

Horrors 61

Chapter 61: Affection Level Increase

Chen Ge was thankful that he didn't say anything bad about Zhang Ya earlier. He laughed awkwardly and said, "I came out for fresh air because the dance studio was a bit too stuffy."

The red blood trailed down her uniform as Zhang Ya stared at Chen Ge. Then she raised her slender, pale arm to point at the building that Chen Ge knew as the teachers' lounge.

"You want me to go there?" Before Chen Ge could get an answer, Zhang Ya disappeared. Chen Ge was several meters away from the gate, so he was caught in a conundrum. If he returned to the school to investigate, he might run into more danger, but if he just left like that, he would feel so unsatisfied.

Zhang Ya's attitude toward me seems to have softened. Her hint should be related to the case four years ago. However, this school seems to have another presence similar to Zhang Ya, and there is more than one. I should probably wait for the police to arrive first before I go back in.

After jumping out of the school, Chen Ge stood on guard outside the gate. He wasn't sure whether Zhang Peng was still alive or not, so he did not dare let his guard down. Fifteen minutes later, the blinding headlights of a car cut through the darkness; two police cars were heading his way.

Chen Ge jumped out into the road and waved the flashlight on his phone. "I'm here!"

The cars stopped at the gate to Western Jiujiang's Private Academy, and Inspector Lee, as well as an officer Chen Ge hadn't seen before, stepped out from the car.

"Uncle Lee, you're so fast." According to Chen Ge's calculations, the police should have required another half an hour before to get there.

"We received a distress call from a taxi driver earlier, saying he was getting robbed, so we were already on the way to this place." Inspector Lee had heavy circles under his eyes, signs that he had overworked himself for the past few days.

"Is that so? In any case, come in quick, Zhang Peng should be still inside the school!" Chen Ge pointed at the abandoned school's gate—one might have thought he was the host inviting the guests into his house.

"Da Yong," Inspector Lee said, and a muscular police officer who was about 1.9 meters tall pulled out a clipper from the car's trunk. "After entering the school compound, we'll need to be very careful. The suspect is very cunning, so stick together in pairs."

He turned to look at Chen Ge. "Where is the last place you saw the suspect?"

"At the dance studio, but he has run away already. In any case, I have something else to report to you." Chen Ge walked to Inspector Lee's side and pointed at the teacher's lounge. "Inspector Lee, do you mind following me?"

“Da Yong, you stay behind to watch over the road, others move out according to plan.” Inspector Lee issued his orders, and then he followed Chen Ge into the teachers’ lounge.

This building only had three floors, but the interior décor was much more high class than the other buildings Chen Ge had been in.

Inspector Lee held the flashlight in his hand and asked, “Why are we here? Did you see the suspect run this way?”

His gaze was sharp, and the tiredness fell from the man. Once he entered the crime scene, Inspector Lee seemed to morph into another person.

“Zhang Peng won’t have come here.” Chen Ge walked ahead, trying to pinpoint the exact room Zhang Ya’s finger had pointed at. “I’m bringing you to the place that’s related to the death of the girl four years ago.”

“Haven’t I said I will help you investigate that after we capture Zhang Peng? The two cases cannot be mixed together, and the most important thing now is to capture Zhang Peng.”

“We’re here; this is the room.” Chen Ge didn’t answer Inspector Lee. He had waited for the police to come because he wanted to lower the risk to its bare minimum. The sign on the door said that this was the storeroom for gym equipment. After pulling off the seals and kicking the door open, Chen Ge and Inspector Lee walked into the room.

Numerous balls littered the room, and exercise equipment like tennis rackets and ping pong paddles hung from the walls.

“You brought me here to see this?” Inspector Lee used his flashlight to scan the corners of the room. “What can it prove?”

“Gym equipment...” Chen Ge walked to the center of the room and started ransacking the place. He stopped when he reached a single bed that was placed next to the innermost cupboard. There was also such a bed inside the dance studio; it looked specially made because the bedframe was slender than most normal bedframes.

“Why is there a need for a bed inside the storeroom?” Chen Ge frowned with confusion before lifting up the bed’s wooden boards. A harrowing scene revealed itself before their eyes.

Underneath the worn and dusty bedframe hid ten female ballet shoes of differing sizes, and a pair of them had been dyed black by blood!

“That many of them?” Looking at the shoes that appeared to have been purposely hidden underneath the bed, Chen Ge did not feel anger but shock, shock that the incident at Western Jiujiang’s Private Academy might be more distressing than he had assumed.

“There’s more than one victim!” Chen Ge asked Inspector Lee, “Why would the ballet shoes of the suicide girl be hidden here? Was there any mention of the girl’s shoes in the case report?”

“There’s no record on the shoes.” Inspector Lee frowned. “The shoes are all covered with dust even though they are hidden under the bed; this means that they have probably been left here for a long

time already. However, they were placed neatly in a row, like someone took special care to look after them... perhaps this is the murderer's fetish."

"Uncle Lee, you're the police officer here, so you have to help return justice to the victims." Chen Ge dropped the boards to the side. "The murderer had free access to the dance studio as well as this equipment storeroom, so he was probably a manager or guard."

