ground.

He paled, the height unexpectedly bringing about a wave of fear and dizziness. His foot slipped and didn't find purchase. He slid downward, hand reaching out to grab the railing barely in time. Sharp waves of pain came from the hand that had been injured by Slay, and his wrist also protested. But this action delayed his fall by a bit, enough for Lu Yang to rush over and grab his hand.

Jiang Ziya dangled in midair, abruptly feeling that this situation was way too familiar. Last time, he too had grabbed hold of Lu Yang like this. Now, the situation was reversed, and it was Lu Yang's turn to grab him in the nick of time.

"Ah Yang, if you can't hold on..." *Then, let go of me!*

Before he even finished saying that, Lu Yang grabbed him with one hand, while the other hand held the fence, and easily pulled Jiang Ziya back up onto the roof. Of course, it was inside the fence.

*...All right, comparing yourself to others can really anger you to death.*

*This is inhuman!*

However, last time, he had gotten shot before grabbing Lu Yang, so a comparison like this wasn't fair. Jiang Ziya tried to redeem himself.

Lu Yang took measure of Jiang Ziya. Seeing that he was fine, he then summoned Slay to circle Jiang Ziya, who didn't mind, letting the spiritual sword fly around him.

*Looks like it really is Jiang Ziya.* Lu Yang relaxed greatly.

"What were you doing?" After relaxing, he grew angry. Lu Yang scolded, "I told you to find Jian Zhi, yet you came here to jump. Did you think tonight wasn't exciting enough, so you planned to scare me to death?"

Jiang Ziya said in puzzlement, "But I really did see Jian Zhi just now. Weird, was my eye acting up? Why couldn't I see clearly this time?"

"No, your eye is fine. If not for you, we probably would have left a long time ago and wouldn't have discovered that anyone had disappeared at all, at least, not until tomorrow when someone finds the bodies."

Lu Yang frowned and continued, "Besides, it was possible for you to hallucinate and be guided to return here to jump off the building because you discovered that Jian Zhi had disappeared. So, the reason was to find Jian Zhi. If we hadn't discovered the truth, it might have been some other reason, like receiving a call from me telling you to

come here.”

“Why do I have to jump?” Realizing where he currently was and connecting that with jumping, Jiang Ziya abruptly recalled that he had seen a figure fall past the east-facing classroom while even smiling at him. Coming to this realization, he said, “I was...the victim of the first school wonder?”

“Yeah.” Lu Yang nodded.

Jiang Ziya scratched his face. He hadn’t thought that he had actually been the first to fall victim. Luckily, he had not disappeared without a trace like what had happened with the bathroom mirror and the wishing corpse.

Then again, this might’ve been because Lu Yang had been beside him. Lu Yang may not have noticed anyone else disappear, but if Jiang Ziya had disappeared, Lu Yang would definitely have realized right away. Therefore, he had ended up coming back to jump after they had split with the group.

Lu Yang frowned. “I think, we’re inside a barrier dimension.”

Jiang Ziya nodded and said, “Is it this rooftop? It should be, or else why would I mistakenly think that I saw Jian Zhi?”

“No, the barrier dimension should be the entire campus.” Lu Yang calmly said, “You didn’t notice the pathway this time because the pathway was our goal. Ever since we began investigating those school

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wonders, we walked step by step into the barrier dimension. That's why my texts to my father all failed. We're stuck in a barrier dimension, cut off from communication with the rest of the world.

"Moreover, once inside a barrier dimension, even your eye would become clouded. It's just that your left eye can see through the truth too well, so you can't be completely tricked. That's why you kept feeling that something was off, and finally discovered that someone had disappeared."

"Jian Zhi!"

Jiang Ziya turned to look toward the angel, who was growing more and more frantic, its pain and anxiety splayed across that beautiful face.

Lu Yang asked in confusion, "Is this Jian Zhi's guardian spirit? What's wrong?"

"The angel is calling for Jian Zhi." Jiang Ziya looked at the angel. If not for that cry of "no Jian Zhi," he might have jumped before Lu Yang arrived. He turned and asked Lu Yang, "Did you go over to the anatomical model?"

"Yeah." Lu Yang told him about it and even brought up that Lin Zhixiang hadn't found Jian Zhi.

Jiang Ziya walked up to the angel, no longer hiding the fact that he could see the angel, who had been panicking but now looked at Jiang Ziya in slight bewilderment.

“J-Jian Zhi.” This was all the angel seemed to be able to say.

Jiang Ziya looked at the sigil on the ground. He looked up, saw Slay, and reached out, thinking to snatch it to destroy the sigil, but Slay twisted and dodged Jiang Ziya’s random grab.

Seeing that, Lu Yang growled, “Stop trying to grab Slay. Is the injury on your palm not bad enough? Just watch, your fingers will get sliced off next.”

“Um.” Jiang Ziya rubbed his nose. This was Lu Yang’s sword, and he had intended to grab the hilt, so he just felt that nothing would go wrong. He pointed to the floorboards and said, “Have Slay slice a few times here.”

Lu Yang followed as instructed.

Once the sigil was destroyed, the angel escaped from imprisonment right away. It rushed into the air, looking in a certain direction and shrieking in a piercing voice, “Jian Zhi—”

Seeing the angel about to fly off, Jiang Ziya immediately shouted, “Wait for us! Take us with you to where Jian Zhi is so we can help him!”

But the angel didn’t pay him any attention, flying away directly.

*I don’t think we can communicate...*

"That's the direction of the medical campus. It should be where the anatomical model is." Lu Yang tapped Jiang Ziya and said, "Let's go!"

The two of them once again began the exercise of running in the middle of the night.

Jiang Ziya asked in near disbelief, "Are we still in the barrier dimension? Even the streets outside the school are part of it?"

"I don't know. I'm not skilled at distinguishing barrier dimensions." Lu Yang simply said, "But as long as you're on your toes, no barrier dimension can easily trick you."

*So everything is up to me.* Jiang Ziya suddenly wondered just how Lu Yang had been able to survive this way up until now over all these years.

"No wonder you keep getting trapped in barrier dimensions." That he had stayed alive up until now must be thanks to Slay.

Lu Yang frowned and said, "Actually, a barrier dimension of this caliber is rare. I should say that rarely have I ever come across this kind of barrier dimension, other than that world of ash that we mistakenly entered last time. Creating a barrier dimension is hard, and practitioners rarely specialize in barrier dimensions because it's too difficult and also too disadvantageous in a direct confrontation. That's why those with high skills in creating barrier dimensions are more often than not specially raised by the family. These kinds of people



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wouldn't carelessly commit a crime, especially homicide, as using their abilities to murder would be too much of a waste."

Jiang Ziya felt that whether they were in a barrier dimension or not was really complicated and scary, and so he sent Lu Yang a worried look.

Lu Yang laughed and said, "With Slay's help, most barrier dimensions pose no harm to me. They would just trap me for a period of time until the other person can no longer maintain it. See, even with this barrier dimension, they didn't dare to pick me as a target."

"That's good then." Hearing that most barrier dimensions couldn't harm Lu Yang, Jiang Ziya relaxed and nodded. As for himself, all he had to do was follow Lu Yang decisively in the future.

The two of them returned to the medical campus. When they passed by the basketball courts, they once again saw several male students playing basketball there. It was nearing four AM. *Just what is going on with the internal clocks of these medical students?*

Beneath the shadows of the trees, someone lifted up a ball and said, "Hey, want to play together?"

Lu Yang had only just said, "No time," when he saw Jiang Ziya stop in his tracks, staring suspiciously at the other person.

"Come on, don't turn us down!" Several university students were all holding balls in their hands and laughingly said, "We were just about

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to change balls.”

Lu Yang froze and looked toward those people but couldn't see their faces, just a mouth cleaved wide open. That so-called basketball wasn't a ball at all either, but rather a human head plastered with hair and blood.

