

Eight Uncles 71

Chapter 71 Let's Go To Catch Ghost

The homeroom teacher stopped talking and looked at Cheryl.

Cheryl had dark circles under her eyes. It seemed that she did not sleep well last night. Her mother must have forced her to study all night. "Great! Cheryl will recite the poem for us!" Finally, the homeroom teacher said.

Soon, Cheryl began to recite the poem. She recited the poem as expressively as she could as if she was reciting it on a stage.

Everyone was amazed.

"Not bad!" The homeroom teacher praised Cheryl when she finished.

What? Not bad?

Cheryl was not happy when the homeroom teacher said that. She thought she deserved a better compliment.

The vanity spirit behind Cheryl was not happy too. She raised her head and glared at the homeroom teacher.

At that moment, Lily saw many straws behind Cheryl's neck.

Just then, Pablo came back. He noticed Cheryl and the vanity spirit were angry with the homeroom teacher.

Thinking of what he had found just now, he squinted his eyes and whispered, "Lily, raise your hand and say you want to recite the poem too."

Immediately, Lily raised her hand and asked, "May I recite the poem too?"

The homeroom teacher turned around and looked surprised. "Sure, why not?"

With that, Lily stood up and began to recite the poem. Her voice was not as loud as Cheryl, and she could not even pronounce some of the words clearly.

However, Lily had a cute little girl's voice that everyone liked. The class was amazed at how talented she was and felt that she recited the poem better than Cheryl.

Even the homeroom teacher was startled.

"Lily, you're amazing! Have you read the poem before?"

"No, this is the first time I recited it!" Lily blurted and glanced at Pablo.

"Keep up the good work, Lily. You're gifted!" The homeroom teacher praised Lily again.

The class continued. However, Cheryl could not concentrate at all. She recited the poem better than Lily but the homeroom teacher only praised Lily but not her.

It took Cheryl a night to memorize the poem. How could the homeroom teacher compare her to Lily, who read the poem for the first time just now?

Cheryl was mad. She knew the homeroom teacher praised Lily because she came from a rich family.

If I also come from a rich family, the homeroom teacher will also praise me too...

Cheryl was jealous. A thought suddenly flashed through her mind.

If I kill Lily, I can replace her and become the rich daughter of the Crawford family.

Thinking of that, Cheryl stretched her hand out deliberately. She wanted to push Lily to the floor.

However, Lily was not sitting up straight. She was resting her head on the table.

Out of balance, Cheryl fell and bumped into the back of Lily's chair instead.

"What's going on?" The homeroom teacher turned around and asked.

Cheryl quickly sat upright and pretended nothing had happened.

"Nothing..." she replied quickly.

The homeroom teacher could not help pursing his lips. Somehow, he felt Cheryl was a bit strange.

The vanity spirit saw Pablo glancing at her and quickly shook her head. "It's not me! I didn't ask her to do that. She did it herself!" she explained in a hurry.

The vanity spirit sat upright immediately. However, she was still reluctant to let go of Cheryl. She was still sprawling behind Cheryl's back.

It was not easy to find someone like Cheryl who was blinded by vanity at such a young age. The vanity spirit still needed two more days before she could occupy Cheryl's body fully.

When the time comes, Cheryl's body would belong to the vanity spirit completely. With that, no one could ever harm her again.

"Master, she's so big. Can she fill up the jar of souls?"

"I don't think so..." Pablo shook his head.

"What? She can't even do that?"

Pablo leaned against the wall and stared at the vanity spirit. "Are you a teacher at this school?" he asked.

The vanity spirit's face darkened. She clung to Cheryl's back more tightly.

Pablo took out a book and asked, "Lily, do you know how one turns into a malignant spirit? It's not easy, you know? Let me tell you now. So listen to me carefully."

"First, they must die in a tragic death. Being knocked by a car or jumping off a building is not considered a tragic death. They have to die in a way even worse than that."

Clearing his throat, Pablo continued, "These spirits keep wandering at the place where they died and keep repeating the last moment before their death. As time goes by, resentments accumulate in their heart and turn them into malignant spirits."

After saying that, Pablo closed the book and asked, "I'm curious. How did you die?"

Hearing that, Lily tilted her head and glanced at the vanity spirit. She was curious about how she died too.

However, the vanity spirit turned her head away. She did not want to answer Pablo's question.

The vanity spirit could not tell what kind of spirit Pablo was but instinctively, she felt Pablo had a terrifying aura.

The vanity spirit was the malignant spirit. In fact, she was the most ferocious spirit in the world, but why was she still afraid of Pablo?

Finally, the bell rang. The class was dismissed.

Cheryl glared at Lily and gritted her teeth. The dark circles under her eyes were getting worse.

"You did it on purpose, didn't you?" Cheryl bawled. She was mad.

"Huh?" Lily was confused. "What do you mean?"

"You purposely recited the poem after me, right? Do you want to prove that you're better than me?"

Hearing that, everyone looked at Cheryl in surprise.

Cheryl was startled. It was only then that she realized she said what was on her mind.

She quickly packed her school bag and sneered, "Didn't you say you want to meet me after class?"

After saying that, Cheryl left in a hurry.

Hearing that, Lily quickly put Tortoise and Polly into her bag.

"Where are you going?" Josh asked.

"Come on, Josh. Let's go! Let's go to catch the malignant spirit now!"

With that, Lily grabbed Josh's hand and began to run.

"Wait!"

Josh did not want to follow Lily. He was afraid of ghosts. There was no way he would follow Lily to catch the malignant spirit.

chapter 72 Josh Runs Into A Ghost Again

Lilly forcefully dragged Josh to a sprint.

The blazing sun still hung overhead. The trees in the school grove weren't particularly short but provided just enough shade. The moment he set foot in the grove, he noticed Cheryl there with her head hanging low. She looked downcast.

She sluggishly looked up to stare at him when he approached.

He could feel every hair on his body stand on end.

Lilly turned around. "Are you scared, Drake? You can head back if you are!"

Josh was ready to leave but stayed out of stubbornness. "...Real funny. You think I'm scared?"

Calm... I have to calm down.

Nothing in the world scares me.

A resounding scream tore through the air just as he was thinking. "Ah!"

Josh jumped. "Eek!"

That startled Lilly who chased after the boy who began to run wildly. "That's Polly, Josh!"

Polly was sitting in the school bag singing. "...Take the red string of fate... You and I... Ah..."

The bird couldn't reach a higher octave leading to a hideous scream.

Josh was rendered speechless.

He wanted to weep so badly.

That was when Cheryl began to take light, mincing steps toward them.

"You're here, Josh." She giggled.

The subject of affections had been shocked stupid. "..."

His tears stopped and a chill ran down his spine.

Cheryl had a pale complexion with eyes bruised and sunken in.

Her features were stiff, leading to her efforts in smiling leaving everyone unnerved.

Josh felt numb. "Uh..."

Lilly got in Cheryl's way and started with a frown, "Stop scaring him!"

She wore a serious expression on her chubby, child-like face.

"Master... Master?" Lilly looked around.

Where is he?

Pablo drifted close. "I'm here."

The man in white robes had deep-set eyes, a tall nose bridge, and rouge red lips. His appearance made him look demonic.

"What is it this time?" Pablo indifferently patted the girl's head.

Lilly threw him suspicious looks.

What's wrong with my master?

He got bored while I was forced into a timeout and left the school to go take a walk.

He came back while I was in class then left again.

He was nowhere to be found...until now!

That was the least of their problems. Lilly asked, "What's wrong with Cheryl?"

She was puzzled.

