

Horrors 271

Chapter 271: Are You There? [2 in 1]

After fixing the door and the lock, Chen Ge and Xiao Gu dragged the ghost stories society's members back to the first floor and locked them inside the dressing room.

"Boss, are you sure this is safe?" Xiao Gu wiggled the door lock. "I mean, do you want me to go grab some ropes to tie them up?"

Chen Ge could see the improvement in Gu Feiyu. He removed the outfit that he was wearing and handed it to Xiao Gu. "That won't be necessary. Put this back on and return to the third floor. The visitors are already waiting."

"No problem, leave it to me." This time, Xiao Gu put on Doctor Skull-cracker's uniform without hesitation. In fact, he looked quite enthusiastic, so enthusiastic that Chen Ge wondered if he had been taken over by the monsters from the ghost stories society. After all, it was as if he was a completely different person from how he had been that morning.

"Weird, when you entered the Haunted House earlier, it felt like I was asking you to walk to your execution—why the sudden change?"

"Change?" Xiao Gu scratched his head in embarrassment. Wearing Doctor Skull-cracker's outfit, doing that action, it gave Chen Ge a sense of incongruity. "Actually, I thought your Haunted House was only meant to scare people to their death. I don't quite approve of that way of making money, but after seeing you fix the relationship problem of that couple, I suddenly feel like our Haunted House is quite warm."

"Looks like you have been having these misunderstandings about our Haunted House. Fear can help people remove the disguise that they wear daily. Here, you don't need to watch your every move or calculate how to appear to others; just focus on screaming," Chen Ge said seriously. "A fast-paced life means plenty of everyday pressure. In this city, there has to be a location where people can vent their pressure without fear. You assumed we're earning people's money by scaring them, but in reality, we're merely here to add a little color to their mundane lives."

Patting Gu Feiyu on his shoulder, a smile that was as warm as the rising sun appeared on Chen Ge's face. "Try your best to scare the visitors. The couple from before is the perfect example. We often forget the things that we have, so only in the deepest despair can we be reminded of what is the most important in our lives."

"You're right!" After listening to what Chen Ge had to say, Gu Feiyu heavily nodded several times. He suddenly found his job to be quite saintly. "I will try my best to do my job!"

"Good luck." Looking at how eager Gu Feiyu was, Chen Ge felt comforted. "That is how you should do it. By the way, you better set my phone number as your number one speed-dial. If you come across anything you cannot solve inside the Haunted House, call me immediately."

“Okay.” The arguing couple was nothing more than an interlude for Chen Ge, so he really did not expect it would be the incident that would help him gain Gu Feiyu’s approval. Of course, it was the Haunted House that his Boss Chen had ‘built’ in his mind.

Opening the thick curtain, Chen Ge walked out of the Haunted House. The resting tent was filled with waiting visitors. The promotion’s effect was much better than he had expected. Many visitors who could not wait any longer went to try out other attractions. For the first time in a long time, there were bustling crowds inside the park. Even though it was still far from how it had been during the height of New Century Park, it was good enough to make the park workers rejoice. They finally had things to do and get busy with; the theme park that been built for almost a decade saw life again.

After losing two members, the ghost stories society stopped coming to test Chen Ge. Perhaps they had sensed the problem. If they continued to test Chen Ge’s Haunted House out like this, the society would run out of members in a few days. The crowd was still bustling outside the Haunted House when it was 6:30 pm. However, for the sake of security, Chen Ge stopped accepting visitors. The workers began to clean up the park, and the visitors started to leave the park around 7 pm.

The number of visitors had broken the record at New Century Park in the most recent six months. During lunch, Uncle Xu was called away by Director Luo. They seemed to be discussing the next phase of the promotion plan. “Thank you for your help today!”

After closing the gates, Chen Ge counted his earning. Combining the online payment and cash payment, he earned almost 15,000. The number was smaller than he expected, and the main reason was because Chen Ge limited the number of visitors that could visit his Haunted House simultaneously. This was for the sake of their safety. Minghun could only allow 4 visitors at most, and the limit for Murder by Midnight was seven. Due to the demand for Mu Yang High School, Chen Ge upped the limit to twelve. The first two scenarios took about twenty minutes per visitation, but Mu Yang High School was so large that a normal visitation even for twelve visitors would last forty minutes.

The rate of earning money was low, but the good reputation kept climbing. More and more people actively helped Chen Ge promote his Haunted House by telling their family and friends either in person or through social media.

This was a positive cycle. For a normal Haunted House, due to its limitation in setting, once the freshness was over, the number of visitors would drop. However, since Chen Ge’s Haunted House was delineated according to the scare levels, as long as he could provide newer and scarier scenarios, the number of visitors would only continue to increase. For him, a good name and reputation was far more important than temporary benefits.

After a whole day of operation, only one group managed to find eighteen nametags. The group included other students from Western Jiujiang’s Medical University that came with Yang Chen and other visitors who had tried the scenario once before. Chen Ge asked them whether they would give the other scenario a try, and the team, who all looked like they had been ravaged, very adamantly rejected Chen Ge’s offer.

The day’s operation finally ended. After Xu Wan and Xiao Gu left, Chen Ge used his phone to transfer some bonus money into their accounts. After dealing with all the miscellaneous tasks, Chen Ge opened the door to the dressing room. Wei Wu and Kong Xiangming had already woken up.

However, since the monsters that possessed them had left, their minds seemed to be heavily affected. They looked dull and dim-witted, like they could not remember anything. Chen Ge led them out of the Haunted House and personally took them to the police station to find Captain Yan.

...

Xiao Gu wandered aimlessly down the road. He kept touching his face. After wearing the weird mask for a whole day, even after taking it off, it felt like something was still sticking to his face.

Where will I sleep tonight? After the big falling out with Manager Huang, it doesn't sound like a good idea to return to the security dormitory. Brother Chen has helped me so much already—asking him for early pay is too hard to do.

He pushed his hands inside his pockets. While he was desperate for a solution, there came a message from the bank on his phone.

Brother Chen has given me a bonus? But it's only my first day.

Xiao Gu looked at the message that stated 800 had entered his account. It was enough for him to rent a comfortable room at Western Jiujiang. Comparing that the experience he had had at the security team, Xiao Gu could not help but be touched. *Boss Chen is a really good man!*

After pocketing his phone, Xiao Gu headed for Fang Hwa Apartments' security dormitory. He was going back to pack his stuff and would leave to find a place for himself tomorrow. He arrived at his destination at around 8 pm. When he walked in, he saw Manager Huang standing there with a lousy expression on his face.

"Where have you been?" He was in a sharp suit, and his suede shoes were sparkingly clean. Manager Huang seemed to always have a bone to pick with Gu Feiyu.

"I've been looking for you. I've found a new job, so I'll be moving out of here tomorrow." Gu Feiyu had always been straight-shooter, so he told the man everything that was on his mind. Ol' Wong was also inside the bedroom. He quickly rushed out to pull on Gu Feiyu's sleeves. He lowered his head to apologize to Manager Huang. "Please don't mind him. Xiao Gu is too young to mind his words."

He then turned to glare at Gu Feiyu, "Why don't you know how to edit that temperament of yours?"

"There's no need for him to change. After all, this place is too small for a personality as big as his." Manager Huang placed the piece of paper he was holding on the table. "Even if you don't plan to quit, I won't be keeping you around. Fill out this form, and I don't want to see you here again after tomorrow."

Pushing Ol' Wong aside, Manager Huang walked to the door and stopped. "There's another thing. Ol' Wong, the kid came on your recommendation, so the money to pay for the damage that he has done and his medical fees will be taken out from your salary."

"What does this have to do with Uncle Wong? Just remove that from my salary." Xiao Gu tried to keep himself calm.

"Your salary? When you came, things were clearly written in the contract. You have to work for a full month before your salary can be counted. Now you're quitting in less than a month; do you really think the contract is just a piece of paper? Think about how much trouble you've created for me even though

you've been here less than a month." Manager Huang walked away without even turning back. "You want to talk to me about salary? In your dreams!"

Gu Feiyu wanted to charge forward to punch the man into a pulp, but he was stopped by Ol' Wong. "Xiao Gu, don't act too rashly. Be patient."

"Uncle, I don't mind if he didn't give me my salary, but I cannot rest easy knowing he'll take those fees out from your salary!"

"How old are you already? Why are you still acting so rashly?" Ol' Wong asked for Gu Feiyu to sit down while he walked to close the bedroom door. "It's not easy to find a job these days. Tell me what kind of new job you've found. If the conditions are good, perhaps I'll also want to switch over to help."

Ol' Wong was worried about Gu Feiyu. He was afraid that he might have been tricked, so he used a round-about way to ask about Gu Feiyu's situation. The mention of his new job did make Gu Feiyu calm down slightly. "I'm currently employed at a Haunted House, and the job is to scare people. The boss is very nice. It's my first day of work, but he's already given me a bonus."

"Is that so?" Ol' Wong was still a bit suspicious. "You're too trusting. You'd better be on the lookout for yourself even if you're working for others. Don't create trouble for people, but you have to be careful of cheaters."

"I'll be fine, Uncle."

Ol' Wong gave him plenty of advice because he worried about the young man. He changed into his security uniform when it was about 8:30 pm and prepared to leave.

"Uncle, I remember you had the morning shift today, right? Where are you going so late at night?"

"After the murderer was discovered at this place, everyone has been quite unsettled, and there has to be more than one person for the night shift."

"How about I help take your place for one night?" Xiao Gu felt guilty. If not for him, Ol' Wong's wages would not have been docked.

"You take a good rest so that you can be energized for work tomorrow morning." Ol' Wong exited the room with his thermos cup. He walked out the door before turning back. "If you don't like your new job, remember to give me a call. I still have some connections here."

"Don't worry. As tiring as the new job is, it's still much better than working security."

"You cheeky kid." Ol' Wong shook his head and left for real this time.

He walked slowly to the backdoor of Fang Hwa Apartments. After chatting with the guard whose shift he was taking over, he stood in the guard post alone. There were two guards on night shift—one looking after the front door, the other the back door—so they would not meet each other.

The night darkened, and the normally deserted backdoor became even more desolate. Since a murderer had just sneaked into the residential area, Ol' Wong did not dare lower his guard. He sat beside the window and kept raising his head to inspect the backdoor. After a whole morning of work, combined with his advanced age, Ol' Wong soon found himself collapsing on the table.