"If what you're saying is true, then that does narrow down the investigation scope quite a bit." Inspector Lee seemed to have been moved by the pair of darkened dancing shoes. "Don't worry, I will not rest until I get to the bottom of this case. No matter who the murderer is, I'll have him punished to the full extent of the law!"

When Inspector Lee said that, Chen Ge's black phone vibrated. He pulled it out to glance at it. There was a new message on the phone.

"Managed to locate Zhang Ya's red dancing shoes before dawn. Completed Zhang Ya's Bloody Heart Mission, Mission Completion Rate: 50 percent.

"Zhang Ya's affection level toward you has increased! You can write something you want her to do in Zhang Ya's personal profile page (Note: It mustn't be against Zhang Ya's will)."

Chen Ge silently retreated to the door. *Tonight's experience might have been harrowing, but at least the result is good.*

He opened up Zhang Ya's personal page, and the display turned red immediately. *My demand mustn't be against Zhang Ya's will—that's the only requirement.*

After some thought, Chen Ge wrote, "I hope Zhang Ya will listen to me forever."

"I'm sorry, but your demand is against Zhang Ya's will, please change it."

"I hope Zhang Ya will protect me from being harmed."

"I'm sorry, but your demand is against Zhang Ya's will, please change it."

"I hope Zhang Ya will not harm me or harbor any intention to kill me!"

That's doable, right?

"I'm sorry, but your demand is against Zhang Ya's will, please change it."

Er...

Chapter 62: Four-Star Scenario!

After trying it three more times and failing three more times, Chen Ge decided to give up. He would continue the research when he was back at his Haunted House. To his surprise, when he exited Zhang Ya's personal page, there was another unread alert on the black phone.

Haven't I finished the Bloody Heart Mission already?

Chen Ge opened the second message without much thought.

“The Specter’s Favored, congratulations for completing Rare Level Ghost, Red Specter’s Bloody Heart Mission. This mission is part of a side mission for a four-star scenario—School of the Afterlife!

“Note: When the Bloody Heart Mission’s completion rate reaches one hundred percent, it’ll unlock the Trial Mission for School of the Afterlife (Mission effective time is three months). Completing all the Trial Missions will unlock said scenario!

“School of the Afterlife—Scream Factor 4 Stars!

“Side Mission 1: Red Dancing Shoes (The school after midnight is the Red Swan’s stage. She is a wicked specter as well as a red ballet dancer). Mission Venue: Western Jiujiang’s Private Academy.

“Side Mission 2: The Hanging Man (I never kid, not in life nor in death). Mission Venue: Western Jiujiang’s Private Academy.

“Side Mission 3: The Stink (He collects all the trash in his bedroom just to hide an unspeakable secret). Mission Venue: Western Jiujiang’s Private Academy.

“Side Mission 4: The Pen Spirit Who Refused to Leave (Pen Spirit, Pen Spirit, can you tell me who will die next?) Mission Venue: Mu Yang High School.

“Side Mission 5: The Fifth Cubicle in the Toilet (Every day at midnight, people swore they could see a red shadow appear inside the toilet. To catch her, I hid inside the fifth cubicle of the toilet). Mission Venue: Mu Yang High School.

“Side Mission 6: Deep Well (One brother and one sister went to school, but how come no one returned?) Mission Venue: Mu Yang High School.

“Side Mission 7: The Sealed Classroom (There’s a classroom at the end of the corridor that’s always sealed. No one ever enters it, but every night, the classroom comes alive with activity). Mission Venue: Mu Yang High School.

“Side Mission 8: Eternal Life (In an undisclosed underground morgue, there’s a group who seek eternal life). Mission Venue: Western Jiujiang’s Medical University.

“Last Mission: Currently Locked.”

Reading the series of message on the black phone, Chen Ge was baffled. *Four-star scenario? Even a one-star scenario manages to cause forensic science students to faint, so just how scary will a four-star scenario be?*

Everyone has a threshold with regards to horror; once that threshold is overshoot, it might be harmful to the person’s health. Chen Ge read the various Side Missions again, and just the mission description alone made his skin crawl. Most importantly, these were just Side Missions; the finale was still locked. Logically speaking, Chen Ge had to finish the eight Side Missions first before he could unlock the final mission.

A four-star scenario is probably too hard for the current me. Perhaps I’ll be able to challenge later but definitely not now.

Chen Ge closed the message and clicked into the unlockable scenario tab. Other than The Third Sick Hall and The Haunted Hearse, there was now an additional School of the Afterlife, but different from the previous two, this scenario's name was written in blood-red ink.

So, this one scenario practically collects all the haunted school stories into one. In that case, even after this scenario is unlocked, it probably can't be released to every member of the public.

Looking at the Scream Factor delineation of the various scenarios, a thought bubbled up in Chen Ge's mind. One-star scenario should be open to anyone, but entrance to scenarios that were three stars or above should be limited to those who had survived one- and two-star scenarios. In other words, this could be considered a type of visitor protection.

