

Horrors 591

Chapter 591: Underwater

Chen Ge thought about it for a long time but settled on no answer.

“I still know too little, but I did come away with a reward tonight.” He narrowed his eyes at the bank. Huang Ling’s husband was already gone. “Previously, I thought that he was just a small fry, but it turns out he might be the biggest fish in the pond.”

Chen Ge did not like to do things in a roundabout way, so he decided to go straight to Huang Ling’s home after finishing the Twin Water Ghost mission. The fog on the water dispersed, and it was dark all around. Chen Ge glanced at his watch; it was almost 1 am.

“How long have I stayed in the fog?”

When the boat rowed to the center of the dam, it had not yet been midnight, and now, it was almost one hour later.

“Ol’ Zhou, has the Vat Ghost returned?” Chen Ge stood at the bow and looked down the rope. The dam was deeper than he thought—even with the Yin Yang Vision, he could not see the bottom.

Ol’ Zhou was not there mentally. He had been spooked by Zhang Ya, and his demeanor had stopped being so natural around Chen Ge. Previously, he had always had the impression that his boss was a kind person, one who managed to gather a house of ghosts from his kindness and grace, but seeing Zhang Ya walking out from his shadow at such close distance, Ol’ Zhou changed his mind.

Was it possible for a normal person to spend every moment with such a scary Red Specter, to have their relationship so close that they were basically inseparable?

He even started to wonder if his boss was actually being controlled by a Red Specter, being nothing more than a puppet.

“What’s wrong? Are you not feeling well?” Chen Ge’s concerned tone caused Ol’ Zhou to shudder. He quickly snapped into it and waved his hands in quick succession.

“It’s nothing. What were you asking earlier?”

“Did the Vat Ghost return when I was out of it earlier?”

“I don’t think so; the rope hasn’t moved.” Ol’ Zhou shook his head. “Actually, I haven’t been paying much attention. I was too focused on you.”

“Focused on me? By the way, did you see a boy who looked just like me coming over from afar earlier?”

“A boy?” Ol’ Zhou’s confused look explained many things. The thing that had happened earlier was only visible to Chen Ge and Zhang Ya.

“Then did not notice anyone appearing at the bank?” Chen Ge wanted to get more information on Huang Ling’s husband.

“I’m not sure, but I think that was where the fog drifted from.” Ol’ Zhou’s words confirmed Chen Ge’s suspicion. “There is something wrong with the fog?”

Ol’ Zhou was very clever and quickly grasped what Chen Ge was hinting at.

“I have no idea what they’re after, but it’s not that simple to kill me. It’s more like they want to show me something and lead me down a sinful path.” Anyone who saw their young self being brutally murdered would be left with an emotional scare, but with the training given by the black phone, Chen Ge had cultivated a strong and resistant heart.

“But let’s ignore that for now. The Vat Ghost has probably encountered some danger if he still hasn’t returned. Can you help me to communicate with the female ghost inside the shampoo bottle? See if she is willing to help bring back the Vat Ghost.” Chen Ge was worried about the Vat Ghost’s safety. After all, he was sent in alone to deal with so many strange ghosts unwater.

Ol’ Zhou relayed Chen Ge’s words to Wen Wen’s sister. After a while, the shampoo was twisted open from the inside, and a weave of dirty, smelly hair crawled out from within. She seemed to want to crawl onto Chen Ge’s body but was afraid and hesitant.

“What is she doing?” Chen Ge turned to Ol’ Zhou, but the latter did not get it either. The hair was stuck together, and without closer inspection, it did look like water weed.

“They’re both hair, but this is completely different from Zhang Ya’s.” Chen Ge squatted down and made a brave decision as he actively reached out toward the hair on the boat.

“How do you wish for me to help you?” The hair curled around Chen Ge’s finger. It was wet and slippery like he was holding a living fish. The hair knew its limit. She only dared to touch Chen Ge’s finger—she did not even dare to approach his palm. With one end curled around Chen Ge’s finger, the other end reached toward the water.

“You want to drag me into the water?” Chen Ge did not think that the girl would be courageous enough to harm him after Zhang Ya’s appearance and with Xu Yin standing there. “Or are you trying to lead the way?”

Just as they were tussling, the rope at the bow shuddered. Many bubbles followed, and the Vat Ghost’s round head broke the surface.

“How come you’ve been down there for so long?” Probably feeling the concern in Chen Ge’s voice, the Vat Ghost did not appear that frightened anymore. His lips opened and closed as he waved his hands at Chen Ge. More bubbles floated to the surface.

“He found the body, but he could not get close to it. It seems that ghosts are unable to get close to it.” Ol’ Zhou took up the role of the translator seriously—he was very professional.

“Ghosts can’t get close to it?” Chen Ge felt the slickness around his finger. “Is that why Wen Wen’s sister needs my help to get her body?”

Staring at the water, this mission turned out to be different from what he had expected. Wen Wen’s sister was a half Red Specter, and even she could not get close to it, let alone less powerful ghosts. Zhang Ya was probably the only exception, but Chen Ge had no power over that one.

“Xu Yin’s connection to me will weaken once he’s underwater, and he’s still missing his heart—I doubt he’ll be able to go through the barrier as well.” Xu Yin had implicit trust in Chen Ge, and because of that, Chen Ge did not send Xu Yin to do things that he had no confidence in.

“Since ghosts can’t get close to it, then a human has to do it.” Chen Ge took out the black phone to confirm the mission detail. It said clearly that he had to be there alone to salvage the body. “I was wondering why it purposely added a detail like that.”

Chen Ge thought about it for a long time before coming to a decision. “There is nothing to hesitate about. When I first got the black phone, I was in a much worse condition, and I wasn’t afraid then, so there is no reason for me to be afraid now.”

Fixing the rope to the boat, Chen Ge had Ol’ Zhou and Bai Qiulin look over the rope, and he took the flashlight given by Zhang Dabo, removed his shirt and pants, and jumped into the water. The water temperature was low, but Chen Ge did not feel cold. It was unclear whether that was because he was well-trained or because he had gotten used to the chill.

His finger had Wen Wen’s sister’s hair wrapped around it, and she had been pulling Chen Ge toward a direction inside the dam. He sucked in a deep breath and had the Vat Ghost and Xu Yin guard beside him. He dived into the water.

He turned the flashlight on, but the light was weak underwater. Even with his Yin Yang Vision, the range of his sight was very limited. Time seemed to have slowed down like Chen Ge had entered a different world. This place was very quiet, and it gave him a strange feeling, like an unborn child swimming in his mother’s womb.

His body sinking, Chen Ge gripped the flashlight in one hand and the rope in another. Water pressure came in from all sides, and the oxygen in his lungs slowly decreased. There was something that touched Chen Ge in the dark, and it did not feel like fish.

Unable to speak, he was unable to communicate with the ghosts around him. In fact, Chen Ge could not even see them; he could only sense somewhat uncertainly that Xu Yin and the Vat Ghost were next to him. Then again, it was them who gave him courage to go underwater to go searching for a body.

Several seconds later, with the black hair leading the way, Chen Ge saw something that looked like a coffin underwater, and a thick copse of water weed grew around it.

Chapter 592: Unlocked Underwater Scenario

The flashlight was barely able to pierce the darkness around him. With the tugging of the black hair, Chen Ge was slowly being pulled to the thing that looked like a coffin.

Why is there such a thing in the dam? Who was it made by, and who is it for?

Before jumping into the dam, Chen Ge had no idea the dam would be so deep. He was running out of oxygen, and it showed with the lightness of his head. He moved the flashlight to shine around the coffin. The black ‘water weed’ danced at the bottom of the dam. After diving another two meters, Chen Ge

realized that it was not a plant but human hair. It was weaved together into braids, and Chen Ge's eyelids kept twitching as he observed them.

Wen Wen's sister wants me to swim through the jungle of hair?

Just as this thought floated up in his mind, his body could not help but shiver. The black hair climbed onto Chen Ge's arm. As he parted the 'water weed' away, it revealed a bloated and pale face.

It's a woman.

Her eyes were closed, and she was floating vertically in the water. There was something that was wrapped around her ankle, tying her to the coffin. With a quick glance around, Chen Ge noticed a hole at the bottom of the dam. The coffin was stuck inside the hole and the bodies were floating above the hole. Their hair grew alongside the natural water weed, and they formed a large blurry shadow in the water.

To enter the hole, one had to pass through the water weed and dead people's hair. This was the first time that Chen Ge had come across such a creepy scene. Perhaps it was the nervousness that sped up the exhaustion of oxygen because Chen Ge started to feel his lungs constrict.

Reaching out to push the weed and hair away, Chen Ge swam past the human bodies. The hole was very deep, and the coffin was stuck close to the entrance. Once Chen Ge tried to swim toward the hole, the hair around his arm untangled. Wen Wen's sister was unable to get close to the coffin.

Unable to speak, Chen Ge could only gesture with his hands. Thankfully, Xu Yin had worked with him many times in the past, and he soon understood what Chen Ge meant.

A smear of red appeared in the water like someone had poured blood into it. Xu Yin tried to follow Chen Ge into the hole, but once he approached the hole, a weird gurgle came inside the hole like the monster hiding inside it was slowly awakening. Xu Yin wanted Chen Ge to retreat—he could sense the bad aura hiding inside the hole.