At around 11 pm, the phone on his table suddenly rang. It woke Ol' Wong up from his sleep. He looked around the room guardedly with his forged police baton. There was no one under the dim street lights.

Phew, scared me.

Ol' Wong opened his thermos cup to take a sip. He looked at his phone. There was a message on his WeChat.

"Are you there?"

He was far too old to use much social media, so Ol' Wong was confused. *Who sent this message?*

The messenger's profile was private, so only friends could see it. Ol' Wong looked at the person's name and profile picture, but he really could not remember adding this person as his friend before. *Other than my family and colleagues, the only people who would know my WeChat are the tenants of this residential area.*

Holding the phone in his hands, Ol' Wong thought for a long time, but the memory did not come to him. However, for some reason, the person did seem familiar. He placed the phone on the table. He thought about replying with a voice message, but considering how late it was, that might have been impolite. So, he used his fingers to slowly type out a message. "Yes, how can I help you?"

Several seconds later, the reply came.

"I'm a tenant on the third building's 23rd floor. I don't know what's going with the family across from me, but the children in the room keep crying. However, I cannot hear the voice of any adult. Quickly call someone to come take a look."

Crying children? 23rd floor third building? Ol' Wong looked at the message and assumed it was from a tenant. After all, something similar had happened before.

"Okay, I'll be coming in a minute." Out of caution, Ol' Wong messaged the guard that was manning the post at the front door. Then he called Manager Huang, but the call was not picked up.

Why is it the third building again? So many things are happening here.

Ol' Wong picked up his baton and ran to the third building. He had heard the rumors about the elevator at the third building, but the tenant lived on the 23rd floor, and climbing the stairs would have been too slow if there was an emergency.

I should wait for Ol' Wei before I get into the elevator. Ol' Wong waited in the lobby for the other guard to come, but then his phone rang again.

"Are you there?"

"Yes."

"The children are crying even harder. Something is wrong! Where are you people?"

Reading the message on his phone, Ol' Wong pressed the elevator button. To his surprise, the elevator was already waiting on the first floor. "Coming, don't worry."

As the silvery-gray elevator door slowly closed, Ol' Wong's heart started to race. The claustrophobic environment made his breathing become rather uneasy. The number on display soon turned to 23, and the doors opened. The darkened corridor was unusually quiet, and Ol' Wong stepped out of the elevator carefully. He switched his flashlight on, but for some reason, the light did not give him the sense of security that he wanted. It only made him feel even more uneasy.

"I'm already on the 23rd floor. Can you give me your room number?"

"3239."

Taking a deep gulp, Ol' Wong slowly nudged forward in the dark. He used his flashlight to shine on the room number, and it felt like he had walked for a long time before he found room 3239.

There's no crying? He stood at the door for a long time, and Room 3239 was very quiet. There was no sound of children. *Is this a prank, or has something bad already happened?*

Ol' Wong was not sure. He took out his phone, ready to ask the person, but the person sent him another message.

"Are you there?"

"I'm already at Room 3239, but there's nothing here. Are you mistaken?" Typing was too slow, so Ol' Wong sent a voice message. Not long after that, his own recorded voice appeared behind him.

"Who's there?"

Ol' Wong slowly turned around. The door opposite from Room 3239 was slightly ajar, and a deathly pale figure was squatting at the door, holding the phone.

...

Xiao Gu planned to lie down for the night at 11:15 pm when his phone vibrated. He picked it up to read and saw it was a message from Ol' Wong. The content was simple; there were only three words.

"Are you there?"

Chapter 272: He's Not Ol' Wong!

"Uncle Wong?" Gu Feiyu looked at his phone and replied without thinking. "I'm here, what's wrong?"

"There's a tenant that said he saw someone suspicious sneak into the third building. You know we're running low on staff, so if you're still awake, do you mind coming to help?"

"Someone suspicious? Okay, I'll be there in a minute!" Since he was the reason Ol' Wong got fined, Xiao Gu was ravaged by guilt. He had been hoping for a chance to make up for that, so he agreed readily.

Grabbing his phone, Gu Feiyu ran to Fang Hwa Apartments. The third building was just adjacent to the backdoor. Gu Feiyu glanced inside the guard post. Ol' Wong had left in such a hurry that he did not even close the door.

“Did something happen already?” He called Ol’ Wong, but there was no answer. After he entered the third floor, there was another message on his WeChat. “The person who sneaked in appeared to be a thief. We have cornered him on the 23rd floor. When you come, remember to be careful.”

“Okay.” Xiao Gu was worried about Ol’ Wong’s safety, so he rushed into the elevator and pressed the button for 23rd floor. The elevator doors slowly closed, and Xiao Gu started to frown, looking at his phone.

Uncle Wong types very slowly, and he normally sends voice messages. Also why didn’t he answer my call earlier? He was confused, but Xiao Gu did not think this was a trap. I just came to the city to find work. I have no looks and no money; there is no reason for people to trick me. Perhaps Uncle Wong’s team is on a stake-out, so it’s inconvenient to answer the call.

The number shifted, and the elevator soon arrived on the 23rd floor. “Uncle, I’m already here. Where are you?”

Xiao Gu slid out of the elevator silently. He hid around the corner and messaged Ol’ Wong to ask for his location.

“The thief seems to have enter Room 3239. We’re hiding in the room across from it. When you come over, make sure not to make too much noise.”

Raising his head to look down the darkened corridor, Xiao Gu memorized the room number that he had been given before advancing. The only source of light in the corridor was Xiao Gu’s phone. He looked at the closed doors that lined both sides of the corridor, and he slowed down.

He moved further away from the elevator. When he was halfway there, Xiao Gu turned back to look. The number on the elevator shifted. It appeared like someone had called the elevator, or perhaps someone had entered the elevator. In any case, the elevator had returned to the first floor. If something dangerous happened then, it would be impossible to escape via the elevator. It would take at least one minute for the elevator to come back up again.

Someone is coming up from the first floor? Is it the other guard? Xiao Gu waited for a while and realized that the elevator was still at the first floor. He was suspicious, but before he could understand why, Ol’ Wong started to rush him through WeChat.

This triggered an alarm in Xiao Gu.

Uncle Wong couldn’t have typed so fast; the person sending the messages is not him!

Xiao Gu had already suspected that before, but he had believed that there was nothing worth getting from him. There were so many contacts on Ol’ Wong’s WeChat, so why was he selected?

Xiao Gu slowed down. He called Ol’ Wong again, and similarly, there was no answer. “Don’t want to pick up the phone but keep sending messages... is it because the real messenger wants to hide their voice?”

Not long ago, Xiao Gu met the madwoman in the third building. He had almost been brutally murdered. The experience had left a deep scar in his heart, but it had also taught him a valuable lesson—one cannot be too careful. He did not dare move forward anymore but slowly nudged toward the elevator.

I should leave this building and get help from the other guards. Xiao Gu regretted rushing into the elevator. Just hours ago, Ol' Wong had reminded him to not act so rashly. He stuck to the wall, and as he moved down the eerie corridor, he became more unsettled.

The elevator is still sitting on the first floor. This is weird. If someone on the first floor didn't call the elevator, why did it go down? Did someone enter the elevator on this floor when I wasn't paying attention?

In the silent corridor, Xiao Gu's phone suddenly vibrated. It gave him quite a scare. He lowered his head to look. There was another message from Ol' Wong. "Have you arrived?"

For some reason, when Xiao Gu saw this message, he panicked. He increased the speed of his retreating footsteps. He moved several meters, and there was another message on his phone. "Are you there?"

Xiao Gu stopped replying. He retreated to the elevator and pressed the button to call for it. The elevator that stopped at the first floor started to move. Xiao Gu stared at the number on display, and his heart raced. The person who sent him the message seemed to sense something because the frequency of messaging drastically increased. Xiao Gu's phone kept vibrating, and the same message repeated itself.

"Are you there?"

"Are you there?"

"Are you there?"

Now Xiao Gu was certain it was definitely not Ol' Wong on the other end of the line!

The more he thought about it, the more scared he became. Seeing the messages that filled up his inbox, a chill ran through his body. *What is happening?*

When the elevator reached the 11th floor, Ol' Wong suddenly stopped sending him messages. Xiao Gu sighed in relief. He swiped his sweating forehead and realized it was soaked in cold sweat. *Someone should have taken Ol' Wong's phone already. I need to leave before I'm discovered.*

Xiao Gu pressed on the button rapidly. When the elevator reached the 14th floor, he turned over his shoulder to look. One of the room doors at the end of the corridor creaked open, and a pale figure holding Ol' Wong's phone was poking their head out.

...

"My parents taught me to be a law-abiding citizen from a young age. That filled me with a sense of justice and cultivated the habit of helping others whenever I can. Therefore, when I saw people ignoring the law and harming the innocent, I had to apprehend them. I admit I might have acted a little bit emotionally, but the situation didn't allow me any other options. If I didn't act, more people would have gotten injured."

Chen Ge wiggled the handcuffs and announced openly in front of the three officers and Captain Yan that sat across from him in the interrogation room.

"That is the reason you used violence to knock them out?" The officer who sat next to Captain Yan frowned.

"But I'm the victim here. After all, there are more of them than me."

"Have you seen a victim come to make a police report with two unconscious culprits?"

"They attacked me first; I was only acting in self-defense."

Chen Ge stared at the four policemen, who stared back at him. In the end, it was Captain Yan who coughed and said, "Stop arguing. The officers who were sent out to verify the news should return shortly."

Chapter 273: Xiao Gu, Run!

The interrogation room door was pushed open at 11 pm. Two officers walked into the room and placed two printed files on the table.

"Wei Wu, real name Zhang Wu, male, 36, works at a pharmaceutical company. He has been spotted going out late at night for the past six months and has been using his fake identity to rent many underground storage rooms. Investigation is still ongoing for his properties."

"Kong Xiangming, real name Kong Yin. A wanted man on the run. Xing Hai police suspect this man is related to two homicides."

Looking at the information on the table, Chen Ge sat up straighter. Things were even more successful than he thought. Kong Xiangming was a wanted man. He did not even have to say much to prove his innocence.

"See, I'm not lying to you, am I?" Chen Ge raised both of his hands. "I'm sorry, but what is the reward for capturing a wanted man? Xing Hai is a bigger city than Jiujiang, so the reward money should be higher, right?"

"Reward money is decided by the department of public security; it has nothing to do with locality." Captain Yan had the man beside him uncuff Chen Ge. He then personally poured a glass of water for Chen Ge. "Tell me, how did you discover these two?"