The playability of the Haunted House will be increased in this manner as well. Those who have visited once may return to challenge a scarier scenario until they perfect every scenario. This means that they will have a different experience every time they visit, and this will definitely boost the popularity of my Haunted House.

Suddenly, He San's image appeared in Chen Ge's mind. He was technically the only visitor who had challenged more than one of the Haunted House's scenarios. *That kid is somewhat of a good luck charm of the Haunted House. Perhaps I should invite him again when the new scenario is unlocked...*

There were many fresh ideas in his mind, like giving additional rewards and certificates after the visitors survived certain levels. This way it would encourage the visitors to breakthrough to challenge scarier scenarios.

This makes me feel like some kind of dungeon master.

Chen Ge couldn't help but smile. In the future, there would probably be professional teams who came to his Haunted House to understand the true meaning of fear.

"Why are you smiling dumbly to yourself? Looks like you up to some kind of no good." Inspector Lee came out from the room. He had completed the initial survey. "I've communicated with Team 1 and Team 2; they couldn't find any trace of Zhang Peng. The atmosphere of this school weirds me out, and the environment is too complicated to navigate at night. We'll retreat for now and set up a plan when the investigation team gets here."

"Okay." Chen Ge had prepared to leave for a long time already. All his reasons for being there had been accomplished.

Everyone thus retreated from the school grounds. The police sealed the gate, waiting for aid to arrive. The investigation team finally arrived when dawn came, and they looked as exhausted as Inspector Lee's group.

After a simple greeting, Inspector Lee drove Chen Ge home in his car.

"Yet another sleepless night." Chen Ge finally relaxed when he was sitting in the backseat of the police car. He stretched lazily before lying down on the cushion.

"You're the first person that I've come across who can be so comfortable inside a police car," Inspector Lee commented with a degree of dissatisfaction. "By the way, I have a few questions that I haven't had the chance to ask you until now."

"Then, don't ask." Chen Ge could already guess the questions. He used his backpack to smother his face and pretend to fall asleep.

"Why would you go to Western Jiujiang's Private Academy at midnight? And how did you know the exact time of death of the girl? This was four years ago, and even the forensic doctor wouldn't be able to tell me the time of death without referring to the case file, but you managed to do that. That's just too abnormal." Inspector Lee crawled into the driver's seat and started the engine.

"Lucky guesses." Chen Ge turned his body about. "Uncle San Bao, can you turn the air-conditioning on?"

"You've dropped all formalities around me, haven't you?" Inspector Lee grumbled as he turned on the air-conditioning. It was then that his phone suddenly rang.

"Uncle, it's your phone."

"Talk some more and see if I'll toss you out of the car or not?" Inspector Lee looked at the ID before answering it. He did not say a word, and there was no sound coming from the other end either. The call was ended three seconds later.

"Who is so brave to make prank calls to the police?" Chen Ge turned to look but was surprised to find Inspector Lee's facial expression had softened.

"That's my wife. Every time I'm on a special mission, she'll give me a call to check on my safety. Due to the sensitive nature of certain missions, we've come up with our own style of communication. Instead of verbal communication, as long as I pick up the phone, that means that I'm still okay."

Chapter 63: Someone's in the House

"Auntie sure cares about you."

"Of course." Inspector Lee put his phone away, and his face twisted with confusion. "Wait, just who do you think you are? You call me uncle and my wife auntie?"

He waited for an answer, but it never came. He turned and realized Chen Ge had already fallen asleep. When the police car arrived at New Century Park, Chen Ge was shaken awake by Inspector Lee. The former left the car in a sort of daze, carrying his backpack.

"Be careful at all times! Zhang Peng is still out there. Based on the current situation and his twisted mentality, he might give up everything just to take revenge on you," Inspector Lee reminded Chen Ge.

"I know." The mention of Zhang Peng did wake Chen Ge up slightly. He waved at Inspector Lee before turning to enter New Century Park. The elderly guard was already asleep. Even as Chen Ge walked through the front door, he did not wake up.

Tonight's reward is quite valuable. I can ask for a favor from Zhang Ya since I've completed her Bloody Heart Mission, but would it be too much of a waste to have her eliminate the mirror monster for me?

Chen Ge pulled out the black phone and clicked into Zhang Ya's page. The affection level had been raised from "Crazy about you" to "Yours forever."

I'll need to study this closer so that I maximize the usability of this chance.

As he entered the Haunted House, Chen Ge did not exit the page but continued reading through the details on Zhang Ya.

When I have enough money, perhaps I should rent myself a room outside. Sleeping in the staff breakroom feels weird after a while, Chen Ge thought to himself as he walked down the dark corridor. He was familiar with every corner of this Haunted House; even without light, he wouldn't knock into anything.

When he passed the first-floor toilet, the wooden door creaked as if blown by the wind. The wooden door was not sturdy to begin with, and after being assaulted by Chen Ge using the mallet, the door itself had become misshapen. He tried to close the door as best as he could, but when he walked toward it, he noticed that the window in the toilet was half open.