Is Wen Wen's sister's body deeper into the hole or just inside the coffin?

The water slipped into his ears and his nostrils. Chen Ge was running out of time, and he needed to come to a decision soon.

Open the coffin! If her body is not inside it, then we'll retreat immediately.

All of the ghost refused to get close to the hole, so something seemed to be wrong with it. No matter what it was, this was not good news for Chen Ge, who did not have the support of any ghosts with him. He was used to interacting with ghosts, and the only thing able to apprehend a ghost was a scarier, crueler ghost.

Chen Ge was not good at diving. With no other option, he pulled on the water weed and dead human hair as support to yank himself closer to the coffin.

The flashlight given by Zhang Dabo was not made for underwater diving. The light flickered on and off like it could go out at any moment. With the threat of no light and dwindling oxygen, every second that he spent underwater would increase the chance of Chen Ge getting into an accident.

With his hands on the water weed and dead bodies, Chen Ge finally nudged through the hole. At the same time, he noticed that all of the dead bodies' legs were shackled by rope, and all the ropes reached into the coffin.

From the looks of it, it appeared like the dead bodies' owner was hiding inside the coffin, and it had the say of these dead bodies' life and death.

After exhausting two seconds, Chen Ge finally gripped the coffin inside the hole. He adjusted his position and shone the flashlight deeper into the hole.

The man from the fishing society said that he saw many water ghosts at this dam, but there are only four dead bodies around this hole, could the rest be hiding deeper inside the hole?

The ray of light was unable to penetrate into the darkness, so he was unable to tell.

I have to tell the police about the dead bodies. I should leave the exploration of the hole to Captain Yan and his team.

Chen Ge intended to suggest that Captain Yan drain the dam, but he knew that the chance of that were not high. Eastern Jiujiang Dam was located upstream, and it was connected to many different branches of big rivers. Unless they could stop the running water at its source, there would not come a day when Eastern Jiujiang Dam would be dry.

Now's no time to plot.

Due to the lack of oxygen, Chen Ge's mind was wavering. His palm pressed on the coffin, and something sticky touched his palm. It felt very uncomfortable like he had stuck his hand into a vat of glue.

What is slathered on the surface of the coffin?

Chen Ge lifted his hand to see—his palm had turned blood red. It was unclear whether it was a kind of red algae or something else completely. Chen Ge watched closer, and he realized that the red thing on his palm was still moving like it was alive.

*Oh, f*ck it.*

Chen Ge swam to the bottom of the coffin, and due to his experience at the Coffin Village, he was familiar with the construction of a coffin and could lift one open easily. Using the buoyancy of water and his own weight, Chen Ge shook the lid loose, and several seconds later, the closed coffin lid eased open a sliver.

The lid was nailed onto the coffin—this was an old tradition at Jiujiang city, a practice called Coffin Sealing. This tradition was not often practiced because only those who brought shame upon the family name would get such a treatment.

Even with all his might, Chen Ge was unable to peel the lid off. When he was desperate, a thick smell of blood smothered his nostril. Xu Yin had entered the hole and grabbed the other end of the lid. He purposely avoided the end of the coffin, like the thing inside made him uncomfortable or even afraid.

With Xu Yin's aid, Chen Ge slowly pulled the coffin open, and he shone the flashlight in.

What he saw was something that he never would have imagined in his life.

The coffin was filled with a collection of dolls. They did not look like the ones sold on the market, so they were probably hand-made. That was confirmed also by the extremely rough handiwork and the lack of company label. However, each of them was marked with a name.

What's going on?

Chen Ge trained his full attention on the content inside the coffin.

The black phone's mission was for me to salvage dead body. Could these dolls be the dead body it's referring to?

With the dwindling of time, Chen Ge could not stop to think, so he reached into the coffin. However, as his hand landed on one of the dolls, the coffin shook, and the ropes that reached into the coffin were pulled taut. He looked up, and the four dead bodies anchored to the four edges of the coffin had all turned to look at him.

Four dead faces with the hair growing from their scalp weaving together to form something of a net. Chen Ge kept calm. At this point, there was no return. With a grit of his teeth, he yanked the doll out of the coffin. Weirdly enough, a string was pierced through each of the doll's hearts, connecting them, and by taking one out, Chen Ge pulled the whole collection out with it.

When he yanked out the dolls, Chen Ge felt his feet going numb like a school of fish just slithered past him. Considering where he was, he instantly felt unsettled. Turning the flashlight around, Chen Ge lowered his head to look, and a group of pale-faced children had gathered around his feet.

When did you show up?

Scanning them with Yin Yang Vision, Chen Ge soon realized that these kids barely counted as baleful Specters—they were lingering spirits hanging onto this world by a thread, and they had possessed the dolls.

Does each doll represent a living child? So many children have died from bury seed?

The incident was more serious than he had thought. Chen Ge pulled the children out from the coffin and prepared to swim to the surface.

Wait a minute.

Without much hesitation, Chen Ge dislodged the coffin lid from the coffin. Since Xu Yin did not dare to get close to the end of the coffin, there had to be something more to the lid. Thus, he decided to carry it back with him for a closer inspection.

The dead bodies that were tied to the coffin did not stop Chen Ge. If anything, this felt more like a ritual. The deeper secret would only be revealed by exploring deeper into the hole.

This should be the handiwork of the mastermind as well. Instead of going into the unknown hole, it's safer for me to go and confront Huang Ling's husband in person.

Chen Ge rarely did things that he had no confidence in.

Under the protection of Xu Yin and the Vat Ghost, Chen Ge grabbed the coffin lid and the rope that strung through the dolls and swam through the black hair and water weed.

Breaking the surface, Chen Ge took a deep breath. He tossed the dolls and coffin lid onto the boat and used the last vestige of his strength to haul himself on it.

A slight vibration came from a corner of the boat. Chen Ge moved the clothes aside, and he was greeted by the lit screen of the black phone. A new message had come through.

“Congratulations, Specters’ Favored, for completing the two-star Trial Mission—Twin Water Ghost! You have successfully unlocked the underwater scary scenario!”

Chapter 593: The Shirt of the Drowned

Even then, Chen Ge was still trying to get over the aftereffects of holding his breath for too long. His head was light, but even in that condition, he still grabbed onto the coffin lid and the rope that strung the dolls through their hearts tightly. After taking several deep breaths, Chen Ge finally felt well-adjusted enough to glance at the phone.

“The two-star mission Twin Water Ghost has been completed. Completion Rate: one hundred percent. Unlocked this mission’s hidden item—the Shirt of the Drowned.

“The Shirt of the Drowned (Malice Points: 17): There are things underwater that crawled into my clothes, and they pulled me deep into the water.”

The mission has a completion rate of one hundred percent. Looks like the hole in the dam is not counted by the black phone as part of the Twin Water Ghost mission.

Chen Ge put the black phone away, and there were many questions left in his mind.

Was the coffin purposely placed there to block the way into the hole?

Earlier, Chen Ge had noted that Xu Yin did not dare get close to the end part of the coffin, and he felt the secret to that would be hidden on the coffin lid.

After putting on his clothes, Chen Ge laid the lid vertically down on the boat.

It’s impossible for me to physically carry this back home with me, but no taxi will allow me to put this inside their car. I’ll need to come up with a solution.

The coffin lid that Chen Ge had salvaged from the dam was much smaller than a normal coffin. It was decayed and was stained with patches of red. It was unclear whether those patches were dead bugs or a type of water plant that had dried up. After removing the thing that covered the surface, Chen Ge made a startling discovery.

A Specter was carved on the decayed wooden board. The monster was wrapped in chains and had six eyes, looking almost similar to the monster that the ghost stories society had left on the door in the Haunted House.

The ghost stories society committed many ritualistic murders and gouged out the victims' eyes to create something like this on the door in my Haunted House. At the time, they wanted to dominate the door, so the carving of this ghost should possess the power of guarding a door.

Chen Ge took out his own phone and snapped a picture of the carving.

The coffin was stuck near the entrance of the hole, and the ghost was carved onto the lid—could this be a device to guard the hole inside the dam? To prevent the thing inside from coming out?

Only Chen Ge would come up with the idea of using a coffin to guard a hole.

The black phone gave me the mission to come salvage dead bodies, so technically, it should include the possibility that I would carry the whole coffin away with me. Then this means that no matter what kind of scary presence is hiding inside the hole, it should pose no threat to me.

Since he already had the coffin lid, going back underwater was impossible; Chen Ge was merely finding an excuse for himself.

The coffin was probably placed here by the mastermind. Then the enemy of my enemy is my friend. If it doesn't want the thing inside the hole to come out, then I should find a way to release it.

Chen Ge was unsure what was inside the hole and had no idea where the hole led to. Honestly, at that moment, he was not at all interested. He just wanted to leave that place as soon as possible. What if something really did slip out and vented its anger from being trapped onto him?

When Chen Ge prepared to row away, a blob of dark shadow floated onto the surface of the water.

I'd almost forgotten about her.

The shadow stuck to the side of the boat. Strands of black hair crawled up from the water, and they grew like vines on the side of the boat before slithering onto the boat and slipping into one of the dolls.

Picking up the doll, Chen Ge noticed that it was different from others. She was wearing a little dress with blood spots, and the hair was real human hair. The name that was carved on the back was red in color.