According to Pablo's teachings, the vanity spirit shouldn't have been able to overtake Cheryl's body yet but Lilly no longer felt Cheryl's "presence".

Pablo narrowed his eyes. "This is a phenomenon known as the 'spirit substitute'."

"Possession and spirit substitute sound similar but they're completely different. Possession implies the ghost attaching itself to a host and influencing them. Spirit substitute is when a ghost is trying to manipulate the host physically without fully occupying the host's body."

Lilly nodded vigorously. "Oh! So that's a spirit substitute."

Josh had turned ashen. "W-What do you mean 'spirit substitute'?"

The unapproachable boy who thrived on logic was reacting just like a normal kid would.

Lilly began to explain what she learned from Pablo to him. "Spirit substitute, huh? Look over there, Josh..."

She pointed at Cheryl standing on her tiptoes. "A spirit substitute is a ghost trying to manipulate its host. There's a ghost behind her right now. Its feet are padding Cheryl's own. That's how she's moving right now..."

"Huh?!"

He was afraid but found himself unable to look away.

Cheryl was indeed on her toes but the back of her foot was straight. That wasn't how an ordinary person stood at all.

He was more than ready to make a run for it.

Lilly talked him down. "Never run when facing a ghost! A human can't outrun a ghost. Running will also reveal one's sole of their feet to the ghost, allowing for easier possession."

Josh was speechless.

How was he supposed to leave now?

He could hear a tiny part of his subconscious begging for help!

Lilly was speaking with great earnest. "The soles of our feet cannot leave the ground. We cannot move away, jump, or walk backward."

She tilted her head and pondered a way out of this. There was only one way to deal with it.

“Of course, our best way out of this is to defeat the ghost!”

Josh chose to cling to Lilly’s arm instead.

She was taken aback. She gave him a reassuring pat. “You’ll be okay, Josh. I’m good at what I do!”

“A ghostie like that is not enough to scare me away!”

Lilly dispelled his fears by patting herself in the chest. Her hair ties tied to the top of her head fluttered in the breeze.

The vanity spirit couldn’t help but snicker at the child’s words.

Her alone?

The only thing I’m afraid of is Pablo!

She took control of Cheryl’s body and asked, “And what are you planning to do?”

Pablo leaned against the tree and said leisurely, “Nothing. This is my student’s practice run.”

“We can also settle the matter of the eighteen lives who were crushed under the playground.”

The vanity spirit’s expression twisted. She barred her fangs and viciously lunged at Pablo.

“Mind your own business and stay in your lane! We’re all ghosts here...”

Lilly grabbed the ghost by her feet and flung her back!

“Yeah, you’re both ghosts but Master is not some malicious spirit!”

Pablo was shocked. “...”

Is this what it feels like to have my young pupil defending me?!

Stubbornness flitted across his face. “Get her, Lilly!”

“Okay, Master!”

She answered as she looked back. “You have to let go of me first, Josh.”

Josh had long been stuck in a stupor.

Lilly cast the vanity spirit out. A gigantic female ghost as large as a sumo wrestler appeared before him.

“Huh?!”

A... A ghost?!

Lilly had just pushed him off, leaving him unstable on his feet and needing to lean against a tree to support himself.

The moment he looked up, he was greeted by the sight of a deathly pale, young man clad in robes and red lips standing by the same tree. He had no legs...

The man gasped when their gazes met. "You can see me?"

"Ahhhh!"

With a flick of Pablo's finger, he sent a charm to seal Josh's mouth.

"Shh... Watch."

The vanity spirit was stupefied by how Lilly had sent her flying.

She was... sent flying by a four-year-old?

She clambered to her feet and stared at Lilly.

"What kind of thing are you..."

"I'm a person. Not a thing.... Wait, no. I'm a person, a thing... Eh?"

Lilly's cheeks puffed up in indignation when she realized her words weren't coming across right.

The vanity spirit scoffed. "Oh, is the little thing angry?"

That had Lilly bristling.

"You're the thing here!"

She suddenly grabbed the spirit's leg, picked her up as if she were a sack of flour, and hammered her to the floor with a dull thud.

The vanity spirit was stunned. "..."

"???"

Chapter 73 Caught My First Spirit

Lilly was livid and oddly so.

The vanity spirit that had been jerked around like a pinball nearly spat out a mouthful of blood. That was just a slip of the tongue. What's the big deal?!

"Hey..."

"Boom!"

Lilly acted as if she were wrestling a sandbag. The vanity spirit was completely floored by how they were tossed and smacked like flatbread.

She simply had no opening to fight back and it was driving her up the wall.

The brat she had so vehemently looked down on was this powerful?

"Wait!" The vanity spirit yelped.

"No way!"

Do I look like an idiot?!

Why wait for someone who would launch a counterattack against me?

The vanity spirit was furious. "I'm using Cheryl's body right now! Do you want to injure your little friend that badly?"

She was so afraid that she tried to use Cheryl as a shield, only for Lilly to shoot her down. "She's not my friend."

Who cares if she got hurt?

Better to die a dignifying death than one sucked dry by a ghost.

That rendered the spirit speechless. She gritted her teeth as she studied both Pablo and Lilly and ultimately decided that it would be better to make a run for it.

The red bracelet on Lilly's wrist emitted a faint glow that helped pull the vanity spirit back.

The girl strained herself to continue pinballing the spirit.

As the host of the vanity spirit, Cheryl was also taken for a spin. If it weren't for the fact that Lilly was grabbing onto the spirit's foot instead of hers, she would've long been turned into a pile of mush.

In truth, she wasn't faring much better. Her head had visibly swelled up from the impact.

Only a resounding bang could be heard at the last strike as smoke billowed around them.

Lilly successfully cast the spirit out of Cheryl!

Cheryl was out like a light.

Lilly could finally heave a sigh as she wiped the sweat off her brow. "Got you! What now, Master?"

I'm tired.

Catching ghosts is such a tiring job!

Master is such an unreliable guy. This move was all he taught me. It's such a tiring trick too!

Both Pablo and Josh who were on the sidelines were locked in a stupor.

Josh was bewildered as he muttered, "That's...so cool..."

My sister isn't an annoying crybaby. She's a violent little girl!

She seemed more like a thug that wore rings on every finger and cut down anyone who refused to see her way.

Pablo hadn't expected Lilly to be so gifted when it came to spiritual power. She could wrestle spirits into submission!

What the hell is that?

Even for the likes of him, it would take considerable effort to separate the evil spirits from their hosts.

And all Tulip had to do was beat them down into submission.

The red bracelet contributed as part of it but it served more as a supportive function.

Her strength could not be demonstrated on the living but it did well against the dead.

It was as if she was born just for this.

Pablo set aside the shock and said, "Remember when I taught you how to use the ghost recovery charm?"

Lilly nodded. "I do. Your painting skills are terrible, Master but I remember."

He twitched in irritation.

Just say "I remember". Was all that necessary?

Lilly awkwardly waved her hands and drew the pattern of the ghost recovery charm. A yellow rune manifested in the air, enveloping the vanity spirit and yanking it into the jar of souls.

"No! I refuse to go in there! No!" The ghost screeched.

"Why... Why?! I tried so hard but I never amounted to anything!"

"Why?!"

Lilly didn't care about the hows or why's!

She pulled the spirit into the jar of souls with all her might.

The light from the charm was like a huge net that gradually shrank smaller and smaller around the spirit.

The more the spirit struggled, the more the net was stretched taut around her.

Lilly had no choice but to step on the spirit and pull her back.

Pablo helplessly stroked his forehead at the sight. "What a silly girl."

