

Caojiawan Ghost Station

...Well. It's complicated.

Imagine the problems, if you would, of being one of the administrators for the municipality of Chongqing. The area has a population larger than Texas's, with half of them living in one city. It's corrupt. It's fairly poor, despite being heavily industrialized and a major transportation hub. And it's full of ghosts, of course.

Not that the current regime officially admits to the existence of ghosts, or their need to be appeased on a regular basis. Officially. *Unofficially*, the current dynasty ruling China has long since learned how to tacitly overcome many of the more egregious limitations of Marxist-Leninist theology when it comes to dealing with objective reality, and dealing with the supernatural isn't really particularly hard. All one has to do is blame all superficially incomprehensible decisions on garden-variety corruption, or bureaucracy run amok.

For example: there is a [rail station at Caojiawan](#) (a rural area inside Chongqing) that seemingly has **nothing** there to justify a stop. It is literally out in the middle of nowhere

-- if you look at it with mundane eyes. Anyone with the ability to see the esoteric will swiftly realize that the area is a large, sprawling, but intangible necropolis populated with millions of ghosts. And it's not just specters: there are streets, shops, houses, and ghostly versions of all the amenities you'd expect in a city.

So why are the inhabitants there? They're commuters, naturally. The bureaus running Chongqing made a deal with the city's ghosts: if they moved out into the wilderness, the city would make it symbolically and esoterically easy for them to return on a regular basis. Not every ghost took this deal, but enough of them did to allow the psychic atmosphere of Chongqing to be lightened considerably; and, for their part, the ghosts involved find that it is much easier to sustain their existence when they're effectively a part of 'normal' city life. And it was easy enough to write the whole thing off as future civic planning gone stubbornly wrong, of course. Certainly such things happen often enough in totalitarian economies to be believable, after all.

One small problem, though: somebody corporeal -- and somebody who wasn't in on the original arrangement -- has noticed that there's a modern rail station out in the wilderness, and decided that it'd be a great place to build

an actual planned city. Worse, he's sufficiently tied into the existing Chinese regime that he can't be squashed or disappeared. And worst of all, the man is a committed materialist who would probably react extremely badly to finding out just how wrong his religion is with regard to the supernatural.

How to resolve this problem? Well. *Clearly* this is a job for professionals. Probably not an extremely remunerative one, alas -- **unless** there happened to be certain items possessed by the current dynasty that might have an appropriate esoteric value, to the right people. If that is the case, then perhaps a trade of goods for services could be negotiated?

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