“Zhao Shuang'er? This doll is Wen Wen's big sister?” The mission had been completed, but there were too many dolls on the boat. “Every doll has a name carved on the back, so each of them represents a life.”

When he was underwater, Chen Ge could sense the anxiety and fear from the children. They were all still so young, and most of them had not even experienced life before.

“Too many things are involved in this case. I'm afraid I won't be able to handle this alone. I should inform Captain Yan about this.” Ninety percent of the Jiujiang's disappearances happened in Eastern Jiujiang. If they were all due to the shadow's plan, then the number of deaths would be astronomical.

Chen Ge decided to hold onto the doll that Wen Wen's sister possessed. There was another unique thing about this doll—her clothes were always wet. Afraid that she might wet the comic, Chen Ge placed her in his pocket. Summoning all the ghosts, Chen Ge rowed the boat back to the bank.

When Zhang Dabo saw Chen Ge return safely, he sighed in relief. He had really been concerned for the man. Who could blame him when Chen Ge came alone to the dam at night to come salvaging for dead bodies, and without any safety gear at that! Just watching it from the bank, he could not help but feel anxious, afraid that the King Fish might show up to assault Chen Ge.

“Brother, mind giving me a hand?” The boat moored, and Chen Ge lifted the coffin lid up.

“What is this?” Zhang Dabo was an honest man. He gripped the other end of the coffin lid and started to pull.

“This is a coffin lid. I found it at the bottom of the dam.”

“A coffin?” Hearing Chen Ge’s answer, Zhang Dabo almost slipped and fell to the ground. “Didn’t you go searching for dead bodies? Why did you come back with a coffin lid?”

“There are four dead bodies in the dam, I couldn’t handle all that alone. We should call the police and leave this to the professionals.”

“Four... four bodies?” Zhang Dabo could not imagine that the dam that he was tasked with guarding over would hide so many dead bodies. Chen Ge moved everything onto solid ground and right then his phone rang.

“Shall we call the police now?” Zhang Dabo looked at the coffin lid, and he felt incredibly uncomfortable.

“There’s no need to rush. Let me answer this call first.” It was Lee Zheng who called Chen Ge. When Chen Ge saw Huang Ling’s husband earlier, he had messaged Captain Yan and Lee Zheng, but they did not reply immediately probably because it was already too late.

Accepting the call, before Chen Ge could speak, Lee Zheng’s voice came through. “Chen Ge, are you telling me Huang Ling’s husband is the murder suspect? How confident are you?”

“One hundred percent confident, I suggest you detain him as soon as possible. The man is extremely dangerous. The longer you let him roam free, the more dangerous he’ll be,” Chen Ge said confidently, “Also, there’s another thing. I found four female dead bodies in Eastern Jiujiang Dam.”

“Eastern Jiujiang?”

“Yes, they’re underwater. When I was investigating the dam earlier, Huang Ling’s husband was also around the area.”

Lee Zheng did not question why Chen Ge would go to the dam searching for dead bodies in the middle of the night; he just answered Chen Ge instantly, “Wait there, our people will be there in a minute.”

“Okay.” After the call ended, Chen Ge looked at the dumbstruck Zhang Dabo. “Brother, the police will be coming soon. I might need to trouble you again later.”

“It’s no trouble. Do say if you have any use for me.” After all that had happened, the way Zhang Dabo looked at Chen Ge changed. At 3:10 am, the police from both Eastern Jiujiang’s police station and the main police station arrived at the same time. As if on cue, Chen Ge also received the call from Lee Zheng.

“Chen Ge, something’s wrong. I personally went to Huang Ling’s home. Huang Ling is mentally unstable, completely out of it, and her husband is nowhere to be seen.”

“Follow the surveillance around Eastern Jiujiang Dam—that should give you the lead to follow his trail. This man is very important and very dangerous, be careful when you conduct the search.”

Chapter 594: Expanding Haunted House

“For now, you should focus on helping the local team investigate the dead bodies underwater, leave the rest to us.”

Whenever Lee Zheng conversed with Chen Ge, he would have this strange feeling. Whether it was his tone or his way of thinking, the latter felt more like an experienced first-class police inspector. At times, Lee Zheng even suspected that Chen Ge was a special agent that Captain Yan had requested to aid their group. In fact, Lee Zheng did not think he would be surprised if one day in the future, Chen Ge came slapping his shoulders and said with a smile, “Sorry, but I’m actually also a police officer.”

Clever people turn their passion into their career, but in Chen Ge’s case, his pursuit of justice was far beyond a mere passion for murder investigation. It was hard to imagine what kind of attitude he adopted to be able to unearth so many hidden cases all over the city without asking for any reward in return.

“Alright, I will lend them my full cooperation.” The group that was responsible for overseeing the dam was from the Eastern Jiujiang Police Station and Investigation Team Two from the main station. Chen Ge was not familiar with them, and after some basic questioning, the two parties got into a standstill on how to deal with the coffin lid.

In the end, under the persuasion by the leader of the Team Two, Chen Ge agreed to hand over the coffin lid and the dolls inside the coffin to the police temporarily for the medical doctor and other professionals to examine, and then the police would personally send them back to the Haunted House.

“Every doll here has a name carved on their back, and each name corresponds to a once-living child. I suggest you run an investigation on each of the names, and you might come to a surprising discovery.” Eastern Jiujiang had been peaceful for so long, but this peace was faked. The current beneath the surface was rapid, and no one had any idea how dirty and how deep the water went.

At 3:30 am, the management of the dam and the salvage team arrived. They worked together to retrieve the dead bodies and the coffin. During the process, one of the salvage members claimed that he heard strange noises coming from inside the hole, and someone else noticed flickering shadows underwater. It was probably the fish.

The salvage operation went smoothly. After the bodies and coffin were taken away, there was nothing left for Chen Ge to do. After getting permission from the police, Chen Ge called a cab and left.

He had never seen an underwater scenario being built before, and he was quite curious about this newly unlocked scenario. At 4 am, Chen Ge returned to his Haunted House. He pushed open the gate and rushed underground. Walking down the darkened steps, Chen Ge noticed that a small path had opened

up between Mu Yang High School and Coffin Village. It was large enough to allow two people to go through at once, and it went deeper underground. Walking down the path felt strange and oppressive.

The light was dim and the air damp. Occasionally, Chen Ge could hear the sound of water dripping. At the end of the tunnel was a dark lake of water, and a small boat was floating on the surface of the water. The boat was made from wood, and it was just big enough to fit two passengers.

“There’s no paddle?” Chen Ge tossed the Vat Ghost into the water, and to his surprise, the water was surprisingly deep. Getting on the boat, Chen Ge slowly paddled using his hands to row himself forward.

“This design is rather insane. The visitors have to use their hands as paddles for the boat to move. If the monsters hiding in the water suddenly surface, just how much terror and despair will the people on the boat be trapped in?”

Due to safety considerations, Chen Ge planned to go to the Props Room to make a small wooden paddle for emergencies. Inching along the way, the boat continued to move forward. The scenario for Twin Water Ghost was only half the size of Mu Yang High School.

“But this is at the very least a two-star scenario. It can’t be this simple, can it?” Chen Ge was seated inside the boat and looking around with his flashlight when the Vat Ghost suddenly surfaced. He waved his hands and then pointed at the water.

“There’s something underwater?” Chen Ge thought about it and approved of that possibility. The lake was quite large, and the boat did not come with a paddle. The people on the boat had to use their hands to work the boat, and in that case, it was highly probable for them to be pulled overboard.

No matter what, safety was the most important. To prevent accidents from happening, Chen Ge removed his clothes that were still damp and jumped into the water again. Using his Yin Yang Vision, Chen Ge discovered to his surprise the completely different world that was underwater.

This scenario was built on the slope, and the deeper one swam, the more things one could see. The things near the top of the water were common everyday items like an old sofa, broken furniture, and lamps like actual rooms that had sunk.

“Are these the rooms that the drowned victims lived in before they died?”

Further down, the bed of the lake was littered with cut up dolls. The faces were embedded into the silt, the broken eyes staring at the boat that skimmed across the surface. Moving forward, one would come into a graveyard of coffins. They were stacked in a complicated manner, turning the geography of the underwater lake into a maze.

“I don’t think this scenario should be opened to the public yet. Without the necessary equipment, it is too easy for accidents to happen.”

Running into scary things underwater was ten times more terrifying than running into them on solid ground, but unfortunately, the risk was too high. Chen Ge was a Haunted House operator, and he defined his own job as one in the service industry. The underwater scenario was a good direction for the Haunted House to take, but it could only be tested after he had the necessary equipment.

“Then again, I suppose it’s not completely useless. At least I have a home now for all the underwater ghosts that I encounter in the future.”

Chen Ge worked together with the Vat Ghost to move the boat back to the shore. Then, he carried his clothes and retraced the path back. “You should stay here for now.”

Vat Ghost was naturally faint-hearted. Give him a water vat, and he could stay in the cramped space without complaint for century. His personality was really a great contrast to how he looked.

“If you see any visitors wander in here, remember to warn them to stay back. If they fall into water, you have to save them, understand?”