Did I forget to close the window when I left? The sky outside the window was brightening. Chen Ge stood at the window to inspect it. He didn't see anything like a footprint near or on it. *It's probably due to the recent high amount of stress.*

Even so, Chen Ge grabbed the mop that was leaning against the wall as he headed toward the control room. The Haunted House was fitted with cameras that covered every corner. A simple look at them would confirm for Chen Ge whether someone had snuck in or not.

Pushing open the control room door, Chen Ge sat before the computer and booted up the computer. All the surveillance footage was stored inside this computer. Chen Ge looked for the ID of the camera at the entrance of the toilet and pulled up the video.

He thought he was being overly cautious, but several minutes later, Chen Ge did discover a strange man on screen!

The man had his head lowered and quickly rushed down the corridor once he exited the toilet.

Someone did come in; there's another person hiding in this Haunted House other than myself! That woke Chen Ge up completely. *The man seems to know there's a camera at the entrance of the toilet and knows where he's going. This means that he has probably been inside the building before.*

There were several cameras installed on the corridor. After the mysterious man disappeared from the camera, Chen Ge searched for the ID of the next camera, which was placed at the corner of the corridor that led to the toilet. On the second video feed, it was shown that the strange man turned into the control room once he raced down the corridor.

He headed for the control room directly, probably to destroy the evidence. This man knows the layout of my Haunted House very well.

There was only one name in Chen Ge's mind, and just as he was about to continue his investigation, he saw himself on screen.

The video has rolled onto the present. That's me holding the black phone and the mop as I entered the control room... Wait, this means that the man hasn't left! Just as Chen Ge saw himself on screen, he grabbed the mop next to him and turned around!

The locker that was about two meters behind him was shoved open, and a man with bloodshot eyes, holding a sharp knife in his hand, jumped out from it!

"Zhang Peng!" Chen Ge screamed when he saw the man's twisted features. Probably agitated by Chen Ge's voice, Zhang Peng charged at him with the knife. Chen Ge calmed down quickly from the initial shock. He opened the room door that was behind him and retreated as he deflected Zhang Peng's assault.

Even though Zhang Peng was handicapped, he fought with the passion of one who did not want his life anymore. The man knew this was the end of the line, and what he wanted now was someone to join him in death. Chen Ge evaded left and right as he moved toward the maintenance room. He looked like he was cornered, but that was part of his plan.

Zhang Peng had put his life on the line, so escape was out of question. He needed to fight back, but the wooden mop in his hand wouldn't harm Zhang Peng, so Chen Ge was reminded of Dr. Skull-cracker's iron hammer. Earlier, to avoid an unnecessary misunderstanding with the police, Chen Ge had hidden the hammer inside the maintenance room.

The assault intensified. Zhang Peng seemed to have seen through Chen Ge's plan. He did not even attempt to avoid Chen Ge's hit as he allowed the wooden mop to smack on his body—his aim was to get close to Chen Ge.

Very soon, Chen Ge retreated to the door of the maintenance room. He was biding the time to jump into the room, but before that could happen, he felt an extra weight on his body like he was carrying a boulder.

"You're going to die today!" Zhang Peng, who had been silent, suddenly cried out. Spirit had returned to the man's eyes, and his knife skill became much more agile.

What's going on? The mirror monster has been controlling Zhang Peng until now? So where is the monster now? Chen Ge could feel his movement slowing down. He used his hand to feel behind him, but he couldn't feel anything. Something pressed hard on his shoulder, causing him to bend over slightly. He turned his head around to look, and a black shadow about the size of an adult man was riding on his back!

The mirror monster!

Panic flashed across his eyes. Chen Ge dipped to avoid a knife aiming at his neck, and he turned to blast through the door into the maintenance room. He ran toward the cupboards that held all the random junk.

It's still not time to give up. Zhang Peng and the black shadow share one entity, if I use the hammer to incapacitate Zhang Peng, then I'll be able to stop the black shadow as well!

Chen Ge felt like he was dragging a small mountain on his back. He had underestimated the black shadow's growth. Compared to the first time they met, this creature had become much harder to deal with.

Something was choking the breath from his throat as the weight on his back continued to increase. The laughter of various individuals appeared in his ears, and when Chen Ge reached the cupboard, he was drained from exhaustion.

Chen Ge's consciousness wavered, and a humming sound sung in his ears. Without turning to look, Chen Ge knew Zhang Peng was walking toward him with the knife.

The monster on his back continued to press down on him. Chen Ge used every ounce of his energy to open the cupboard door. As he tried to search for the hammer through the junk, the black phone fell from his pocket, the screen still on Zhang Ya's personal page.

Chapter 64: Ate It?

The mirror monster had Chen Ge in a chokehold, and the murderer was inching toward him with a sharp knife. Chen Ge had no time to hesitate. When he saw Zhang Ya's page, he reached out to type two words—Help me!

The weird laugh in his mind grew louder. Zhang Peng's knife came at him before Chen Ge had the time to key in anything else. He turned around and grabbed anything from the cupboard that he could get his hands on to throw at Zhang Peng.

