

Horrors 221

Chapter 221: The Wrong Scenario

"I think we're almost near the end. No wonder Boss Chen calls this place a Third Sick Hall—stay here long enough, and those without sickness will also go crazy."

"I wonder how the workers manage to survive. Working at such realistic location every day, looking at this insane writing on the wall, Boss Chen must have provided them with some counselling."

"Now that you mention it, we've been here for about ten minutes already, but we have not seen one Haunted House worker."

"Stop chattering. We're rounding the corner. Be careful of things jumping out at you."

The few visitors took seven minutes to reach the end of the corridor. They kept their backs against the wall, and when they looked down the corner, they were stunned. "More corridor?"

The setting was almost the same: old walls, cracked floor, endless blood writings, and the dolls wrapped up in mattresses. The only difference was that the colors on the wall had deepened, and looking through the cracks, things like blood vessels could be seen.

"A background loop?" Standing at the corner, Han Qiuming frowned and uttered a term that was unfamiliar to outsiders.

"Isn't this a repetition of the earlier set?" Luoluo and Xiao Du heard the term for the first time.

"It looks the same, but every repetition, there are some changes that have escaped your attention. When you're at your most vulnerable, the scary stuff will appear all at once."

Han Qiuming confidently said, "I've seen this before at an overseas Haunted House called Recurring Nightmare. The whole scenario was made up of nine rooms, and each room was scarier than the one before it. Most importantly, the nine rooms could be freely moved, so you had no idea what kind of stuff had been added to the rooms after you opened the door."

"You're talking about individual rooms that are easier to manipulate, but here, the whole corridor is decorated the same way." Gou Miao touched the wall and said softly, "Everything here has an authentic touch to it; it's like Boss Chen has moved a real mental hospital into the Haunted House. I don't know why I think that, but I have a feeling I'm right."

"Ol' Guo, you're being too sensitive." Han Qiuming chuckled. "Ever since you came back from the hospital where Xu Zhenzhen committed suicide, you have turned into a coward. As the operators of Haunted Houses, we live on fear and terror. If you're so afraid, how do you expect to scare others?"

"Qiuming, it's something I also did not believe in initially, but after some more interactions, you'll see what I mean."

"From how I see it, you're regressing." Han Qiuming and Guo Miao faced each other. "For real though, you managed to take it even though your place was taken down on the first day of work? Do you know

how much effort and time we have spent to prepare for our opening day? Yet it was all ruined by that Chen fella. Even then, you still think he is a good man? You plan to have a truce with him? Have you lost your mind, or have you gone senile?"

"Qiuming, this is not boss' fault." Song An's voice was low. "If anything, it is your fault for suddenly changing the advertisement. You had to add that we're the scariest Haunted House in Jiujiang, slandering other people's names."

"So, you mean the fault lies with me?" Han Qiuming's face dropped. "Tian Teng Medical School is the latest enclosed Haunted House that I personally designed, combining my years of experience. It even has a hidden plot. I admit that his Haunted House has some points that we can learn from, but compared to my design, his is still too juvenile."

"I'm not going to argue with you. You were not there that day, so you don't understand what happened."

"If I was there, things would have gone differently. As Haunted House workers, you were scared out of the Haunted House by a visitor. You've been made the laughingstock within the industry." Han Qiuming's single sentence had insulted all the workers there, but he did not seem to mind it. "Looks like we'll need to increase your training after we return."

"Qiuming, we can talk about this later; there are other visitors with us." Guo Miao brushed Han Qiuming's needling words off.

"Yes, when we return, I'll need to have a chat with our sponsor. I feel like you've become too old to be the proprietor of this business anymore."

In his anger, Song An roared at Han Qiuming, "Han Qiuming! Boss has been nothing but kind to you. Don't cross the line!"

"I've crossed the line? Every single decision I've made is for the benefit of the Haunted House. Tian Teng Medical School has been redesigned four times already, and I'm the one responsible for three of them." Han Qiuming chuckled. "You all know how good they were."

"Incorporating a real case into the Haunted House and using a dead victim's name as a prop to send us to court, that's the good effect you're talking about?"

"Sorry, but I'm only interested in the result. Based on the data, after including the dead Xu Zhenzhen, the ticket sales increased by five times." Han Qiuming shrugged. After all, he had the right to be proud. "It was me who saved your career. Plus, please remember that I'm the designer that your sponsor begged to come help you, and you're just a worker hired by the Haunted House."

"Using actual cases as material and using a dead person's name to attract attention. When you were designing it, did you consider the feelings of the victim's families?"

"Now you're turning on me? Why didn't any of you say anything in the beginning?"

"Stop arguing!" Guo Miao pulled Han Qiuming and Song An away from each other, "We can resolve this when we return. Boss Chen cleared our Haunted House alone, and if we fail to clear his with so many of us, that will be a real source of shame."

Han Qiuming and Song An both harbored a stomach full of fire, and it helped to overwhelm the fear in their hearts.

“Who has the time to argue with person like this?” Song An strode forward alone.

“Oh! Song, don’t walk away on yourself!” Afraid that something bad might happen to Song An, Guo Miao chased after the man, moving a distance away from the rest of the group.

“There are indeed all sorts of people in the world.” Han Qiuming walked easily at the back. When he first entered the Third Sick Hall, he had been shocked by what he saw, but now, he felt much better.

He turned back to look. “The three of you stick close to me. We have ten minutes left, but don’t worry, I’ll clear this scenario. Honestly, this Haunted House might be something within the country, but compared to those foreign Haunted Houses, it’s nothing.”

“Mr. Han, I understand what you’re trying to say, but there’s something that I want to confirm with you.” Xiao Du was at the back of the group. His face was blanched. He had not paid attention to the argument between Han Qiuming and Song An because his attention had been occupied elsewhere.

“What is it?”

“Didn’t you say the mannequins wouldn’t get within five meters of us?”

Xiao Du pointed behind them, and those incredibly real mannequins had all entered the Third Sick Hall!

The leading mannequin was the female student with a nametag. Her head was lowered, and she stood only three to four meters away from Xiao Du.

Chapter 222: Don’t Be Afraid!

“Why are they following us?” Xiao Du’s voice was shaking. He was closest to the group of mannequins.

“Did you hear any footsteps?” Han Qiuming moved his eyes away to look at Xiao Du. “There should be more than one worker mixed in the mannequins since they need to move so many mannequins.”

“There was no sound. It was as if they suddenly appeared behind us, I swear.” Xiao Du was afraid that Han Qiuming would not believe him.

“No sound?” Han Qiuming’s brows were creased together. He stared at the mannequins for a while before suddenly laughing. “I know the reason!”

He strode toward the mannequins like he had really discovered their secret. “The Third Sick Hall is filled with mattresses. The workers will not create any footsteps if they step on them. The designer of this Haunted House has an impressive mind. He purposely hid the dolls underneath these mattresses to distract our attention, making us forget their actual purpose.”

Han Qiuming stopped beside the female mannequin with his lips turned up. “Using the mattresses to hide the sound of footsteps, that is a great idea, but your lousy performance gave it away. You have to maintain a safe distance if you aim to psychologically pressure the visitors. Making the visitors aware of your presence but not close enough for them to touch you is the best method.”

Xiao Du did not quite get what Han Qiuming was saying. “Why is that the best? For me, this kind of encroaching assault is scarier.”

“Pushing it too far will cause the opposite reaction in the visitors, and they might do something like this.” Han Qiuming pulled the mannequin’s head off and shoved her to the ground. Facing the group of mannequins in the darkened corridor, he shouted, “Come out on your own. Don’t make me go in to catch you—that will just be awkward for everyone.”

“Who are you talking to?” Xiao Du found him unable to catch up.

“The workers inside this Third Sick Hall. They are hiding among the mannequins with special make-up!” Han Qiuming pushed on his glasses. His face stated that he had everything under his control.

However, ten seconds later, the mannequins in the corridor still had not moved. The shadows stood unmoving in the dark corridor, and it was weirdly scary with how still they were.