"I've told you. I'm the victim!" Chen Ge pouted. Listening to him, the few policemen in the room felt their scalps numb.

"We believe you, but everything needs to be based on the evidence." Since no one had any sign of saying anything, Captain Yan stepped forward. "Don't mind it too much, but if there's a next time, try to take a lighter hand. If you accidentally take someone's life, things will be very complicated."

Captain Yan did not know why he would say that, but he had a feeling this was only the beginning.

"Okay, I'll try."

"I'll personally go ask about the reward money for you tomorrow, so now can you tell us about these two?" Captain Yan was familiar with Chen Ge's personality, so he threw out the reward money as bait.

"Told you, I'm really the victim." Chen Ge's voice turned serious. "You guys still remember how I accidentally came into the group of madmen detaining live hostages at the mental hospital, right?"

“Yes.” Captain Yan seemed to remember something. “The group of madmen had a picture of you entering the New Century Park, so do you mean these two people were sent by them to the Haunted House to disturb business?”

“Disturb my business?” Chen Ge shook his head and sighed. “They were sent to kill me.”

The interrogation room became quiet after he said that. Based on the investigation and their years of experience, the officers believed Chen Ge was right.

“This is part of their revenge against me.”

“Just because you exposed their secret at the abandoned mental hospital? That made them want to kill you?” a young looking officer at the table asked.

“They’re all mental patients; their worldview is different from us.” Chen Ge thought about it, and he prepared to tell Captain Yan the things that he could reveal to prevent the police from having unnecessary sacrifices. “After a short interaction, I realized these people’s hearts have been fully twisted. They use their own twisted views to understand the world, and the scariest thing is they believe they are right and it is this world that is wrong. You cannot apply normal logic to them; they are extremely dangerous.”

“Mental patients going around killing people with a twisted worldview?” Captain Yan tapped lightly on the table. This was something he would subconsciously do when he was in deep thought.

“What I’m saying is the truth. You have to be very careful; they’re different from normal mental patients.”

“Different how?”

“During the day, they can act incredibly normal. Only when after midnight or when they’re alone will their side that is ill be shown.” Chen Ge was giving Captain Yan’s team a warning. This group of madmen were different from normal, and most of them were smarter than normal people.

“I understand. Most serial killers have deficiencies in terms of mental and spiritual health.” Captain Yan wanted to say something more when Chen Ge’s phone rang.

“Xiao Gu?” Chen Ge glanced at his phone and was quite surprised. “Why is he calling me?”

He was detained inside the interrogation room, so he asked Captain Yan, “Do you mind if I answer this call? It’s from my employee.”

“You can answer it here.” The few officers placed their absolute focus on Chen Ge. They perked up their ears to listen. Chen Ge picked up the call, and before he could move the phone to his ears, Gu Feiyu’s scream at the top of the lungs came through. “Brother Chen! Fang Hwa Apartments’ third building! Uncle Wong has already...”

The voice suddenly stopped. Xiao Gu’s phone sounded like it was slapped away by something and knocked into the wall. There were only running footsteps that could be heard in the call.

“Fang Hwa Apartments’ third building?” Chen Ge did not end the call. He paid full attention, hoping to get more information. The sound of footsteps soon disappeared. It was unclear whether Xiao Gu had run to another floor or tragedy had befallen him.

“Chen Ge, what was that about?” The few officers leaned forward.

“It’s at the third building again.” Chen Ge’s eyes were rather scary. “The bunch of crazies have reached out to attack my employee. They’re inside Fang Hwa Apartments’ third building!”

The interrogation room was silent for a second before everyone mobilized. “Call the local station! Get them moving instantly!”

If this was before, Chen Ge would not have told the police. After all, Captain Yan would not have chosen to help him capture the members of the ghost stories society based on his few words. But things were different now. The police had confirmed that the two members that Chen Ge had caught were involved in many crimes. Chen Ge was not lying.

“Captain Yan, can you drop me off at New Century Park first? I need to go get something important.”

“Ol’ Wu, you drive Xiao Chen.” Captain Yan seemed to morph into a different person. He walked out of the interrogation room and yelled, “Stop dawdling! Get moving!”

“Wait a minute.” Chen Ge chased after the man. “Captain Yan, don’t make too big a commotion. I fear this is a premeditated plan.”

“Don’t worry.”

After getting the promise from Captain Yan, Chen Ge took Ol’ Wu’s car to return to New Century Park. He grabbed the recorder and ballpoint pen, and since the police were coming with him, he did not take the hammer.

The ghost stories society targeted Xiao Gu mainly to get to me. They want to lead me there with Xiao Gu as bait. Chen Ge did not plan to take a big risk. He sat inside the police car and thought about it carefully. Since you have set up such a big plan, there has to be a trap. Conservatively speaking, I suspect there will be at least four members at Fang Hwa Apartments.

Chen Ge looked out the window at the night sky, and his finger traced the play button of the recorder. *But they won’t be expecting me to come with the police.*

Chapter 274: Fatal Message [2 in 1]

At 11:34 pm, Chen Ge received a call from Captain Yan when he was still inside the police car.

“The situation is not looking good. The opponent is on high alert; they seem to have discovered us.” Captain Yan sent Chen Ge a picture on his phone. “After our investigator entered the elevator, they discovered a phone that was left inside it. There was this message that they discovered inside the phone. It was still typing.”

The picture was of Xiao Gu’s phone. There was a weird paragraph in the typing space.

“Daddy killed us and placed us on the stairs.

“Big brother is lying behind me.

“Little brother is lying in front of me.

“Can you find us?”

“What is the meaning of this?” Chen Ge looked at the message on Xiao Gu’s phone, and he frowned with confusion. He did not quite understand the message that it was trying to say.

“I suspect they have noticed us, and that’s why they purposely left us this message to find in the elevator.”

“Your team has entered the third building?” Chen Ge had already warned Captain Yan, telling them not to make such a huge commotion.

“The two teams of plain clothes haven’t entered Fang Hwa Apartments yet. Their vehicles are parked at the junction about 150 meters away from the building, but they are fully ready, just waiting for the command.”

“Then, how could you have been discovered? Did the scouting investigator slip up or something?”

“Impossible, the investigator that entered the third building to scout is our senior officer. He has seven years of experience and has helped us clear many impossible cases.” Captain Yan did not think the problem lay with his men. “Furthermore, the phone was the first thing he saw when the elevator opened. If they wanted to place this phone without anyone seeing, they needed at least three minutes, and three minutes before this, our teams had not even entered Fang Hwa Apartments yet.”

“I understand what you mean. In other words, the suspects had placed the phone before you arrived.” When Chen Ge understood that, his face shifted. “Where is the investigator that found the phone now?”

“He’s still inside the third building; it was he who sent me the picture.”

“Damn it! Get him out immediately!” Chen Ge understood that the reason the ghost stories society trapped Xiao Gu was to deal with him! So, the phone with the weird message was probably meant for him as well!

After dealing with many ghosts, Chen Ge had discovered some rules about them. Including the Red Specters, most ghosts needed a medium if they wanted to do something in the physical world. For example, Zhang Ya’s love letter, Xu Yin’s tape, and the Pen Spirit’s ballpoint pen. In turn, normal people needed these ‘special items’ as a trigger to allow them to interact with the other world.

The message left on Xiao Gu’s phone was probably one of these triggers. After reading the message, it meant that the person was targeted by one or several unknown ghosts.

“Understood.” Captain Yan did not ask for details. He used the internal communication device to ask for the investigator to escape the scene immediately, but to his surprise, even though only minutes had passed, the investigator had already lost contact!

“This is bad!” Captain Yan did not hang up, so Chen Ge could hear him clearly.

"I still need 3 to 4 minutes before I arrive. Do not send any more people into the building!"

The few officers on the other end of the phone were discussing plans. After several seconds, Chen Ge heard the door being open. It sounded like someone was looking for Captain Yan. After their brief conversation, Captain Yan told the man to stay in his vehicle while he picked up his phone to inform Chen Ge, "The trainee of the investigator that I told you about just came to find me. He said that his instructor just sent him a WeChat message."

"But weren't you unable to reach the investigator when you tried to contact him earlier?" Chen Ge was intrigued. "What did the message say?"

"Just three words—Are you there?"

"Are you there?"

"This message is definitely not sent by the investigator." Captain Yan's voice turned serious. "An experienced investigator would know not to send meaningless messages to his trainee when he is in the middle of a mission. If he needed any assistance or anything happened to him, the first person he should call is the chief commander."

Looks like something bad has already happened to that investigator. Chen Ge did not say that out loud, but he did think it.

"No matter what has happened to him, we have prepared for the worst scenario." An investigator could be in mortal danger. This meant that Captain Yan could not just wait outside the residential area anymore. "Contact Team 1 and Team 2, we move out immediately! Go into the third building!"

"Captain Yan, don't act rashly! The mental patients hiding in that building are very dangerous!"

"The situation has changed. We can only do this now. Give your phone to Ol' Wu. Have him drive the car here to meet up with me."

People's lives were on the line; Chen Ge knew he would not be able to persuade Captain Yan, so he compromised. "Captain Yan, you have to make sure the officer who received the message from the investigator does not step close to the building; he might have been targeted already."

After the investigator saw the message on Xiao Gu's phone, some tragedy befell him. After that, he immediately sent a curious message to his trainee. Chen Ge had a feeling there was something problematic about this. He thought back to what Xiao Gu told him when he made the call. The first thing he said was related to Ol' Wong.

He tried to arrange the information in his mind. After Xiao Gu got his job at the Haunted House, the chances of him returning to Fang Hwa Apartments for night patrol were extremely low. So why did he return to the third building?

Xiao Gu's incident is probably related to Ol' Wong! Perhaps Ol' Wong sent him a message as well! Chen Ge wanted to tell Captain Yan something else, but Captain Yan had already ended the call to command the teams. Three minutes later, Chen Ge finally arrived at Fang Hwa Apartments.

"Have you found the missing investigator?"

“Yes, thankfully, we found him at the corner of the staircase leading up to the second floor. Physically, he’s fine, but he’s unconscious. According to the men that found him, his eyes were unfocused, and his face was pale.” Captain Yan stood beside the fleet. Holding their internal communication device, his brows were creased deeply. “Now I’m curious; how did the culprit manage to knock out a perfectly healthy adult male with fighting experience in less than a few minutes?”