After giving the Vat Ghost his orders, Chen Ge was still worried. He ran to the tool room to make a roadblock and placed it at the scenario entrance.

“Who would have thought that my Haunted House would one day have an underwater scenario?” Chen Ge looked at his Haunted House, and his heart was surfeited with pride. With his careful expansion, the Haunted House now had a hospital, a school, a village, a residential area, and even a manmade lake. “The Haunted House just upgraded to a Maze of Terror. If I continue to unlock scenarios, will my Haunted House eventually become an underground city filled with endless scary stories and terrifying tales?”

When he first obtained the black phone, Chen Ge had once noted the term Castle of Nightmares on the mission detail, and he felt like that should be the Haunted House’s final goal.

After dealing with all that, Chen Ge placed the wet clothes in the toilet and gave them a simple scrub. Then he went to the staff breakroom. He was about to crawl into bed when his phone-started to vibrate. It was Lee Zheng.

“Inspector Lee? How can I help you?”

“We’ve found Huang Ling’s husband.” Lee Zheng’s tone was grave, signifying that they had run into trouble.

“Where did you find him?” Chen Ge sat up and spooked the white cat, which had curled up next to him.

“We checked for his trail on the surface and finally found him at the entrance to White Dragon Cave Tunnel. When we arrived, he was already unconscious.”

“White Dragon Cave Tunnel?” Chen Ge thought that the name was familiar. His eyes slowly widened because White Dragon Cave Tunnel was the abandoned tunnel where he had completed his latest Nightmare Mission, the place where he had seen his young self being killed for the first time.

Chapter 595: He’s Already Dead

Huang Ling’s husband was found fainted at the entrance to White Dragon Cave tunnel, which was something that Chen Ge did not anticipate.

The shadow is extremely cunning. He probably sensed something beforehand and made an early escape. But why would he go to the tunnel? Is this a hint that there is something he needs inside the tunnel? Huang Ling's husband is fainted outside the tunnel, does that mean he's already been abandoned by the shadow? Or is there a spare body to possess inside the tunnel?

Several questions popped up in his mind. Chen Ge could not get it. He glanced at the time and told Lee Zheng, "Inspector Lee, can I go there and ask him a few questions?"

"We're now at the hospital. The doctors are inspecting Jia Ming's body. He is slipping in and out of consciousness, and his mind is a jumbled mess. I'm afraid you won't be getting any answers even if you try."

"Then, can I just take a look at him?" Chen Ge wanted to personally confirm whether the shadow was still attached to Jia Ming. After getting Lee Zheng's permission, Chen Ge changed and rushed to the People's Hospital.

Chen Ge flitted in and out of the theme park multiple times in one night. Initially, the senior guard still greeted him, but later, even the guard got tired of watching him coming and going.

When Chen Ge arrived at the hospital, it was around 6 am. Police officers stood guarding the door, and when he tried to approach, he was immediately blocked.

"I'm here for Inspector Lee Zheng from the main police station. I was on the phone with him earlier." Chen Ge gave them Lee Zheng's name. One of them thought that Chen Ge look familiar, and after studying him for a while, he managed to recognize Chen Ge.

"Follow me, Inspector Lee did mention you." The officer led Chen Ge to the first room on the left. "Jia Ming is in here. His psychological status is not that stable. Try not to say anything to provoke him."

"Understood." Chen Ge glanced at the room next door. "If Jia Ming stays here, then who is staying here?"

"His wife, Huang Ling. We went to Huang Ling's home first tonight, and we immediately noticed something wrong with her. It was like she had taken some hallucinatory pills, so we also moved her to the hospital."

"Okay." Chen Ge pushed the door lightly open. Lee Zheng and a female officer were seated one meter away from the bed, and they were conversing with the patient in bed. Hearing the door open, everyone in the room turned to look.

Since Lee Zheng and the female officer knew that Chen Ge was coming, so they reacted calmly, but just as Lee Zheng was about to greet Chen Ge, Jia Ming suddenly screamed in bed. His face was pale, and he jumped to the other end of the bed. His emotions were frazzled, and he pointed at Chen Ge with a shaking finger. "Ghost! Ghost! He's a ghost!"

The needle for the drip was forcibly yanked out, but Jia Ming did not appear to feel pain. His eyes were glued to Chen Ge with fear pouring out of them. The people in the room did not expect a change like that. Lee Zheng summoned the doctors, and they worked together to pin Jia Ming down on the bed.

“Should we try to use anesthetic?” the doctor asked Lee Zheng. Lee Zheng shook his head; he was curious why Jia Ming would react that way when he saw Chen Ge. After Jia Ming calmed down, Chen Ge sat on the chair. Strangely enough, after he entered the room, Jia Ming refused to move his eyes away from Chen Ge. Whenever Chen Ge made a move, Jia Ming would react like a frightened cat, trying to escape.

“Don’t worry, he won’t be able to harm you with us here. Furthermore, I can confidently tell you that he is a human being, not a ghost.” Lee Zheng had Chen Ge sit down next to him.

“What is going on?” Chen Ge was equally confused. He used Yin Yang Vision to study Jia Ming. The man did not have a trace of Yin energy on him—he looked just like a normal human being. The ghost was not on his body. Did it leave, or was it hiding in his shadow?

Chen Ge had not left the park with his backpack, and he maintained a sharp alert around Jia Ming. Ever since Chen Ge entered the room, the atmosphere had changed. Lee Zheng massaged his thudding temples, and his bloodshot eyes looked at the two who were staring at each other. “Please, both of you, calm down.”

Seeing as Jia Ming’s emotions were slowly calming down, he told the doctor to go and nurse the wound on his hand while he stood up to remove all the fragile and sharp objects from the bed.

“Tell me, why are you calling him a ghost? Have you seen him before?” Lee Zheng had interrogated many criminals, and he knew that Jia Ming’s reaction earlier was not an act.

Jia Ming did not dare to speak, and his eyes kept darting around. Finally, after multiple questions from Lee Zheng, he sighed. “I saw his murder with my own eyes!”

“I was murdered?” Not only Lee Zheng, even Chen Ge was shocked. In the morning, he had stayed obediently at the Haunted House, and occasionally, he would wander out at night, but he was sure that he had not been killed in any shape or form.

“But he’s here in his physical body. Are you sure you did not just imagine this? When a person is under high stress situation or possesses a highly unstable mental faculty, hallucinations can happen quite often. After all, most of the time, our brain will only allow us to see what we wish to see.” Lee Zheng tried to analyze this from a professional angle.

“He’s not a living man; you have to trust me! He’s very dangerous! He’s really a ghost, a ghost back to claim lives!” The mention of Chen Ge caused Jia Ming’s emotions to unravel. “He will kill me. Those who get too close to him will die—I will die, no! Everyone in this room will die!”

Jia Ming yelled loudly, so loud in fact, the patients in the other rooms could hear him clearly. Both Lee Zheng and the doctor in the room frowned.

“It’s not beneficial for the patient’s health to allow him to keep yelling like this. I still suggest we should administer some anesthetic,” the doctor suggested again but was still denied by Lee Zheng.

This experienced officer was observing Jia Ming’s tone and expression. He even paid attention to the way the man’s pupils moved when he was speaking. He was surprised by his conclusion; Jia Ming did not appear to be lying.

Hearing Jia Ming's accusation, Chen Ge did not deny it instantly but instead started to stare back at Jia Ming with some interest in his eyes. This reaction made Lee Zheng rather speechless.

Normally, if the living human next to him was accused by the suspect to be dead, Lee Zheng would laugh and then drag the suspect to see a psychiatrist. However, this happened to Chen Ge, and Lee Zheng started to have doubts. The man next to him had a case file dedicated to him at the main station's filing room. He had helped the police solve many murder cases, and it was not wrong to say the man walked the same path as death. However, this did not mean that he suspected that Chen Ge was dead—he merely suspected that this case would dig up even scarier things.

"You said that I will kill you? Then what is my motive?"

When a person was suddenly scared, their body would react in involuntary ways. In the study of this field, Chen Ge was an expert. When he entered the door, his eyes had fallen directly on Jia Ming. The man reacted in extreme fear—whether it was his expression or tone, they were extremely authentic, but for Chen Ge, they were also a bit much.

Jia Ming's reaction was slightly different from the reaction of the visitors at his Haunted House when they were scared. If not for the fact that he scared people for a living, he would not have been able to tell the difference.

With a theory in his heart, the way that Chen Ge looked at Jia Ming changed from kindness to suspicion.

"You said that I will kill you, then you have to at least give me a reason to kill you, right?"

Chapter 596: Ghost Story

Everyone turned to look at Jia Ming. From an observer's point of view, Chen Ge indeed did not have any motive to harm Jia Ming. The police were not fools. Before they captured Jia Ming, they had already investigated his background, and there was no interaction between him and Chen Ge before they met.

He curled backward. After hearing Chen Ge, Jia Ming became even more afraid. "I can't say. If I do, then there is no way I'm leaving this hospital alive! He will kill me here! He will use methods that you can't ever imagine to welcome death. He is the devil, the devil that peels back human skin to feed on their flesh!"

"Stop changing the topic. If you don't give us an honest answer, I will leave you alone to stay in the same room as him," Lee Zheng warned.