He was so furious that he smiled. *They actually dared to approach us? Now, I finally have something I can destroy!*

“Slay, destroy them!”

Slay flew into the air, piercing straight toward those spirits. The opponents were clearly afraid of this spiritual sword. Not only were they unwilling to approach, they even retreated in a hurry.

Lu Yang himself wasn't slacking off either. He closed the index and middle fingers of his right hand together, pointing them straight forward, while he touched his thumb and ring finger together. At the same time, he muttered, “Natural order of Heavens and Earth, disperse the foulness from the air, let the evil impurities dissolve away, let Taoism last for all eternity, let this imperial decree of Taishang Laojun be heard—Obey!”

A silver ray of light shot out from his fingertips, piercing straight into one of the spirits. The spirit let out an ear-splitting shriek before its body burst apart from the middle, scattering into silver particles of light.

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After that, Slay dispatched another one. Lu Yang, who had held back the entire night, finally felt a sense of freedom. As long as he knew where he could point his sword, he was fearless!

Jiang Ziya was inwardly anxious. Normally, he probably wouldn't stop and wait for Lu Yang to finish off these spirits and would continue forward right away. But no matter how worried he was, he was wary of taking any rash actions, given how there had been one victim after another, he had nearly jumped to commit suicide, and he had learned that he was in a barrier dimension.

However, when he saw the flickering lights from the medical building, an alarm sounded through his head, and he hurriedly shouted, "Lu Yang, quickly finish them!"

"Roger!"

Lu Yang responded, and Slay flew high up, circling several times and leaving expansive afterimages in the air. Following that, countless phantasms of the sword rained down from above, destroying all the spirits in a single breath!

Jiang Ziya was practically speechless. *Just what kind of crazy production are you putting on here?*

**"Jian—Zhi—"**

Jiang Ziya looked toward the medical building, his face paling. Lu Yang stilled. He hadn't clearly heard the words "Jian Zhi," but he had heard

the wailing cry.

The two of them glanced at each other and immediately dashed wildly into the medical building. They even saw some students along the hallways, who all looked worried and helpless, not knowing what exactly was happening.

“What’s that noise?”

“Is it an earthquake?”

“Such a strong wind...”

To Jiang Ziya’s ears, that cry of “Jian Zhi” had been extremely clear, but Lu Yang had only heard a shriek. To these normal students’ ears, it was even more indistinct, akin to the howling of a tempest.

“It’s the fire alarm!” Lu Yang shouted. “Hurry outside! Call the police right away! The two of us are going to warn everyone else.”

Once someone explained, the sound in those people’s ears immediately turned into the wail of a fire alarm. As they learned that it was a fire, they paled and followed what Lu Yang said, rushing out of the building.

Lu Yang led Jiang Ziya, arriving at the classroom with the anatomical model with familiarity. This was his third time here. He would know the way even with his eyes closed.

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He kicked open the classroom door, face darkening right away. He had clearly destroyed the anatomical model, yet there was currently still one propped up on the stand. It was just that the classroom had poor lighting, so he could not make out the true appearance of the model.

Lu Yang placed his hand on the light switch but hesitated. Before turning on the lights, he reminded, "Ziya, you best not look."

Jiang Ziya sucked in a deep breath but didn't plan to run away. He just said, "Turn on the lights."

With the lights on, it was clear that a person was standing there, but they couldn't tell if it was Jian Zhi or not from their angle. Half of the anatomical model didn't have any skin, the structure of the muscles exposed. A portion of the chest cavity was even open, revealing the organs inside. This was for the sake of easier observation for the students, but what had originally been an extremely fake plastic model was now more real than ever.

Even though he had been mentally prepared, Jiang Ziya still could not help but tremble from seeing such a terrible sight. He could not bring himself to believe that this was the classmate he had only just left: Jian Zhi, who had dragged him into joining the club, Jian Zhi, who had secretly harbored a crush on Lin Zhixiang... yet this was reality. He didn't even need to walk over like Lu Yang for a better angle to see the side of the "anatomical model's" face that had skin.

It really was Jian Zhi. Even though another classmate had died under his supervision, Lu Yang didn't have time for guilt or grief. He just

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walked forward by a bit, to block off Jiang Ziya from the front, and quietly asked, "What does the black demon by Jian Zhi's feet actually look like?"

"No, it's not a demon."

Jiang Ziya looked at the pitch black lump of a person that was endlessly shrieking "Jian Zhi" while kneeling by the "anatomical figure's" feet. His heart felt heavy with grief.

"It's the angel."

## Chapter 4: School Wonders Part 3—That Angel, That Demon

As he picked up the feathers, Jiang Ziya found that he had strangely returned to the location of the first school wonder. *Did the angel disappear so early on?*

A sudden flash of light made Jiang Ziya lift his head to look up at the rooftop of the department building, only for him to discover a figure standing beside the fence of the roof.

“Hey! Careful!”

Jiang Ziya shouted a few times, but the other person didn’t react at all. The only thing Jiang Ziya could do was begin to dash toward the roof. As expected, all the doors were open on the way there, as if someone had gone ahead of him.

He rushed straight to the rooftop, gasping for air. It felt like he had done a whole month’s worth of running today.

He tried pushing the metal door to the rooftop, and it swung open just like he thought it would. The moment he walked in, Jiang Ziya’s gaze was drawn by the most eye-catching thing there—the angel.

The angel was not hovering in the air like usual and was instead kneeling on the floor. It was struggling violently, as if tied down by an invisible rope, and its face was full of anxiousness. Even the angel’s eyes had reddened, its beautiful face twisted in fury—still, there was no escape.

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Jiang Ziya peered closely, and only then did he discover that a circular sigil had been drawn on the floor around the angel. The shape was very similar to the drawing on the wall of the abandoned campus.

*If the angel is here, then was the person I saw earlier Jian Zhi?*

Jiang Ziya looked toward the edge of the building. Like he had thought, a figure was there. As he made his way over, he shouted, "Jian Zhi, it's Jiang Ziya. Don't be reckless. No matter what you're seeing now, don't move for any reason..."

The angel, who hadn't ever made a sound before, spoke up with a hoarse voice, "N-no Jian Zhi."

Jiang Ziya froze and turned his head to look at the angel. Tears streamed down the angel's face, hands seemingly plastered against a formless cage that the angel could not escape from.

Jiang Ziya abruptly began to feel suspicious. *Who caged the angel? Are the school wonders capable of doing this?* But there was no school wonder about anyone getting captured.

"Ziya!"

Following the shout, Lu Yang shoved open the metal door. Upon seeing the situation, he yelled in shock, "Don't move. Not even an inch!"

Jiang Ziya froze and asked in confusion, "Why are you telling me that? Shouldn't you tell that to Jian Zhi instead? He's already standing



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outside the fence. Don't you see him?"

Lu Yang carefully said, "I don't see Jian Zhi at all, just you standing on the edge of the building. Don't move. I'm coming over right now."

*Since when was I on the edge of the building? I haven't even reached Jian Zhi's side!* Doubtful, Jiang Ziya turned his head to look, only to discover that there was nothing in front of him. Below was the far too distant ground.

He paled, the height unexpectedly bringing about a wave of fear and dizziness. His foot slipped and didn't find purchase. He slid downward, hand reaching out to grab the railing barely in time. Sharp waves of pain came from the hand that had been injured by Slay, and his wrist also protested. But this action delayed his fall by a bit, enough for Lu Yang to rush over and grab his hand.

Jiang Ziya dangled in midair, abruptly feeling that this situation was way too familiar. Last time, he too had grabbed hold of Lu Yang like this. Now, the situation was reversed, and it was Lu Yang's turn to grab him in the nick of time.

"Ah Yang, if you can't hold on..." *Then, let go of me!*

Before he even finished saying that, Lu Yang grabbed him with one hand, while the other hand held the fence, and easily pulled Jiang Ziya back up onto the roof. Of course, it was inside the fence.