When the two were conversing, said investigator had been taken out. There was a specialized unit looking after him. Chen Ge glanced at the investigator’s apparel. Without taking off his shirt, thus revealing the police undershirt, he looked just like a normal citizen. His identity would not have been discovered so easily.

“The ghost stories society probably took him as a stranger who accidentally walked into their trap. They see human lives as disposable and won’t hold back even when facing an innocent, but this time, they have made a regrettable mistake.”

When Chen Ge arrived at the 24th floor for the first time, Zhu Xiu had once requested the ghost stories society to help him evade the law enforcement. However, the ghost stories society had firmly rejected him. This little detail proved one important thing. The ghost stories society would not dare start an open conflict with law enforcement. They were like rats living in the shadows of the city, creating chaos and rot, but they would never face the light.

“Captain Yan, what about the phone left inside the elevator? Have your people found it?” Chen Ge asked another crucial question. The unfinished message left on Xiao Gu’s phone was a trap left behind by the ghost stories society. Taking a look at it might lead to some serious bad luck.

“Team 1 has found it. It’s now inside the evidence bag.” Captain Yan did not realize the severity of the situation, but Chen Ge was different. Too many people’s lives were on the line; he did not dare to waste any more time. “Captain Yan, the bunch of mental patients’ real target is me; I cannot let other people fall victim on my behalf.”

Then, he walked toward Fang Hwa Apartments.

“Wait a minute.” If this was some other citizen, Captain Yan would have stopped him, but he knew Chen Ge was different. He took out a walkie-talkie from inside the vehicle and pushed it to Chen Ge. “Do you know how to use this?”

“Yes, when my Haunted House still had quite a number of employees, every one of us had one.”

“Perfect.” Captain Yan still worried about him. He waved at Ol’ Wu, who had driven Chen Ge over. “You two go in together. At least you’ll have the other person to watch your back.”

Chen Ge did not reject Captain Yan’s kindness, and he entered Fang Hwa Apartments with Ol’ Wu. To prevent the eruption of unnecessary panic, Captain Yan did not inform the tenants who stayed there, and the third building was eerily quiet. The dim light fell on the curiously white walls. Chen Ge and Ol’ Wu walked to stand beside the elevator.

“Captain Yan wants us to follow behind Team 2, so we’ll head to the 5th floor immediately.” Ol’ Wu had just confirmed the location of the two task forces on his walkie-talkie. “Make sure you stay behind me, and don’t wander off on your own.”

Apprehending the culprit with the victim, that was something that was incredibly rare. However, considering the things that had happened to Chen Ge recently, Ol' Wu soon got over it. The man who was beside him used three weeks to fill up a whole row of filing cabinets at the Serious Crimes Unit. Thinking about this, Ol' Wu subconsciously nudged to the side, introducing a larger distance between him and Chen Ge.

"Ol' Wu, let's go find Team 1 first! That phone is seriously problematic, and Team 1 is in grave danger because of it!" Chen Ge said urgently. The more they dragged this out, the higher the chance Team 1 might come across danger.

"No, we can't do that. Captain Yan has given explicit orders for us to follow Team 2."

"We'll just go to take a look at Team 1. If they're perfectly fine, we'll go meet up with Team 2."

"Alright, fine." Ol' Wu hesitated for a long time before entering the elevator with Chen Ge. He pressed the button for the 8th floor. "Team 1 and Team 2 are each responsible for the stairwells on both sides of the building. Team 1's progress is faster than Team 2's, so the chance of them running into danger is also much higher. That is why Captain Yan wants us to stick to Team 2. He doesn't want us to put you in unnecessary danger."

"I understand," Chen Ge answered absentmindedly. He looked at the number changes but his gaze kept wandering to the button that should not be there—24. The two soon arrived at the 8th floor.

By that point, Team 1 had already reached the 9th floor. They searched the floor one by one, and their speed was fast. Ol' Wu gained contact with the leader of Team 1 on the walkie-talkie, and the two entered the safety passage to gain access to the ninth floor.

They waited in the stairwell for a while until the team leader for Team 1 and two other officers ran out from the corridor. "Why did you bring him with you?"

The leader for Team 1 was large and muscular. When Chen Ge was interrogated at the station, the man had been sitting across from him. Chen Ge remembered Captain Yan calling him Lee Zheng.

"I'm just following Captain Yan's orders." Ol' Wu looked at the two men beside Lee Zheng. "Why are there only three people in your group?"

"I had Xiao Jia and Ah Cheng are waiting for us at the other end of the corridor to prevent the suspects from running away when we're searching through the building." Lee Zheng looked down the corridor. "This is weird. Didn't you come across them when you came up?"

When the man said so, Chen Ge had a bad feeling forming immediately. "The phone that you guys picked up inside the elevator, is it with them?"

"Yes, what's wrong with that?" Lee Zheng knew Chen Ge's name already. Chen Ge's reputation had preceded him even before the interrogation incident at the police station that day. Then something hit him. Lee Zheng frowned. He took out his walkie-talkie and yelled down the darkened, horribly-lit corridor, "Xiao Jia! Ah Cheng!"

The man's booming voice echoed down the corridor. After a long time, the response finally came on Lee Zheng's walkie-talkie. "Brother Zheng, I don't know what came over Xiao Jia; he kept running upstairs! I

tried to make him explain it to me, but he is not responding in any way! We're now on the 14th floor, and I just caught up to him... Xiao Jia! What are you doing? Have you lost your mind?"

There was chaos on the walkie-talkie followed by something heavy being thrown to the floor.

"Ah Cheng?" Lee Zheng gripped the walkie-talkie. He yelled behind him and led the remaining group member up the stairs. Chen Ge and Ol' Wu also followed. The group ran up to the 14th floor, where they found Ah Cheng lying on the floor with his hands over his face. Blood seeped through the slits between his fingers.

"Ol' Wu! The two of you escort Ah Cheng back down immediately."

"Brother Zheng, I'm fine. You have to go and get Xiao Jia; he looks like he was possessed!"

Lee Zheng peeled Ah Cheng's fingers back slightly. There was a huge bite mark on his cheeks, and there was a large wound on the back of his hands.

"That phone, is it on Xiao Jia?" Of everyone there, Chen Ge could be considered the one that was the calmest and most collected. "Did either one of you take a look at the message inside the phone?"

"I didn't, but Xiao Jia did glance at it before putting it inside the evidence bag," Ah Cheng answered honestly.

I knew it! It is related to that message. Chen Ge thought back to the content of the message. It was very weird, and he chewed on it in his mind. *Father has killed us and placed us on the stairs—the message should be hinting at the stairs, but what is the meaning of the pair of siblings placed one in front and one at the back? Also, why is the directive to find them at the end?*

When Chen Ge was thinking about this, Lee Zheng had brought him men up to the 15th floor.

"Ol' Wu, stay here and watch over Xiao Jia. I'll go take a look." Chen Ge did not give Ol' Wu any chance to speak and ran up the stairs straight away. *The first investigator who read the message fainted, but Xiao Jia, the second officer who read the message, went berserk. Why is there this difference?*

Lee Zheng did not want to split up his group, but they were afraid to miss the floor Xiao Jia could be at, so they chased up the stairs. Chen Ge did not have this worry. He ran to the 15th floor and then walked to the elevator. After he got into the elevator, he pressed the button for the 23rd floor. He planned to head directly to the most dangerous 23rd floor. After all, this was the floor that Xiao Gu mentioned on the phone. *Hopefully, Xiao Gu is still safe.*

The elevator doors slowly closed, and Chen Ge kept his finger on the play button of the recorder. If he had come alone, he might really have fallen for the ghost stories society's trap, but this time, he had come with the police, and in terms of numbers, he had the advantage.

The number on the elevator kept changing, and when the elevator reached the 21st floor, Chen Ge's phone suddenly vibrated.

He clicked on the screen to open the message, and he was surprised to find a message from Xiao Gu's phone.

"Are you there?"

After reading the message, Chen Ge replied to the number.

“Give me your location. I will go find you now.”

Chapter 275: The Ghost in His Heart! [2 in 1]

The person on the other end of the line did not seem to expect such a direct reply. The new message came after about ten seconds. “I’m hiding inside the dresser in Room 3239. There seem to be things around me.”

“Do you mind describing the shape and size of those things?” Chen Ge was too lazy to type, so he sent a voice message.

“I cannot take a good look—it is too dark in here—but I can sense their presence.”

“But don’t you have your phone with you? Couldn’t you turn on the flashlight feature to take a better look around you?”

“I will be discovered.”

“Then how did you manage to hide inside Room 3239? Does this mean you have the key?”

“No, the door was open, so I snuck in immediately.”

“What about Ol’ Wong?”

“Ol’ Wong?”

The conversation had been going back and forth very quickly until this point. On Chen Ge’s side, it showed that the other party was typing, but there was no new message.

Did I kill the conversation? Chen Ge waited for a long time, but there was still no reply. He took out his phone and sent ‘Xiao Gu’ a message. “Are you there?”

When the elevator arrived at 23rd floor, Chen Ge had already sent thirteen of the same message.

“Are you there?”

When he was about to send the fourteenth one, Chen Ge realized that he had been blocked. *You’re the one who harassed me, but you’re also the one who blocked me; what’s wrong with you?*

He walked out of the elevator and pressed the play button on the recorder.

The bloodied tape slowly turned. Chen Ge narrowed his pupils, lowering the influence darkness had on him to its lowest. *Well, fret no more because I’m here to correct you.*

Chen Ge’s nerves tensed as he leaned toward the wall. Then he slowly walked down the corridor.

After reading the message on the phone, Xiao Jia lost complete control of himself and even injured his partner by biting him. This means that the ghost hiding in the dark should have the power to influence a person’s mind. The blood face of the ghost stories society had a similar power, but the blood face needed

to be close to their target and morph into the same facial features of their target before they could initiate their power.

This is a special type of ghost. Normally, these ghosts that have special powers aren't be good at combat, like the Pen Spirit.

When Chen Ge came, he did not bring Doctor Skull-cracker's hammer or the cleaver. He pushed his hand into his pocket to grab at the ballpoint pen inside it while his other hand held onto the wall. He was afraid that the door before him would suddenly open and a ghost head would stick its head in. Counting the number on the door, Chen Ge soon arrived at Room 3239. He wiggled with doorknob, but the door did not move.

Should be this room. He knocked on the door. "Is anyone there?"