“Mr. Han, should we just move on? It’s fine if their workers don’t want to come out,” Xiao Du advised, but Han Qiuming felt like this was an affront to his face. “If they’re exposed, then this is no longer their choice. It’s their bad luck that I’m in such a foul mood today. That Chen fella has ruined our Haunted House, hasn’t he? Today, I’ll repay his kindness and wreak havoc inside his!”

Han Qiuming strode inside the group of mannequins. He pulled off the heads of the mannequins one after another and kicked them to the ground. “Fine, continue to hide. Let me see how long you can hold on!”

The rolling heads made the situation worse.

“Please come back, Mr. Han!” Looking at the mannequin heads that rolled across the floor, Xiao Du’s heart raced.

“What are you in such a hurry for?” Han Qiuming yanked out five heads. “This worker sure is loyal. He’d rather watch the props get destroyed than come out to surrender.”

“Boss and Brother Song have wandered far away, we need to catch up!” Xiao Du urged. More heads rolled on the floor, and his scalp went numb because their facial expressions seemed to be changing—they were smiling!

“Don’t fret!” When Han Qiuming pulled off the eighth mannequin head, he also realized that something was wrong. “The mannequins are installed with metallic joints and support. Even an adult would have a hard time moving four of them at the same time. Could the workers be hiding at the back of the group? That has to be it. Even with special make-up, the workers will be exposed if they wander too close, so they have to be hiding at the back!”

Han Qiuming convinced himself. He charged forward, knocking the mannequins all over the place.

“Mr. Han!” Watching as Han Qiuming rushed into the group of mannequins alone, Xiao Du was worried. With a grit of his teeth, he ran after the man. “Let’s go! It’s not nice for us to ruin so many expensive props.”

“He dares wreck our Haunted House, so he should be prepared to face such consequences.” Han Qiuming strode toward the last four mannequins, which were lying on the ground. “You are making me do this to you.”

His hands tightened around the fourth mannequin. With a light yank, the mannequin’s head came off easily.

“It’s also a mannequin?” Xiao Du’s voice was shaking. “Mr. Han, are you sure the mannequins weren’t moving on their own? When I came over, I swear the expressions on the mannequins’ faces changed.”

“What do you know? Stop talking!” Han Qiuming pulled off another two mannequins’ heads. His hands started to tremble when they tightened around the last mannequin’s head. With a strong pull, a face that was crying got separated from its body.

“What the f*ck?”

Holding the head, Han Qiuming stared at Xiao Du.

“They’re all mannequins?” Xiao Du’s voice was shaking. Standing in the grave of the mannequins, he did not even dare move.

“Don’t be afraid! The workers probably ran to hide inside the sickrooms on both sides when they saw me coming.” Han Qiuming dropped the head to the ground and rushed to inspect the sickrooms. “Come out now! I’ve seen you!”

He searched several rooms, but there was no reward. Han Qiuming returned with a stern face.

“Mr. Han, do you think this place is really haunted? That Boss Chen is a madman; he is someone who will do anything. I was trapped inside a steel box by the man before.” Xiao Du was covered in chills and started to relay his nightmarish experience.

“Enough, that’s not something to boast about.” Han Qiuming waved to interrupt Xiao Du. He was calculating the distance between the corridor and the entrance to Third Sick Hall. “The workers wouldn’t have time to run out the entrance after they moved the mannequins. Yes, I know it now. They should have left through a workers’ pathway. There is probably some hidden passageway underneath one of these mattresses.”

No matter what he said, Xiao Du would not believe him anymore. Now he just wanted to get as far away from Mr. Han as possible. Xiao Du had a feeling that staying close to the man would not lead to anything good.

“If you want to go look for that, you have fun. I’m leaving.” Xiao Du turned and ran.

“With such cowardice, no wonder he was spooked by the visitor.” However, the confidence in Han Qiuming’s voice had disappeared. He walked back to the Third Sick Hall, and a headless mannequin’s finger pulled on his pants. He promptly kicked the mannequin away. “Who are you trying to scare?”

After turning the corner, Han Qiuming heard the sound of stuff rolling on the floor coming from behind him. “That is so fake.”

However, he did not turn back around the corner to look but increased his speed to catch up to the rest.

Chapter 223: He Has to Be a Patient!

"What's wrong with you?" Looking at Xiao Du, who was covered in cold sweat, Su Luoluo also started to get nervous.

"I'll tell you the truth, but don't be scared." Xiao Du huddled with Su Luoluo. "I suspect that this place is really haunted."

"Don't try to scare me." Su Luoluo had visited many Haunted Houses before, but she had never seen one like Boss Chen's before. The place was like a maze, and it was completely open for visitors to explore.

"Mr. Han's earlier speculation was all wrong; there was not one worker hiding among the mannequins! They were moving on their own!" Xiao Du gripped his hands tightly, causing his knuckles to crack. "We cannot depend on Mr. Han. I have to report this to boss and Brother Song."

"They left a long time ago... wait, don't run so fast!" Xiao Du rushed forward in a hurry, leaving Su Luoluo behind. The girl did not know whether she should run after Xiao Du or stayed behind with Ye Xiaoxin to wait for Mr. Han.

"A haunted Haunted House? Mannequins moving on their own?" Ye Xiaoxin added these two comments into her notebook. "Even professional actors from other Haunted House can be scared. This Haunted House sure is something else."

She gave a very high review. "I've not come across such a high-quality Haunted House in a long time, so today should be fun."

"The boy did not look like he was lying," Su Luoluo reminded Ye Xiaoxin. "Let us move as well. It's better if we're together."

"It's my opinion that Haunted Houses are no different from magic. They depend on illusions and psychological tricks to surprise visitors. The realer the illusion, the more successful it'll be." Ye Xiaoxin removed her jacket and tied it around her waist. She stretched lazily, and her voluptuously figure annoyed the only audience somewhat. "In this respect, Western Jiujiang's House of Horrors is undeniably successful."

"Then you stay here, I'll go join them."

The few visitors were thus separated. None of them realized that the bloody letters on the wall continued to deepen as if the blood was trying to seep out of the wall.

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"Boss, stop defending him. Han Qiuming is talented, yes, but that doesn't mean we should allow him to insult us like this!" Song An was angry on Guo Miao's behalf. "Yes, he came up with the design, but all of us contributed to building the set. In fact, he barely contributed in the construction, so what is he so proud about?"

“Calm down, I understand everything you said, but patience goes a long way. After all, he was the designer invited by our sponsor.” Guo Miao was old enough to see many things lightly. “Haunted Houses are a dying trade, and we’re all trying to find work. There’s no reason to fight among ourselves.”

“But did you not see how arrogant he was? He even wanted to replace you! Honestly, if the sponsor listens to him and replaces boss, I’ll hand in my resignation immediately.” Song An was a straightforward person.

“Don’t worry, the sponsor wouldn’t agree.” Guo Miao sighed. Actually, he was not that confident. After being forced to leave Xing Hai, their numbers had been dropping. “Let’s find that tape recorder first. There are fans of Tian Teng Medical School out there, so we cannot disappoint them.”

“Okay.” The two of them continued to move forward. After turning a corner, they found themselves in another corridor. “What is the meaning of this? They want us to keep on walking until the end?”

The place was dim, and the color of the walls deepened as if they were bruised. Stepping on the uneven mattresses, smelling the mixture of antibiotics and some weird stench that perforated the air, it felt like they were inside the intestine of some weird creature.

“There has to be a reason for Boss Chen to design the place like this. It’s probably to increase the authenticity.” Guo Miao peeled off a piece of the wall, and it crumbled in his fingers. “Along the way, I realized some of the numbers outside the rooms weren’t removed. The rooms in the first corridor all started with four, those in the second corridor started with three, and this corridor uses the number two.”

“The numbers are decreasing?”

“I suspect that this whole scenario is based on a building that has four floors in total, and Boss Chen has replicated it perfectly. Each corridor represents a floor of the building.” Looking at the walls, Guo Miao continued. “Even the numbers are preserved in their well-worn state. Not one detail has been missed. This is more than a mere OCD.”