*...All right, comparing yourself to others can really anger you to death.*

*This is inhuman!*

However, last time, he had gotten shot before grabbing Lu Yang, so a comparison like this wasn't fair. Jiang Ziya tried to redeem himself.

Lu Yang took measure of Jiang Ziya. Seeing that he was fine, he then summoned Slay to circle Jiang Ziya, who didn't mind, letting the spiritual sword fly around him.

*Looks like it really is Jiang Ziya.* Lu Yang relaxed greatly.

"What were you doing?" After relaxing, he grew angry. Lu Yang scolded, "I told you to find Jian Zhi, yet you came here to jump. Did you think tonight wasn't exciting enough, so you planned to scare me to death?"

Jiang Ziya said in puzzlement, "But I really did see Jian Zhi just now. Weird, was my eye acting up? Why couldn't I see clearly this time?"

"No, your eye is fine. If not for you, we probably would have left a long time ago and wouldn't have discovered that anyone had disappeared at all, at least, not until tomorrow when someone finds the bodies."

Lu Yang frowned and continued, "Besides, it was possible for you to hallucinate and be guided to return here to jump off the building because you discovered that Jian Zhi had disappeared. So, the reason was to find Jian Zhi. If we hadn't discovered the truth, it might have been some other reason, like receiving a call from me telling you to

come here.”

“Why do I have to jump?” Realizing where he currently was and connecting that with jumping, Jiang Ziya abruptly recalled that he had seen a figure fall past the east-facing classroom while even smiling at him. Coming to this realization, he said, “I was...the victim of the first school wonder?”

“Yeah.” Lu Yang nodded.

Jiang Ziya scratched his face. He hadn’t thought that he had actually been the first to fall victim. Luckily, he had not disappeared without a trace like what had happened with the bathroom mirror and the wishing corpse.

Then again, this might’ve been because Lu Yang had been beside him. Lu Yang may not have noticed anyone else disappear, but if Jiang Ziya had disappeared, Lu Yang would definitely have realized right away. Therefore, he had ended up coming back to jump after they had split with the group.

Lu Yang frowned. “I think, we’re inside a barrier dimension.”

Jiang Ziya nodded and said, “Is it this rooftop? It should be, or else why would I mistakenly think that I saw Jian Zhi?”

“No, the barrier dimension should be the entire campus.” Lu Yang calmly said, “You didn’t notice the pathway this time because the pathway was our goal. Ever since we began investigating those school

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wonders, we walked step by step into the barrier dimension. That's why my texts to my father all failed. We're stuck in a barrier dimension, cut off from communication with the rest of the world.

"Moreover, once inside a barrier dimension, even your eye would become clouded. It's just that your left eye can see through the truth too well, so you can't be completely tricked. That's why you kept feeling that something was off, and finally discovered that someone had disappeared."

"Jian Zhi!"

Jiang Ziya turned to look toward the angel, who was growing more and more frantic, its pain and anxiety splayed across that beautiful face.

Lu Yang asked in confusion, "Is this Jian Zhi's guardian spirit? What's wrong?"

"The angel is calling for Jian Zhi." Jiang Ziya looked at the angel. If not for that cry of "no Jian Zhi," he might have jumped before Lu Yang arrived. He turned and asked Lu Yang, "Did you go over to the anatomical model?"

"Yeah." Lu Yang told him about it and even brought up that Lin Zhixiang hadn't found Jian Zhi.

Jiang Ziya walked up to the angel, no longer hiding the fact that he could see the angel, who had been panicking but now looked at Jiang Ziya in slight bewilderment.

“J-Jian Zhi.” This was all the angel seemed to be able to say.

Jiang Ziya looked at the sigil on the ground. He looked up, saw Slay, and reached out, thinking to snatch it to destroy the sigil, but Slay twisted and dodged Jiang Ziya’s random grab.

Seeing that, Lu Yang growled, “Stop trying to grab Slay. Is the injury on your palm not bad enough? Just watch, your fingers will get sliced off next.”

“Um.” Jiang Ziya rubbed his nose. This was Lu Yang’s sword, and he had intended to grab the hilt, so he just felt that nothing would go wrong. He pointed to the floorboards and said, “Have Slay slice a few times here.”

Lu Yang followed as instructed.

Once the sigil was destroyed, the angel escaped from imprisonment right away. It rushed into the air, looking in a certain direction and shrieking in a piercing voice, “Jian Zhi—”

Seeing the angel about to fly off, Jiang Ziya immediately shouted, “Wait for us! Take us with you to where Jian Zhi is so we can help him!”

But the angel didn’t pay him any attention, flying away directly.

*I don’t think we can communicate...*

"That's the direction of the medical campus. It should be where the anatomical model is." Lu Yang tapped Jiang Ziya and said, "Let's go!"

The two of them once again began the exercise of running in the middle of the night.

Jiang Ziya asked in near disbelief, "Are we still in the barrier dimension? Even the streets outside the school are part of it?"

"I don't know. I'm not skilled at distinguishing barrier dimensions." Lu Yang simply said, "But as long as you're on your toes, no barrier dimension can easily trick you."

*So everything is up to me.* Jiang Ziya suddenly wondered just how Lu Yang had been able to survive this way up until now over all these years.

"No wonder you keep getting trapped in barrier dimensions." That he had stayed alive up until now must be thanks to Slay.

Lu Yang frowned and said, "Actually, a barrier dimension of this caliber is rare. I should say that rarely have I ever come across this kind of barrier dimension, other than that world of ash that we mistakenly entered last time. Creating a barrier dimension is hard, and practitioners rarely specialize in barrier dimensions because it's too difficult and also too disadvantageous in a direct confrontation. That's why those with high skills in creating barrier dimensions are more often than not specially raised by the family. These kinds of people

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wouldn't carelessly commit a crime, especially homicide, as using their abilities to murder would be too much of a waste."

Jiang Ziya felt that whether they were in a barrier dimension or not was really complicated and scary, and so he sent Lu Yang a worried look.

Lu Yang laughed and said, "With Slay's help, most barrier dimensions pose no harm to me. They would just trap me for a period of time until the other person can no longer maintain it. See, even with this barrier dimension, they didn't dare to pick me as a target."

"That's good then." Hearing that most barrier dimensions couldn't harm Lu Yang, Jiang Ziya relaxed and nodded. As for himself, all he had to do was follow Lu Yang decisively in the future.

The two of them returned to the medical campus. When they passed by the basketball courts, they once again saw several male students playing basketball there. It was nearing four AM. *Just what is going on with the internal clocks of these medical students?*

Beneath the shadows of the trees, someone lifted up a ball and said, "Hey, want to play together?"

Lu Yang had only just said, "No time," when he saw Jiang Ziya stop in his tracks, staring suspiciously at the other person.

"Come on, don't turn us down!" Several university students were all holding balls in their hands and laughingly said, "We were just about

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to change balls.”

Lu Yang froze and looked toward those people but couldn't see their faces, just a mouth cleaved wide open. That so-called basketball wasn't a ball at all either, but rather a human head plastered with hair and blood.

He was so furious that he smiled. *They actually dared to approach us? Now, I finally have something I can destroy!*

“Slay, destroy them!”

Slay flew into the air, piercing straight toward those spirits. The opponents were clearly afraid of this spiritual sword. Not only were they unwilling to approach, they even retreated in a hurry.

Lu Yang himself wasn't slacking off either. He closed the index and middle fingers of his right hand together, pointing them straight forward, while he touched his thumb and ring finger together. At the same time, he muttered, “Natural order of Heavens and Earth, disperse the foulness from the air, let the evil impurities dissolve away, let Taoism last for all eternity, let this imperial decree of Taishang Laojun be heard—Obey!”

A silver ray of light shot out from his fingertips, piercing straight into one of the spirits. The spirit let out an ear-splitting shriek before its body burst apart from the middle, scattering into silver particles of light.