The bloodied tape created a shrill white noise; it felt as if Xu Yin was warning Chen Ge. He knocked on the door several times, and to Chen Ge's surprise, a man's voice did eventually come out from within Room 3239. "Yes, I'm here! Who is disturbing people so late at night? What do you want?"

Someone is in? Chen Ge was actually more surprised than the man inside the room. He knew this was either someone who had been taken control by the ghost stories society or the man inside the room himself was the member of the ghost stories society. He was severely anxious, and his attention was pulled taut.

Fang Hwa Apartments' room doors all came with a double layer and soon the door inside was pulled open. A man about 1.7 meters tall stood inside the room, looking at Chen Ge with a cold expression. "What do you want?"

"I'm here to assist the police in capturing a fugitive. In a minute, the rest of the police troop will arrive." Chen Ge's tone and mannerisms were a perfect mimic of Captain Yan.

"Another fugitive?" The man's face turned even harsher. His brows were creased together.

"Hubby, what's wrong?" A woman about thirty walked out of the living room.

"There's another fugitive apparently."

"Wait, didn't we just have a fugitive sneak into this place a few days ago? This place is so dangerous. How many times has this happened now?" The woman's voice turned shrill. "I've told you, we should move from this place as soon as possible, but you just refuse to listen to me!"

"Move, move, move? Where do you suggest we move to?" The man's temper was lit up. Neither of them was backing down, and an argument soon started. Chen Ge looked at them with a detached gaze. He was unable to be sure whether they were members of the ghost stories society, but his instinct told him that there was something off about this couple.

When people are in the middle of an argument, they would hold the other person's gaze. Compelled by emotions, they might even use their nonverbal actions; however, these two don't do that. Their bodies are extremely awkward. Is it because they don't want to act out because I'm here, or is this all just a show? The argument went on for a while before the woman left the man at the door and strode back into the room.

The man looked like he was harboring a great ball of fire, and his attitude toward Chen Ge was harsh and pointed. "We're tenants of this building; we have not seen any fugitives or heard any weird noise. Go along and disturb someone else."

Normally, one would not have opened the door for people to enter at the middle of the night. Chen Ge had expected that. If the man suddenly opened the door and allowed him to inspect the interior, Chen Ge would really have needed to be careful.

"I just have a few questions for you." Chen Ge pointed at the few adjacent doors. "Do you know your neighbors well?"

"The rooms next to us are all empty, and there's a single man living opposite from us. He just moved in one or two months ago, and he rarely leaves his room, so can't say I know much about him."

"When was the last time you saw him?"

"Probably Wednesday night. I came back home three hours later than usual due to overtime, and I ran into him at the elevator."

"Wednesday night? Elevator?" Chen Ge immediately tied the man in the opposite room to the ghost stories society. "Do you know the man's name?"

"No idea." The man slammed the door shut after that. The sound of the door closing echoed down the corridor. Chen Ge stood in the middle of the corridor, and he turned to face the room opposite from Room 3239.

"Could a member of the ghost stories society be hiding inside this room?" There was suspicion in his eyes. The couple in Room 3239 might have looked normal, but they had 'inadvertently' revealed several pieces of key information to Chen Ge—Wednesday and the elevator. Only members of the ghost stories society would know such details. *Did they do that on purpose? Is their aim to lure me to the opposite room?*

Chen Ge did not know whether this was a coincidence or a trap. Ever since he gained the black phone, he had become more and more cautious. His right hand curled around the ballpoint pen, and his left hand grabbed the doorknob of the room opposite from Room 3239. Chen Ge turned the doorknob, and the door slowly opened.

It's not locked? When he realized that the door was not locked, Chen Ge immediately took a step back. The real trap should be this room opposite from Room 3239. Just as he released his grasp on the doorknob, a bloody hand the size of a child reached out to grab him!

It missed, but they were just centimeters away from each other!

What was that?

In the dark corridor, the door creaked open slowly. As if climbing out of the door, there was a little boy with tiny limbs, a large head, and a face that was purple from a lack of oxygen!

What made Chen Ge's heart quiver was that the boy was wearing a red shirt!

The twisted lips slowly opened to reveal a row of uneven teeth. The boy seemed to be smiling.

"Daddy killed us and placed us inside the door.

"Big brother is hiding behind the door.

"And he told me to hide in front of the door."

Just as the boy finished, another misshapen head poked out from inside the room. Its face was bloated, and the eyes were almost popping out of their sockets.

"Daddy killed us and placed us inside the door.

"Little brother is hiding in front of the door.

"And he told me to hide behind the door."

Both boys had curious expressions. They climbed out of the door and stood before Chen Ge, one standing in front, the other at the back. Fresh blood trickled down their bodies to form blood vessels that slowly crept away. They were like millipedes crawling on the ground and walls. The corridor became very dangerous, but the ghost stories society's trick was not done yet.

A white shadow slowly crawled out from Room 3239. It was the white shadow that escaped from the woman who killed Xu Yin. There was only one third of its body left. It looked like it was trying to escape. It crawled on the carpet of blood vessels, but its body was quickly dragged back into the room, and there was soon the sound of chewing coming from behind the door.

There are other monsters inside that room? Chen Ge was unfortunate enough to be right. A hand covered with blood vessels reached out. It looked no bigger than a normal person's hand, but the thing that alarmed Chen Ge was the hand seemed to have been seriously scorched. There were no finger prints.

The air in the corridor seemed to coagulate. A thick smell of blood filled the air. The air pressed on one boy's head like a kind father tussling its beloved child's hair. "He has found us, so now it is your time to find him."

The man's voice was throaty and raw. It sounded like he had consumed highly corrosive things before. Just the voice alone made Chen Ge's skin crawl. After hearing the man's voice, the two boys with Red Shirts gave an extremely happy smile, and they replied in unison, "Yes, Father."

The broken faces rushed toward Chen Ge. Xu Yin could barely handle one Red Specter, much less two. Chen Ge was under immense pressure, to a degree that he had not felt before. Without hesitation, he yelled out the name on the cursed love letter. "Zhang Ya!"

Like water dripping into a deep well, ripples started to form in Chen Ge's shadow. The crawling blood vessels suddenly stopped moving. Even the hand that hung outside the door with no fingerprint shuddered slightly. Black hair crawled out of Chen Ge's shadow like waves. It crashed into the walls on both sides of the corridor, using this powerful and violent method to crush all the blood vessels that were heading toward Chen Ge.

The temperature on the 23rd floor continued to drop. Zhang Ya's beautiful face appeared behind Chen Ge. That bone-chilling presence was hiding a soul that was burning with passion!

"This is the ghost in your heart?" The man slowly walked out from behind the door. He was wearing a large red jacket, and even though he was wearing a mask on his face, the mask did nothing to hide the man's face that was completely ruined.

"Zhang Ya, be careful!" Chen Ge decided to take a step back from the battlefield. He would be completely useless in the battle between Red Specters anyway. Chen Ge's reminder fell on deaf ears. After all, Zhang Ya would not have listened to him anyway.

Without wasting time talking or testing, Zhang Ya's eyes filled with resentment, and her black hair rose up like waves, scratching the walls as it rushed toward the two boys!

Blood vessels entwined with black hair as they crashed forward like engulfing waves. Chen Ge hid behind Zhang Ya while contemplating something else in his mind.

The man controlling the two boys in red shirt should be Patient 10 from the Third Sick Hall. The man's face, his body, and even the finger prints on the man's hands had been burned off. This fitted the description for Patient 10 perfectly. The Haunted House recovered all the sickrooms in Third Sick Hall, and the walls of Room 10 had a thorough recording of its occupant's history. The reason for his madness was the accident that killed his two children. The immense guilt and continuous trauma caused his mental breakdown.

Everything matched perfectly. Chen Ge did not think that he would face the scariest patient from Third Sick Hall that night!

He had underestimated the ghost stories society's desire to kill him. They had probably started drafting this murder plot after they lost contract with Kong Xiangming and Wei Wu. With a strategist like Wu Fei, who was smarter than normal people, they would not make the same mistake twice. The ghost stories society might have sent out all its members tonight!

Zhang Ya's appearance did not give Chen Ge any security. After all, Patient 10 alone had two Red Specters, and other than him, the ghost stories society still had six remaining members!

BANG!

The blood vessels exploded, and Zhang Ya's black hair curled tightly around one of the boys' necks, slamming him heavily on the ground. Weirdly enough the boy did not seem to feel any pain. In fact, there was a smile on his misshapen face. "Big brother, I'm running out of breath."

The already crooked head grew bigger, and blood vessels started to surface on his face. It appeared like his head was about to be popped by the leash of black hair around his neck.

At this crucial point, however, the other Red Specter and the man who stood by the door did not seem willing to help. The man even ordered the older brother to jump over Zhang Ya to focus his attack on Chen Ge.

The black hair completely covered the younger brother. After a blood-chilling scream, the blood vessels did not get absorbed by the black hair but seeped out through the seams to slowly form a new boy standing not far away. His head was smaller, and the red on his body lighter, but other than that, he was no different from before.

“What are you two waiting for?” The man with the ruined face growled with pain in his voice. Other than that, there was a trace of anger as well.

“We just wanted to wait until things were more stable. After all, the ghost in his heart is definitely stronger than most.” The door to Room 3239 slowly opened. The pair of husband and wife walked out from it. There was a thin monster standing on the man’s shoulders while the woman walked backwards. The blood face on the back of her head was flashing a creepy smile.

The two walked out laughing. They assumed victory was already theirs. However, to their surprise, when the door was open, the black hair rushed at them and curled around their bodies like a huge python.

Facing four baleful specters at once? And two of them were Red Specters!

The man and woman looked at each other. They saw fear, terror, shock, and despair reflected in each other’s eyes.

“Didn’t you say you can halt the monster on the target’s body?” the woman screamed, but that was all she managed to get out before the black hair surged into the holes on the blood face.

The man was screaming as well. The thin monster wanted to curl back into the man’s body, but it was already too late. The black hair tightened its grasp as it slowly pulled the monster out from the man.

“One versus four?” The man with the ruined face slowly clenched his wounded hand. He had thought that this was a perfect plan, but there was still unforeseeable problem.

The black hair was like a river rushing through the blood red world. In her fluttering red dress, Zhang Ya stood silently in the middle of the corridor. She heard the man’s voice and slowly moved her gaze away from Chen Ge.

When her eyes fell on the man with the ruined face, her eyes twinkled like she had found a brand-new toy.