His limbs were failing him, and the veins in Chen Ge's neck were protruding. Even without the stab from Zhang Peng, he would be strangled by the mirror monster. Chen Ge clawed violently at his neck, but he caught no purchase—it was as if there was nothing there. Chen Ge placed his last hope on the black phone.

He turned his head to look at the phone on the ground and saw that there was a line of blood red letters on screen. "She has understood your demand, so please accept the content of the first agreement."

It appeared like the demand went both ways. While Chen Ge asked something of Zhang Ya, she would also ask something of Chen Ge, and Chen Ge's order would only be carried out once the agreement had been reached.

At a time like this, no matter how ridiculous the content of Zhang Ya's agreement was, Chen Ge would agree unhesitatingly. Inching his finger forward, Chen Ge pressed the "yes" button on screen.

The moment his finger touched the screen, the temperature of the small room dropped tremendously as cold drafts blew into the room from all corners. The weird laugh in Chen Ge's head stopped immediately. He could feel the monster on his back shiver; it could also feel fear.

The sound of dripping suddenly appeared in the room like something was leaking. The mirror monster on Chen Ge's back released its hold on Chen Ge and escaped back into Zhang Peng's body.

The maintenance room became eerily quiet. Even Zhang Peng knew something was wrong. This gambler who had nothing to lose did not choose to retreat at the last moment but raise the knife to charge at Chen Ge.

However, he only took the first step when the expression on his face changed. The mirror monster had forcibly taken over his body, making him leave. The man and the ghost were quarrelling, forcing them into inaction. While that was happening, Chen Ge's shadow slowly stood up, and a bloody dress appeared behind Chen Ge.

Zhang Ya had probably left quite a heavy trauma on both the man and the ghost at Western Jiujiang's Private Academy because when they saw the Red Specter behind Chen Ge, a consensus was made, and the man turned to run.

Without the constriction from the mirror monster, Chen Ge was released from the lock. He had almost been killed by Zhang Peng, and he was still reeling with anger, so naturally, he wouldn't let them escape so easily.

He just stood up with the iron hammer when the Red Specter made her move. Zhang Ya seemed to have a fetish for cruel kills because even without the order from Chen Ge, needle-like black hairs shot into Zhang Peng's body.

The murderer's footsteps slowed. Naturally, Chen Ge would not give up on this perfect opportunity. He swung the iron hammer on Zhang Ge's shoulder. The impact caused the man to fall forward. Making use of this opportunity, Chen Ge aimed yet another strike at Zhang Peng's upper calf.

An ear-splitting shriek escaped from the maintenance room. The mirror monster inside Zhang Peng knew that the man was cornered, so it decided to abandon Zhang Peng and flew toward the toilet.

"Not good, there's a mirror inside the first-floor toilet!"

Before Chen Ge realized what had happened, Zhang Ya started to chase after the mirror monster. This shadow creature seemed to be highly interesting to her.

I have to figure out a way to block the mirror.

Chen Ge looked around him and spotted the half-full vat of fake blood left in the maintenance room. The toilet's door creaked in the wind. When Chen Ge arrived, he saw that half of the mirror body had already been punctured by Zhang Ya's hair, but it was just inches away from the mirror.

"You're not getting away that easily this time!"

Unsure whether it would be of use or not, Chen Ge splashed the fake blood all over the mirror. The black shadow hesitated before the mirror. Before it could react, tendrils of black hair curled around its body like snakes. Chen Ge could barely make out its humanoid shape anymore as it was caught in the hair.

The bloody dress fluttered in the wind. After Zhang Ya got bored, she tore the black shadow that was compressed into a ball into two. She swallowed half of it before tearing up the other half into pieces and gently blowing it into Chen Ge's face.

Chen Ge felt like something had entered his eyes, and his body shivered involuntarily from the sudden cold.

“What was that?” Chen Ge wanted to get an answer from Zhang Ya, but after fulfilling her part of the agreement, this cruel Red Specter disappeared into his shadow.

The toilet door was still squeaking on its hinges, but there was nothing left inside the toilet to suggest that the crazy things that Chen Ge had just witnessed had truly happened.

Just like that, Zhang Ya ate half of the mirror monster and blew the other half into my eyes. Chen Ge looked at the mirror and a sensation that felt like he was dreaming overwhelmed him. The mirror monster has been taken care of, so there shouldn't be a new number that surfaces on the mirror tomorrow night, right?

Until now, he could not understand what the numbers meant, but he had a feeling they pointed to a huge secret.

After closing the door, Chen Ge used his phone to contact the police. He did not trouble Inspector Lee this time. After all, the man wasn't a machine; he had been required to deal with more than enough over the past few days already.

Leaning against the wall, Chen Ge glanced at Zhang Peng, who lay as if dead on the floor. When the mirror monster left his body, it seemed to have taken something from the man. The man's eyes looked blankly forward, and his gaze was soulless.

I suppose this is a kind of karma.

At 6 am, the investigation team from the main city, officers from Western Jiujiang police station, and members of the park's management all gathered at the entrance of the Haunted House. The last suspect from the Ping An Apartment case had finally been caught.