“Yes, I have that impression as well. We create Haunted Houses mainly to scare the visitors, but this Boss Chen’s creations feel like it is more of a reduplication. So many details, including the bloody letters on the walls, this is already a kind of illness.” Song An’s anger started to dwindle as it was replaced by fear. “The bloody sentences have not stopped since we entered this place. It is hard to imagine how the man managed to write all these letters.”

“Some of the bloody letters look fresher than others.” Guo Miao also felt unsettled as an image appeared in his mind—in the middle of the night, the Haunted House’s boss carried a bucket of red paint alone in the dark and started to write down all these letters like he was possessed.

“Before entering this Haunted House, Boss Chen told us that the place has been in operation for five to six years already. Could it be that he planned this scenario with the help of his parents?”

“To use five years to build a single scenario? What is the point of that?” Since they were in the same business, Guo Miao knew how much time and effort were needed to build a scenario as complicated as this. “When we were at the entrance, a few of us peeled off the flooring. Boss Chen even paid attention to places that normal visitors wouldn’t pay attention to. That was incredibly out of place.”

“Wait a minute, the name ‘Third Sick Hall’ sounds quite familiar to me now.” Song An took out his phone, and the result made his face fall. “Boss, the Third Sick Hall is a real place in Jiujiang! Its patients were involved in many crimes like murders. In fact, a few days ago, the police sent out a warrant to capture the escaped patients!”

“So, Boss Chen wasn’t lying?” Guo Miao’s pupils danced. “He brushed over such an important fact?”

“The internet says that the Third Sick Hall was abandoned five years ago, and his Haunted House began operation five years ago!” Song An compared the timelines, and they were a match.

“This is bad!” Guo Miao suddenly remembered something. “Examine the articles closely. Look at the warrant. See whether there is anyone that matches Boss Chen, like similar weight, height, and so on.”

“Boss, you suspect that Boss Chen was once a patient of the Third Sick Hall?”

“Do you think a normal person would spend five years to reconstruct a mental hospital? Every detail here is so authentic—only someone who spent a long time inside a mental hospital could replicate them so perfectly!” The more he thought about it, the more afraid Guo Miao became. “This Boss Chen cleared Tian Teng Medical School with his heartrate not going over one hundred once. How can someone like that be a normal person?”

“How about we just stop this tour and leave immediately?”

“Leaving now might cause us to get targeted.”

“Why?”

“The Third Sick Hall is not normally open to the public, and Boss Chen said that the scenario is not yet completed. Thinking about it now, those were probably all excuses.” Guo Miao felt like killing Han Qiuming. “This place is probably hiding a huge secret.”

Song An realized how severe Guo Miao’s expression had gotten. He whispered, “What kind of secret?”

“Before I arrived, I spoke with the manager of New Century Park. The man mentioned in passing that Boss Chen’s parents disappeared mysteriously half a year ago without leaving behind any clues.” Looking at the crazed sentences written in blood, Guo Miao’s heart was frozen in fear.

“Mysterious disappearance?” Song An’s shock turned into terror. His eyes bulged as if he was suddenly reminded of something.

Chapter 224: Limitation

“Could Boss Chen’s parents...” Song An felt like his throat was filled with ice. When he said that, his lips were shaking uncontrollably.

“You saw the blood streak on the side of the bed in that room earlier. I didn’t want to say anything then because we had outsiders with us.” Guo Miao reached into his pocket to pull out a cigarette to dangle on his lips. “Fake blood is definitely not that color. The scratch marks and blood stains that we saw probably came from an actual human.”

"There are many more similar scratch marks and blood stains inside this scenario. If all those are real..." Song An shivered as he looked around. *This is not a Haunted House; it's a slaughterhouse!*

"Boss, shall we call the cops?"

"I had the same idea, but we're in here for only ten minutes. If this is a misunderstanding, we'll be shamed for the rest of our lives." Guo Miao bit on the cigarette. "Let's meet up with the others first."

"Boss! Brother Song!" When Song An was conversing with Guo Miao, Xiao Du ran over, gasping for air. "The mannequins are alive! The mannequins are following behind us even though no one is carrying them!"

"The mannequins are alive?" The bad news just kept coming.

"Yes, Mr. Han said that it was because of the workers hidden among the mannequins. To expose them, he dashed into the group of mannequins to drag them out." Xiao Du's breathing became calmer. He did feel safer around Guo Miao and Song An.

"Did he find any workers?" Guo Miao and Song An's faces shifted. This Haunted House had many nasty surprises!

"There was not one worker among the mannequins!"

"If they were not manually moved, why are the mannequins following us? Han Qiuming might be an annoying person, but he is indeed a professional in this business."

"No idea, but Mr. Han failed to discover any secrets after destroying all the mannequins. They're just normal mannequins."

"Wait, Mr. Han destroyed the mannequins?" The bad feeling within Guo Miao was slowly materializing.

"I warned him about it, but he still went ahead and pulled off all the heads." Xiao Du pouted. "You don't know what happened then. Mr. Han was standing amid the broken mannequins, saying that since Boss Chen has ruined Tian Teng Medical School, he was going to create chaos within his Haunted House as well!"

Listening to Xiao Du, both Guo Miao and Song An froze. *What the f*ck! Does he not know the limits? Why do you have to go and provoke a crazed murderer?*

"What's wrong with the both of you?" Xiao Du realized that both Guo Miao and Song An were not speaking, and the atmosphere was rather heavy. "Are you both scared as well? I was walking at the back of group, and it felt like people were following us. Every time I turned back to look, the mannequins moved closer, and I swore one of them even smiled at me!"

"Xiao Du, the mannequins aren't that important." The cigarette in Guo Miao's mouth had been chewed in half. He removed it and shoved the broken halves into his pocket.

"How is that not important? Boss, there are at least twenty of those mannequins. If they all come alive, how are we going to survive?" Xiao Du was surprised by his boss' reaction. This was different from what he had expected.

"Boss is right. There is a bigger problem that we need to deal with." Song An's expression darkened. "Let's go find that Han Qiuming first."

Song An's sudden change in attitude confused Xiao Du. "Brother Song, didn't you just have an argument with Mr. Han? You're still going to look for him?"

"There's no choice." Song An said with a serious expression. "I cannot just let him die, can I?"

"Let him die?" Xiao Du's lips fell open. *When did things become so serious? Aren't we only visiting a Haunted House?*

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After Xiao Du and Su Luoluo left, Ye Xiaoxin stood where she was. She was brave and enjoyed the visit. Occasionally, she would take out her notepad to jot things down.

"You're waiting for me?" Han Qiuming's heart soared when he saw Ye Xiaoxin was alone.

"I prefer to do things slow and alone. Your friends are all ahead." Ye Xiaoxin pointed forward with her pen. Due to the corner, they had no idea what had happened ahead.

Han Qiuming glanced at Ye Xiaoxin and did not move his gaze away anymore. He increased his pace to walk beside her. "I can help with your review; after all, I'm a professional. I've visited many Haunted Houses and worked with many foreign teams."

"Is that so?" Ye Xiaoxin pushed open a random door and looked through everything with patience.

"Haunted Houses with a mental hospital theme alone, I've been to three. One of them was built directly on an abandoned mental hospital; that is true authenticity." Han Qiuming saw that Ye Xiaoxin wanted to move the bed, so he quickly hurried in to help.

As he attempted to flirt, Guo Miao and Xiao Du's call came from the corner. "Where is he? Qiuming! Han Qiuming?"

"He was just behind me earlier, where has he gone?"

"This place is too dangerous; we need to find him!"

"Han Qiuming!"

There were rushing footsteps in the corridor, and Han Qiuming pretended to not hear them. He helped Ye Xiaoxin move the bed and placed it on the floor.

"They're calling you, aren't you going to respond?"

"Why should I when they only want me when they come into danger?" Han Qiuming chuckled. "There's probably something very scary later. These guys might look large, but they're all useless. They all need to depend on me."

Ye Xiaoxin did not comment, and they replaced the bed. "Actually, you can go with them, I would prefer to explore the place alone."