Chapter 276: Just a Little More

The man with the ruined face felt pressured from being targeted by the Red Specter. Compared to the manic gaze standing amid the pool of black hair, his cruelty and madness paled in comparison. He could feel the enmity directed his way.

“Stop her!” The two boys controlled the blood vessels, trying to stop Zhang Ya, but they were powerless before the waves of black hair. The two of them could barely protect themselves.

“Useless!” The ruined man’s face twisted. He was not powerful enough to face Zhang Ya. His main source of power was the two Red Specters that were made from the souls of his two children. Berated by their father, the two boys started to scream. Their bloated heads squeezed out more blood vessels, and they used their bodies to block Zhang Ya’s path.

Ravaged by the black hair, the two boys’ bodies were torn apart once more. The blood vessels seeped through the black hair, but the boys’ rate of recovery had slowed down conspicuously.

“It’s impossible for there to be such a powerful Red Specter! How many baleful specters has she consumed already?” The man was in throes of disbelief. After so much planning, the cooperation of so many members were unable to deal with Chen Ge!

There was regret crossing his eyes. He saw his two boys being torn apart again, and his heart was bleeding. “Just a little bit more...”

Both Room 3239 and the room opposite from it were set up with traps. As long as Chen Ge had stepped into either one of them, he would have been killed instantly. There would not have been a chance for him to summon his ghost. When the boys were squeezed until they popped for the fifth time, the scars on the man’s ruined face throbbed violently. There was a sensation that had not appeared in his heart for a long time—Fear.

The man grabbed his arms. His fingers dug into the scars, and blood dyed his fingers red. “This is such a horrible experience.”

The wounds were torn open, and blood leaked out. The man seemed to be acting up. His hands kept tightening. “What should I do? What should I do? What should I do?”

The two boys were squeezed until they exploded. They recovered and rushed forward again. They tried everything they could, but they could not stop Zhang Ya.

She was getting close!

The blood trailed down her fingers and landed on the floor. The man with the ruined face felt like retreating. He glowered at Chen Ge, who stood behind Zhang Ya.

“Looks like I’ll have to sacrifice that thing.” The man plucked out his fingers from his open wound. His blood formed a trail in the air. He took out a wooden box from his pocket; the interior of the box was left with an inky black blood stain.

The few baleful specters showed signs of losing control—the black blood stain seemed to be highly attractive to them!

The man gave some orders silently, and then he grabbed the wooden box and ran down the corridor, abandoning the two boys. The black hair slithered on the ground like snakes. There was greed in Zhang Ya’s gaze like a glutton spotting their favorite food.

After tearing the boys up for the seventh time, Zhang Ya lost her patience. All the black hair rushed toward the man. The blood vessels from the carcasses of the two boys morphed into blood globules, and they moved behind Zhang Ya with a speed that was observable to the naked eye. Their speed was very fast, and soon, the blood gathered together. A monster that looked like conjoined twins was reborn behind Zhang Ya.

“Not good!” Chen Ge ran down the staircase behind him without hesitation. The man with the ruined face had made his last bet. He was going to use himself as bait to create the chance to kill Chen Ge!

“We’ve... found you!” The conjoined twins crawled at Chen Ge with surprising speed. Chen Ge had greatly underestimated the power of the Red Specters. They had been limited by Zhang Ya’s black hair earlier, so they did not have the chance to display their true power.

With its ability to morph into blood vessels and be reborn as well as its high mobility, if Chen Ge faced this thing alone, his chance of survival was zero.

“Xu Yin! Chen Yalin!” Chen Ge called out all the ghosts that he could manage to buy time for himself.

A girl with a purplish face and a man wearing half a red shirt appeared in the corridor. They stood side by side, blocking the conjoined twins. To Chen Ge’s despair, the monster completely ignored Xu Yin and the Pen Spirit. Its fingers covered with blood vessels seemed to cut through their bodies like a knife.

His wounds opened, and Xu Yin was knocked into the wall. One of his arms was torn off. The Pen Spirit also suffered grievous wounds when she was touched by the blood vessels. Her body faded like she was about to disappear. However, they were not the conjoined twin’s target. After damaging the two baleful specters, it charged at Chen Ge without decreasing in speed!

There were no other ghosts he could summon. Chen Ge realized how few employees he had at his Haunted House. The conjoined twins’ heads were radiating with a horrible stench. Their facial features were shifting. The crooked lips hung open, and the completely unrecognizable faces were staring at Chen Ge. “We’ve found you!”

When they were about one meter away, the conjoined twins suddenly slowed down. Its bulging eyes turned to the side. The male ghost with one of his arms torn apart was using his remaining arm to hold onto the conjoined twins’ leg!

A blood red hand reached for Xu Yin’s arm. The conjoined twins picked Xu Yin up from the floor, aiming to tear him in half. His body split open down the middle. The wound that was left behind by his beloved leaked out blood. “So painful, so painful!!”

Xu Yin ignored his half-torn body and tried his best to bite at the conjoined twins. The cruelty of the battle between baleful specters could not be put into words. Chen Ge knew that the current Xu Yin was no match for the Red Specter. He was only trying to buy him time.

“I need to meet up with the police immediately!” He ran out the corridor. When he was almost at the stairwell, a bespectacled man ran up the stairs. When Chen Ge saw the man, his heart skipped a beat. It was not the police but Manager Huang.

“What’s going on? Quick, follow me!” Manager Huang gasped for air with his hands holding onto the railing. He extended his hand toward Chen Ge like he was going to bring Chen Ge to safety.

Looking at that hand, Chen Ge took a deliberate step back.

The night when he entered the ghost stories society, Manager Huang had also been inside the third building. When he reached the lobby, Manager Huang had been lecturing Xiao Gu. The other suspicious point was the additional number on the elevator. A 24th floor that did not exist, the manager of the residential area had to know about it, but he did not do anything to remove it. Removing the number from the elevator would not have taken too much time.

Furthermore, Fang Hwa Apartments was the gathering place for ghost stories society, but there was no trace of them on the surveillance. Someone might have helping them from the dark, and that someone was probably related to Fang Hwa Apartments.

Sensing Chen Ge's suspicious gaze, Manager Huang knew that he had probably been exposed already. He removed his disguise and slowly turned around to reveal the blood face on the back of his head. "I don't want to do this, but after joining the society, I too have become a monster..."

While Manager Huang was lamenting his face, Chen Ge took out the walkie-talkie that Captain Yan had given him, and he pressed the button and shouted, "23rd floor! All four killers are on the 23rd floor!"

Chapter 277: Even the Shadow Is in the Shape of Love

Seeing how Chen Ge took out the walkie-talkie from his pocket like magic, the other half of Manager Huang's words were stuck in his throat.

"You're a police officer?" His reaction was one beat slower.

When he realized the situation was getting out of hand, Chen Ge already received the reply from Team 1's leader, Lee Zheng. "Hang in there! We're coming!"

There were rushing footsteps echoing up the stairs. Team 1 was not far away!

Manager Huang's face fell. When he created his own ghost stories, there were victims who tried to call the police as well, but there would be a process of taking out their phone and calling the police.

However, Chen Ge pulled a walkie-talkie out of his chest pocket without warning. Plus, Manager Huang did not get the feeling of a cop from Chen Ge!

Resentment, fear, and screams were a baleful specter's favorite food. Manager Huang was forced to do some cruel and scary things to prevent himself from being eaten by the monster possessing him.

However, the man before him was cultivating three baleful specters on his own, and it included the scariest Red Specter. Based on the standard of the ghost stories society, the lives this man had claimed would not be less than ten!

However, this butcher whose hands were covered with blood also worked with the police?

Incensed, Manager Huang knew that things would not be so easily settled tonight. Even after he killed Chen Ge, the identity that he was using then would have to be abandoned. "This is all because of you!"

The things that happened in the shadows had to be dealt with using the rules that governed the shadows. However, none of them expected there would be a 'traitor' among them!

The blood face's reaction was much more violent than Manager Huang's. The face knitted from blood flew toward Chen Ge. In that process, the facial feature had started to morph into Chen Ge's face.

This thing again. Chen Ge used the walkie-talkie to swipe at the blood face, but it was to no avail. His assault just passed through the blood face, he could not even touch his enemy.

"Killing you or temporarily taking control of your body might give me a chance to escape." Only Chen Ge knew Manager Huang's real identity. If the blood face took over Chen Ge and made him shut up permanently, Manager Huang still had a chance at escaping.

When the blood face was close to Chen Ge's face, the man's pupils suddenly transformed into narrow slits like those of a cat, and they radiated a chilly forcefield.

"Yin Yang Vision!" However, that was only enough to stop the blood face for half a second. Thankfully, that half a second was all Chen Ge needed. He thrust with his legs and sprung forward to do something crazy.

He knocked into Manager Huang, sending both of them careening down the stairs. His arms were scratched, and pain radiated through his body. However, to Chen Ge's surprise, the pain only lasted for a moment before it disappeared.

When his vision returned to normal, after Chen Ge stood up and prepared to run down the stairs, he realized the joints of his body were wrapped in black hair.

Zhang Ya? Other than some surface bruises, Chen Ge was completely unharmed.

However, the same could not be said for Manager Huang, who was slowly being dragged up the stairs by the black hair.

The blood face was punctured, and Manager Huang was unconscious. His body was twisted in various angles after being dragged by the black hair.

Chen Ge turned around and looked up the 22nd floor stairwell. Zhang Ya, dressed in red, stood quietly on the 23rd floor. The waterfall of black hair behind her was binding the conjoined twins, blood face, and thin monster. It formed a river that flooded the entire corridor.

The red dress was as bright as blood, and the black hair pooled around her legs. The ugly and scary monsters screamed and groaned before being torn into pieces and swallowed. To be honest, Chen Ge was quite frantic when he saw this.

Zhang Ya moved toward Chen Ge, and the bone-chilling fear and heavy smell of blood permeated Chen Ge's senses. There was another change to Zhang Ya's body. She seemed to have obtained the thing she wanted.

The lowered head tilted upward, and the black hair parted like curtains. Zhang Ya's face stopped several centimeters away from the tip of Chen Ge's nose. She looked into Chen Ge's eyes, and her pale, lifeless hands were carrying a normal-looking wooden box.

"For me?" The moment Chen Ge opened his lips, a cold draft sucked into his body. He accepted the wooden box and opened it to take a look. The black blood stain had disappeared, and in its place was a weird looking doll.