How badly did the spirit offend you for you to step on them?

"Now you have to ask her how she died," Pablo said.

They weren't collecting spirits just for the sake of collecting them. There were more questions to ask.

Figuring out how malignant spirits die will benefit her future knowledge and experience.

Lilly did as she was told. "Hey sumo wrestler, how did you die?"

The vanity spirit glared at the girl with red eyes. "You're the sumo wrestler!"

"That's a rebound!"

The vain spirit didn't know how to respond. "..."

Neither did Pablo and Josh. "..."

The vain spirit became even more manic in her attempts to break free.

Pablo knew she wasn't going to divulge how she died at this point.

With a snap of his fingers, he retrieved the spirit in the jar.

The jar swayed. Her angry screeching could be heard from within. "Let me out!"

Lilly patted the jar. "Be a little quieter, Ms. Sumo Wrestler. You can stay there with Ms. Ugly!"

The girl shook the instrument with delight.

Ms. Sumo Wrestler and Ms. Ugly. My jar is filling up fast!

Lilly quickly asked, "Master, is my jar full?"

It's a big spirit!

Pablo patted her head. "Let me show you how to see if it's full."

He took one of Lilly's fingers and pressed it on top of the surface of the jar, whispering, "Concentrate."

She did as she was told and was suddenly greeted by what was the inside of the jar.

It was a large empty space.

Ms. Ugly was lying within and was clearly bored.

Ms. Sumo Wrestler was stamping her feet and cursing angrily.

She was large but not nearly enough to stuff the jar full.

When Lilly came back to her senses, the jar in her hands was still the size of a fingernail as it swayed lightly.

She wailed, "When am I going to get it filled up?!"

Pablo smirked and decided to make fun of her. "I don't know. Why don't you have your brother calculate that for you?"

He turned his attention to Josh who was standing next to him.

Josh felt his blood freeze. "Don't ask me!"

I don't want to know about any of this!

He didn't care how many homes the female spirit had. He'd rather give up his beloved mathematics and chemistry for liberal arts than do the calculations.

"Why?! You're good at math, aren't you?"

No, I'm terrible.

Lilly crouched down and began to draw on the dirt floor. "Look, Josh. This is the inside of the jar. This is Ms. Ugly and Ms. Sumo Wrestler... The space is really big... They're both really big too... How many Ms. Ugly and Ms. Sumo Wrestler would we need to fill it up?"

"..."

Suppose Ms. Sumo Wrestler is x and Ms. Ugly is y ...

No! I'm not calculating that!

His hands seemed to gain a life of their own. He wanted to calculate everything that had to do with numbers.

He picked up a branch and began to scribble on the ground.

"The volume of the spirits would be x plus y . The room's area is... And so, filling it would take 19 and 100 respectively."

"You'll see nineteen Ms. Sumo Wrestlers and a hundred Ms. Ugliers."

Lilly nodded vigorously. "Uhum, I got it."

Pablo watched them in silence. "..."

I did tell you.

Josh tossed the wooden stick aside without saying another word and pretended nothing had ever happened.

He looked away. "Why do you need to fill it up?"

Lilly hugged her knees and rested her head on top of them. "Master says that I'll be taken away if I don't fill it."

That took Josh by surprise. "Taken away? To where?"

Chapter 74 A Guard Dog For A Sister

Lilly bowed her head and drew on the dirt floor with a stick. "To somewhere far away where I won't be able to come back."

"..." To Josh, that sounded like Lilly was going to die if she didn't fill the jar. He said nothing for a while until he could gather himself. "Are there more ghosts like Ms. Sumo Wrestler...?"

The faster they were caught, the better it would be for her.

He wasn't going to watch her die simply because she failed to fill the jar of souls. He was only doing this because...All he did was make a calculation. He had to verify the results to see if he got it right.

That was all there was to it.

Pablo suddenly got closer to Josh to ask quietly, "Say, how can you see me?"

That jolted Josh who was just about to respond when the white-robed man faded away before disappearing.

That had him looking around in confusion. "Lilly, is your Master gone?"

Lilly looked beside him. "No, he's right beside you!"

Josh suddenly felt a chill on the back of his neck. It felt as if someone's hand was on him which had all the hairs on his body bristling.

He fought the urge to look back!

Why does it feel a hundred times scarier when I don't see it?!

Lilly suddenly cut in. "Josh, my master is asking if you've ever seen a ghost before."

He stiffened. "No."

Pablo rubbed his chin and frowned.

"Well, that's a bit odd. How can he see sometimes but not others? Strange!"

In his hundreds of years as a spirit, he had never seen anyone like Josh unless they received external interference. Examples of that ranged from applying a dog's tears onto their eyelids or having someone forcefully open their third eye temporarily.

Josh, however, was suddenly able to see.

One either had the eyes to see or didn't...

"How is this possible?" Pablo flipped through his booklet.

Do not panic when in doubt. Let me see if I can find an answer here.

Noise suddenly began to fill the clearing.

Anthony, a few teachers, and the headmaster came into view.

Behind them were Drake, Ivan, Theo and his father, Valentine, and Tina, Cheryl's mother...

Everyone immediately noticed the unconscious Cheryl alongside Lilly and Josh who were kneeling on the ground.

Were they...making calculations for something?!

The x's and the y's had everyone at a loss for words.

"Lilly!" Anthony took a large stride forward and put his full attention on Lilly. "Are you okay?"

"I'm okay!" She answered.

The foreign language teacher, Ms. Watson crossed her arms. "I told you I don't know. This has nothing to do with me! See for yourself. She came here herself. Stop pushing the blame on me."

Every student had queued up by the gate after school when the homeroom teacher realized that Josh, Lilly, and Cheryl were missing.

Tina rushed in to pick her daughter up. "Cheryl?!"

Cheryl was covered in mud. Her hair was also in disarray. Tina could barely recognize her own daughter!

The girl finally regained consciousness and burst into tears.

"It hurts! It hurts!"

Cheryl's face was heavily bruised. Her arms and calves were also littered with scraps...

Her face had swelled up. One of her front teeth was missing. Her eyes were bruised black.

"What is going on here?" Tina wanted to unleash her anger so badly but Anthony had her backing down.

These people are the Crawfords...

She changed her tone. "Did Cheryl do something wrong?"

Cheryl felt wronged...

I didn't do anything wrong! I don't know what happened. How did I get here?

Why does everything hurt?!

Why doesn't Mommy protect me as Lilly's uncle does? He always protects her no matter what.

Cheryl's sobs turned into full-blown wailing.

Anthony turned to Josh. "What happened here?"

Lilly bowed her head as if she had done something wrong and was about to speak when Josh cut her off.

"I did it."

That shocked Tina. "Why..."

He stuffed his hands into his pockets. "She messed with my sister and claimed she had been passing notes in class."

"She then dragged me here after school to ask me out."

"Why is a kid acting like some kind of demon? Keep away."

"..." Everyone didn't seem to know how to respond.

Josh had started with a fact that everyone knew to help cover for Lilly and throw off suspicion.

Doing so, however, put all the focus on him...

Tina anxiously protested, "Even if that was the case, you shouldn't have beat her up like that..."

Cheryl liked him. Isn't it a good thing to have someone like you?!

What was the point of beating her up?

Josh grunted. "I wasn't even that heavy-handed."

Ms. Watson crossed her arms and frowned. "What's wrong with Cheryl reporting you for passing notes in class? What nonsense is this? You were the one in the wrong and yet you beat her up?"

Josh smiled coldly. "Duh. Reporting it is fine but I just wanted to hit her. So what?"