"Am I that scary?" Chen Ge knew that Lee Zheng was purposely saying that to force out the truth, so he cooperated fully. He stood up to examine the windows and door. After making sure that all the openings were locked, he sat back down.

With his exit barred, Jia Ming hesitated before coming clean. "I once witnessed his murder, and while I was running away, he saw my face.

"When was this?" Lee Zheng waved to signal for the doctor to leave, and then he took out his recorder pen.

“It was around three or four years ago.” Jia Ming looked at Chen Ge cowardly, and his voice was as soft as a mosquito—one would not be able to hear him unless one paid full attention. “I worked at an insurance company before this, and I was tasked with handling a car accident for a realtor’s family. The people escaped unharmed, but the car was not so lucky. After the traffic police’s investigation, it was revealed that the person was driving under influence, and the deepest scar on the vehicle was discerned by a professional to be the drunken driver’s own doing, so following the company rules, I did not approve of his insurance claim.

“Because of that, the man brought people to come to the company to create trouble. The man came from a powerful background, so the manager did not dare make him an enemy. As such, he sacrificed me as the scapegoat. At the time, I was still a young man, unable to control my emotions. After the man sent his people to beat me up, naturally, I fought back, and in the end, both of us were sent to the police station.

“My wife went through a lot of hoops to save me. For that, she lost her job, and we lost a lot of money. I was deeply resentful, and all I wanted to do was to take revenge.

“That night, I sneaked into the man’s house. Initially, I just wanted to familiarize myself with the place, but I ran into something extremely scary.”

At this point, Jia Ming stopped. He looked at Chen Ge, and his forehead was covered with cold sweat.

“Why are you stopping now?” Lee Zheng and the female officer were both quite agitated.

“I ran into someone who was trying to kill the realtor.” Then he raised his finger, but he was too afraid to point it at Chen Ge. “I just wanted to take a small revenge on the man. I never thought to kill anyone. I had nothing to do with his death.”

The case suddenly became complicated because it involved another murder. Lee Zheng frowned. “Who is this realtor that you’re talking about? I think I know all the real estate agents in Jiujiang.”

“His name was Jiang Long. He once took over the plot at Ming Yang Residence, the largest abandoned residential area in Eastern Jiujiang.”

“It’s him?” Chen Ge and Lee Zheng shared a look as they connected the many clues in their mind.

“Jiang Long died from a car accident. We have the case file at the police station.” Lee Zheng was quick to point out the anomaly in Jia Ming’s story.

“You’re being tricked! You’re still being lied to! He was definitely murdered, and the killer is...” Jia Ming bit on the tip of his tongue and then pointed his finger at Chen Ge, “The kill is now sitting next to you!”

“You said I killed Jiang Long? How come I have no memory of this at all?” Chen Ge studied Jia Ming’s every move closely. He realized that the way Jia Ming bit on his tongue was quite similar to his own. When he was caught in a conundrum or had to remain calm while in a dangerous situation, he would do the same thing and used the acute pain to help pull in his focus.

Jia Ming did not dare answer Chen Ge. It was as if he had depleted all of his courage telling his story.

“What exactly did you see? Why did you say the murderer is Chen Ge?” That was what Lee Zheng was curious about. This was the first time that, after detaining the suspect, the suspect pointed out the witness as the murderer.

“You have to believe me. His face is forever seared into my mind! I can confidently say that it was him who I saw that night!” Jia Ming ignored Lee Zheng and continued in his own manner. “The first time that I went to find Jiang Long was around twelve midnight. That was merely to scout the place out. However, once I arrived at his place, I realized that I wouldn’t be able to get close to the man. There were too many guards and cameras.

“But at around 1 am, something seemed to happen inside the residential area. All the guards ran toward one of the houses, and in the chaos, I sneaked into the crowd and followed them.

“It was Jiang Long’s neighbor’s home that attracted the crowd. The two dogs raised by the family were brutally murdered, and the curious thing was that there was no sound to the murders.

“The guards quarantined the neighbor’s home and started the search for the dog killer. It was a noisy occasion, but Jiang Long’s home was weirdly silent. All the lights were off, and no one answered when the guards went to knock on the door.

“Jiang Long was probably not home, so I realized that this was my perfect chance. I could sneak into his house and run away with some valuable items as compensation. I circled around to the backyard, and after some trials, I realized that the wall was too tall for me to climb over, not to mention the cameras that were still operating. Just as I thought of giving up, I gave the backdoor a push, but to my shock, the door was not locked, just closed.

“After the door opened, before I could react, what I saw gave me the shock of my life.

“A man was kneeling on the ground, covered in blood. His expression was one of intense pain, and there was something forced down his throat. Even so, he was still coughing up blood. Standing next to him was a man who held a bloody knife between his two fingers, and he was speaking something in an awfully casual manner.”

Jia Ming turned to look at Chen Ge, and his fists tightened as veins popped on the back of his hands.

“The bloody man kneeling on the ground was Jiang Long, and the man standing over him was him.”

“I was at Jiang Long’s bungalow? How many years ago was this?” Chen Ge had no memory of this at all. The man had to be lying, or the man that he saw was not Chen Ge but someone who looked like Chen Ge.

“The face matches perfectly. Your face is the stuff of my nightmares, so I cannot be mistaken.” Jia Ming was on the verge of tears. “Jiang Long noticed me and reached out to me for help. When he opened his mouth to beg, the blood trailed down his lips. Of course, I didn’t dare stay and turned to escape from the scene.”

“Wait a minute, I have a question. Jia Ming definitely died from car accident, and there was no knife wound on his body. The forensic doctor even confirmed that as his actual cause of death.” Lee Zheng was still on Chen Ge’s side. Of course, he was because Jia Ming was making no sense.

“That was the first time. After that, this devil started to haunt me. I kept having the same dream over consecutive nights. After I fell asleep, he would crawl out from underneath my bed and stand at my bedside to whisper into my ear that since Jiang Long had died, it would be my turn next.”

Chapter 597: Like a Shadow

“You dream about what you think in the day. That’s quite normal.” Lee Zheng was familiar with Chen Ge, and from his perspective, it did not feel like Chen Ge would do something like hiding under someone’s bed and then slipping out to whisper a death threat.

“I know that you don’t believe me, but that was not a dream.” Jia Ming lowered his voice, and his tone turned weird. “Have you ever wondered what your reflection is doing when you stand before the mirror and lower your head to wash your face? Has he lowered his face reflecting your motion, or is he still standing in the mirror, looking down on you? Have you ever run into a situation where someone in the public restroom in the next cubicle asks for toilet paper from you, but when you came out, you realize that you were alone in the restroom all that time? Have you ever found that when you called a close friend or family, they kept saying there was disturbance on your side like there were many things standing around you?”

Jia Ming gripped the edge of the bed tighter and tighter. “I’ve experienced all of that.”

“I think I should call the doctor to come back in.” Lee Zheng was an atheist, and he had studied criminology and psychotherapy at college. He did not think that Jia Ming was lying, so in that case, his mind had to be wrong. He was probably suffering from paranoia.

“Before the doctor comes in, do you mind hearing a few stories?” Jia Ming tilted his head toward Chen Ge. “It is about me and him.”

“I had no idea you two were so close.” Lee Zheng nodded.

“After leaving Jiang Long’s home, I was too panicked to recognize the route home. I raced about aimlessly for half an hour before arriving at home. At the time, I was living at a rental, and my landlady was an old lady. She lived on the first floor, my family was on the second floor, and the third floor was a storage room.

“When I returned, it was already very late. After entering the place, the old lady’s pet cat kept screeching, not the kind of meowing that asked for a scratch on her back but a shrill and eerie noise.

“Probably woken up by her pet, the old lady opened her door and looked out. Then she told me one thing.

“Please don’t make such a loud noise when you two walk around. It’s already so late at night; what are you two doing out so late?”

Jia Ming still remembered the expression on the old lady’s face because he replicated it perfectly for his listeners.

"I apologized hurriedly to the old lady, but once I got to the second floor, I realized that something was wrong. I turned back to look, but there was only me in the dark corridor, so why did the old lady say 'two'?"

"At the time, a chill quickly crawled up my spine. I ran to the door and searched for the key. You know how everything becomes more difficult when you're panicking. I tried to get the door key, but it just refused to be found, and then something strange happened.

"There was a knocking sound coming from the third floor like a ball bouncing continuously against the ground.

"When I moved in, the old lady had already told me that the third floor was empty, and it was used to store big furniture and stuff. I had asked her why she hadn't rented the place, and she had said that her son's family once lived on the third floor, but the family of three had died in a car accident. Even though she could have rented the third floor, she didn't want to because she wanted to keep it as a memory.

"Strange sounds came from the third floor that should have been vacant. I didn't dare stay too long in the corridor. I finally found the key in my shirt pocket, and at that moment, the sound stopped. I turned to look up the stairs out of curiosity, and at the corner, turning up to the third floor, I saw a pair of gray-colored legs. Due to the angle, that was all I could see.

"I was spooked and opened the door as fast as I could.

"After entering the house, I was still panicking. I closed the outside security door, and just as I was about to close the inner door, curiosity killed the cat, and I leaned out slightly to glance at the legs on the stairs.

"Leaning against the gap on the door, I adjusted my angle and slowly squatted down. I moved my gaze up and saw the pair of legs once more. Just as I was continued to look up further, a boy's head suddenly appeared in my sight!