"The man with the ruined face!" The doll was one-tenth the size of the man. His mask had been taken away. Other than the eyes, the rest of his facial features had been ground flat. He had no nose or lips, just like a devil in people's nightmare.

"You've turned him into a toy?" The doll in the box was a soul that had been pulled out of his physical body. The scary face turned left and right. Chen Ge could feel the wicked presence radiating off it.

Zhang Ya had also taken out Zhu Xiu's soul to make a toy when she dealt with her killer.

Chen Ge's hair stood on end looking at the man who struggled inside the box. This was the second scariest present that he had received in his life; the first was undeniably Zhang Ya's love letter.

"Thank you, I... like this present a lot. You're the first girl who has given me a present."

Zhang Ya moved her gaze away when she heard Chen Ge say that. She lowered her head like she did not want Chen Ge to see her expression. However, Chen Ge could sense the joy in her heart.

The black hair continued to move. Chen Ge could not believe that while they were having this 'friendly conversation' on the 22nd floor, the black hair was still consuming the monsters on the 23rd floor.

The black hair slowly returned to Zhang Ya. Chen Ge caught sight of Xu Yin's broken body, and his lips fell open. He immediately told Zhang Ya, "Wait a minute! The young man who is screaming pain and the girl in school uniform are my friends, please don't hurt them!"

The good atmosphere was thus ruined. When Zhang Ya raised her head again, she had returned to her usual self. Xu Yin and the Pen Spirit were ejected from the river of black hair. The black hair curled upon itself, crushing the other monsters, bathing the corridor with fresh blood.

Zhang Ya's body wavered like she was feeling sleepy. She raised her head to look at Chen Ge before walking past him. When Chen Ge turned around, she had already disappeared.

However, the chilliness behind his back did not dissipate. Chen Ge felt like there was a pair of resentment-filled eyes following him. After two minutes, when he heard Lee Zheng's voice coming from downstairs, the feeling finally left.

Chen Ge's body was frozen solid. He collapsed to the floor and summoned back the seriously injured Xu Yin and Pen Spirit before shoving the weird box into his pocket.

The presents given by Zhang Ya were scarier than the one preceding it. First it was a candy made from human soul, and now there was a 'toy' made from a mad murderer.

Chen Ge turned back to look with a bitter smile. With the light on his phone, he discovered with a shock... his shadow did not reflect himself!

The faded light landed on him, but the shadow was that of a long-haired woman!

Chen Ge changed his words without hesitation. "But these gifts are too precious! There was never a girl who was this nice to me! I'll remember this feeling for as long as I live!"

Chapter 278: Another Spin at the Wheel

"We've found Xiao Jia. He's unconscious, but physically, he's fine." Lee Zheng paused before adding, "But that Chen Ge seems to be facing some problems."

"Xiao Chen is injured? Where are you! I'll be there in a minute!" Captain Yan's voice could be heard on the walkie-talkie.

“No, he’s fine, but he probably went through some trauma. After all, when we received his distress call, both he and the four mental patients were on the 23rd floor. He probably went through something traumatic.” Lee Zheng looked at Chen Ge, who sat frozen on the stairs, and he did not feel so good.

Initially, he had a bad impression of Chen Ge. Especially inside the interrogation room, he thought Chen Ge was being incredibly proud. However, when he heard Chen Ge cry for help earlier, he put aside all his prejudice and led his men to save Chen Ge, but he was still one step too late.

As the team leader for the investigation team at the city police station, Lee Zheng knew how rare it was for a victim of an attack to survive. The physical wound might heal over time, but the mental scars would probably remain forever.

“If only we got here sooner.” He wanted to encourage Chen Ge, but he did not know what to say.

Chen Ge sat on the stairs between the 22nd and 23rd floors. He had been staring at his shadow for about ten minutes already, and he realized something scary.

His shadow was not changing back!

When the light hit him, he could see two shadows overlapping over one another.

Something has changed within Zhang Ya. Previously she was hiding inside my shadow, but now she wants to morph into my shadow!

Chen Ge thought back to the curious reaction that Zhang Ya had shown when she saw the wooden box.

The black blood stain inside the box must be really important to her. Black-colored blood? Red Specter? Is there a relationship between them? After absorbing that black blood, has her power broken through another limit?

The more he thought about it, the more confused he became. Chen Ge looked at his own shadow, and Zhang Ya’s shadow was slowly replacing his. It looked like she was planning to follow him forever, until he no longer cast a shadow.

His finger touched the wooden box that was by his chest. Honestly, this was the first time a girl had given him a present. It was wrong on so many levels, but it also felt quite nice.

This is such a weird feeling.

No matter what happened to Zhang Ya in the future, one thing was for sure—he would never say anything negative about Zhang Ya ever again.

Temporarily, there should be no worry. After Zhang Ya swallowed the hospital president last time, she was asleep for several days, and I had to call her to wake up. This time, Zhang Ya has consumed two full Red Specters, two blood faces, one thin monster, and that mysterious black blood. She will probably will down for quite a while after such a feast.

Zhang Ya was Chen Ge’s main fighting force. With Zhang Ya’s presence, Chen Ge had managed to beat the ghost stories society; without Zhang Ya, Chen Ge would not have been able to deal with one Red Specter.

The man with the ruined face, the couple, and Manager Huang—after removing four of them, the society only has three members left.

Chen Ge's face was calm, his thoughts unreadable.

The remaining three include the chairperson, No. 10, and Wu Fei. Currently, I still cannot confirm their identities, but one thing's for sure—these three are extremely dangerous and cunning.

The society sent out a full party, and they failed to kill me, so temporarily, they won't be making any moves.

Zhang Ya was still asleep. Even though Chen Ge could not stop the 'love' from Zhang Ya, at the same time, it was undeniable that he had entered a period of weakness. If the society sent out another two Red Specters, it would flatten his Haunted House.

It was then that Chen Ge suddenly missed Zhang Ya. Without her, Chen Ge felt so unsafe. *The number of visitors has been climbing recently, and the Haunted House has collected so many screams. Perhaps it's time to spin the wheel again.*

Chen Ge did not want to use the Wheel of Misfortune, but he could not think of a better way to increase his power in a short amount of time. He needed more party members.

The black blood is something mysterious. When Zhang Ya awakens again, she might have morphed into a new stage already.

Something that was scarier than a Red Specter... Chen Ge shuddered just from the thought of it. Holding the railing, Chen Ge tried to stand up. His body was covered in dust, and his arms were scratched. He looked like he might fall any time soon.

"Be careful." Lee Zheng stayed by his side, so when he saw Chen Ge try to stand up, he immediately went to help.

"I'm fine. Please help me find Xiao Gu and Ol' Wong; I can look after myself." Chen Ge did not know why Lee Zheng's attitude toward him had changed so suddenly. He had a feeling Lee Zheng had misunderstood something, but he was in no mood to explain himself.

The two returned to 23rd floor. The monsters had all been consumed by Zhang Ya, so the members of the society were heavily damaged mentally and unconscious. The man who looked the scariest was lying in the middle of the corridor like a vegetable. His eyes were open, and they were soulless.

Lee Zheng looked at this with a frown. A weird thought bubbled up in his mind. *How come these people look like the real victims?*

No one knew what had really happened on the 23rd floor. The only witness claimed that he had tripped on the stairs and knocked his head. He could not remember anything except that he was being chased.

Pushing open Room 3239's door, Lee Zheng smelled something like blood. He rushed into the bathroom and saw a family of three lying unconscious in a pool of their own blood. Their wrists were cut open like it was a bloodletting ritual.

"There's still breathing! Come over and help, call the ambulance!"

Team 2 had already arrived. They hauled the real victims out of the room. Chen Ge could not be of much help. He stood in the corner of the room and quietly inspected the weird drawing on the wall.

The drawing that was painted in fresh blood looked like some sort of alphabet. When Chen Ge got near, the ghosts he was carrying shuddered.

Words that can make specters feel fear? Looks like the ghost stories society does have some power.

He was thankful that he did not walk into this room. After several minutes of inspection, he took out his phone to snap a picture of the drawing.

The drawing on the wall slowly faded without the contribution of fresh blood, losing its function.

Exiting Room 3239, Chen Ge and Lee Zheng entered the opposite room.

The décor in the room was startling. There were three hanging ropes swaying in the middle of the living room. The unconscious Ol' Wong and Xiao Gu were lying under the first two ropes while the third one seemed to have been prepared for Chen Ge.

Three nooses, a family of three, and three final members. They seem to like the number three a lot.

Chapter 279: I've Been Waiting for You

Ol' Wong and Xiao Gu were sent to the hospital while Chen Ge stayed behind to help the task force finish up their work at Fang Hwa Apartments. Seeing how hardworking he was, the few officers' impression of Chen Ge improved tremendously.

Standing in the room opposite from Room 3239, Chen Ge avoided the gazes of the officers and took out his phone. When the man with the ruined face was made into a doll by Zhang Ya, the black phone had vibrated. However, the situation had been too dangerous for him to take a look.

A new message appeared on the screen. After the man with the ruined face was taken care off, the Third Sick Hall's completion rate had increased to eighty percent!

If the completion rate reaches ninety percent, there will be a reward, so I need another ten percent.

Chen Ge looked at the phone. When the completion rate went over ninety percent, he would get the reward of a Trial Mission. After completely demolishing the ghost stories society, he would gain the reward that came from the Third Sick Hall's hidden mission.

In other words, the black phone is pitting me against the ghost stories society. Why does it hate the society so?

After the multiple interactions with the society, Chen Ge had a deeper understanding of them. Each member was the vessel for a monster from behind the door. To feed these monsters, or rather, to not let themselves be eaten by the monsters on their bodies, they had to continuously create ghost stories to fulfil the monsters' needs.

From a certain perspective, they were no longer human beings but puppets controlled by the monsters. This was the biggest difference between Chen Ge and the majority of the members.

I have a feeling the society is not that simple. Their promotional flyer features a blood red door. This bunch of crazies must know more about the world behind the door than I do. Perhaps the mysterious chairperson is a ghost from behind the door himself.

Chen Ge got gripped by a sense of danger. He had a feeling the current employees at his Haunted House were not enough anymore.

“Xiao Chen!” The room door was pushed open, and Captain Yan walked in. Chen Ge immediately pocketed the black phone and slid down on the sofa to pretend to be weak.

“Captain Yan, you’re looking for me?”