After watching Zhang Peng being hauled into the police car, Chen Ge's taut nerves finally relaxed. He did not stay to chat but returned to the Haunted House and locked himself in the breakroom.

The case at the Ping An Apartment is finally wrapped up. The mirror monster has been eaten by Zhang Ya, so there are no more hidden threats lingering in my Haunted House, meaning I can finally open all of the scenarios up for business in the morning. Chen Ge lay in bed, thinking about his future. What I should focus on next is the expansion of the Haunted House because the new scenarios won't be unlocked without the expansion. After I wake up, I should go talk to Uncle Xu. In any case, I have to convince him to let me rent the underground parking lot.

As he tried to fall asleep, Chen Ge felt a cold breeze caress his body. The chill did not leave even when he wrapped himself up in the covers. The chill seemed to come from his eyes.

Zhang Ya did blow part of the mirror monster into my face, could this be caused by that? Chen Ge grabbed a small piece of mirror to look at his face. Everything looked normal except perhaps his pupils turned darker like the surface of a bottomless lake.

Eventually, fatigue caught up to him. Chen Ge placed the mirror underneath his pillow and soon drifted off to sleep.

At 10.30 am, before he managed to catch several hours of sleep, Chen Ge was woken up by the call on his phone. He looked at the ID and answered it. "Xiao Wan, you can have the morning off. Come back in the afternoon."

"Boss! There are so many people down here! There are even police and reporters, what have you done?"

Chapter 65: Captain Yan

"But I've not done anything! Wait for me, I'm going down now!" Chen Ge leaned closer to the window to glance down. There was indeed a great crowd outside the Haunted House, and the number was still growing.

"Boss, listen to me, surrender while you still can before this gets worse."

"Surrender my foot! Just wait for me." After hanging up, Chen Ge quickly put on his clothes, washed his face, and ran to the door. He pulled back the heavy curtains and dashed out the gates.

When Chen Ge made his appearance, the rowdy crowd started to quiet down. The surrounding visitors looked at Chen Ge with curiosity and more than a bit of disappointment in their eyes. Obviously, they had expected the person who was surrounded by the police to look less... normal.

This was the first time that Chen Ge had felt so many eyes on him. He seemed to shrivel up in shyness, but he felt like he should say something. "Do any of you mind telling me what this is for?"

"You are Chen Ge?" The leading officer carried a box in his arms. He was slightly rotund, but his eyes were sharp and penetrating, which created a rather humorous contrast to his babyish face.

"Yes."

"Can I see your identification?"

Chen Ge searched for a long time before producing his identification card. All this while, he was silently studying the officer before him. The officer was wearing a uniform different from Inspector Lee and his men.

"Okay, thank you for your cooperation." The officer smiled. He waved at the reporters beside him, opened the box in his hand, and announced in an official tone, "For providing the murder case at Ping An Apartments with crucial evidence, Jiujiang Municipal Bureau for Public Security is awarding this Level Three Public Security Medal of Honor to Chen Ge! Hopefully, Chen Ge will appreciate this honor and continue to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the public security of our society!"

This series of announcement confused Chen Ge. Things were happening too quickly for him to handle. As the box was pushed into his hands, he looked at the shiny medal, and there was only one thought on his mind, which was only half-awake. *Where's the reward money?*

The slightly rotund officer stood beside Chen Ge and paraded him to the wall of reporters. The whole process lasted for fifteen minutes. After the crowd dispersed and the reporters left, Chen Ge quietly sought out the rotund officer. "Sir, how may I refer to you?"

"The name's Yan, you can call me Captain Yan. I was classmates with Western Jiujiang's Ol' Lee. In fact, he has told me many things about you." Captain Yan seemed to be a friendly character. His eyes that looked upon Chen Ge were glowing the praise. "The way you handled the case at Ping An Apartments is impressive. When you were being chased by the killer, your reaction and observation skills surprised both me and Ol' Lee."

After being fed the series of praises, Chen Ge felt too embarrassed to jump to the topic of the reward money. "All I did was run crazily around the woods. The case wouldn't have been solved without the police. In fact, I would have been the killer's latest victim if not for all of you."

After the trading of compliments, Captain Yan realized that Chen Ge was still lingering shamelessly around the police car. He smiled to himself because it finally dawned on him why Chen Ge was there. "Xiao Chen, you'll need to go to the main city's bureau personally to get the reward money. Due to the large scale of the case, it took a while for the reward to be approved, but you can go get it now. I hope you understand."

"Of course, of course." After knowing where to get the reward money, Chen Ge's heart that hung in the air finally settled.

"I came here today to thank you in person. Every unsolved case is like a boulder pressing on every police officer's heart, and it's something passed on from the senior to the junior. Four years ago, I was also involved in this case, so thank you for solving this trouble in my heart." Captain Yan smiled sincerely. "By the way, the elder from Ping An Apartment also wished to speak to you. The elder is incapacitated, can no longer move his lower body, and has lost much of his capacity to talk, but his mind is still sharp. He knows it is you who saved him and solved the death of his family. He also wants to thank you in person."