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After that, Slay dispatched another one. Lu Yang, who had held back the entire night, finally felt a sense of freedom. As long as he knew where he could point his sword, he was fearless!

Jiang Ziya was inwardly anxious. Normally, he probably wouldn't stop and wait for Lu Yang to finish off these spirits and would continue forward right away. But no matter how worried he was, he was wary of taking any rash actions, given how there had been one victim after another, he had nearly jumped to commit suicide, and he had learned that he was in a barrier dimension.

However, when he saw the flickering lights from the medical building, an alarm sounded through his head, and he hurriedly shouted, "Lu Yang, quickly finish them!"

"Roger!"

Lu Yang responded, and Slay flew high up, circling several times and leaving expansive afterimages in the air. Following that, countless phantasms of the sword rained down from above, destroying all the spirits in a single breath!

Jiang Ziya was practically speechless. *Just what kind of crazy production are you putting on here?*

**"Jian—Zhi—"**

Jiang Ziya looked toward the medical building, his face paling. Lu Yang stilled. He hadn't clearly heard the words "Jian Zhi," but he had heard

the wailing cry.

The two of them glanced at each other and immediately dashed wildly into the medical building. They even saw some students along the hallways, who all looked worried and helpless, not knowing what exactly was happening.

“What’s that noise?”

“Is it an earthquake?”

“Such a strong wind...”

To Jiang Ziya’s ears, that cry of “Jian Zhi” had been extremely clear, but Lu Yang had only heard a shriek. To these normal students’ ears, it was even more indistinct, akin to the howling of a tempest.

“It’s the fire alarm!” Lu Yang shouted. “Hurry outside! Call the police right away! The two of us are going to warn everyone else.”

Once someone explained, the sound in those people’s ears immediately turned into the wail of a fire alarm. As they learned that it was a fire, they paled and followed what Lu Yang said, rushing out of the building.

Lu Yang led Jiang Ziya, arriving at the classroom with the anatomical model with familiarity. This was his third time here. He would know the way even with his eyes closed.

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He kicked open the classroom door, face darkening right away. He had clearly destroyed the anatomical model, yet there was currently still one propped up on the stand. It was just that the classroom had poor lighting, so he could not make out the true appearance of the model.

Lu Yang placed his hand on the light switch but hesitated. Before turning on the lights, he reminded, "Ziya, you best not look."

Jiang Ziya sucked in a deep breath but didn't plan to run away. He just said, "Turn on the lights."

With the lights on, it was clear that a person was standing there, but they couldn't tell if it was Jian Zhi or not from their angle. Half of the anatomical model didn't have any skin, the structure of the muscles exposed. A portion of the chest cavity was even open, revealing the organs inside. This was for the sake of easier observation for the students, but what had originally been an extremely fake plastic model was now more real than ever.

Even though he had been mentally prepared, Jiang Ziya still could not help but tremble from seeing such a terrible sight. He could not bring himself to believe that this was the classmate he had only just left: Jian Zhi, who had dragged him into joining the club, Jian Zhi, who had secretly harbored a crush on Lin Zhixiang... yet this was reality. He didn't even need to walk over like Lu Yang for a better angle to see the side of the "anatomical model's" face that had skin.

It really was Jian Zhi. Even though another classmate had died under his supervision, Lu Yang didn't have time for guilt or grief. He just

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walked forward by a bit, to block off Jiang Ziya from the front, and quietly asked, "What does the black demon by Jian Zhi's feet actually look like?"

"No, it's not a demon."

Jiang Ziya looked at the pitch black lump of a person that was endlessly shrieking "Jian Zhi" while kneeling by the "anatomical figure's" feet. His heart felt heavy with grief.

"It's the angel."

## Chapter 5: Ceremony of the Devil Part 1—Not Your Case

Liu Yishi calmly waited outside the abandoned campus, drawing the attention of the policemen coming and going. Fortunately, this situation did not continue for long before the person he was waiting for arrived.

"You are Lu Yang's father?"

Before Liu Yishi could give a greeting, he heard a young policeman mutter, "How come it's a westerner? I don't know English!"

Liu Yishi smiled and used fluent and proper Mandarin to say, "Since my son is half, as the dad, I can only be a foreigner."

Hu Lican immediately whacked his partner on the back, the force so great that Fang Da's heart was nearly ejected from his ribcage.

"Sorry, this brat is still green. Don't pay him any mind. I'm Hu Lican, a captain from the criminal investigations division." Hu Lican extended a hand out as he introduced himself.

"Greetings, Captain Hu Lican." Liu Yishi reached out and gripped the other person's hand. He introduced himself, "I am Liu Yishi, Lu Yang's father."

"Then, why is your surname Liu?" Fang Da asked in surprise. *Even though taking on the mother's surname is possible now, it's still rare for that to happen!*

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*Again?* Hu Lican turned and smacked the back of his partner's head. He scolded, "What the hell does his son's surname have anything to do with you?!"

With a smile, Liu Yishi stopped him from beating his partner up any further by saying, "Captain Hu Lican, it's fine. Chatting can help loosen our nerves."

Fang Da felt very wronged, but he didn't dare to randomly speak up anymore.

"Actually, my surname isn't Liu." Liu Yishi blinked and explained, "My name is Lewis Hunter. My surname is actually Hunter. My son's English name is Luke Hunter. Overseas, he takes my surname. In Taiwan, he takes his mother's surname. Isn't this very fair?"

Fang Da came to a sudden understanding and quickly nodded his agreement.

Seeing that his partner hadn't caused offense, and the two had even begun chatting, Hu Lican relaxed. It seemed that Lu Yang's father was as approachable as Lu Yang. This was good news.

Liu Yishi raised his head to look at the abandoned campus, a slight frown on his face.

"Let's head inside. Even though I'm not as wary of reporters as Lu Yang is, if possible, I still don't wish to appear in the public eye."

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Hu Lican nodded. As he led the way, he said, "I passed you off as an advisor, an expert on those devil sigils. If you're unable to explain something, just say that you need to go back and do research. You can wing it. I'll help cover for you on everything else."

Liu Yishi didn't mind much at all. Even though he could not be said to be an expert on this sort of matter, he was definitely more knowledgeable than the general populace in Taiwan. An impromptu explanation was no problem either.

Hu Lican said, "Using an apparatus, we have already photographed all of the erased sigils from the first floor to the seventh. Fang Da, give the data to Mr. Liu."

Fang Da quickly handed over a folder.

As Liu Yishi flipped through it, he asked, "You mentioned floors one through seven. Does the eighth floor not have one?"

Hu Lican said in frustration, "That's the weird part. The eighth floor actually doesn't have one. There's also a lot of graffiti here, so some people claimed that these sigils actually have nothing to do with the case."

"It really is the seven deadly sins." Liu Yishi looked at the sigils. Each of the sigils represented a devil from the seven deadly sins. This wasn't a big deal, as these types of sigils had great supplementary benefits. They could cause a sense of unease, strengthening the effect of a barrier dimension.

However, the eighth floor didn't have a sigil. Liu Yishi lifted his head and looked at the abandoned building, a feeling of dread settling in his heart.

There were several policemen on the scene, their complexions all terrible. Whether or not they handled the serial murder case well, they would still get a wave of complaints about poor public security right from the start. The police would definitely get an earful.

A foreigner such as Liu Yishi appearing here drew many curious glances, but once everyone saw that he had been brought here by Hu Lican, they didn't ask too many questions.

"Even if he's some advisor about the sigils, there's no need for him to come to the scene, right?"

Hu Lican shot him a glare, but he was helpless to do anything more than that. The person who had spoken was also a captain and wasn't one of his people. These kinds of joint cases were the most troublesome.

Liu Yishi smiled at Hu Lican to show that he didn't mind, while Hu Lican gave him an apologetic look. He led Liu Yishi to the entrance of the room. Inside, the female university student was still limp with her back leaning against the wall.