Ms. Watson was stunned speechless.

Theo was impressed by the display and decided Josh could boss him around all he wanted!

He had just passed a note to ask Lilly if he could pat her parrot and tortoise after class.

It resulted in Cheryl accusing Lilly of passing notes, leading to the girl being put in time out.

The petty Theo was also upset.

Anthony cut in. "Yes, assaulting someone isn't right. We'll take responsibility for what happened."

He turned to Charlie.

"We're making a public apology. Mention the Miller family's daughter dragged a scion of the Crawford family to the grove to confess and he hit her. The Crawford family will formally apologize and offer compensation of 10 thousand."

Ten thousand was no small amount but it was simply a drop of water in the ocean for the Crawfords.

Tina immediately said, "No, there's no need..."

Cheryl would be publicly humiliated if it were made public!

She didn't know what to do. Was this what an apology was like for the Crawfords?

She couldn't find any fault in the offer to offer compensation and publicly apologize.

She forced a smile. "It's normal for kids to fight. Nothing to worry about."

Cheryl continued to wail. "Mommy, I didn't..."

Tina hissed at her daughter. "Stop talking!"

The girl pinched her lips shut as tears continued to spill from her eyes.

"Alright. Feel free to contact my assistant if you ever want to follow up on the matter," Anthony said indifferently.

He then picked Lilly up into his arms and left with Drake and Josh.

Ms. Watson chastised them for being hedonistic.

Josh excelled in his classes but those were in other subjects. He had only scored 90 on his foreign language test.

Having a mere score of 90 had her seeing him as an underperforming student.

She hated underperforming students.

Anthony stopped in his tracks and turned to glare daggers at Ms. Watson.

“How do you think we should handle Ms. Watson over here, Mr. Lane?”

Ms. Watson felt her heart drop to the pit of her stomach.

What?

Was he blaming all of this on me?!

All she did was stand her ground. What was wrong with that?

Why are the Crawfords taking it out of me?

Chapter 75 Leaving Campus In Shame

Ms. Watson got indignant but remained steadfast that the problem wasn't as big as it made itself out to be.

She was, after all, the best foreign language teacher in the school!

Animaux Private Academy relied on her to beat their rival, the North City Public School.

Mr. Lane, the headmaster, was going to keep her around even if he agreed with Anthony. It was all just a show after all.

Mr. Lane, who had tried to blend into the background, finally had no choice but to step up. “Ms. Watson was also in the wrong for having punished a student without a proper reason. She'll be disciplined for it.”

Ms. Watson could barely believe her ears. “I'm just doing my duty as a teacher! I dole out punishments because I have a responsibility to see them better.!”

“Your students are punished without reason and treated differently based on your segregation of their grades,” Anthony started coldly.

“Posting students' grades on the blackboard to blatantly discriminate and discourage students.”

“Is that what you mean by taking responsibility?”

“What students grow to be outstanding without a bit of a teacher's scolding? This is all for their sake! Frankly speaking, aren't you doing this to me because of Lilly? You're all terrible people!” Ms. Watson had grown greatly agitated.

“Oh, really?” Anthony smirked.

He already had Charlie look into the foreign language teacher.

Charlie began to read the details of the investigation out loud, "Ms. Watson tried to bribe the head of department with gifts two years ago and received disciplinary action."

"Since September of last year, Ms. Watson has taken advantage of her position to refer students to off-campus tutoring classes, from which she receives referral fees from."

Anthony kept his steely gaze on the teacher.

"It's fine even if Mr. Lane doesn't take action against a teacher like you. I'll just have to take it up elsewhere."

"I'll also be reconsidering my investment in the school."

Why would he be so generous as to donate to the school? It was charity, yes, but realistically, he wanted the Crawford children to receive the best at school.

The headmaster fell silent. "..."

What was he supposed to do? He was at a loss for words as he watched Anthony walk away.

Ms. Watson was indignant. "These people are going too far, Mr. Lane!"

The headmaster immediately silenced her. "Shut up! Pack up your things and leave!"

That stunned her. Was this for real?

"You can't do this, Mr. Lane! We're preparing for the midterm exams right now..."

Mr. Lane turned to leave.

Half an hour later, she was kicked out of school.

Every parent stared at her. She suddenly felt like a student that had been singled out...

Embarrassment, humiliation, unsettled...

"Corporal punishment... Hah, I can't even bear to raise my voice at my daughter... And here she is..."

"I never liked her... I was wondering what connections she had the entire time..."

"Referring students to off-campus tutoring institutions and collecting referral fees... Tsk. What a great teacher."

Ms. Watson fled from the scene!

She hadn't just been fired.

Her teaching qualifications had also been revoked.

How was she going to make a living now?!

Anthony held Lilly firmly in his arms. His pace was neither quick nor slow.

Both Josh and Drake trailed behind him. The former was still carrying Lilly's school bag with a long face.

Lilly hesitated to speak.

“Uncle...”

“I wasn’t in timeout for very long!”

She had left with her brother to get food too!

Anthony eased his tone. “It has nothing to do with you, Lilly.”

He was trying to comfort the girl.

It was true that Ms. Watson deserved to be punished but how could it have nothing to do with Lilly?

Charlie had inquired a few students on the ins and outs of Ms. Watson doling out punishments to Lilly and also vilifying her in class.

She had even claimed that Lilly’s return caused Liam and Winona’s divorce.

It would be odd if Anthony let her off the hook so easily.

His eyes were glazed by cold steel. What happened has happened.

This was a warning to everyone that there was a price to pay for messing with the Crawford family’s youngest daughter.

So what if everyone thinks we’re overbearing?!

“Let’s go. You can come shopping with me. Do you want anything, Lilly?”

Lilly immediately put the matter behind her and nodded. “Yeah!”

She wanted silver needles to treat Granny’s legs.

She wanted to see her grandmother jumping!

She suddenly asked, “We’re not taking the school bus, Uncle Anthony?”

The yellow school bus was going to leave soon.

Anthony looked at Ivan who was lined up to get on the school bus and said, “No. We’re going to the mall.”

“Yay!”

Ivan was throwing glances at Lilly who was beaming like the sun.

When he broke out of his stupor, he found her waving at him which prompted him to wave back.

He then stumbled his way into the school bus.

Valentine Taylor, meanwhile, took the opportunity to bound over to the Crawfords. “Hello, Mr. Crawford and Ms. Lilly.”

He then pushed Theo forward. “Say hello to them!”

His son had no choice but to obey. "Hi, Mr. Crawford. Hi, Lilly!"

Anthony turned his attention to Theo.

So, this is the boy Lilly was passing notes to?

They say if a family had a son, they would be looking for a suitable girl to be their son's bride.

It was the opposite for a family that had a daughter. They would keep an eye out for predators trying to whisk the girl away.

Anthony narrowed his eyes. "Can I help you?"

Valentine cleared his throat. "Well, I had something I wanted to ask Ms. Lilly..."

That had Anthony frowning. What could a grown man want from Lilly?

"Yes?" Lilly asked inquisitively.

Valentine sighed. "I heard that you were the one who saved Theo the other day."

"The thing is my mother has been in a coma for a long while. She wouldn't wake up no matter what we tried. We'd like you to come to take a look, Ms. Lilly."

Valentine's facial features reminded Lilly of an old woman in green robes that she had dreamt of.

Pablo suddenly spoke up, "His mother? Could the old woman you dreamt of be her?"

Lilly answered in a low whisper, "I think so too, Master. He looks so much like her! The resemblance is uncanny."

Pablo took another look at Valentine and decided that his disciple was right.