"It's fine. This way we can be on the lookout for each other."

Since she could not chase Han Qiuming away, Ye Xiaoxin did not say anything else. She exited the room and entered the corridor. Guo Miao's group had just run past.

"Did you notice the numbers left on the door? All of the rooms here start with the number 2." Han Qiuming tried his best to show off, but Ye Xiaoxin was not interested. They walked for a short distance when Ye Xiaoxin stopped.

"What's wrong?"

"This door is different from other rooms." Ye Xiaoxin pointed at the plaque. It was smudged, but roughly, they could make out the words 'Director's Office'.

"Maybe the recorder is inside. Come on, let's take a look."

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Guo Miao and Song An ran all the way. They screamed until their throats were raw, but there was no reply from Han Qiuming.

"This shouldn't be! He was just behind me!" Xiao Du had a full head of sweat as various scary thoughts filled his mind. "Do you think Mr. Han was kidnapped by the mannequins?"

"Probably not. He would have screamed if something happened to him, but we didn't hear anything." Guo Miao frowned, looking at the collapsed mess of mannequins and the rolling heads. He gritted his teeth. "Don't panic. He's probably in one of the sickrooms. We'll turn back and look."

Chapter 225: Tape Recorder

"Boss, you still want us to find him?" Xiao Du grumbled. The young man did not have a good impression of Han Qiuming because of his sharp tongue.

"Something might really happen to him if we don't find him." Guo Miao's expression was serious.

"Perhaps something has already happened to him. No, we can't leave him behind! We're retracing our steps now!"

"I agree with you, boss." To everyone's surprise, Song An did not hold onto his grudges and was willing to help. "It's a mistake to get separated inside a Haunted House. We'd better stick together."

Xiao Du nodded after a long pause. "Okay, I'll follow you."

The most innocent was Su Luoluo. The girl did not know anything and had no idea what the workers from Tian Teng Medical School were talking about. She just followed them and ran all over the place.

"We should be more detailed with our examination. We need to look inside every room."

With Guo Miao leading the way, the group returned into the Third Sick Hall.

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Han Qiuming and Ye Xiaoxin entered the director's office. The room was separated into two smaller rooms, equipped with simple desks and chairs.

"The drawers are empty, and there are no books on the shelves. It's impossible to know the boss' personality from his reading preferences, but this is a good thing as well because it saves our time. Many Haunted Houses like to hide passwords or clues inside books," Han Qiuming explained to Ye Xiaoxin, but it felt like he was talking to himself. Ye Xiaoxin moved away from the man and walked deeper into the room. She looked at the large dresser.

"Let me, this dresser is obviously custom-made. Ninety percent chance there's a worker or trap hiding inside." Han Qiuming walked forward to pull the door open. The dresser was empty. He laughed awkwardly. "Looks like this is the ten percent. The worker probably didn't have the time to return after scaring Ol' Guo."

Ye Xiaoxin was completely uninterested in the man. She knocked on the walls of the dresser light. "Placing a special dresser inside a special room, there has to be a reason."

When Ye Xiaoxin knocked on the back wall of the dresser, the sound changed. It was obvious that the back was hollow. The two worked together to remove the wall, and a hidden passage was revealed.

"The worker's passageway?"

"It's shouldn't be."

There was no light inside the passageway, so Ye Xiaoxin took out her phone to use its flashlight. When both her and Han Qiuming entered the path, an invisible force pushed the wall of the dresser, and it slowly closed. The passageway was so cramped that it was difficult to even turn. Thankfully, it was only several meters long.

At the end of the oppressive tunnel was a steel door. Ye Xiaoxin pushed it open, and before her was a wooden board. She shoved it open, and the scenery changed. This was a sickroom that she had not been in before.

"The director's office is connected to a sickroom? What is the meaning of this design?" Ye Xiaoxin was completely drawn into the authentic recreation of the Third Sick Hall.

"Do you think it's because the director kept the patient in his room as his possession?" Han Qiuming suggested. "I hear this is something common when the private hospitals weren't professionally managed like nowadays."

"Possibly." They entered the room and started inspecting it. There sick bed, tables, and chairs had their corners ground down. The decoration was simple; there was nothing special.

"Let's go out to take a look." Han Qiuming opened the door, and a weird stench entered his nostrils. It smelt like the mixture of medicine and blood. He staggered one step back and extended his neck to look down the corridor.

The walls were cracked, and the blood vessels behind them seemed to be pulsing. It gave a very creepy feeling like the building was alive and the walls were hiding its blood vessels.

"It doesn't seem like we've been to this corridor before." The set design was almost the same, but the feeling it gave was completely different. The Third Sick Hall had made use of the looping design to its

maximum potential. The visitors did not know what was at the end, and they had no idea how many corridors awaited them.

The mattresses on the floor were well-worn, and the dolls poked their pillow heads out. Weird expressions were drawn on their faces. It felt like their eyes were following the duo. Han Qiuming wanted to retreat. They came from the secret passageway, so they did not know how far this corridor was from the rest, and they had no idea how many scary things it was hiding.

He used his phone to shine the light down a corridor. The end of the dark corridor was not an exit but yet another corner.

“Don’t block the way.” Ye Xiaoxin exited the sickroom. Her legs that stepped out felt like they were touched by chills. This corridor was obviously different from those before it.

“Let’s look around. The tape recorder should be one of these rooms.” Ye Xiaoxin entered the sickroom next door to investigate, but Han Qiuming stood where he was. His hand that gripped the door was covered in sweat, and he peeked over his shoulder to look at the room door.

The upper half of the door was normal—it had the sign ‘3’—but the lower part of the door was quite scary. It was completely covered in red paint, but the paint was bright and sticky. The red seemed to be alive, and it grew on the door. “Room 3? Why are the number of the rooms in this corridor different from others?”

Han Qiuming and Ye Xiaoxin examined the first three sickrooms. When they reached the end, they discovered a room without a number or a sign. “Let’s go in and see.”

The room was small and completely enclosed. There was sound-insulation on the walls, and there was a bed with straps installed in the room. There was some broken equipment left by the bed.

“This looks like an electroshock therapy room. I’ve seen something similar in many other mental hospitals and movies.” Han Qiuming looked around the bed before examining the cluster of broken equipment. Then he started to chuckle. “Found it!”

Han Qiuming moved the equipment aside to retrieve a tape recorder that was hidden among it.

“And here I thought the Haunted House would be difficult.” He tried his best to pretend like this was nothing, but the excited expression on his face betrayed his true feelings.

In comparison, Ye Xiaoxin was much calmer. She looked at the recorder and frowned for the first time since she entered the Haunted House. “Do you hear that?”

“Hear what?” Han Qiuming did not know what Ye Xiaoxin was talking about. “Let’s ignore it. We need to leave now. There’s a time limit to this game. I’m going to make a perfect game clear and shut that Chen fella up.”

“You really don’t hear that?” Ye Xiaoxin pointed at the tape recorder in Han Qiuming’s arms. “The tape inside is turning, and the play button is lit up. The recorder has been running.”

Chapter 226: Believe Me

Wearing the bloodied doctor's outfit, Chen Ge opened the wooden boards wearing the skin mask. *Ten minutes have passed, and there haven't been any screams. Looks like they have gotten used to the Third Sick Hall.*

Chen Ge felt like he had become too soft. Afraid that the visitors might get too spooked by initial scares, he gave them a ten-minute buffer.

They should have found the tape recorder. Things will be a little more difficult from now on.

Chen Ge moved down the darkened steps. When he reached the bottom of the stairs, he turned to look down the left corridor. There was not one mannequin outside the sealed classroom. *They sure are obedient today. Normally, a few of them would be out loitering.*

Holding the faceless nurse's uniform and the hammer, Chen Ge pushed the Third Sick Hall's steel door open.