"His posture was very strange. His legs were straight, but the head was almost touching the ground. That was not possible for the normal human body.

"I slammed the door shut and tried to switch the light on in the living room. I knew where the switch was, and as my hand reached over, before I touched the light, my finger brushed up against something. It felt like human skin. It felt like I was touching another human hand inside my own home.

"Flipping the switch, the lights came on, and it gave me the sense of security that I needed. I started to call for my wife, but there was no answer.

"I was so afraid, so I proceeded to turn on all the lights in the room. Eventually, I found a note left behind by my wife next to the living room phone.

"She said that my father-in-law was seriously ill, and the hospital had told her to go to the hospital. She had left the food for me in the fridge, and if I wanted to eat, I would need to heat it up in the oven.

"I put the note away. My wife wasn't home. I looked at my own hand. I was sure that I'd touched another person's fingers earlier. So, that could only mean that there was another person other than myself in the room.

“I didn’t dare to sleep. I checked every nook and cranny that could be a hiding place, but I came up with nothing. I tried to call my wife, but there was no answer.

“I was so afraid. I turned the television on and blasted the volume up to the highest. Then I brewed myself several cups of strong coffee. I planned to stay in the living room throughout the night and then move away from that horrible place the next morning.

“I wasn’t paying any attention to the show on the television. I kept refilling the coffee to fight the drowsiness that was coming. Finally, dawn came. Unable to hold it in anymore, I went to use the bathroom.

“After peeing, I stood before the sink, wishing to use some cold water to wash my face. Opening the faucet, watching the water flow, I started to panic like someone was observing me. I suspected that the person who had been following me was hiding inside the bathroom. I glanced around the room out of the corner of my eye, but the bathroom was too small for anyone to hide in.

“Straightening up, I looked at the haggard reflection of myself in the mirror. I shook my head and decided to move right there and then, moving somewhere where there were more people.

“Putting down the towel, I couldn’t shake the feeling that something was wrong. Without a chance to think about it, the phone rang. My soul jumped out of my body. I hurried to answer it—my wife was calling.

“The sky was already bright, and my wife said that she had called me many times throughout the night. She had been very worried because no one answered.

“When she said that, I was sweating bullets. It was she who had refused to answer my numerous calls that night, not the other way around.

“I glanced subconsciously at the phone cable and was about to tell her what had happened when she suddenly asked me if there was someone in the room with me. She heard someone talking incessantly, and it sounded curiously like my father-in-law. Apparently, he was saying, ‘Look behind you, look behind you...’

“I quickly whipped my head around, but there was no one there. Looking into the bathroom, I could only see my reflection, standing with the phone in his hands, looking right at me.

“I told my wife to stay at the hospital to accompany my father-in-law. After hanging up, I sat back down, but the more I thought about it, the more unsettled I became.”

Chapter 598: Someone Behind Me

“Holding the tea cup, I thought about it for a long time until I saw the reflection that was on the surface of the coffee. When I looked down into the cup, the reflection was also looking back at me.

“Then I suddenly realized, when I was turning back to look at the mirror earlier, my reflection in the mirror didn’t have his neck turned? He was standing facing me, just like...”

For a moment, Jia Ming lost the ability to speak, like something was wrapping its hands around his neck. His eyes were overflowing with terror.

“A chill rose up behind me, and the living room sofa was facing away from the toilet. I could sense something behind me! It was like someone was standing there!

“I didn’t dare to turn around. Turning the cup, my eyes slowly moved down. I wanted to see through the reflection what was behind me.

“As the cup turned, the chill approached me. The hair on the back of my neck stood on end, and just as I was about to catch a glimpse in the water, the skin that was exposed on the back of my neck felt something, like someone had lowered their hair, letting it fall over my skin.

“My arms shivered. Without being able to help it, the cup slipped from my fingers, and the coffee splashed everywhere. Screaming, I grabbed the ashtray and fruit plate on the table and flung them behind me as I skipped over the furniture, rushing to the door. Holding the doorknob with both hands, I turned back to look. There was nothing else in the room. The only thing different was the disturbance of the television signal. There was no video, only a flickering blue and white background.

“The surroundings were so quiet that I could hear the static coming from the television. I didn’t dare stay inside the room for too long—I wanted to escape, but I started to have second thoughts, remembering the boy that I saw on the stairs in the impossibly position. I was afraid that he was just on the other side of the door.

“The corridor wasn’t safe, but neither was the room. I didn’t know what to do. I froze, holding the doorknob.

“Just as I was hesitating, the image on the television started to flicker faster and faster. I noticed that, amid the changing images, a woman’s face was starting to form!

“That was all the motivation I needed to yank the door open and run. Without stopping to look around, I dashed right to the street. But the dark streetlight still unable to provide me with any sense of security. I charged ahead like a mindless madman until the energy left me, and I collapsed on the ground. Surrounded by the streetlights, I felt slightly better.”

When he told the story, Jia Ming’s forehead and back were drenched in cold sweat, and none of the people in the room had a normal expression. The tone of Jia Ming’s voice, combined with his actual exposition of terror, drew his listeners into the scene.

The female officer gripped the pen that she was holding tighter. Lee Zheng turned to glance at Chen Ge. “What is your opinion? Before Doctor Gao disappeared, he once told me that you were quite good at psychology. What do you think that the ghost he saw represents?”

“His story is very interesting. I can give it a simple analysis.” Chen Ge stood up and moved to sit next to the bed. “Jia Ming started his story by saying that he saw Jiang Long being assaulted by someone at his bungalow. The person used a knife and threatened Jiang Long to do something extremely painful, and he said confidently that the person was me, or at least looked similar to me.

“After coming across that, he raced back to his home. When he was in the corridor, the senior landlady told him, ‘Please don’t make such a loud noise when you two walk around. It’s already so late at night; what are you two doing out so late?’

“This means that the old lady saw more than Jia Ming in the corridor, and that second person was very close to Jia Ming! So close that the elder thought that person was Jia Ming’s friend.”

Chen Ge smiled at Jia Ming.

“If he’s telling the truth, then this means that from then on, there was already someone or something following him, and this person is most likely the bad guy that he saw at the bungalow—the ‘Chen Ge’ who threatened Jiang Long with a knife. The difficulty of trailing the man without being noticed and how I managed to trick him and failed to hide myself from the detection of an old lady aside, we shall assume that what he’s saying is real so that we can continue the analysis.

“Then, he ran to the second floor where his home was. When he opened the door, he saw a little boy’s legs and head on the corner of the stairs to the third floor. Plus, the location where the boy appeared was quite interesting.

“Jia Ming told us the old lady said that her son’s family of three died in a car accident, and the third floor was originally occupied by them. She didn’t want to rent it to keep as a keepsake.

“We’ll make the bold assumption that the boy that Jia Ming saw was the old lady’s grandson, the boy who died in the accident. Then the strange thing was, Jia Ming had stayed there for so long, but he had not seen the boy before. So, what changed that night so that he was able to see the boy?”

Chen Ge was serious with his analysis, but from Lee Zheng and the female officer’s perspective, it was like they were listening to a mental patient giving counselling to another mental patient.

“The answer is very simple because the boy could see the thing following Jia Ming as well. Pay attention to how the boy appeared. He was standing at the corner with his head lowered to the ground like he was spying. This means that the thing following Jia Ming was much scarier than the boy.” Chen Ge had the smile on his face. “A human scaring a ghost, that is the first time I’ve heard something like that.

“There’s another noteworthy detail after he entered the door. When Jia Ming noticed that his reflection in the mirror was not reflecting the action that he was doing in real life, he felt something coming from behind him. Just as he prepared to turn the cup to see who it was, his neck was touched by something similar to a curtain of hair.”

Chen Ge paused.

“This is important because I have short hair. Most guys have short hair. When we lower our head, it is impossible for our hair to be long enough to fall onto the back of his neck. In other words, it should be a woman, or rather a woman ghost who was standing behind him.

“Then, when he prepared to escape the room, he saw the issue with the television. The images started to flicker, and a woman’s face appeared. From all the observations so far, even if there was a ghost in the room, it should have been a female ghost. Combining with the information that we gathered earlier, the real identity of this female ghost should be none other than the landlady’s daughter-in-law.

“In Jia Ming’s story, two ghosts were featured, and they were related to the story that his landlady once told him. This probably happened because something happened to Jia Ming that night, causing him great psychological stress. This placed mental subversion on his mind, causing him to see things where there were none. This could explain him drawing out the ghosts from the story that he had once heard.”

Chen Ge used some professional terms that he had learned from Doctor Gao before. He had no idea what they meant exactly, but it did help to make him sound professional.

With his explanation, Lee Zheng and the female officer’s expression softened, and they kept nodding. Compared to the supernatural, they had an easier time believing that something was wrong with Jia Ming mentally.

After clearing his name, Chen Ge turned to look at Jia Ming. Perhaps his gaze reminded Jia Ming of something scary, or maybe Jia Ming sensed danger from him, but his body suddenly started to spasm before fainting completely.

“I didn’t even touch him.” Chen Ge raised his hands and stood up. As the doctors and nurses bustled around Jia Ming, Chen Ge slowly stepped away. He did not really tell the police everything. Actually, it was his opinion that Jia Ming was not lying.