A person wearing a robe and a mask was currently kneeling in front of her to examine her.



Liu Yishi looked at the deceased girl sorrowfully. *Sigh, she was so young.*

Someone deliberately walked over to say, "Captain Hu, the advisor you hired sure is daring! So, how is it? Figure anything out yet?"

Hu Lican frowned. It was the captain again, that Chen guy. They never really saw eye-to-eye in the first place. Now, no matter how much patience he had, multiple provocations from the other person made him growl, "He only just got here. Captain Chen, why don't you show me how you'd solve this case in a snap?"

"Why, are you able to solve the case?" Captain Chen huffed.

Liu Yishi spoke up to interrupt their argument, "This should be an imitation of a sacrificial ceremony for summoning a devil. Floors one through seven were the sacrifices, while this woman on the eighth floor is the end product. That explains why the first seven floors have sigils on the walls, but the eighth floor doesn't have one."

Captain Chen looked over doubtfully, while Hu Lican straightened up. He just knew that the father of that Lu Yang brat would be no pushover himself.

"What do you mean by end product?"

"To make it so that the devil can take over her body and appear in this world." Liu Yishi said with a smile, "Of course, these are all ceremonies of the devil detailed in books. They aren't actually true. I'm just

describing what I know.”

He had to say this, or else the policemen to the side would immediately think of him as a lunatic. It would make things difficult later on.

Hu Lican immediately said, “But the murderer might think of it as real!”

“Yes, that is possible. There are many cases involving religion overseas.” Liu Yishi helpfully called out to the examiner inside, “You can search to see if there are any special marks on her body. They are usually on the palms or the chest, and are only on the lower body on the rare occasion.”

Hearing that, the white-robed person glanced at him and walked over while simultaneously pulling off his gloves and mask. Then, he took out a camera from his pocket and handed it to Hu Lican.

“You are right. These are the photographs I have just taken. There is a mark on the palms and the chest like you said. I haven’t examined the lower body yet. I will perform a more thorough examination after the body is sent back. From my initial examination, I have determined that this injury was made using a sharp object. Based on the condition of the injury, it should have been made prior to death. What is strange is that the deceased showed no signs of struggle. When we head back, we should test to see if she was drugged.”

Liu Yishi was shocked over the other person’s age. *Is this really a*

*forensic scientist?*

Hu Lican immediately answered his query, "Let me introduce you. This is Qian Shao, our forensic scientist. Don't be tricked by his baby face. He's actually been at this for fifteen years already. He has a lot of experience. Mr. Liu is an advisor I hired. He is experienced with things like sigils and devil ceremonies."

Qian Shao coldly said, "That's right, so don't look at me as if I'm some sort of youngster! I'm already thirty-eight. We're from the same generation!"

Liu Yishi helplessly said, "But I'm already fifty, and my son is now in his second year of university. You're twelve years younger than I am. It wouldn't be strange for you to call me Uncle, right?"

Scientist Qian looked at this "uncle" in shock, completely speechless. He really hadn't thought that this person would be an uncle. *Don't they say that foreigners age more quickly?*

Hu Lican guffawed and said, "I was shocked earlier, too. Mr. Liu looks so young."

Liu Yishi politely said, "You flatter me too much."

Having made a great blunder, Scientist Qian wore an uncomfortable expression.

Fortunately, Uncle Liu was always amicable and immediately changed

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the topic. "Could I take a photo of these pictures of the marks?"

When it came down to it, it wasn't up to him, so Scientist Qian looked at Hu Lican.

Hu Lican nodded and said, "Sure."

Liu Yishi immediately photographed them. The sigils would help clarify which people were behind this. Even if they were all sigils of the devils, different masters would result in different representations. It was just that he was not all that familiar with these specific sigils.

This, however, was good news. No sigils that he had been forced to become familiar with were from easy-to-handle factions.

Halfway through photographing, he received a text from his son, which detailed a bunch of the school wonders.

"A ninth floor?" Liu Yishi frowned. He turned to look. There were indeed stairs that led up, but what was up there should be the roof. There were only eight floors here.

*And we even have to shout "I'm heading up to the X floor now?"* Liu Yishi felt that he would get thrown out.

"Could I head up to the roof to take a look?"

Hu Lican looked over. With everyone's gazes on him, he had to open his mouth and ask, "Why do you want to head up?"

"Logically speaking, the highest floor is the closest to God. If they do not wish to offend God, they should have set something up there too. Going up to take a look will clarify if they are spiritual-minded or if they are amateurs, if this is a poor imitation, or if they are involved with religion."

Liu Yishi spoke just the right amount of nonsense. Whether or not there was something upstairs, he would not be wrong about the degree of the culprit's religious familiarity.

Having taken on all sorts of identities to solve cases over the years, Liu Yishi was skilled at making sure he was always in a winning position.

"Got it." Although he really wanted to throw the entire case at Liu Yishi, as a policeman, Hu Lican still had to say, "Let the police head up and do a search first. Then, you can head up."

Liu Yishi smiled and said, "Of course."

Hu Lican got busy coordinating the people who would head up with him. When he turned, he saw that Qian Shao was actually still standing in his original spot. He asked, a bit shocked, "Scientist Qian, aren't you busy? You actually have spare time to stay behind?"

Qian Shao said with a scowl, "I took over starting from the third floor. I don't believe there are any problems with my results. They definitely died from the cold, hunger, and a heart attack. But, what kind of

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murderer can kill people like that? Even the one who died from hunger should show some evidence of getting restrained or drugged, but there's no such evidence!"

Liu Yishi felt Scientist Qian to be quite unfortunate. Eight floors in a row had gotten hit, and the eighth floor was even an obvious murder. It wasn't strange for the autopsy reports of the previous seven floors to get doubted.

Hu Lican awkwardly said, "Maybe someone really is capable of using strange methods to commit murder. Anyway, I'm going to head up to take a look." After saying that, he fled the scene.

"Strange methods still need to be feasible! Are there really cases like this one overseas?" Qian Shao asked, disgruntled, "And the deaths, are they just as weird?"

Liu Yishi, who had tons of experience under his belt, innocently said, "I am just a specialist in researching devil ceremonies. I am neither a forensic scientist nor a coroner. Why would you ask me?"

Qian Shao was unwilling to give up and asked, "Don't tell me you never heard anything from the police during investigations? Like this case, don't you already know the methods of death?"

Liu Yishi serenely said, "Scientist Qian, this is a curious world. There will always be things we cannot explain. It is best not to overly dwell upon it."

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Qian Shao stubbornly said, "Forensic science is all about dwelling upon the minutiae, haggling over every little thing! If you won't say it, I'll report that Hu Lican is bringing unauthorized personnel to the crime scene."

Liu Yishi indicated that he had lost and helplessly gave an example, "I have once seen a death resulting from losing every drop of blood in the body, yet there was no wound to be found."

Qian Shao frowned but said, "Continue."

"All the bones were shattered, but there was no outward bruising."

"Hm." Qian Shao furrowed his brows in thought. *How was that achieved?*

"The head was gone."

"What's weird about that?"

"It was found in the stomach."

"There was no injury over the stomach?"

Liu Yishi shrugged. "The only injury was on the neck."

Qian Shao felt that the current case was a cinch. He said in satisfaction, "Thanks, I'll treat you some day."

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"Then, I await the feast." Liu Yishi seized the opportunity to accept. If he were to remain in Taiwan, another acquaintance was another acquaintance. After all, both he and his wife had been absent for a long time. Their original contacts were probably no use anymore. They were likely to be less connected than their son, which was really a huge hit to the parents' dignity.

Hu Lican came down and said, "There's nothing much upstairs. You can head up. Be careful, there aren't any railings up there."

Liu Yishi nodded and walked right on up. As he had expected, there was nothing there. It was just a normal roof.