The Third Sick Hall hasn't been completed yet, and the hidden mission has not been triggered. The scenario is only fifty percent complete at most, so it can't be treated as a real three-star scenario. The group is also accompanied by many professionals, so they might really succeed. Chen Ge walked slowly. He was not in a rush. *Gotta go find that madwoman's mannequin and test the effects of this nurse's outfit first.*

After turning the first corner, Chen Ge suddenly stopped moving. In the middle of the corridor, over twenty mannequins blocked the road with their bodies, their heads rolling left and right. They seemed to be having quite a good time.

"Why are you all here?" Chen Ge stood in the middle of the road, and the rolling heads stopped immediately. All of them started to play dead. "Is this your scenario? Why are you coming to the mental hospital with your school uniforms?"

Naturally, the mannequins were silent. They stopped moving like primary school students who had been caught by their teacher at the arcade.

"It's one thing to come here, but you're disposed of as well?" Chen Ge sounded angry, but he felt sorry for them. He carried the heads up from the floor and returned them to their owners. "This group of visitors wouldn't even leave the harmless mannequins be, such cruelty."

His progress was slow because there was no light. After patching up the sixth mannequin, he stood up and announced, "When I send them out, I'll return to help the rest of you."

There was anger lacing his voice as Chen Ge gripped the hammer and ran down the corridor.

...

Inside the electrotherapy room, Han Qiuming leaned toward the recorder. He listened for a long time, but there was no sound.

"Could it be an empty tape?" This was the only conclusion that he could come up with.

“Would the boss do something that pointless?” Ye Xiaoxin had a feeling there was something more to this tape, but it was true—there was only faint white noise. She reached out to press the buttons on it, but no matter which button she pressed, the play button did not change, and the tape kept playing.

“The boss has probably modified this recorder; the buttons are only for appearance. The real power switch is hidden somewhere else.” Han Qiuming looked for a long time but could not find the real switch. His face was dark. Even since entering the Third Sick Hall, he had tried to make himself look useful, but the props inside this place kept going against him.

“We should leave first.” Han Qiuming looked at his phone. “We have three minutes left. If we hurry, we should be able to make it.”

He exited the room with Ye Xiaoxin. They planned to use the secret passageway in Room 3 to exit.

At the same time, at the other end of the corridor...

Guo Miao’s group rushed back into the deep ends of Third Sick Hall. They looked cursorily inside the rooms along the second and third corridors, including the director’s office, but they could not find Han Qiuming.

“Boss! We’ve looked through all the rooms, but there’s still no sign of Han Qiuming!” Song An exclaimed between hurried breaths.

“The corridors only leads one way, so we should have run into each other. Where is the guy?” Guo Miao patted himself on his face lightly. He had not been so worried in the past ten years. “Let me think about this. There are three possibilities to Han Qiuming’s disappearance. One, he has found a secret passageway and run into it; two, he was hiding in one of the rooms earlier when we were looking for him, and now, he is deeper inside the Haunted House; and three...”

At this point, the bloody scenes that one associated with mental hospitals appeared in his mind. He did not have the courage to continue. He looked at Song An and saw fear reflected in his eyes.

“This is bad!” The two guys communicated with their eyes, and it caused Su Luoluo’s scalp to go numb.

“Do you guys want to continue this tour? Because I’m leaving!”

She was getting more scared. Even her own teammates were more professional than these Haunted House workers, who kept saying things to make her scared.

“No! You can’t go alone; it’s too dangerous! We mustn’t separate from each other!” Song An commanded like something bad would happen to Su Luoluo if she left them.

“Ol’ Song is right. Being separated will give them the chance to take us down one by one. Only by staying together will the enemy not dare do anything rash.” Guo Miao forced a smile at Su Luoluo. “I’m sorry for dragging you into this mess, but don’t worry, we’ll definitely bring you out safely.”

Su Luoluo felt like crying when she heard Guo Miao’s apology. *Why are you suddenly apologizing? What is happening? You told me I was lucky to have been selected to join you on this visit, but I’ve done nothing except run all over the place. Why are you doing this to me?*

Su Luoluo suspected that she had been tricked and that she was the only real visitor. The rest of them were actors! The two Haunted Houses had worked together to scare her!

“We don’t have time to waste. The longer we stay here, the more dangerous it is for Han Qiuming. We need to find him now!” Guo Miao decided. “Come on! Let’s move down the other corridor!”

He and Song An walked in front while Xiao Du followed at the back. Before they moved on, he turned to tell Su Luoluo, “Brother Song and Boss are reliable people. With them around, nothing dangerous will happen to you.”

“What kind of danger will happen to me inside a Haunted House? Is that how you console someone?” Standing alone in the corridor that was covered with bloody letters, Su Luoluo followed Guo Miao’s group unwillingly. She did not dare go back to the exit alone. The group walked to the fourth corridor. They looked through all ten rooms, but they still had not found Han Qiuming.

“We’ve reached the end? Where is this Han Qiuming?” Song An leaned against the wall, physically drained.

“A live person disappeared just like that?” Guo Miao’s heart was racing. He looked around and realized that the blood letters on the wall had deepened in color.

“We must have missed something!” Guo Miao gripped Song An’s shoulder. “All Haunted Houses have pathways specialized for workers—it should be the same for the Third Sick Hall. In the few sickrooms that we checked earlier, a few of them had unique structures. I believe that the pathway is hidden in one of them.”

“Okay, we’ll go back to look together!”

Su Luoluo, who had been following them, was tried. This was the first time she had visited a Haunted House like this. “I just ran here, and you guys are running away again?”

“The worker’s pathway and Han Qiuming should be in one of those rooms.” Guo Miao looked at Su Luoluo. He had not been so serious for a long time. “Trust me, I won’t be mistaken!”

...

Holding the tape recorder, Han Qiuming and Ye Xiaoxin exited the director’s office. The white noise from the tape had gotten more pronounced.

“Where are your teammates? I seem to hear running.” Ye Xiaoxin kept her distance from Han Qiuming.

“Ignore them, let’s get out first.” Holding the tape recorder, Han Qiuming felt like something was observing him. It made the skin on his back crawl.

Chapter 227: Help! Help!

“You go first. I hear this Haunted House delineates its scenarios into different stages of difficulty. Since it is not often that we get to visit the hardest scenario, I wish to look around some more.” Ye Xiaoxin stood inside the director’s office.

The noise that came out from the tape recorder grew louder, and some other sounds could be heard within the white noise. It sounded like gasps of air and also crying.

Han Qiuming looked at the time; they still had two minutes left. He did not have time to dawdle. "Okay, you take care of yourself."

Then he turned toward the exit with the recorder. Watching as Han Qiuming's back merged into the darkness, the eyes of Ye Xiaoxin, who had kept her cool throughout, bulged wide. *Why is there someone lying on his back?*

She was someone who did not believe in the supernatural, which was why she could so bravely review so many Haunted Houses. However, just now, she saw something that her experience could not explain. *Who was that lying on his back? Is it one of the workers?*

...

Han Qiuming ran at the top of his speed with the recorder. *Two minutes left!*

His body temperature fell. Han Qiuming did not know why, but there was a chill that radiated from his back and suffused through his body before finding its way into his heart.

"Pain..."

A voice appeared beside his ear. It was fleeting.

"Who was that?" Han Qiuming turned his head around to look behind him. It was like a girl was lying on his back, but when he looked, there was nothing there. "Was I mistaken?"

He ran faster with a simple goal in mind, to leave as soon as possible. "I already have the item, and I'll win the moment I escape. I'll gain back the face that Tian Teng Medical School has lost!" Han Qiuming ignored everything and dashed madly ahead.

"So painful..."

The voice came closer, moving from his back to the side of his ears like it was trying to find its way into his earlobes.

" So painful! "

" Ahhh! " Han Qiuming waved his arms at the air around him angrily. "Come out! Who is it?"

There was no response other than silence. There were only the echoes of his voice and the tape's white noise in the long corridor.

"Is it this recorder?" Other than himself, only this recorder could produce sound. Han Qiuming placed it before his eyes. The tape was still turning, and the play button's light had changed from the earlier green to red. "This has to be it!"