"Say yes. We'll go take a look tomorrow."

Lilly nodded. "Okay! I'll come by tomorrow."

Valentine didn't seem to have expected her to outright agree and was overjoyed!

Cheryl, meanwhile, was curled up in her mother's arms and wailing.

"I didn't do anything wrong, Mommy!" She cried. "Did Josh beat me up because Lilly doesn't like me? Did Lilly badmouth me to him?!"

Tina sighed. "Just put up with it, Cheryl."

"I don't think a friendly relationship with the Crawfords is possible right now. The Shaws will have to be our best bet."

They were now switching their target to Ivan Shaw...

How was Cheryl going to be by Ivan's side if everyone knew she had been beaten up for trying to confess her love to Josh?

She sniffled. "I know, Mommy."

She was truly hurting. She felt as if she had been thrown onto the ground repeatedly. Every part of her ached.

She hated it all but she hated Lilly most.

It was obvious that she was the one who was being picked on but Lilly had everyone loving and caring for her. Cheryl had no choice but to put up with it.

Why?

Chapter 76 Josh The Dishonest

Lilly and Anthony took a stroll on the street. The girl had eaten ice cream, two boxes of strawberries, a mousse cake, grilled chicken wings, and fried chicken...

It was only after she got her silver needles that they went home. Bettany smiled. "You're home just in time for dinner, Lilly."

Lilly shook her head. "My stomach is massive now, Granny."

That caught Bettany off guard. "What did you eat?"

The girl met her grandmother's gaze. "I had ten salads."

The elder was amused by her antics. "Lying is bad, Lilly!"

"Don't be angry, Granny! I had an ice cream, two mousse cakes, and two boxes of strawberries..."

She recounted everything she ate.

"..." Bettany was at a loss for words.

Lilly gave Bettany a look. "You said you wouldn't be angry, Granny."

"I'm not angry. Don't eat so much of that junk. Children should be eating better."

The little girl happily kissed her grandmother. "Okay, Granny! Thank you!"

Granny was the best.

She was going to learn medicine to cure her legs!

The child happily went upstairs.

She hurried back into her room when she sensed movements coming from within the jar of souls.

Bettany's eyes softened as she watched Lilly return to her room before she turned to Anthony.

"Really? Why did you feed her all that junk? You know how children can be irresponsible. Can't you be a little more sensible as an adult?"

Anthony awkwardly rubbed his nose. Lilly was the one who ate everything. Why was he the one getting yelled at?

“She said she wanted to eat.”

She had looked at him with puppy eyes. Who could resist her?

Bettany continued to criticize him, “So you give her everything she wants? Learn to say no.”

She would never have allowed him to go this far if she were around.

Anthony cleared his throat. “I still have a meeting to attend.”

He immediately left.

Bettany glared at him.

Lilly had only been Jean’s substitute at first but that gradually changed.

Lilly had long since ceased to be a reminder of what had been lost. The Crawfords now spoiled her silly.

“How is she going to grow up if she doesn’t eat?” Bettany muttered and went to the kitchen to prepare a snack.

Josh, who was upstairs, left for the kitchen to get himself a glass of water.

He passed Lilly’s room when he came back upstairs and went to his room.

It didn’t take him long to leave downstairs again to fetch a small carton of milk.

Drake, who was sitting on the couch downstairs, noticed. “Do you want to see Lilly?”

Just go, damn it!

This back-and-forth is giving me a headache.

Josh clicked his tongue. “Who said I was going to go look for her? I was just thirsty and wanted a drink.”

Drake was obviously doubting him.

Josh scurried about until night fell when he knocked on Lilly’s door.

“Come in!” Lilly called out.

He lowered his head and nervously scanned his surroundings before quickly entering the room.

Drake, meanwhile, pretended he didn’t see anything.

Hah, that’s one stubborn guy.

He didn’t understand why Josh seemed to have changed ever since he left with Lilly.

Lilly was such an annoying person. He’d never be so foolish as to go along with her whims.

He huffed and closed the door behind him to read.

Lilly was lying in bed when Josh entered her room.

Her feet were dangling in the air.

“What are you doing?” Josh asked.

She continued to shake her short legs. “I’m trying to lose weight.”

“...”

“How old are you? What kid needs to lose weight?”

Her chubby cheeks would disappear if she lost weight. She wouldn’t be cute anymore.

She was perfect as she was now. A tomato.

She finally put her feet down and sprawled on the bed. “Okay... I won’t be able to eat all I want later if I don’t lose some.”

Granny will worry if I don’t eat.

“You still want to eat?” Josh was shocked.

Others went on a diet to appear slim and here she was doing it because she wanted to eat more.

She ate everything the street had to offer this afternoon!

Lilly was clutching at her rounded tummy in distress.

“Why are tummies so small? Why can’t everything below the neck be a stomach?”

“...” Josh had nothing to say to that.

“...”

She suddenly looked up. “Hey, Ms. Sumo Wrestler? How did you die?”

The spirit was so swollen. Could she have been stuffed to death?

Lilly was looking directly behind Josh.

He stiffened. “M-Ms. Sumo Wrestler is behind me?”

No way... Is she behind me...?

Lilly pointed behind him. “She’s right there on top of you.”

She said the most frightening words with the sincerest expression.

Josh immediately scampered up to Lilly and stiffly sat down next to her.

That startled Lilly. “Are you scared, Josh?”

He pursed his lips. “No. I was just tired of standing and wanted to sit down.

Lilly looked at Josh and then at the sofa by the wayside.

He could’ve sat there. Why was he sitting next to her?

She saw through his lies in an instant but chose not to dwell on the matter.

“Okay, Josh! Tell me if you’re tired next time.”

“...”

There won’t be a next time!

He slinked into the couch to cover up his embarrassment.

“Did you manage to ask her how she died?”

He just couldn’t contain his curiosity.

How did a spirit like her die?

That was his first encounter with the supernatural. His world turned upside down ever since he saw the ugly ghost that night.

It was as if he had opened a door into a brand-new world.

He was scared but he couldn’t help wanting to know more...

Pablo was currently suppressing the vanity spirit.

Her mouth was wide open. She didn’t look friendly at all.

He managed to pull a female spirit named “May Lee” out of her mouth.

Lilly was surprised. “Wow, you did it!”

“What?” Josh asked.

“Ms. Sumo Wrestler ate Ms. Ugly. Master tried to wrangle them.”

She had been anxious.

She had to fill the jar after all. Having a spirit devoured meant that she had to get another one to replace the eaten.

Pablo told her not to worry. That was how she could leisurely try to lose weight while Pablo rescued Ms. Ugly from Ms. Sumo Wrestler’s stomach.

Josh misunderstood her.

He was now without sight. His overactive imagination had him thinking it was like taking a dump.

Disgust flashed in his eyes at the thought.

Chapter 77 Vanity Spirit Roxanne Larson

May Lee burst into tears after being spat out.

“She ate me! She actually ate me!” “We’re both spirits that have been caught but here she is trying to bully me.”

The vanity spirit was pinned down by an invisible pressure that rendered her immobile. She smiled coldly. "I do what I want! None of you are getting any kind of peace."

Her eyes were red as she stared at Lilly...

Pablo suddenly smacked the back of her head,

"That's my disciple you're trying to threaten there!"

The vanity spirit's head came flying off from the impact and rolled to Josh's feet.

Lilly gaped as she watched the stray head tumbling up to her cousin.

Josh gulped. "What are you looking up...?"

Lilly pointed at the vanity spirit's head: "Ms. Sumo Wrestler's head fell off. It's under your feet right now!"