He knelt down to study the floor, but he did not notice any signs of alteration.

Footsteps sounded behind him. Liu Yishi didn't turn to look and quietly said, "Can you set up a time and make sure no outsiders are around then?"

Hu Lican frowned and asked, "Is late at night all right? It'd be difficult to have no one around, but arranging four or five people who won't blab is manageable."

"Then, let's do that." Liu Yishi didn't mind. He wasn't Lu Yang, who was still a student and didn't want too many people to know about him. Rather, if a few people among the police knew of Liu Yishi's capabilities, it would make things a lot more convenient.



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"Got it. Let's do it tonight. The sooner it's solved, the better." Hu Lican said in frustration, "This guy has already killed eight people, and we're defenseless against this kind of stuff. I can't have my subordinates face this kind of danger, but I can't command them to always be in groups of three. The other squads wouldn't listen to me either."

"All right, tonight then." Liu Yishi nodded.

Hearing that, Hu Lican relaxed a bit, but then he began worrying again. "Damn, with this kind of murder, even if we catch the guy, I really don't know what kind of evidence could convict him."

Liu Yishi looked at him and smiled faintly. "Don't worry, we have our ways of punishment."

When he heard that, Hu Lican froze. He felt it to be wrong, but then he thought of the eight murder victims and the nearly impossible to convict murderer. He was unwilling to say that Liu Yishi was wrong, so he could only ask in curiosity, "How are these kinds of cases handled overseas?"

Liu Yishi smiled.

"Let practitioners deal with the practitioners."

## Chapter 5: Ceremony of the Devil Part 2—Floor by Floor... Upwards?

**Immortal Lady He: Was the stupid brat angry?**

Liu Yishi looked at his cell phone quite helplessly. His wife was always so audacious. Their son had been called a stupid brat since he was a kid. *He'll turn rebellious like that!* Fortunately, he always called him sweetheart or darling and used love to spoil their son so that he could grow up properly.

**Detective Exorcist: He was only angry for a little while. See how nice he is to you?**

**Immortal Lady He: I bet he just doesn't care where his dad and mom are.**

Liu Yishi was so agitated that he almost coughed blood on the screen of his cell phone.

**Detective Exorcist: Our son looves us a ton!**

**Immortal Lady He: You obviously have that son complex thing.**

**Detective Exorcist: ...**

**Immortal Lady He: Fine, I'm not going to squabble over this with you. You're worried about that destiny thing Dad brought up? They were destined in the first place. They're brothers!**

**Detective Exorcist: Brothers? Wifey, don't tell me that you and**

**Jiang Shang... Sob sob sob!**

**Immortal Lady He: Cut the tears. If you want to die, just say so! Don't you remember when I said that they'd become sworn siblings if they were the same sex, and they'd get married if they were the opposite sex? Of course Jiang Ziya is our Ah Yang's brother!**

**Detective Exorcist: But, dearest, our daughter-in-law has already married another.**

**Immortal Lady He: What?**

**Detective Exorcist: Jiang Ziya has a twin sister.**

**Immortal Lady He: ... Damn, we were too slow.**

Liu Yishi snickered. *Dearest, you're always so adorable!*

Footsteps sounded. Liu Yishi lifted his head and saw Hu Lican and Fang Da walk out.

**Detective Exorcist: It's about time. I'm off to deal with the case.**

**Immortal Lady He: Okay, make sure to look for Jiang Shang. I remembered he was a strange guy. He shouldn't have kicked the bucket so easily.**

Liu Yishi pondered over it but still typed a final sentence.

**Detective Exorcist: So it's easy for Yang Jiayin to kick the bucket?**

After waiting for a while, he didn't receive a reply from his wife. Liu Yishi didn't find it strange. Before he went offline, he would mention going first, but his wife on the other hand would leave without a word. She would only reply later when she remembered to do so.

"Mr. Liu." Hu Lican immediately walked over after he saw that Liu Yishi was done.

Liu Yishi smiled and said, "No need for pleasantries. Let's head in now. I'm sure it wasn't an easy task to arrange even this short period of time."

*Don't I know it?* Hu Lican laughed awkwardly.

There were five policemen at the scene, along with Hu Lican and Fang Da. The number was pushing it, but it was just within the acceptable limit for Liu Yishi. He glanced at Hu Lican, who immediately flashed him a brash smile.

Even though he appeared to be a rough guy, he was quite perceptive. Liu Yishi was satisfied with the contact person from the police that his son had chosen. Of course, what he was satisfied about was that his son had a good eye.

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Liu Yishi walked up to the stairway of the first floor. Ignoring the surrounding gazes of the policemen, he said, "I'm heading up to the second floor now."

The policemen looked at each other before uniformly looking at Hu Lican in the end. Even if they were supposed to respond, it should be their superior who did the responding.

Hu Lican had worked with Lu Yang for a long time and thoroughly understood that when a practitioner was doing his job, they should just stay in the background and do nothing. Therefore, he didn't say anything. After Liu Yishi headed upstairs, he trailed after him, never too close but never too far either.

The policemen shared glances but hurriedly rushed after their superior when they saw him head up and even turn to glare at them.

Liu Yishi was calmly observing the room across from him, the location of the murder. It was the same room on every floor. Even if one claimed this wasn't a murder case, no one would believe it.

A dark figure was standing inside the room.

Liu Yishi heard the movements of the police behind him. They weren't reacting to it, so it seemed that they couldn't see it.

He quietly stood there for three minutes, but the dark figure didn't react at all.

"I'm heading up to the third floor now."

After walking up to the third floor, there was another dark figure inside the other room, but it was slightly clearer than the second floor's. Liu Yishi heard a gasp behind him.

"Who gasped? Come here."

A rather young-looking policeman nervously walked over to him. Under the sympathetic gazes of the other police, he grew even more nervous.

"You're..." Liu Yishi was a bit shocked. He had thought that it would be Hu Lican. He tried to recall the other person's name and asked, "Fang Da?"

Fang Da nervously nodded. "Yes, I'm so sorry. I didn't make a noise on purpose."

"What did you see?"

Fang Da stilled. Seeing Liu Yishi look at him encouragingly, he understood that he hadn't made a blunder. Relieved, he told him, "I thought I saw a person in that room when I just got up here, b-but after taking a closer look, there was no one there. I was just mistaken, I think."

Liu Yishi nodded but didn't say anything. He turned toward the stairs and said, "I'm heading up to the fourth floor now," and then he headed

up.

This time, all sorts of reactions happened: gasping, crying out, and even frantic footsteps. The dark figure was only there for a moment, but they couldn't explain it away using Fang Da's explanation from the previous floor, of being mistaken. *Could this many people be mistaken at once?*

As for Fang Da, he was about to faint. Earlier, he could say he was mistaken, but currently, there was a figure inside standing there without moving!

Liu Yishi frowned. *This school wonder is actually true?*

"I'm heading up to the fifth floor now."

*We don't want to go to the fifth floor!* With tearful faces, the policemen all uniformly turned to look at Hu Lican. The latter didn't want to head up to the fifth floor either, but the problem was that at least a few policemen had to become familiar with this sort of stuff. Only then would they know what was going on if they encountered it in the future and would know who they should seek out to solve it.

Hu Lican walked in the front as the first one and even used his gaze to urge the rest to quickly follow.

The policemen could only slowly shuffle forward. Then, they remained rooted to the spot, nearly forgetting to breathe, until that persistent voice sounded again.

"I'm heading up to the seventh floor now."

In the back were the policemen who trembled nonstop. After they arrived at the seventh floor, the figure was no longer a shadow but entirely the shape of a person who was wearing a ragged but warm coat. It was exactly the appearance of a homeless person. If the policemen hadn't already read the profile of the deceased, they might have gone over to him to chase him away from the scene of the crime, but unfortunately, they had all read it.