"I understand." For Chen Ge, the case was merely a mission dispensed by the black phone, but for the victims and their family, it was a meaningful closure.

"You'd better visit him soon. The elder is currently in hospital. Perhaps it was the emotions that ran high or perhaps the question that has been keeping him alive has been answered... in any case, he's not doing so well."

After that, Captain Yan got into the car.

"Okay, I'll visit him later in the afternoon." Looking at the special uniform that he wore, Chen Ge felt this Captain Yan carried a greater responsibility than he let on. After the police car left, the park's workers surrounded Chen Ge.

"Boss, are you going to be on television again?"

"Not bad, there's even a medal."

After sending them off, Chen Ge found Uncle Xu in the crowd, and he dragged him to a corner to speak.

"Uncle Xu, what's the update regarding the rental of the underground parking lot? The money will be coming soon!"

The mention of underground parking lot made Uncle Xu frown. "This is not the issue of budget. Xiao Chen, I cannot sit idle and watch you jump into your own grave. The visitor number of the park has been steadily dropping, and everyone is trying to flee, don't you understand that?"

"I do understand that, and I know what I'm doing," Chen Ge replied confidently. The Haunted House might carry the key to the disappearance of his parents. Only by continuing to expand it would Chen Ge have the chance and the ability to interact with the other world.

"Still so stubborn." Uncle Xu tried to persuade Chen Ge for a long time, but it was to no avail. In the end, he could only sigh. "Come with me then. Due to the appearance of the police, Mr. Luo is also with us. You might as well talk to him in person."

"Director Luo is here?" Chen Ge had heard his parents mention this actual owner of New Century Park many times already.

"What do you think? The police set up a security perimeter around the park, did you think they would not inform the management? To provide full cooperation, Director Luo has been staying at the park for the past few days." Uncle Xu led Chen Ge to a building on the northern side of the park. This was the second tallest structure in the park, behind the Ferris Wheel. "When you meet Director Luo later, remember to watch what you say. The less you say, the less likely you'll make a mistake, you understand?"

Chen Ge followed Uncle Xu into the elevator that led them up to the top floor. They stopped before the door of an office. The door wasn't locked. Uncle Xu knocked on it, and very soon, a man in his fifties came out from it.

The man was of average height, and his hair was half white. His features were gentle, and the suit he wore was not branded, but it was clean and didn't have the slightest crease on it.

This is Mr. Luo? He looks so different from the picture. From how Chen Ge saw it, the man standing before him looked more like a retired teacher.

Chapter 66: Build Her a Park

"How can I help?" the man inquired in a soft-spoken tone, surprisingly unbusinesslike.

"Director Luo, this is the brave Xiao Chen who helped the police capture the fugitive." Uncle Xu pulled Chen Ge to his side. "He's here to get an update about the thing I reported to you earlier. He wishes to rent the unused underground parking lot."

"I understand. Leave us be, you can go busy yourself with your work." Director Luo signaled for Uncle Xu to leave.

Director Luo had Chen Ge sit on the sofa while he poured two cups of tea. "I've been informed you wish to rent the underground parking lot. Do you mind telling me why you plan to do that?"

"I wish to expand the Haunted House. I want to build an underground maze inside the parking lot."

“An underground maze. That’s not a bad idea, but do you have the budget and ability to handle something of that scale? The rental for the space will be small in comparison to the finances you need to set up the place.” Director Luo leaned against the couch, his eyes colored with lethargy and tiredness. “I am not against your idea, and I can rent you the place, but before that, I need to ask you a few questions.”

Even though he had gotten a verbal agreement from Director Luo, the man had not yet mentioned the rental amount, so Chen Ge was still nervous. “Ask away.”

“You’re the owner of a Haunted House, so you know better than I do how high the early investment in a Haunted House is. Also, different from hotels or motels, where you can still sell or reuse the tables, chairs, and utensils, if your Haunted House fails, what are you going to do with the spooky props and items?”

Director Luo did raise a valid concern, something that Chen Ge had not even considered before.

“Even if you manage to do a good job reviving the Haunted House, how are you going to solve the issue of returning customers? A Haunted House is a one-time exhaustion product. There might be some initial hype, but it’ll eventually run out because the number of your potential customers is only so big. You’re going to invest greatly into this, are you confident you’ll even earn back your capital?”

“One final question, by building your Haunted House underground, how are you going to promote it? Your customer’s number is highly dependent on the park’s visitor number. How is your Haunted House going to survive when the day comes for the park to close?”

Chen Ge knew that Director Luo was stopping him out of kindness. In fact, he knew that those who advised him against investing in the Haunted House were only looking out for him. They had his best interests at heart.

Director Luo’s three questions revolved around Chen Ge’s mind. The first two questions were easily solved with the presence of the black phone, so Chen Ge’s real conundrum was the last question. If New Century Park closed, naturally, his Haunted House would close, too.

Moving to another place would be difficult, just the number of documents would cause Chen Ge enormous headaches. Furthermore, his budget was limited; to find another location to fit the black phone’s scenarios would be impossible.