"..." He abruptly stood up and sat down next to Lilly.

"The seat isn't very comfortable. I think I should just stay here instead."

She nodded. "Okay."

He wasn't even going to try explaining himself anymore.

With a flick of Pablo's wrist, the head flew back over to him.

He sat cross-legged, propped up his chin, and asked, "How did you die?"

The vanity spirit scoffed. "I'm not telling you anything."

He smacked her head and sent it bouncing before tugging it back again. It was as if he were toying with a yo-yo.

"Why did you die?"

The spirit's head was buzzing.

She could rip her head off just fine but it didn't mean she could get out unscathed with Pablo smacking her around. It was clear he was no ordinary spirit!

"What..." The vanity spirit grew irritated.

Pablo braced himself to do it again. "Oh, you still won't talk?"

"..."

Were they playing?

Lilly watched them with wide eyes.

You can do that...?

What am I learning all this for?

“Come here, Tulip.” Pablo beckoned Lilly.

The vanity spirit, recalling Lilly had wrestled her to the ground immediately said, “Alright. I’ll talk! Don’t hurt me.”

Lilly was far more frightening compared to Pablo...

She had no chance against the little girl.

She helplessly began, “My name is Roxanne Larson. I was a rich woman who came from old money...”

Lilly suddenly asked, “Really?”

The vanity spirit held her breath before ultimately saying, “I worked my way up the ladder...”

Both Lilly and Pablo didn’t believe her.

Lilly’s intuition told her that the spirit was lying.

Pablo was speechless. The vanity spirit was worthy of her name. She was vain even when threatened.

The spirit finally had no choice but to offer the truth. “I was an employee at a printing factory when I was still alive.”

It turned out she indeed worked at a printing factory and spent her days at the workshop.

Luck was on her side. One night, she ran into the manager’s daughter who was kind enough to offer her a ride home. The two became fast friends.

“We got close... She’d often invite me to her place for meals.”

She licked her lips. “I finally learned what steak tastes like and had prawns that were plump and firm...”

“I always thought that prawns were half empty on the inside...”

Pablo instantly understood that she was talking about stale dead shrimp.

Shrimp contained high levels of histidine, which was the reason for their delicious taste. Dead shrimp are quickly decomposed by bacteria, at which point the flesh would grow sparse and emit a pungent odor.

Shrimp like there were often sold to small restaurants or food stalls by the streets. Flavorings were added to mask the smell. Only a shell remained when eaten.

“And?” Lilly asked.

Josh, who couldn’t hear a thing, was panicking.

I didn’t want to see anything but I want to know how the vanity spirit died but I have to wait for Lilly to be done questioning her.

The spirit continued, “My bestie would offer me clothes she doesn’t want anymore. There’s also some bags and jewelry...”

She was happy at first even if it were just her friends' unwanted leftovers because these were things she could never afford.

Her best friend's father was not just the director of the printing company. He was also a president of a large group.

The printing company was just one of the family's many businesses.

"I enjoyed a life I could've never dreamt of because of her..."

She would go shopping with her friend after work and watch her buy everything that she liked without blinking.

She trailed by her side and basked in the envious glances thrown their way. It was as if she were a rich woman herself.

"I was at my bestie's place when the store manager of GUOLHJ personally delivered their latest products of the season to her door for her to pick out."

"She spent two hundred thousand on clothing that day. The ones she didn't like? The manager simply smiled and left."

Roxanne continued in a daze, "That's when I finally knew that was how the rich bought their clothes. The luxury goods sold in stores are the leftovers the rich didn't want."

She thought going shopping with her friend was already an impressive feat.

To think she could also have the store manager personally deliver everything to her door too? What kind of life was that?

The store manager's smile and the two hundred thousand bill left a deep impression on her.

That batch of clothes allowed more luxury dresses to come her way.

She wore a halter dress from GUOLHJ, carried around a YSHGD bag, and wore shoes by DHEJ.

A mere cup of Starbucks cost her a day's worth of wages!

"How can such a man still live in that ten-room dormitory at the factory? It's not worth it to me at all!"

Pablo was speechless.

She forgot who she really was after having the luxury of clothing right at her door.

"What happened after?" Lilly propped up her chin as she listened to Roxanne retell her story.

"I wanted to rent a home. The housing agent noticed how I was dressed in luxury items and introduced me to high-end apartments..."

The agent's fawning and envious glances, as well as compliments on her pale skin and beauty, gave her a ruthless satisfaction of vanity.

Of course, she was pale. She was in the printing factory day in and day out, leaving at 7 in the morning and returning at 11.

How could she not be pale?

She really thought herself to be a rich woman amidst the barrage of compliments.

“So, I rented an apartment for five thousand a month...”

She regretted it after signing the contract but there was nothing she could do when the agent was watching her with such eagerness.

Despite having wasted a decade away at the factory, all her overtime only amounted to three thousand a month...

Lilly started to count. “Your salary is three thousand, the rent is five thousand. That means you still need...”

Josh answered, “Two thousand.”

Lilly was shocked. “That’s so much money! How did you make up the difference?”

Roxanne smiled bitterly. “Yes. How did I make up the difference...”

She had to pay a deposit of three months, leading to her having to fork out twenty thousand from the get-go.

All she had was a thousand...

Chapter 78 Vanity Kills

“I remember my palms sweating as the agent went through the contract with me,” Roxanne said.

She no longer had any reason to delay the inevitable when the agent was done explaining the contract. She made up an excuse about having to make a call and borrowed twenty thousand from loan sharks.

“It was an easy transaction but they didn’t hold back if you weren’t able to pay up...”

“But I couldn’t care less. I managed to get the money transferred.”

The agent smiled at her the same way the GUOLHJ store manager smiled at her friend!

The uneasiness and fear of having just borrowed from a loan shark were instantly replaced by a sense of dignity.

“It was a time you were admired if you could afford to live in a 5000 dollar apartment...”

She secretly ate instant noodles inside her upscale apartment that night.

Lilly asked curiously, “If your bestie is so rich, why didn’t you ask her to lend you money?”

Roxanne immediately shot it down. “No! The reason why she was friends with me was because she believed me to be pure and simple...”

She lied to her friend and claimed that her parents were seriously ill which was why she worked overtime. She would say things like “It doesn’t matter how hard I work as long as my parents are well”.

She couldn’t possibly go to her friend for money.

She would definitely be disappointed in her once she learned that she wanted to live in a luxury apartment. Their friendship would be over.

How else was she going to get designer clothing and bags?

Pablo thought about what Cheryl was like and finally understood why the vanity spirit insisted on clinging to the girl.

“So you’re vain and hypocritical.”

Roxanne continued, “I can’t return to working at the printing factory after getting that apartment. It isn’t in line with my status.”

It had to be a high-collar, decent job to be worthy of her and yet she had no education, skills, or experience. She couldn’t even apply for a decent white-collar job.

“There was a public institution recruiting temporary workers... They noticed how I was kind, pitiful, and sincere, so they recruited me.”

Pablo held back a laugh.

Kind, pitiful, and sincere? That’s all an act!

“It was a great position. Everyone would envy me for what I had.”

What was not so great was how her pay was only a thousand a month.

The reason why Roxanne was hired was entirely because the wages of temporary workers were low.

She had a decent job, and a decent home, and carried designer clothing and bags every day.

The pressure of paying back the loan sharks, however, grew heavier. A packet of instant noodles now had to be split between two meals but she now lived a life that was the envy of all!

It didn’t take long for all of it to no longer be enough to satisfy her vanity. She inadvertently claimed herself to be a daughter of a president of a big corporation and was working low-wage jobs to experience what working life was like.