As he looked at the homeless person in front of him, Liu Yishi wasn't in a hurry to leave this time. First, he wanted to see if anything would happen if he stood there longer. Second, he was thinking about what might appear on the eighth floor. According to his son, Jiu Ge had already helped the deceased's spirit ascend, but was that enough to prevent the spirit from appearing here?

These spirits hadn't been here in the first place but had appeared using the method detailed in the school wonder. Liu Yishi didn't feel that they actually had anything to do with the victims, so the thing on the eighth floor should still appear.

Liu Yishi pondered over it as he observed the homeless person. There was no reaction.

He turned to face the stairs. This action made the seven policemen behind him pale.



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"D-do we have to go up to the eighth floor?" Fang Da was trembling fiercely. But even the others were of no more help than this newbie.

Liu Yishi's response was... digging out his cell phone.

"It's past three already... Darling, why haven't you contacted me at all?"

He scratched his head and, after mulling it over for a bit, still decided to call him. However, the call didn't go through.

Of course, there were many reasons why a call might not connect, such as poor reception, but his son was merely in the neighboring campus, not some faraway mountain zone. It was three something in the middle of the night, and the school wouldn't have elevators that Lu Yang would be taking, causing poor reception.

Most importantly, Lu Yang hadn't sent any updates in such a long time. They had already agreed that Lu Yang would be the one to initiate contact.

"Mr. Liu, are we heading up or not?"

Even Hu Lican couldn't stand it anymore. There was a ghost glaring at them in close proximity, and they were stuck here getting glared at, not to mention that they might be heading up to face an even scarier one in the next moment!

Moreover, above them was the final floor. Would it be like now, where

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nothing happened? Then, why had they come here today? To take a stroll in a haunted house? If something were to happen, what would it be...

*Damn, this kind of torture is inhuman!* The pleading gazes of his subordinates were about to burn a hole into Hu Lican.

Liu Yishi looked at his watch and said, "We will wait here for my son to call. If he doesn't call in half an hour, we won't head up. We'll go over to the school to find them."

Liu Yishi didn't get the call. Instead, it was Hu Lican who got one. The policemen all wished that there was a shootout, a car chase, or a turf war—in any case, any reason they could leave this place was a good one!

"Someone called the police from the school."

Liu Yishi frowned. "Is it a homicide?"

"Seems to be a fire." Hu Lican frowned. "It seems to be the medical campus. It's pretty far from here, so we don't have to worry that it'll spread here."

Liu Yishi's complexion changed. He knew that several school wonders had to do with the medical department. He immediately turned to go downstairs.

*No matter how strong my son is, he can't win against a fire!*

## Chapter 5: Ceremony of the Devil Part 3—Fallen

### **Jian Zhi—**

The angel's lower half had already turned into a lump of mud, and its upper body was slowly sinking into the mud. The angel struggled to use both hands to grab onto the tragic Jian Zhi but was unable to touch anything, screams resounding endlessly.

Lu Yang had Slay hover horizontally before him, but he hesitated a bit about what to do. He felt that this guardian spirit was about to wink out of existence even without his interference. This wasn't strange; there were plenty of cases where a guardian spirit would vanish along with the target that they guarded when the target passed away. It was just that this situation was particularly devastating.

Under the assault of the shrieking, Jiang Ziya asked with difficulty, "Lu Yang, c-can you stop the angel?"

"What do you mean by stop?" Lu Yang asked in confusion, "The angel isn't attacking at all and will probably disappear once completely submerged."

"Can you help the angel transcend?" Jiang Ziya really couldn't bear to watch the angel get torn apart by Slay.

"You want me to help an angel transcend?" Lu Yang nearly choked.

"Don't you feel that these are two different religious notions? Besides, the angel is about to sink. I won't make it in time no matter what I do!"

Jiang Ziya braced himself and said, "Would you make it in time to slay the angel? As long as you can make it so that the angel won't continue to scream like this."

Right after he said that, he saw Lu Yang look at him with a strange expression. Jiang Ziya asked in confusion, "What?"

"Nothing, this is just the first time you've told me to slay a familiar."

"If you don't, the angel will die an even worse death! Hurry already!"

Jiang Ziya couldn't bear to listen any longer. This screaming was way too agonizing. He also remembered how the angel had held a cupid bow to cheer Jian Zhi on when he had still been alive and unwilling to give up on liking Lin Zhixiang. Now, in contrast, one of them had died tragically while the other was soon about to fall into mud. He felt as if his head was about to explode from the shrieking.

"Okay." Lu Yang was about to command Slay to pierce through the angel's head when there was a sudden "bang." It wasn't particularly conspicuous amidst the shrieking but paired with the accompanying image, it was very shocking.

The two of them stared at the angel, who had actually grabbed Jian Zhi's feet. With a wobble, the corpse smashed into the muddy floor. The angel hugged Jian Zhi, an entire body of mud enveloping the corpse. The upper body of the angel was above the mud, its screams no longer sounding. The angel had a gentle expression, like that of a

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mother who was firmly hugging her child in her embrace, but whose face was splattered with the child's blood...

Jiang Ziya blankly tugged on the jacket of the person next to him and asked, "Lu Yang, do you see what I'm seeing?"

This question was phrased poorly and very idiotically, but he was so shocked that he wasn't able to describe it better.

Lu Yang nodded stiffly, but he didn't really understand what was happening before him. *A guardian spirit can actually touch something and swallow someone up? No, swallow a corpse? I've never heard of something like this!*

*Should I still slay it? Or should I wait for the angel to disappear on its own?* He couldn't decide.

"Angel, you should spit Jian Zhi out." Jiang Ziya couldn't help but say, "He might have parents. We should at least give an intact corpse to them..."

The angel looked up at Jiang Ziya, eyes suddenly widening. After a sharp wail, golden strands of hair seemed to spring to life as they actually shot out and wrapped around Jiang Ziya's neck.

Before Jiang Ziya could react, he was dragged over, one foot stepping into the mud. The black mud actually crept up his lower leg, and he immediately felt a chill spreading from his foot, nearly freezing him to the point that he couldn't speak.

Fortunately, Lu Yang hacked forward just in time, slicing apart the angel's hair. Then, he pulled Jiang Ziya and wrenched him out of the mud. After that, he pushed him back to the wall.

At this time, the angel slowly stood up. The mud that had originally been about to drown the angel was now the angel's support. Not only had it enveloped Jian Zhi, completely obscuring him from view, it had also taken the place of the angel's originally translucent legs.

The angel looked up, hair dancing like snakes, eyes blood red, mouth opening in an even more desolate shriek. The pure image of the angel completely vanished without a trace.

"Slay!" After Lu Yang shouted, the spiritual sword blocked them from the other party, the tip pointing straight at the angel.

The angel seemed to understand that this sword was not to be trifled with. Looking at Slay, the angel was wary and did not dare to attack rashly.

When Lu Yang was ready, Slay rushed straight at the angel, who dodged. Just as the angel wanted to retaliate, the corpse that had been wrapped up by the mud fell partway out because of the angel's quick movements. A hand without skin on it smacked onto the floor, leaving a smear of blood.

Seeing that, the corners of the angel's eyes nearly split open. The angel immediately turned around, using the mud to bury the body

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again. At this time, Slay took the chance to strike at the chest of the angel but was unfortunately hindered momentarily by those snake-like strands of hair. The angel flitted to the side and Slay only managed to inflict a long slash across the angel's arm. Black smoke escaped from it, like a corrosive injury instead of one inflicted by a sharp sword.

The angel touched the mud-covered corpse and no longer wished to fight. Giant black wings unfurled. The angel turned, smashed the window, and flew out.

Slay immediately rushed out, chasing after the angel, but the spiritual sword was unable to travel too far from its master. Lu Yang could already feel the distance straining the limit and was about to jump out of the window to follow them so that Slay could continue to give chase, but he heard a "thump" behind him.