Han Qiuming could not figure out what was wrong. Time was ticking. With a grit of his teeth, Han Qiuming grabbed the recorder and continued his mad sprint. *There has to be something wrong with the recorder, but it is also the key to clearing this scenario! It took us so much time to find this—I'm not going to throw it away! It'll be a waste of all my previous effort!*

Han Qiuming cursed Chen Ge within his heart. *Such despicability!*

He needed to exit with the tape recorder to win, and this was the hardest decision. Ditching the recorder meant losing, but keeping the recorder meant having to suffer the torment that it brought. This was a scenario that normal people would not be able to solve!

“Argh!” Han Qiuming gritted his teeth. He was going to give up his life to clear Chen Ge’s Haunted House. He continued to run, but the weight on his shoulders gradually increased. It was as if something was pressing on his shoulders, and the chill seeped into his bones.

“So painful...”

The voice from behind him became clearer and clearer. From the initial fuzzy male voice, it had now turned into a female voice. It sounded familiar. It was a voice that was filled with helplessness and despair.

Wait a minute!

When this voice appeared, the hairs on Han Qiuming’s body stood up. *I’ve heard this voice somewhere before.*

His sanity was almost shattered. In a Haunted House that he had not visited before, he had managed to hear a voice that he was familiar with. *Where did I hear this before?*

Cold sweat slid down his forehead. He did not have many female friends, practically none from his age group. *No, I must have heard this somewhere before!*

A memory from about half a year ago floated up in his mind. When editing the design to Tian Teng Medical School to increase the attraction of the Haunted House, ignoring the objections from others, he had insisted on adding the death of Xu Zhenzhen and her father into the plot. To add to the authenticity, he had thoroughly researched Xu Zhenzhen.

The girl had once worked at her father’s hospital. Later, she had been fired due to medical mistake. At the time, the patient’s family had made a huge deal out of it, and there was even a video online. The family had gone to the hospital to demand an explanation from Xu Zhenzhen. In a nurse’s uniform, Xu Zhenzhen had been surrounded by other doctors and nurses. She had explained herself with her soft voice, but no one had paid her any attention. Later, the situation had spiraled out of control, and she had been shoved to the ground. Someone had even stepped on her fingers.

“So painful...”

Yes! This is the voice!

Han Qiuming’s head was exploding. He was listening to a dead victim’s voice inside a Haunted House!

He threw the tape recorder away instantly. Even if he had ten more hearts, and he would not go near that tape recorder again.

Why would Xu Zhenzhen’s voice be caught inside the recorder? Is it the work of that Chen fella? Impossible! He wouldn’t have known we were going to visit the Third Sick Hall. It was my suggestion that

the plan was changed. Han Qiuming wanted to give himself a huge slap on his lips. I shouldn't have said that!

The tape recorder originally came from Tian Teng Medical School. Could it be that the Xu Zhenzhen that I took inspiration from returned as an actual ghost?

His body temperature was dropping, and his skin was cold. The pressure on his shoulders continued to increase. *I'll need to leave this place first; this house is too haunted.*

Han Qiuming continued to run, but he only took several steps before he started to gasp desperately for air. The soft mattresses did not provide his feet with any purchase, and every step he took made his body feel heavier.

What's going on? It feels like I'm carrying something.

Han Qiuming looked behind him. The tape recorder that he had dropped in the corner was unharmed because the fall had been cushioned by the mattresses, and it was still rolling. The tape that kept on turning was like a curious smile or a whirlpool that was designed to draw him in.

I need to escape.

The tape recorder was far away from him, but the white noise felt like it was just beside his ears.

"So painful, so painful..."

The woman's voice filled Han Qiuming's mind, and there was a crazed look in his eyes. "Stop talking! I told you to stop talking!"

He punched the air and turned wildly about. He wanted to search for the source. In a flash, he saw a woman's face placed on his shoulder, whispering into his ear.

"I've got you now!" He turned on his phone's flashlight and used the camera to point behind him. As the camera turned, the familiar face that he had seen many times on newspapers and medical reports appeared in his phone. "Xu... Xu Zhenzhen!"

The phone slipped from his grasp, and Han Qiuming dashed down the corridor, running for his life. His body turned colder, and the voice refused to leave him be.

"So painful, so painful, so painful!"

After turning the corner, Han Qiuming returned to the mess of mannequins. He did not notice the changes to the mannequins and charged forward blindly. He knew that he had paid attention to where he was stepping, but for some reason, something tripped him up, and he collapsed amid the mess of mannequins. During his fall, his thick glasses were sent flying as well.

"My glasses!"

Han Qiuming crawled on all fours. His surroundings were completely blurred, but he could still make out the shapes of hands, legs, and heads. He crawled toward his glasses, but the glasses kept on moving away from him like they were being moved by the mannequins.

In the dark, he could sense the many heads and body parts moving toward him.

“What are you? Don’t come any closer! Help! Help!”

Chapter 228: The Devil’s Story

Han Qiuming only managed to shout once before something clamped on his lips. Endless terror swallowed him whole. Unable to see anything clearly, the icy feeling shot through his body and was carried in a certain direction. The door closed, and the corridor returned to its original state.

The Third Sick Hall was huge, and all of the corridors were quite a distance from each other, but Ye Xiaoxin still heard some commotion. She hesitated before leaving the director’s office. This courageous girl was very careful with her every step. She turned the corner, but there was still nothing.

Where has that man disappeared to? Did he trigger some trap? Ye Xiaoxin continued to move through the dark corridor.

Suddenly, she heard footsteps. *Han Qiuming’s footsteps are weak and light; this person’s are stable and powerful, like someone who has a purpose and knows what he’s doing.*

Ye Xiaoxin hid in the nearby sickroom and snuck a look through the slit.

Not long after that, an incredibly scary monster emerged. He was wearing a bloody doctor’s outfit, and his face was sewn together. He was covered in a murderous aura and holding a horrific-looking hammer. The hammer was covered in blood splatters, and it dragged across the floor. It did not look like a prop but like an actual murder weapon.

The actor inside the Third Sick Hall? The actor only appears after twenty minutes?

The first time Ye Xiaoxin lost her cool was when she saw the person on Han Qiuming’s back, and the second time was now. The monster was slowly advancing, and Ye Xiaoxin’s fair fingers gripped the door tightly. This was something she had not experienced in other Haunted Houses, and she could not understand why.

Why am I so afraid? Looking at the monster wave the hammer about expertly, Ye Xiaoxin’s instincts told her to hide. *Actors in other Haunted Houses are just putting on a show, but looking at this doctor, it feels like he has really done something sick with that hammer before.*

It was not until the doctor left that Ye Xiaoxin silently exited the sickroom. She jotted down a brief few words on her notebook before starting to follow behind the doctor.

...

In the deepest part of Third Sick Hall, Guo Miao and Song An stood before the door to Room 10.

“The numbering on this corridor is different from others, and Rooms 8, 9, and 10 are the most unique because their doors are made from steel.”

Guo Miao shared his findings with others. “We should focus on investigating these three rooms. Take care to not lose sight of one another. If you discover anything, call for help and do not touch anything on your own.”

The group went into Room 8 first. The window was installed with anti-theft gauze, and there were detaining straps attached to the steel bed on both sides. The whole room gave a weird feeling, but it was not noticeable at first glance.

“This room...” Guo Miao stared at the bed for a long time and said uncertainly, “Looks like everything here is uneven.”

With that reminder, the other visitors saw that as well. Half of the dresser had been destroyed but the other half was perfectly preserved. The left side of the bed was fine, but the right side was heavily twisted. Even the floor was half dirty and half clean. “What is the meaning of this room? The clue to clearing the scenario is unevenness?”

The patient Room 8 housed was Xiong Qing, a patient with Hemineglect. Harmony in the eyes of normal people would be twisted in his perspective, so the world in his eyes was sick and twisted and thus required correction. The group searched for a long time inside Room 8 but came up with nothing. They left Room 8 and entered Room 9.

Room 9 was the cleanest room in the Third Sick Hall. There was no trash or rubbish, and there was no weird drawing on the wall. However, inside the Third Sick Hall, this only made things seem weirder. The group searched the room and still came up with nothing.