“Take a look at this yourself.” Captain Yan took out Xiao Gu’s phone from the evidence bag. At around twenty-five minutes ago, there was a curious message that came into Xiao Gu’s WeChat—“Chen Ge, I will remember your name.”

“This message was sent from the phone of Wang Dajun, the security guard. We’ve searched the entire 23rd floor, but we cannot find his phone. Thus, we suspect that there are other runners, and they have Wang Dajun’s phone with them!” Captain Yan placed Xiao Gu’s phone on the coffee table. “There’s another question. Why would your name appear in the message?”

Wang Dajun was Ol’ Wong’s full name. Ol’ Wong was the reason that Xiao Gu had been at the third building.

“This person who took Ol’ Wong’s phone should be the culprit, the person who planned everything tonight.” Chen Ge understood the meaning of the sentence. The person had carefully planned, but he had underestimated Zhang Ya’s power and Chen Ge’s caution. If Zhang Ya did not come to his aid or he was pulled into either one of the two rooms, Chen Ge would have died.

Thinking about it, Chen Ge shuddered with fear.

“The message came from the culprit, proving two things. One, he is fearless, and two, you have done something to enrage him a lot.” Captain Yan placed Xiao Gu’s phone back into the evidence bag.

“Neither is good for you. They might exact crazier revenge on you.”

The ghost stories society had lost four members at once. Even the man with the ruined face who controlled two Red Specters had been made into a doll. If Chen Ge were a remnant of the ghost stories society, he would have been mad as well.

“Remember my name? Is this a threat toward me?” Chen Ge looked at Captain Yan, who had turned to leave. A thought flashed across his mind, and he jumped from the sofa. “Wait a minute!”

“What’s wrong?” Captain Yan was shocked by Chen Ge.

“The phone! The time the message was sent!” Chen Ge grabbed the evidence bag from Captain Yan. He opened the phone to take a look; the message had been sent twenty-five minutes ago.

Twenty-five minutes ago, the man with the ruined face had just died, and Lee Zheng’s group had not arrived yet!

"There's another society member hiding inside this building, and that person is most likely the real culprit!" Chen Ge narrowed his gaze. Said person had witnessed the whole process, but due to Zhang Ya, they did not show themselves.

"The culprit is hiding inside the building?" Captain Yan nodded. "We've controlled all the exits, and the roads leading to and from Fang Hwa Apartments have been sealed. Temporarily, there is no one suspicious. Don't worry, if they're still inside this building, they won't be able to escape.

The remaining three members were the hardest to deal with. Chen Ge could not place his hope in Captain Yan and his men. He gripped his hands together, and his knuckles cracked. Chen Ge felt like he had missed something.

The man is very clever. The message was sent twenty-five minutes ago, and he might have left already, but how did he escape the detection of the police?

Looking at the message on Xiao Gu's WeChat, Chen Ge was suddenly reminded of something. Xiao Jia had started to go berserk after reading the message on Xiao Gu's phone. However, the investigator who saw the message first only collapsed. Their conditions were completely different.

"Captain Yan, what happened to the investigator who entered the building first? Who has been taking care of him?"

"When I last saw him, he was lying inside the police car, still unconscious. Twenty minutes ago, the ambulance arrived, so he's probably at the hospital now."

"Twenty minutes ago, the ambulance arrived?"

...

The nurse station was silent. The People's Hospital at 2 am was extremely quiet. Most of the patients were already asleep when a pair of eyes that were completely white slowly peeled open.

"Chen Ge..." The words left his lips unconsciously. Then he sat up in bed like he was sleep-walking. "This new scapegoat's body is not bad, but the sensation of splitting consciousness is too painful."

He clenched his fists, and the man's expression turned eerie. There was a trace of envy in his words when he said, "No matter how good the scapegoat is, it won't be better than the Red Specter."

The man climbed out from bed and walked toward the door like an awkward puppet. He slowly got used to his body and picked up pace.

With no one watching, he entered the hospital's safety passageways. He avoided all the cameras in the lobby and sneaked into the dark alleyway behind the hospital.

"Three hours left, I should have enough time to return to the main persona."

He staggered down the alley that was filled with pebbles and trash. His arms and feet were wounded from scratches, but he did not mind it one bit. Looking at the exit that was nearing, he slowly relaxed.

"It's fine even if the plan failed. As long as I'm alive and bring the message back, nothing is certain."

The streetlights outside the alleyway emitted a yellowish light. As the man got close to exit, a man holding a hammer walked out from the shadows to block the exit.

"I've been waiting for you for quite some time."

Chapter 280: Door Knocker

There were no cars on the road, and the surroundings were eerily quiet. Occasionally, there would be a stray cat wandering past, but they soon left the scene as if sensing that things were not right. "Who are you?"

The investigator stood in the muddy, black alley. His shoes were missing, and his feet were stepping on piles of rubbish. Blood trailed down from his wounds.

"Have you forgotten my voice already?" The man slowly walked out of the shadow. He was holding a scary-looking hammer in his hands. The streetlights lengthened his shadow. It was a man who spoke, but his shadow was the shape of a long-haired woman. The investigator finally got a good look of the man's face. His gritted his teeth and forced out two words. "Chen Ge!"

"I don't know you, but you managed to call out my name. Looks like my speculation is correct."

The man who blocked his way was none other than Chen Ge. He and Captain Yan had searched the entire third building, but they could not find the last member that was in hiding.

At the time, Chen Ge had already had his suspicions. After getting the hospital's address from Captain Yan, Chen Ge had returned to New Century Park to grab his hammer before going to the People's Hospital to set up an ambush.

"How did you find out?" At this juncture, the investigator became surprisingly calm. There was a weird smile on his face as he stared at Chen Ge.

"Why should I tell you?" Pressing the play button on the recorder, Chen Ge entered the alleyway holding the hammer.

"Killing me will bring you no benefit. You're just talking to one of my scapegoats. Also, before you forget, you're talking to a policeman." The investigator had initially been shocked when he saw Chen Ge, but he soon calmed down. "If I die, this policeman is going to die with me."

Chen Ge did not have time to waste on chewing words. The phone in his pocket was recording their conversation. Looking at the approaching hammer, the investigator's lips twitched. Chen Ge's emotionless expression seemed to be telling him, *We're not good men, so stop trying to threaten me with these despicable techniques.*

"Actually, we can sit down and have a good talk. Aren't you curious about my real identity? Don't you want to know who I am?" The patient was trying his best to communicate with Chen Ge, but Chen Ge did not look like he was in the mood for talking

Seeing as Chen Ge inched closer to him, the patient changed his tact. "Don't you want to know who the chairperson really is?"

"The identity of the chairperson is a multiple-choice question, and now I'm using the elimination method to find the correct answer." Chen Ge was telling the investigator in a round-about way that he was not going to survive the night.

Chen Ge did not plan to kill an innocent man. He did this behind Captain Yan's back because he had another plan. He had prepared to detain the investigator and bring him back to the Haunted House for interrogation. After all, he had the numerical advantage there.

"I'll detain him before I hand him to the police." Chen Ge said so because the phone was still recording. His real plan was to break the investigator's legs to incapacitate him but keep him alive. The investigator's plan to find an opening in Chen Ge failed, but his expression did not change much. It looked like he still had a trump card up his sleeves.

"Chen Ge, what I'm going to say next will definitely get your attention. If you allow me to leave, I will tell you why the door forms in the first place and how to open and close the door." The investigator had a curious expression. He looked like he was smiling but not really. He seemed to be able to tell Chen Ge would be interested in what he had to say.

"Think about it. You should know how valuable this information is," the investigator calmly said even though his body still moved two steps back. "The policeman you're talking to is just a scapegoat. Only one third of my consciousness is in this body. Even if you kill him, I won't be harmed."

"If you won't be harmed, why are you in such a hurry to leave?" Chen Ge slowed down. "Let me see your sincerity; that is the preface to our deal."

The investigator sighed in relief. "Since you want to know about the information regarding the door, I believe you know the location to one of them."

"Indeed," Chen Ge admitted.

"The reason for the door's formation is very complicated. For now, no one can really tell why. I only know they will appear in a location where Yin energy gathers and human activity is rare. However, those are just minor factors; the key factor is there has to be someone who knocks on the door."

"Someone who knocks on the door?"

"The world behind the door is one colored by not only red but also despair and distraught. It is filled with human beings' various negative emotions. In contrast to this world, it is filled with endless nightmares." The investigator's voice turned soft. "Normal people cannot see that world. Only those with a collapsed mental state or those who have lost all hope will have the chance to push open these doors.

"I once heard this from the first door-pusher. That day, he was just going about his life like normal. He didn't do anything different. Like usual, he pushed open that door that he passed through daily, but the world behind the door changed completely. The door appeared suddenly without warning."

"Without warning?"

"Yes, you own a door yourself, so you must have had similar experience. For example, you're standing outside the door and suddenly you hear..."

Siren suddenly came from outside the alleyway, cutting the investigator off. A few police cars were heading their way!

“Did you call the cops?” The smile on the investigator’s face instantly disappeared.

Chen Ge shook his head. “Continue. Tell me more about the door, and I can help you escape this.”

“Will you?” The investigator laughed coldly.

“You don’t have any other choice.” Chen Ge looked around, trying to find a spot to hide the hammer.

“I’m a resident of hell. Do you think a demon will trust the devil?” The investigator turned and ran down the alleyway. Chen Ge followed close behind.

“Don’t move!” The other end of the alleyway was blocked by another police car. The investigator’s path was blocked. He did not hesitate and ran back into the hospital.

Is he trying to use the complicated layout to escape, or is he trying to find a hostage?

Chen Ge chased behind him, and he soon discovered that he had greatly underestimated the investigator’s decisiveness and viciousness.

After kicking the door open, the madman rushed for the roof of the hospital.

“Don’t come any closer!” The investigator stepped on the railing. He was just inches away from the building’s edge!

The night breeze fluttered the patient’s garb that he was wearing. Under his feet was the city. He stood in the dark night, looking at everything below him.

Chen Ge stopped three meters before the investigator. He did not continue pressuring the man.

“Chen Ge, I’ve remembered your name. Next time we meet, I’ll give you a surprise.” A smile bloomed on the investigator’s face. He looked at Chen Ge and slowly opened his arms.

The rooftop’s safety door was pushed open, and Captain Yan and his men rushed out.

“Yao Qinyi!”

Seeing them, the smile on the investigator’s face turned brighter. He leaned slowly backward like he was returning to the embrace of the dark night.