He turned to look. Jiang Ziya had fallen to his knees and was gripping his left foot, doing his utmost to keep the pain from showing on his face and his screams from escaping.

"Ziya!" Lu Yang jumped in shock and no longer cared about giving chase. He immediately returned to his companion's side, worriedly asking, "What's wrong?"

Jiang Ziya lifted his head and with chattering teeth said, "I-It's so cold. My foot..."

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Lu Yang knelt down to take a look. He directly pulled the pant leg up, only to see a large black splotch on Jiang Ziya's calf. The black energy was even slowly spreading.

"Shit! Dark energy got in your body."

He summoned Slay back to him to stand guard. Lu Yang lifted Jiang Ziya up and headed straight outside.

"We'll head directly to the abandoned campus to find my dad. He's an exorcist. No matter whether it's an angel or dark energy entering your body, he's much more of an expert at it than I am."

Jiang Ziya was in so much pain that sweat dripped down his face. Seeing Lu Yang appear so somber, he forced a smile and said, "You're only responsible for 'slaying.' Everything else is out of your expertise. I get it."

From his voice, Lu Yang could tell that Jiang Ziya was trying to endure the pain. Just as he wanted to say something to divert his attention, he stepped out of the medical building and saw the situation outside. He stopped in his tracks, his words dying.

*What in the world happened?*

Jiang Ziya barely managed to turn his head to look. A bunch of people were sprawled across the ground outside the entrance. They looked to be students, their expressions pained. Just like Jiang Ziya's foot, parts of their bodies had turned black.



Some the students had areas on the head or the neck that had turned black. Or, they were gaping with their mouths open but couldn't breathe, or they were hugging their head, eyes about to fall out. They were in an even more critical condition than Jiang Ziya, nearly about to perish...

Lu Yang looked at this frightening sight, momentarily struggling to breathe.

Jiang Ziya pushed him and angrily said, "Put me down. Rush straight to the abandoned campus and find your dad. Hurry!"

Hearing that, Lu Yang braced himself and placed Jiang Ziya on the steps. Then, he shot out, just as fast as an arrow.

Jiang Ziya looked at the ground full of students. Some of them were about to suffocate. Just as he was about to drag his leg over to see if he could help them, someone suddenly covered his mouth from behind, dragging him backward at a startling speed...

**To be continued**

## Epilogue

From this volume onward, *Illusions, Lies, Truth* is finally taking on its original setup: the supernatural genre (are you sure this is really a supernatural story?). Well... at least there's a supernatural studies society!

I really want to ask, are there any cases of authors out there writing horror stories who get scared to death by themselves?

When I was writing the chapter about the school wonders, it was mostly in the middle of the night. As a result, whenever I went to use the bathroom, I couldn't help but turn my head to glance at the dark corridors and the living room, or I would lift my head to look at the small window high up in the bathroom. Each and every time, I would nervously realize that there wasn't anything there at all!

Late at night, when I told a friend online that I was writing a ghost story and getting super scared, the friend hit me while I was down, immediately describing supernatural things he had experienced before—you'll always have some friends like that in your life. Never tell them that you're super scared of a ghostie, or that you're currently on a diet because you'll immediately receive a mountain of scary photos, plus links to food blogs and a bunch of invitations to go out to eat!

After I finished writing, I didn't feel it was very scary at all, but I was still scared to death. This author's courage is even more miniscule than the size of a tapioca pearl.

Those are spirits. They're all spirits. All the ghosties in the world are

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spirits. We're not afraid, not afraid!

Sob sob, why do I still feel so scared?!

I can't understand why anyone would want to do a night venture at school (then what are you writing about in this book?). I just feel that schools are super creepy at night!

It's probably because a school is more spacious. There are windows everywhere that something can appear in, as well as long and dark hallways, plus bathrooms with tons of stalls. This isn't even taking into account those mirrors, mirrors, mirrors! If I wanted to go to a bathroom at school in the middle of the night, I would probably force a friend to stand outside the stall, or else I'd break down the door.

I'd better never go adventuring at a school in the middle of the night. Fortunately, I have already graduated, so no night ventures will scare me! Since I'll never go!

Was anyone scared out of their wits by the school wonders chapter like me? (The author weakly raises her hand to ask.)

Fine, we won't continue to ask this question that will hurt people's feelings. Let's continue with the afterword.

*Human Doll Contract* was a story that introduced characters. From *In the Name of God* onward, we will be entering the case stories. They should be two volumes long if nothing unexpected happens. I hope a middle volume doesn't come out of nowhere. But going by the

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progress of this volume, I should be able to successfully wrap it up in two volumes.

Although I say that *In the Name of God* is a case story, I seem to be introducing characters again and again. I can only blame Jiang Ziya and Lu Yang for knowing too many people and will introduce them as the case plays out.

I feel like it's turning into a double-protagonist story.

What? You don't think so? Isn't the protagonist Lu Yang?

I also feel the same way—I mean, no! No matter how impressive, how cool, or how useful Lu Yang is, the protagonist is still that unimpressive, not cool enough, and only slightly useful Jiang Ziya. Don't ever mix it up, everyone!

In this age, a protagonist can't even compare to a side character, and a side character can't even compare to the side character of all side characters.

Just look at the boss of Jiu Ge, one Mr. Fu Taiyi who has a lot of free time but seems very powerful at the same time. He is the model side character. All he has to do is appear occasionally, yet no one can overlook his presence. He doesn't have to put his life on the line to attend a school night venture. What a great side character who reaps the benefits without putting in a lot of work.

In this volume, Jiu Ge came up a lot but didn't have many actual

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scenes, more like “see you again.” Only Si Ming appeared for a bit. Although Si Ming never appears for long, he does seem to quietly appear in every volume to establish a presence. In the end, with all the tidbits added together, maybe Si Ming will be the one from Jiu Ge with the most screen time.

I can only say that a horror novel always needs someone to collect the bodies... I mean, always needs a death god—also, don’t you dare shake your head so hard, denying that this is a horror novel.

Finally, in the very end, I want to clarify that I really didn’t purposely stop at such a dire ending. I just happened to write until this point. Really! Please forgive me. I will do my best to quickly produce the next book.

Classmate Ziya, do your best to hang in there. You have to wait for classmate Lu Yang to return and save you!

By: Yu Wo

## **Character Introductions**

白王

傅太一



## **Fu Taiyi**

### **[Biography]**

He appears to be a normal owner of a bookstore but possesses an unfathomable power. He is the leader of Jiu Ge and is known as Dong Huang Taiyi, the God of the Eastern Sky. He seems to be one of the leading powers of Zhongxiang City, with many mysteries surrounding him.

Most loved: Fu Jun

Most hated: ???

Love and hate: ???

Specialized weapon: Light

### **[Overview of Stats]**

Battle Stat: ???

Physique Stat: 80

Support Stat: 50

天使





## **Angel**

### **[Biography]**

Follows Jian Zhi for some reason. Seems to be his guardian spirit, but usually appears more like an invisible parent. Seems to be a harmless illusory familiar but unexpectedly possesses a lot of power.

Most loved: Jian Zhi

Most hated: The murderer

Love and hate: Jiang Ziya

Specialized weapon: Resentment

### **[Overview of Stats]**

Battle Stat: 80

Physique Stat: 60

Support Stat: 20

夏

江其兵



## **Jiang Qibing**

### **[Biography]**

He used to be the Jiang siblings' teacher. He lost his job because of his relationship with Jiang Yu. He married Jiang Yu soon after. He is currently the head of the family. In order to take care of his family, he opened a Feng Shui business, but in reality, deals with demons and familiars.

Most loved: His wife, child, and younger brother

Most hated: Anyone who wishes to harm his family

Love and hate: Jiang Xue

Specialized weapon: Notebook computer

### **[Overview of Stats]**

Battle Stat: 70

Physique Stat: 60

Support Stat: 50