“What is Boss Chen trying to say? This design is difficult to understand.” The patient in Room 9 was Wu Fei. This was someone even Men Nan’s main persona had thought was dangerous.

Pushing open the last steel door, the group who stood outside the door were assaulted by a pungent stench. Everyone had their hairs stand upright and they prepared to run.

When Chen Ge was doing his Trial Mission, Room 10 had been locked, so he had not been inside this room in reality.

“Should we leave?” Su Luoluo asked outside the door with her hand over her nose.

“The smell is not as strong inside the room, but you and Xiao Du can stay outside.” Guo An and Song An entered Room 10, and the decoration inside this room could only be described as madness. There were no windows—it was a completely enclosed area. There was no bed or furniture like tables or chairs. Only several dilapidated and smelly mattresses were left on the floor.

When Guo Miao and Song An’s gaze moved to the wall, even they were spooked. All the surfaces in the room were covered in blood letters of various sizes. They were so overlapped with each other that it created an illusion that they were moving.

The scariest thing was, opposite from the room door was a man’s face, embedded in the wall. It was just a thin layer, and he looked like he was smiling and was not at the same time.

“Boss, that face doesn’t look like a prop—manmade rubber wouldn’t be able create this kind of feeling.”

“I know.”

Guo Miao took several steps toward the human face. He raised his hands to touch it to confirm, but his hand hung several meters away from the face, and he could not move forward anymore. “So be it, I feel like the clue won’t be related to this face. It’s probably hiding among the blood letters.”

Guo Miao looked at the letters around the human face and realized with a shock that unlike the words out in the corridor, the sentences had basic logic to them, as if they were telling a story. Using his phone as light, he read them aloud.

"My wife accused me of being a killer, my parents refused to talk to me, the neighbors pointed at me, and everyone abandoned me.

"I shouldn't be alive, but I found no reason to die. I am the killer of my own children. Yes, I have never denied that fact.

"I shouldn't have left him alone at home. I shouldn't have left the fire on and rushed to work.

"Three lives, three children.

"What can I do to seek salvation?

"I wish to tear out my heart for you to see.

"Please stop blaming me. I'm sorry, it's all my fault.

"I shouldn't have argued; I should accept my mistake silently. If I didn't argue with my wife that night, perhaps she wouldn't have left late at night to find her parents, and she wouldn't have been harmed by those people.

"I'm sorry, this is all my fault.

"I wish to atone for my sins, but who would accept my atonement?

"There's a needle inside my body, standing over my heart. Every breath I take, it pierces through my heart.

"What should I do? Try my best to live.

"I've moved to a completely new place, but the situation hasn't changed.

"Guilt torments me. I am a killer, an unforgivable killer."

Chapter 229: The Flyer for Ghost Stories Society

"No matter where I was, when the sun rose up and I woke up from my dream, I would tell myself it's a new day. Yet, whenever I opened my eyes, the monster within me awakened. It would tear open my wounds relentlessly, and that bone-piercing pain reminded me.

"I'm my children's killer, the source of all tragedy.

"I sought help from doctors, and they told me the monster was a manifestation of my conscience and guilt; it was me torturing myself.

"They suggested that I put my focus elsewhere, find a place where my heart could rest.

"I'm afraid of interacting with people, so I relied on medication and books as well as religion to seek escape.

"I have a small wish in my heart. Perhaps God will be able to forgive my sin to give me my salvation.

"In everyone's eyes, I'm my children's killer, but my God wouldn't. I will give my everything to God.

"Three years ago, the pain finally stopped—perhaps the medicine was working. In fact, I could feel myself improving. I was more at peace with myself.

"The fall of the fourth year, the police came to me with a stranger. They said that this was one of the culprits who harmed my wife. The man came to me because he wanted to seek forgiveness. But why should I forgive him?

"My wife lost three of her children, and she was taken away from me forever not long after. I will never forgive him, never!

"The stranger opened his heart to me, but I didn't feel a shred of pity for the man. If anything, I felt like he had not suffered enough punishment. Those kinds of people do not deserve forgiveness.

"After he was done, he seemed to feel better. Looking at how relieved he was, I was angry. I charged at him, and during our tussle, the locket on his neck snapped, and the necklace that had the carving of God fell to the ground.

"As if afraid that his most precious treasure would be stepped on, he used his body to shield the locket, to beg the God for forgiveness.

"I saw myself in the man; he was very similar, including the God in the locket. I had the very same locket—we believed in the same God!

"Why would my God forgive the murderer who harmed my wife?

"After the stranger left, I smashed the locket around my neck and burned everything religious I had in my house.

"The monster that had been silent for the past four years awakened once more. I thought I was healed, but I was merely lying to myself. However, this was perfect. I no longer needed to suppress the monster that was now a part of me.

"I found a knife inside the kitchen and chased after the stranger.

"God might have forgiven him, but I had not."

The blood letters filled the wall. There were plenty more, but they became more and more incomprehensible, although they all had a feeling of confession to them.

The more he looked at them, the more afraid Guo Miao became. "Could this be Boss Chen's past? The patient in this room was once Boss Chen? This mask is one he has used before?"

His mind went to impossible places to scare himself. "Could this be actual human skin?"

With a grit of his teeth, he held his breath and reached out to touch that face. When his fingertip was about to touch the face, there was a sudden scream coming from the corridor!

“Who is that? I saw it! A face! There was a face inside Room 3!” The shrill female scream made Guo Miao’s legs turn to mush, and he collapsed to the floor. His heart was racing, and Guo Miao had his hand over his heart. He turned to yell outside the room when something caught his attention. He was kneeling before the human face, and from his vantage point, a yellowed piece of paper was poking out between the wall and the human face.

“What is this?” With shaking hands, he reached into the human face to pull the piece of paper out. Careful not to ruin the human face, Guo Miao finally pulled out the piece of paper that was about the size of his palm.

“Ghost stories society?” The paper looked like a flyer. The back was a picture of a half-opened red door, and on the top half was written ‘Ghost Stories Society’. The lower half of the flyer introduced the way to get into this society.

“Look for a building with twenty-four floors and take the elevator at midnight?”

Holding the paper in his grasp, Guo Miao’s heart kept skipping. He could no longer tell what was real and what was fake. At the same time he found the flyer, Chen Ge exited the secret tunnel into Room 3, and the black phone in his pocket vibrated.

A message at a time like this? Chen Ge retreated into the secret tunnel and closed the steel door. He checked his message.

“You’ve triggered the only hidden mission inside Third Sick Hall—Ghost Stories Society!

“This will your first opponent before you master nightmares! Find them!

“Mission Hint one: The ghost story society congregates in one of the rooms on the 24th floor.

“Mission Hint two: A building with 23 floors, but it has 24 numbers. Why?

“Mission Hint three: Only by taking the elevator at midnight will you be able to enter the 24th floor.”

When he was waiting for his elevator at Fang Hwa Apartments, he had accidentally discovered that the building only had 23 floors, but the elevator had 24 numbers!

The Ghost Stories Society is inside that building?

Inside Room 10, Guo Miao put his phone close to the flyer. “Only by taking the elevator at midnight will you be able to find the ghost stories society. After entering the elevator, press to go to the 23rd floor. When you’ve reached the 23rd floor, press to go down to the second floor. When you reach the second floor, go up to the 22nd floor. Repeat this many times before pressing the button for the 24th floor.”

Just looking at the flyer, Guo Miao was scared. He folded the flyer back up and shoved it back under the human face.

“This has to be some kind of prank, right? Taking the elevator alone at midnight, going up and down endlessly. The elevator opens to the corridor. What if those spooky things join you in the elevator?

“This place is too weird, we cannot stay here any longer. Ol’ Song, help me up, we’re leaving!”

Chen Ge pocketed his black phone and swung the hammer before him. *The visitors have triggered the hidden mission. How did they manage to do that?*

Before the Third Sick Hall was opened to the public, Chen Ge had inspected every single corner of the scenario. He had examined Room 10 as well. However, the flyer was hidden masterfully. Only by looking at the mask from the floor would one be able to spot it. This meant that one had to be afraid of the mask until one fell on the floor to discover it. It was a pure coincidence that Guo Miao had found it.