That had people finding a photo of her and her best friend’s father.

That’s right. She pretended to be her friend...

“It was good to be rich. My identity was forged but no one ever bothered to investigate my claims.”

She realized how good it felt to take her best friend’s place!

Everyone flattered her!

She generously invited others to dinner.

She gave away the clothing she no longer wanted and went shopping with others...

She was living life as a rich woman.

Lilly cut in. "So, you're saying you bragged so much, swelled up, and died?"

"..." What?

How does that even work?

"I always thought my friend gave me those things because she was kind to me..."

"But when I followed her example of giving away those things, I realized how superior I felt!"

Roxanne smiled coldly. "She must've had an ulterior motive for being so nice to me. Was she using me to feed into her ego?"

That made Lilly frown. "And how do you know that?"

There was a contemptuous look in Roxanne's eyes. "When I give away unwanted branded clothes, all I feel is contempt when I see how thankful and surprised they are. Hah, those hicks only deserve to have the leftovers."

"She must've thought the same thing when she gifted me all her old clothes. She's such a rich person. If she really cared, she should've just gotten me new ones."

Both master and disciple were speechless.

Lilly was young but even she knew that sort of thinking was wrong.

Pablo asked, "So, you killed her?"

There were bones belonging to eighteen people buried under the playground but one was clearly older than the rest.

Roxanne's eyes were tinged with craze. "I can become her if I kill her. I can replace her if she were dead..."

"Why is the world so unfair? Why does she get a silver spoon the moment she's born while I have to take hand-me-downs?!"

"I should've been the rich one. I'm tired of being humiliated when the loan sharks come after me... I'm tired of having to come up with lie after lie to cover up an earlier lie..."

The loan sharks were more deranged than she could've ever imagined. They had come to her door and put a machete to her neck!

What was she supposed to do?

She was backed into a corner!

She had started with twenty thousand but ended up owing them one million...

She had to kill her best friend, take advantage of their momentary weakness to worm her way into their hearts, and replace her...

Only then would she be able to pay off the loan sharks and live a carefree life!

Lilly shook her head and sighed. "You're too far gone!"

"What happened after that?" Pablo asked.

Roxanne seemed to be in a daze as she murmured, "After I killed her, I treated her parents as though they were my own. I tried to coax them out of their grief every day..."

"But they didn't appreciate it at all. I tried so hard to please them but they never saw me as a daughter."

"They even offered me to the loan sharks just because they found out that I killed her! How could they be so cruel?"

They could've called the cops instead.

Why did they choose to hand her off to the loan sharks?

They must've known that loan sharks never hesitate to kill!

Something dawned on Lilly. "Is that how you died? Why are you so big then?!"

Lilly shot her suspicious looks.

Ms. Sumo Wrestler was huge. She looked more like a balloon.

She was paper white too...

Roxanne's eyes were red with rage. "They dragged me back to the printing factory, stuffed me into a machine to torture me over and over again... They held it up to my mouth over and over again...!"

They were laughing at her for being such a bragger.

So, they blew her up as though she were a balloon and ignored her pleas for mercy.

"They kept it up until my veins exploded."

"They then bled me dry and used my blood as red ink for printed books."

Her dead body was then treated as a rubber ball and inflated ten times larger than the original before finally bursting like a balloon.

Roxanne wailed in anguish. "How could they? I'm a victim too!"

"Even if I did something wrong, it was my best friend who first humiliated me with those old clothes and bags!"

"I regret killing her too! She's dead. It's not like she could ever come to life again. Why won't they treat me like they treat her...:"

"Do they even know what my life was like through the decade? I was made to relive my death over and over again but no one ever heard my screams!"

Chapter 79 What A Thrill

Creating a malignant spirit required them to be trapped in their place of death and experience an uninterrupted repetition of their demise over a decade.

The female spirit had grown resentful after having been put through the wringer.

"I died a horrible death... A horrible death!"

Following her rampage, she shrouded the room with her fury.

"It's all your fault! Why are you getting in my way?!" The vanity spirit shrieked and pounced on Lilly.

This brat was also a child of an affluent family.

Rich, pampered girls were no good!

They were all pretentious phonies!

The spirit did not hide the malice on her face as she rushed up at the girl.

Pablo was just about to strike when a green beam of light flashed passed. Something seemed to be protecting Lilly!

Josh also yelped and backed up!

Poor Josh assumed he'd be safe if he stuck close to Lilly, only to be greeted by a creepy female spirit bleeding from her orifices bounding toward them the moment he looked up.

He nearly ascended from fright.

He wanted to make a break for it but his legs seemed to fail him.

Lilly stood in front of him and threw a punch!

Her little fist threw the massive spirit into the air.

It was a sight to behold. Josh could barely believe his eyes.

Lilly's cheeks were puffed up with anger. She didn't know where the anger stemmed from. All she knew was that she was angry.

Ms. Sumo Wrestler was a terrible person!

Her friend treated her so well but she antagonized and killed her.

I'm going to beat her up into a pulp!

That was how Josh ended up witnessing his lovely younger sister mounted atop the female spirit whilst beating her up.

Every hit caused the spirit's vanity aura to be swallowed up by the jar...

Lilly was no longer the eyesore he saw her as...

She's like Ironman... Wait, no. Lilly is a girl. She's like Iron Man's girlfriend.

"You can do it, Lilly!" Josh couldn't help but cheer her on.

The vanity spirit shrieked. "Let go of me!"

"No way!"

Roxanne cursed viciously, "I curse you to die a horrible death! I curse your entire family!"

"Back at you!"

That angered the spirit even more. "It doesn't work like that!"

"Back at you! Back at you! Back at you!"

That seemed to shut the spirit up.

Even Pablo and Josh fell silent.

The spirit spat out a mouthful of blood.

The vanity aura poured into the jar of souls with the spirit growing increasingly weaker before finally returning to her normal form.

She was skinny with her eyes sunken in. "It's not fair..."

What did I do wrong?

It's the world that's wrong.

She had been so full of hope when she first set foot into Shercaster City for work but everyone around her hated her for being a country hick.

I wouldn't have turned out this way if it weren't for them...

I'm not to blame. I'm not to blame at all.

It's this world that's to blame. Why was I born poor when there are so many rich people around?

It's all her fault for bringing me into the world of the rich and now she would never experience a life of luxury herself.

Everything is their fault...

The vanity spirit transformed into wisps of black vanity aura and absorbed into the jar with a resounding click.

Pablo shook his head. "Women are becoming more and more confusing by the day!"

Her extreme vanity mirrored her inferiority complex.

Lilly shook the jar. "Hey, Master? It feels like there's water in the jar now."

It used to feel empty but now there was a feeling she couldn't quite explain.

Pablo yawned. "Yeah. It is a jar of souls. It works that way."

It was possible to fill it!

Could it be...

Pablo narrowed his eyes. "Where's your croaking parrot, Tulip?"

It would not shut up back at the grove but now it was oddly quiet.

Lilly turned to look around and found the parrot standing under a lychee tree sleeping with one leg curled up and his head in the wings sleeping.

"Huh, Polly? What are you doing there?"

Polly usually liked to rest against the iron bars and raise hell from there!

Polly awoke with a start and tilted its head as it stared at Lilly.

Pablo drifted toward the bird. "Why aren't you singing today?"

The parrot inclined its head, flapped its wings, and began to croak!

"My name is Kiki! Kikikikiki. My name is..."

It began to spin as if it were a hip-hop dancer.

It looked like a parrot that had lost its marbles.