The person that looked like Chen Ge should be the shadow. As for why he looked like Chen Ge, Chen Ge himself had no clue.

What Jia Ming said later was probably all real. The shadow followed him back to his home and was spotted by the landlady, which alerted the souls of the family living on the third floor.

The boy was the landlady’s grandson, and the female ghost was the landlady’s daughter-in-law. There should be a male ghost that Jia Ming did not encounter.

The shadow followed Jia Ming home, and the three souls should be trying to protect him, but the difference in power was too big, so they could only use their own way to remind him, to make him realize the danger he was in.

Chen Ge knew that Jia Ming was not lying. In any case, he would get himself involved because he could not confirm whether the shadow was still on Jia Ming or not. The shadow was very cunning, and this could be his way of making use of the police.

To prove whether Jia Ming was lying or not should be very simple.

After calling Lee Zheng out of the room to get the address for Jia Ming’s rental home, Chen Ge left the hospital. He wanted to ask them in person, he wanted to know what the old lady saw that night, and he wanted to find the souls to ask them how they felt that night.

Chapter 599: If I Say [2 in 1]

The theme park opened at 9 am, so Chen Ge did not have much time left. He decided to continue to investigation right there and then.

“Inspector Lee, don’t let your guard down. This man is very dangerous, and he is definitely not as harmless as he makes himself out to be. It is unwise to treat him like a normal mental patient.” Chen Ge had no idea when Jia Ming would wake up. He shared a few words with Lee Zheng and then left the hospital.

He hailed a taxi to get to Jia Ming’s first rental home. The sun was just coming up, and there were few people on the street. Occasionally, a few cars would pass by, but that was all. Chen Ge had not caught any sleep the previous night. He had first gone to the special education school to chase after the water ghost and then dived into the Eastern Jiujiang Dam to salvage the body before finally going to the hospital to help with the police’s investigation of Jia Ming. In other words, he had put his night to optimal use. There was not one second that had gone to waste.

His head was feeling light as drowsiness came at him like waves. Chen Ge got a quick forty winks in the cab, and the driver woke him up when they arrived at the destination. Alas, the quick nap did not prove to be useful; if anything, it only made Chen Ge feel heavier and slower. It was as if his brain was filled with lead.

He rubbed his face and walked into the small alley. A draft of cold wind buffeted his face. Perhaps it was how the buildings were built, but the sun had a hard time showering its rays into the alley.

“No wonder Jia Ming did not dare stop even for a moment after he escaped from his building. He only dared do so after he ran out into the main street.”

This was an old residential area, and the surrounding buildings were generally quite low. Most of them were buildings with only two or three stories. They looked worn and old, and some of them even had the term ‘to be demolished’ painted on the walls in red.

“The story that Jia Ming told at the hospital should have happened a few years ago. I hope the old lady hasn’t moved and the building is still there.”

He followed the address provided by Lee Zheng and moved in and out of the alleys for a long time before he found the old lady’s home. The neighbors on the left and right had already moved away, and there was a large hole in one of the walls. From the looks of it, this place had been abandoned for a long time already.

“This place sure was not easy to find.” Chen Ge entered the corridor and noted the pots of flowers placed in the corners. However, due to the lack of sunlight, most of the flowers had wilted, and the stems were old, thin, and yellow.

“Is anyone home?” Chen Ge knocked on the door on the first floor, and he called out softly. There was no answer, but his own echo reverberating in the first-floor corridor. He turned to look up the stairs. For some reason, Chen Ge felt like there was something off about the place. He tried to pull on the door, and the security door was pulled back just like that.

“It’s not even locked?” Curious, Chen Ge pulled the door completely open. A heady wave of mold rushed out from within. The room was filled to the brim with old furniture. The sofa was the type that had been in fashion twenty years ago, the type with cloth upholstery. Even the cuckoo clock on the wall and the low dining table looked quite worn already.

“There is no dust on the doorknob, and the clock in this room is wound to be able to run punctually, so there should be someone who still lives here.”

Without getting the permission, Chen Ge would not be rude enough to trespass into someone’s home. He called again at the threshold of the door, but there was still no reply. However, there was a strange noise that came from the ceiling. It sounded like a deflated rubber ball rolling on the ground.

“That came from the third floor.” Chen Ge walked up the stairs. When he passed the second floor, he noticed that the door of the second-floor room was opened, but no strange smell drifted out from it, like the place was regularly cleaned.

After stopping for a while at the second floor, Chen Ge continued to move upward. The window at the corner of the stairs was covered up by a black cloth. There was no light on the wall, so even though the sun was already up outside, it was still as dark as night inside.

“Is someone there?” A strange voice drifted into his ears. Chen Ge was like the hapless main character of those horror movies as he took one step after another toward the source of the strange noise. Stepping on the creaking steps, his body moved gradually into the darkness. He gripped the handrail, feeling the chill that came from the center of his palms.

There was no light at all on the third floor of the old building. Chen Ge took out his phone and activated the flashlight. He shone the light at the place that the sound came from. When the light fell on the spot, there was something that slithered past in a flash.

Chen Ge tensed up as he scanned the entirety of the third floor. The doors on the floor had all been removed from their hinges, and the place was filled with various items. The most conspicuous object of all was a piano covered in a layer of dust. There were many keys that were missing, and it looked like an old man with many missing teeth opening his lips.

“They should be a quite well-off family. After all, they own a three-story building and could even afford a luxury item like a piano.”

Having walked up to the piano, Chen Ge pressed on a few of the keys. The melody that he expected to come from the piano did not show up.

Chen Ge looked into the piano, and a bunch of hair was stuck inside it. Perhaps he had imagined it, but for a moment, Chen Ge felt like the hair was moving as it curled deeper inside the piano.

Reaching into the piano, Chen Ge calmly pulled out a handful of hair. “There is white hair and black hair. The ends are all neat and clean, so they should have been cut off, not pulled off. Is this the old landlady’s special collection? But why would she collect these?”

The landlady’s daughter-in-law was young when she died, so her hair had not gone white.

“Why would the old lady shove so many reams of hair into the piano?” Chen Ge tossed the hair that he was holding back into the piano. As he pulled his arm back, the corner of his eyes caught the vision of a gray face amid the sea of hair. It seemed to be watching Chen Ge from the cover of the hair.

“What was that?” The third floor was reserved for the souls, so it was not unusual for him to encounter something supernatural. Chen Ge did not panic. He placed his phone to the side, aiming the flashlight

inside the piano. Then he reached into the pile of hair with his two hands and started to search. "Are you still in there?"

No one knew what was hiding under the pile, and no one knew what kind of treasure he could come up with. However, the feeling of bare skin touching against the hair did not feel so good. He rummaged through it for a long time, but Chen Ge failed to find the person. He pulled back and looked at the clock sitting at the side. The clock looked similar to the one in the old lady's room on the first floor, but for this one, only the second hand on the clock face was moving.

It turned again and again, but the time shown on the clock was always stuck at 3:44.

"Is it 3:44 am or pm? And what exactly happens at this particular time in the day?"

Just as Chen Ge's attention was distracted by the clock, there was something that slithered out from underneath the piano. The sound of a ball bouncing returned, and when Chen Ge picked up on it, the sound had moved to the second floor.

"It's escaped? No, it feels like it's trying to lead the way for me."

Chen Ge returned to the second floor. He could not shake the feeling that something or someone was watching his back. The sound disappeared once Chen Ge arrived on the second floor, but strangely enough, the angle that the door was left open was different from before.

"It ran to hide inside the room?" Chen Ge pushed open the door to the room that was featured in Jia Ming's story. However, different from Jia Ming's description, all the windows in this room was boarded up. Even though the place was clean, there was just a creepy feeling about the location.

Entering the room, Chen Ge rushed toward the bathroom where the Yin energy was the heaviest. Pushing the door open, he scanned the place roughly and then stopped before the mirror. Chen Ge stood there and stared at his own reflection in the mirror for a long time.

If a person stared at their reflection for a long time, their brain would create the impression that the reflection in the mirror was becoming more and more unlike them. In extreme cases, there might even be a sense of indescribable strangeness and fear.

Chen Ge stared at the mirror for a full five minutes, but he could not tell what was wrong with the mirror. He believed that after the shadow accomplished his purpose, he left immediately and did not leave behind any trace or trap in the mirror. But out of concern for being thorough, before he left, Chen Ge used his Yin Yang Vision and focused on the mirror one last time. As his eyes narrowed, he caught sight of a pair of gray legs.

It was a boy whose head had almost fallen to the ground. He was standing at the door to the bathroom, looking at him.

Whipping his body around, Chen Ge turned but could not see anything. He looked at the mirror again, but this time, even with the use of the Yin Yang Vision, the boy did not show up in the mirror anymore.

"Where did he go?" Chen Ge walked out of the bathroom to the living room, and his expression shifted. The door leading out of the living room was closed. The windows were boarded up, and now, the door was closed. The air in the room became so stale and heavy that it pressed down on Chen Ge.

“Is this that boy’s doing?” He walked to the door and turned the doorknob. He realized that the door was locked, and it would not be able to open without the use of a key. Just as Chen Ge was figuring out what to do with the lock, a sound came from the corner of the living room. Then, the sound of static entered Chen Ge’s ears.