In comparison, when Chen Ge saw the face, he had gone over to squeeze the nose and cheeks to try it out. He was not afraid at all; if anything, he was happy because he suspected that this was Patient 10's face, which meant that he was closer to solving the puzzle.

The hidden mission was discovered the visitors—I need to thank them nicely.

Listening to the footsteps coming from outside the tunnel, he touched the skin mask on his face and lay in wait for the perfect moment.

Chapter 230: Surprise!

"Was it this room?" The few visitors entered Room 3, but the place was empty.

"Are you sure you're not mistaken?" Song An held Guo Miao to look around the room. There was no hiding place in sight.

"There was a face! He was wearing a doctor's outfit, and his face was sewn together. He shook and then disappeared back into the room." Su Luoluo was very sure of herself. Everyone else had their attention turned to Room 10, but she had been paying attention to things behind them.

"Never mind, stop looking," Guo Miao said weakly, his legs still weak. "Let's go out now."

"Impossible, I was staring at Room 3, and the face hasn't appeared again. He should still be inside this room." Su Luoluo grabbed Xiao Du's arm. "You were also in the corridor earlier; did you see anything?"

"Maybe, I'm not sure." Xiao Du's answer was too vague. The few of them stayed in the room for a while before retracing their steps and preparing to leave.

Leaving just like that? Chen Ge exited the secret tunnel and followed behind the group of visitors. *So be it. Their fans are waiting for them outside; I'll save them some face.*

He entered Room 10. *When the hidden mission was triggered, they were inside this room.*

Everything in the room was normal; only a few footprints were left on the mattresses. Chen Ge walked over to inspect the footprints and noticed the small changes in the human face. He squatted down, reached into the face's mouth, and pulled out a flyer from within.

Looks like they found this.

Chen Ge pocketed the flyer and entered the toilet opposite from the electrotherapy room. He carried a female mannequin out from it. He put the faceless nurse's uniform on the mannequin, preparing one last surprise for this group of visitors.

Exiting Room 10, Chen Ge could hear some noise coming from the third corridor. He glanced in that direction and saw the person, but he did not expose her. After turning the corner, he leaned against the wall and waited quietly. Several seconds later, there were soft footsteps coming from the corridor. The person who was following him was very cautious.

The sound of footsteps was adjacent to the wall. In the darkened corridor, danger could come from anywhere. Only the sturdy wall could bring her the security she needed. The two parties got close, the corner blocking their sight of one another. The person was afraid that Chen Ge was still around, so she did not turn the corner instantly but committed to the same pose as Chen Ge—her back against the cracked wall, her legs tensed as she leaned her upper body forward. She bent over and silently moved her face toward the corner.

“Are you looking for me?”

The pair of eyes met, and Ye Xiaoxin’s breathing stopped. Her heart was racing, and blood rushed to her eyes. Her ears were numb, and she could not hear anything!

Her body temperature was dropping, and her body shook involuntarily. Chen Ge looked down on the short-haired woman, and his sewn face was slightly twisted. Without a second word, he raised the hammer in his grasp!

BANG!

The hammer connected on the wall that was two meters above the girl’s head. The wall chipped, and the debris fell on her face; this made Ye Xiaoxin realize that she was not in a dream. Her composure was shattered, and blood drained from her face. She turned and dashed toward Room 3.

“Wait, don’t run!” Chen Ge maintained his distance. He did not catch up to her, but he did not slow down. The hammer scratched the wall, creating a sound that chilled Ye Xiaoxin’s heart. She did not dare turn back to look; there was only one thought in her mind—Run!

She dashed into Room 3’s secret passageway, and Chen Ge followed closely behind her.

One ran, and one chased.

They passed through the tunnel in the blink of an eye and exited at the director’s office.

In the corridor outside, the other visitors did not know what happened, but they could hear the weird noises coming from the surrounding sickrooms.

“Boss, I’m worried. It feels like something is coming.” Song An held Guo Miao and kept turning his head about.

“There are so many of us. If something is really coming, we don’t need to worry.” Guo Miao tried to keep the morale high, but before he could finish, a disheveled woman burst out of the director’s office. It was Ye Xiaoxin. She saw the group of people that she had stunned and yelled, “He’s coming to get us! Run! Run for your lives!”

Her face was red from a lack of oxygen, a different person from the calm reviewer that walked in.

“He? Who is he?”

Ye Xiaoxin ran after she gave the warning. About one second after that, the half-open door to the director's director was cracked open by brute force!

The door slammed against the wall, and it shattered into pieces. The thing that came into the visitors' sights was a blood-stained hammer!

Chen Ge, in his bloodied outfit, exited the director's office. He was chasing after Ye Xiaoxin but came into Guo Miao's group instead. His body blocking the only exit, Chen Ge turned to look at the few visitors. "This is such a coincidence."

The emotionless eyes sent chills down the visitors' spines. Before Chen Ge could make his next move, Su Luoluo and Xiao Du at the back of the group screamed and ran back into the deeper part of Third Sick Hall.

"Hold your ground..." Guo Miao was about to say, but he reached out to grab air. Song An, who had been holding onto him, had abandoned him to rush after Su Luoluo and Xiao Du. He was already several meters away.

"It's wrong to abandon your friend no matter the situation." Chen Ge made the decision and ran past Guo Miao to chase after the escaping three. The smell of blood blasted past him, and Guo Miao slowly slid down the wall. He looked at Chen Ge's rushing figure and took in a deep breath before crawling toward the Haunted House's entrance. "The truth mustn't be suppressed. Someone has to escape this place alive..."

The deepest part of the fourth corridor was a dead-end, and this was also the place where Chen Ge had laid the most traps. This group of visitors had been scared before they even reached the fourth corridor. They did not really inspect the fourth corridor, so this meant that many scare points that Chen Ge had hidden were not activated.

Chen Ge chased after them, giving them tons of pressure. When the three reached the dead end, their minds collapsed.

"There's no way forward." Xiao Du punched on the wall covered with blood vessels, and the fear he was feeling could not be put into words.

"We're trapped." Song An's face was equally filled with despair.

Of the three of them, Su Luoluo was the calmest. "There should be a hidden passageway. Don't you remember? I said I saw a face inside Room 3, but we couldn't find anyone, so I suspect there's a secret passage there."

"Room 3?" The three looked at one another and decided to gamble. They ran toward Chen Ge, and when they were about to meet, the three snuck into Room 3.

"There's really a secret passage!" When Chen Ge was chasing after Ye Xiaoxin, he had forgotten to close the passage embedded into the wall, so the visitors discovered the hidden passageway easily.

"We're saved!" Before they could be relieved, Chen Ge appeared at the door. "Hey!"

“Run!” Su Luoluo was the first to crawl into the tunnel; Xiao Du and Song An followed closely behind her. The dark tunnel was large enough to allow one person to pass through at a time. Su Luoluo saw the exit that was approaching, and her heart was in her mouth. The escape was imminent!

She crawled faster, and when she was about one meter away from the exit, a face covered with bandages appeared on the other end of the tunnel!

She was wearing a bloodied nurse uniform, and Su Luoluo could hear a woman’s giggle coming from the nurse. “What is this?”

Su Luoluo felt like cursing. She forced herself to stop, but the momentum still sent her careening into the monster. The realistic head fell into her chest. The bandages loosened, and the curiously beautiful face was revealed. Then the scariest thing happened. Due to the physical trauma, the nurse’s facial features fractured, and the face shattered before Su Luoluo!

” Ahhh! ”

She tried to crawl backwards while Xiao Du and Song An were mindlessly charging forward. The three rammed into one another, and the collision could be heard miles away. The three tripped, and due to the small space of the tunnel, they got entangled in one another and were unable to escape, lodged in the middle of the tunnel.

Seeing this, Chen Ge chuckled as he moved closer to them with the hammer. “Why are you doing this to yourselves?”