Pablo was rendered speechless.

The green parrot fluttered its wings and shrieked, "It bites! It bites!"

The old tortoise was biting Polly's tail and refusing to let go.

"Uh."

Josh didn't know what to say.

Lilly tugged on Polly's feathers and said softly, "Please let go of Polly, Tortoise."

Josh snorted. "It'd be weird if it understood what you said."

Tortoises had a tendency to never let go once they bite onto something, which was odd that it let go of Polly's feathery tail.

It opened its mouth and shook its head. If they strained their ears, they would hear near-inaudible chirps.

That worked?

That was when Bettany knocked on the door and called for Lilly to head downstairs for supper.

Lilly raced outside after affirming that she heard her grandmother.

She felt hungry after having beaten up the female spirit.

It seemed to have worked better than doing the weight loss exercise!

Josh trailed after her and sat by her side as she ate.

How is she eating so much?

She had a bowl of chicken noodle soup, an omelet, stew, and bread...

She ate so much she couldn't move.

"Eat more! Why are you only taking so little? What are you going to do if you get hungry at night?" Bettany urged.

Grandmothers are a special breed...

Lilly awkwardly rubbed her neck. "I'm full now, Granny! See my tummy?"

What else could she possibly say to that?

She caught sight of a bowl of oatmeal which had her scampering away at the speed of light.

"I'm done eating now, Granny!"

She shot her grandmother a cheeky grin as she made a run for it.

"Lilly, find an excuse to dig up the soccer field at the school tomorrow..." Pablo said.

Lilly nodded. "Okay. I'll keep that in mind."

She opened the door.

Pablo suddenly said, "Huh? Is there a new spirit now?"

Lilly felt her hair stand on end when she was greeted by the sight of what was in her room...

Chapter 80 You're A Little Bastard

There was a female spirit standing in the middle of the room with her hair disheveled and drooping down her face. Her eyes rolled to the back of her head.

There was a massive hole in her head from which she was bleeding profusely from. At her feet were five ghostly babies lying on their backs, the largest one was tugging at a long umbilical cord that connected it to the female spirit.

When she noticed Lilly standing by the doorway, she let out a hoarse shriek, "Lilly... Lilly..."

Her bright red nails were aimed right at Lilly's throat.

Lilly turned pale.

She wasn't someone who feared ghosts. Nothing could scare her except for the memories seared deep into her soul.

The woman before her was no stranger. It was Debbie Monroe!

Debbie was smiling wryly. Her teeth were chattering. "You caused me so much misery! You killed me..."

Lilly couldn't help but take a step back but soon calmed herself.

I'm not scared. I'm not scared at all!

There's no one who can hurt me now.

I have an amazing master who gave me a bracelet that made me stronger.

I've beaten Ms. Sumo Wrestler and even broke an iron railing!

I have eight uncles, Grandpa and Granny, my cousins...

She felt herself gaining strength.

She curled her hands into fists as she glared at her stepmother...

A voice at the back of her mind was screaming for her to beat her up!

Debbie couldn't help scoffing at the sight of Lilly seemingly being scared silly.

Are you afraid now?!

Haha, I can still do whatever I please to her even when I'm dead. So what if she's the Crawford family's precious little princess?!

She deliberately tried to frighten Lilly and called out in an eerie voice, "Come join me in hell, Lilly... I'm so alone..."

Debbie revealed how miserable a state she was in as resentment and hatred churned within her.

This brat has been living quite a good life!

She's now the apple of the family's eye and living the life of a princess!

And, me? Stephen kicked me to my death. I've died so suddenly and inexplicably!

She had a bright future ahead of her and yet died so suddenly.

She killed Stephen and now wanted Lilly to join her in hell!

If she wasn't happy, no one else got to be happy!

Debbie screeched and lunged at Lilly!

Pablo noticed how Lilly stood unmoving with her hands clenched into fists and immediately went forward.

He reached out and put his hand on her shoulder to feed her his power reserves. "You have nothing to fear, Tulip."

Poor girl. She must be scared.

Pablo narrowed his eyes and was about to stuff Debbie right into the jar of souls when the little girl grabbed the woman by her arm and sent her flying!

The tumbling malignant spirit was subjected to eating dirt, leaving her stuck in a daze.

Pablo was caught off guard. "...?"

Even Debbie had no idea what had happened. "???"

The ghost baby who abruptly lost connection with its mother was also confused.

Lilly took the initiative to attack and drag the woman by her ankles.

"No mercy! No mercy!"

Debbie had turned into a sandbag that was meant to be beaten up.

She was furious. "Stop it!"

Lilly did not say a word. She continued to beat her up.

Debbie was exasperated.

How could this be?

I'm a resentful spirit who can take lives!

Why isn't Lilly afraid? Why is she able to launch a counterattack on me instead?

Pablo finally realized he had made a fool of himself in hindsight.

Lilly wasn't afraid at all. She was as brave as she could be.

Debbie's resentful aura began to be absorbed into the jar.

She was flat on the ground like a sack that had been emptied out.

"You... How dare you..."

Her words were shaky as her strength left her.

Lilly finally let her go and took two steps back...to hug Bunny!

That scared me!

The five ghostly infants started to wail. The largest one dragged a blood-red path on the ground as it crawled toward Debbie to curl up in her arms.

The rest followed suit and acted like leeches that clung to her thighs.

Debbie ruthlessly shoved them aside and screamed, "Don't touch me!"

The ghost infants felt wronged...

Lilly pursed her lips as she watched her and came to an understanding.

The largest infant was her "brother" who had never been born.

That was the miscarried child that died when Debbie tried to push her down the stairs but what about the other four?

Lilly asked, "Why does the stepmother have so many babies clinging to her, Master? Can she have that many babies in her tummy?"

If so, it'd be a pity to only fill her tummy with children.

She could've had fried chicken, ice cream, or kebabs there...

Lilly violently shook her head.

No! That's not it! The children are important too.

What I want is more space for food after the fetuses are accounted for...

Ah... That sounds nice.

Pablo answered, "No, there was only one child in her belly. The others may have been fetuses that she aborted at an earlier point in time."

The infants were filled with the hope of being born, only to be mercilessly aborted. These unwilling souls would later linger in the world of the living.

They didn't wander but clung to their mother until she either died or they vanished first.

Pablo asked, "You're already dead, Debbie. Why aren't you joining the cycle of reincarnation?"

She had ended up becoming a resentful spirit too.

How much resentment did she carry?!

Debbie growled, "Why should I when I want Stephen and Lilly dead!"

She chortled. "Remember your Daddy, Lilly? Oh wait, he isn't your daddy."

"Your Mommy and Daddy never got officially married. There was no wedding. There was only a 'wedding ceremony'..."

"I was the one who took your mother's place that night in the bridal chambers! Hahaha..."

"I won! Your mother lost! I had her shipped off to multiple men after that!"

"It's a pity your mother was lucky to not have died at the hands of those old perverts!"

"Hahaha! You're a bastard child, Lilly! Who knows which pervert's child you really are?!"

The more Debbie thought about it, the more she found herself unable to reconcile with her losses!

I was so naive!

I believed Stephen to be my best choice because he was the richest bachelor around!

She schemed to get stronger. She crushed Jean Crawford under her heel, won, and stopped being the third wheel.

She got everything that Jean failed to get.

It had been an unexpected blunder to find out that the man that she had put so much effort into was nothing but a piece of crap.

Lilly clung onto Bunny tighter.

She barely understood what Debbie was saying but what she did understand was that her father wasn't actually her father.

My Daddy is an old and ugly man?

There's eight of them?