He turned to look, and in the dark room, the originally closed television was switched on. A collection of twisted blue and white images appeared on screen, and occasionally, it would flicker.

“This scene appeared in Jia Ming’s story before.” Chen Ge sounded calm, but his heart was actually racing. Before he finished, the flickering on the television screen turned intense, and the rough shape of a shadow started to appear.

The shadow appeared like it was slowly approaching Chen Ge. Initially, it was only the size of a fist, but eventually, it grew to the size of a brain. As she drew closer, Chen Ge managed to get a clearer look.

It was the shape of a woman, and after each flicker on the screen, this shadowy woman would get closer to him, and Chen Ge’s heart would start to involuntarily pick up in speed.

When the woman became the size of an actual person and the television screen was not big enough to hold her, Chen Ge stopped hesitating. He reached his hands back and mumbled two words on his lips. “Xu Yin!”

His fingers searched behind him, but he found nothing, and Chen Ge’s heart skipped a beat. He suddenly remembered that he had received a call from Lee Zheng that morning to go to the hospital to help with their investigation.

Due to the time crunch and the fact that his backpack was drenched from his dip at the dam, Chen Ge had not taken his backpack with him. He figured that since he was going to meet the police, no danger was going to come to him.

His frozen fingers hung behind him, and Chen Ge slowly raised his head to look at the television. Cold sweat glided down his face as his eyes slowly moved up. He finally got the television screen in his sight. Only the blue and white images remained on screen—the shadow of the woman had already disappeared.

Chen Ge sighed in relief, but before he could catch another breath, there was a numbness coming from the back of his neck like someone had accidentally brushed their hair against his skin.

His eyes twitched, and Chen Ge remembered hearing this part in Jia Ming’s story as well.

He slowly turned around, and from the corner of his eyes, he saw a pair of starkly white eyes looking at him from behind.

The body that had shown up in the television was twisted in impossible angles, and her lips cracked open. The woman whose eyes were popping out of their sockets was standing behind him.

His face twitched slightly, and Chen Ge felt the air around him frozen. He stared at the woman’s harried hair that looked like it was brutally tussled and slowly took a step back.

He tripped on something, and Chen Ge fell into the sofa. He looked at the approaching ghostly shadow and almost instinctively said, “Will you believe me if I say I’ve come here to help you?”

Chapter 600: Shadowless Man

The dirty hair swayed with the rhythm of the wind. The sound of bones grinding came from the woman's throat. She moved extremely fast, and while Chen Ge spoke, she was already pressing against him. From the way she reacted, it did not seem like she was in the mood to listen to what Chen Ge had to say.

"I haven't felt this for so long." Cold sweat kept pouring like he was dancing on the edge of a cliff. Chen Ge leaned against the back of the sofa while gripping the armrests as tight as he could. "I don't mean to offend you. I came here just to find the truth of something that happened here some time ago! There was a tenant in this room who was haunted by an evil spirit several years ago. Back then, you showed up to warn him of the danger that he was in, and if he did not find out the reason why, he would not be long for this world!"

If this was any other person, they would be blubbering by then or screaming mindlessly. But Chen Ge was different. He said everything that he wanted to in the shortest amount of time. The ghost did not press closer, and Chen Ge sighed in relief. He adjusted his posture to be more comfortable, and as he moved his neck, he noticed a boy standing next to him.

The boy's skin was startling ashy, and his spine was snapped, so his head hung around his chest. His eyes moved up and down as he gave Chen Ge a close inspection.

"Is this your son? He's such a little cutie..." Chen Ge peeled his lips back to reveal a smile. He knew that the souls here did not have much impression of Jia Ming, so after a brief hesitation, he quickly added, "That tenant was once my best friend. He told me the best time of his life was spent at this old building. The senior landlady treated him very well, and he treasured this part of his memory. But recently, it seems like he's changed into a completely different person. He keeps rambling on about destroying everything that was good in the world to regain control of himself. Initially, I thought he was just kidding, but reality proved that I was wrong. If I didn't call the police to stop him last night, he would have shown up here with a knife already!"

Stuck between the two ghosts, Chen Ge had no idea what he was talking about, but he knew to push all the blame onto Jia Ming. The ghosts there should have seen the shadow before, so Chen Ge believed that if he kept bringing up the incident from several years ago, it should be enough to jog their memory.

He did not need to spend all of his effort in trying to persuade the spirits—he only needed a chance from them to explain himself and to not come for his life when he was so vulnerable. Then, everything else would be a piece of cake.

"Even now, I can't believe that my dear friend has snapped like that. Therefore, I rushed here to warn the senior landlady about the danger she's in. There's a monster possessing my friend's body that's coming after her!" The more he talked, the more agitated he became, and gradually, that overcame the terror that Chen Ge felt. "The old lady is a kind person, and kindness should not be repaid with harm or vengeance!"

For the spirits in the old building, Jia Ming was nothing more than a passing tenant, but their connection to the old lady was different; she was their family. After saying all that, the boy next to him turned to look at the female ghost. Her expressions kept shifting, so Chen Ge could not tell what she was thinking.

His mind moved, and after combining her previous experience, he came up with three different solutions to resolve the conundrum that he was in. However, just as he was about to put one of them into action, the woman and the boy suddenly retreated to the sides and disappeared.

The door was pushed open, and a seventy or eighty year old granny appeared at the door, holding the key in her gnarled hand. She mumbled, "Qian Qian? Is that you?"

The old lady's face, which was filled with wrinkles, looked around the room with anticipation before falling on Chen Ge, who was sprawled on the sofa.

"Please let me explain!" Chen Ge quickly stood up to walk toward the old lady, but his pant leg was pulled back. He turned to look and saw the boy hiding behind the sofa. He was grasping Chen Ge's leg, and that curious head turned left and right like he was warning Chen Ge from revealing their presence to the old lady.

"Don't worry, but who were you talking to?"

Even though the lady was old, she was not a bit senile. She entered the room and peered behind Chen Ge. By then, the woman and the boy had already disappeared.

"Was I talking earlier?" Seeing the old lady enter the room, Chen Ge said softly, "Granny, please don't misunderstand. I'm not a burglar—I just came here to ask you some questions. I saw the door was unlocked, so I thought I'd come in here to find you, but the wind suddenly picked up and slammed the door shut from outside."

"You're telling me it was the wind that locked the door?" The old lady was not easily tricked. She looked at Chen Ge and reached into her pocket. Chen Ge thought that she was going to grab some weapon to defend herself, so he was on high alert, but as it turned out, she was merely going to hand him a clean handkerchief. "Use this to wipe away your sweat. It's fine even if you're a burglar—there's nothing here worth stealing anyway."

"Granny, you're such a nice person." Chen Ge relaxed completely and decided to come clean. "I have a friend who once rented this room from you, but he's in a bad place right now. He keeps saying that there's another person living inside him and kept rambling about destroying all the good memories in his life..."

"You're also here because of Jia Ming?" The old lady interrupted him.

He frowned, and Chen Ge quickly asked, "Someone has been here asking about him before me?"

"A few days ago, a police officer with the surname Yan came to confirm some things with me."

"Captain Yan? What questions did he ask?" Chen Ge was instantly reminded of Captain Yan.

"Mostly about my impression of Jia Ming. The child came from the countryside. He was honest and hardworking, and the only negative traits were his stubbornness and misfortune." A trace of melancholy entered the old lady's voice with the mention of Jia Ming.

“Then did he ask why Jia Ming moved away?” Chen Ge realized that he had underestimated the police. Before Jia Ming was detained, Captain Yan had already unearthed the man’s background and history.

“He did, but honestly, even I don’t know why the child was in such a hurry to move. He didn’t even take his luggage or affects with him. I wanted to mail them to him, but he rejected me.”

“Then can you still remember what happened the night before he moved? It should have been a day when he returned home very late at night.” Chen Ge wanted to corroborate Jia Ming’s story with the old lady’s account.

“I was inside my room that night and didn’t...” The old lady suddenly paused, and she stared at Chen Ge’s face for a very long time. “Have we met somewhere before?”

“Have we met?” This time, Chen Ge was genuinely surprised.

“Yes, I think I remember now. That night, I heard Jia Ming walking in the house, and I thought that he was in an argument with Xiao Ling, so I planned to mediate the argument for them. But when I got to the second floor, I saw someone standing at his door.” The old lady slowly raised her thin and desiccated arm to point at Chen Ge. “It was you; you were the one who was standing at his door that night!”

The old lady panicked, based on the usual development, Chen Ge would reveal a devilish smirk and then say something like, ‘Since you’ve seen my face, I can’t let you live to tell another soul.’ But in reality, Chen Ge voluntarily moved away from the old lady, and he started to fall into a deep contemplation.

The old lady had also seen someone who looked exactly like Chen Ge. This was proof that the shadow was related to Chen Ge, or at least they looked physically the same.

“No wonder the boy and the woman kept staring at my face when they saw me—they should have received quite a shock as well,” Chen Ge grumbled softly to himself and then turned to look at the old lady. “Granny, that night, you saw someone who looked just like me. Was he doing anything weird?”

The old lady shook her head. “All he did was just standing there. Oh right, I was carrying a flashlight with me that night, but after the light fell on him, I realized that he did not seem to possess a shadow.”