“Have you seriously considered these three questions?” Director Luo seemed to anticipate Chen Ge’s answer. “Why don’t you go back for now? We mustn’t jump into important decision without detailed research and thorough contemplation.”

Chen Ge sat unmoved on the couch. He turned to look at Director Luo and asked directly, “Is the park really going to close soon?”

Director Luo did not confirm or deny, but the tiredness in his eyes deepened. “If I say the park is really closing soon, will you insist on renting the underground parking lot?”

“I will.” Chen Ge’s answer surprised Director Luo. “Director Luo, I already have the solution for your first and second questions. And your third question is not valid.”

There was fire dancing in Chen Ge's eyes. The young man powered on fearlessly. "My Haunted House has never relied on anyone else before, and my visitor number will not be entirely dependent on the park. Give me time, and I will not only attract countless visitors to the Haunted House, I will also use it to revive the entire park! Renting the underground parking lot is just the first plan. My plan is to build the world's first unique theme park that is based on horror and terror."

After he finished what he had to say, Chen Ge finally remembered Uncle Xu's advice—the less you say, the less likely you'll make a mistake.

He looked at Director Luo with uncertainty. He regretted telling him everything that was inside his heart.

After listening to Chen Ge, Director Luo put down his cup, and the tiredness in his eyes had disappeared. After a moment's silence, he suddenly laughed and said, "You remind me too much of myself when I was young."

He stood up and walked to open the curtain. The whole park was within view from the office.

"I'm the most devastated and most unwilling for the closing of New Century Park." He opened the window and allowed the wind to ruffle his peppered hair. "This park means the world to me. If possible, I wish for it to stay open forever."

Director Luo turned to smile at Chen Ge. His smile was complicated; it was a calm smile of a man who had seen the world rise and fall, one who had surrendered to the vagaries of fate. "I've heard about your story. After your parents' disappearance, you quit your day job to take over their Haunted House. In a way, our stories are very similar, but you are luckier than I am."

He picked up a picture frame from the table. It was the only picture frame in the room. It had the picture of a pair of father and daughter. The father was of average height and had a gentle demeanor. The girl in his arms was cute, but her hands were twisted at a painful angle, and there seemed to be no life in her eyes.

"This is my daughter. She suffered from serious aphasia and required a special device to even stand upright. God was harsh on her, but she was a strong little girl who loved to smile, not only to me but to the world." Director Luo turned to look at the sky outside the window. "But the world didn't smile back at her. I used to take my daughter to the garden for walks, but none of the kids wanted to play with her. When she turned to look at me helplessly, I knew that she was afraid, afraid that she had done something wrong and that was why she was being isolated. I didn't know how to console her, so we only took her out during the rainy days so that she wouldn't have to face the unfeeling crowd. Perhaps it was then that the thought to build my daughter her very own theme park appeared in my mind.

"Unfortunately, she didn't live to see the day the park was open." Putting down the frame, Director Luo's eyes were still surprisingly calm. "Many people don't understand why I would risk bankruptcy to keep an outdated theme park alive, but I believe perhaps you do."

"I do." Chen Ge had already stood up earlier. He had not expected that Director Luo would reveal such intimate information to him.

"Everyone is trying to find a way out, but you're different. You've surprised me." After closing the window, Director Luo pulled out a document from his drawer. "Actually, when Uncle Xu came to me

with your request, I had already approved it. Take it. Come to me if you need any help, but remember, you only have two to three months left.”

Chapter 67: You Can See Her?

Chen Ge accepted the document, and the first line read—New Century Park’s Underground Parking Lot Usage Agreement.

After flipping through it, Chen Ge did not find any clauses related to rental. “Director Luo, is the document missing something?”

“Have you not seen a free rental agreement before? I’ve stamped the document, so it’ll be effective after you sign it. The document is effective until the park closes, so make good use of it and don’t let me down.” Director Luo’s mood seemed to have improved greatly. He poured himself another cup of tea and said, “You should be quite busy from now on, so I won’t hold you any longer.”

When Chen Ge exited the office holding the contract, he still could not believe that he had managed to get the park’s underground parking lot without paying a single dime!

According to the contract, he was allowed free use of the parking lot as long as the park did not go under. Chen Ge assumed that Director Luo was being so generous because the park would close in another two- or three-months’ time when the new park at Eastern Jiujiang opened.

The underground parking lot is a third of the size of the park. Even though it has been abandoned, to be able to rent it for free is still a wonderful surprise!

Chen Ge felt his luck had gotten much better after taking care of the mirror monster. He had received a medal of honor, the reward money was coming soon, and he had solved the issue of expansion; everything was looking up.

Could it be that removing dirty things can improve my luck? Chen Ge did not think that things would be so coincidental; the thought was merely to humor himself.

After returning to the Haunted House, Chen Ge started his work for the day. He had Xiao Wan put on the park uniform and stand outside the Haunted House to sell tickets while he roamed through the Murder by Midnight scenario, chasing the visitors about in his Doctor Skull-cracker uniform.

Chen Ge exited the Haunted House at 5 pm. He let Xiao Wan leave early before going to get his money.

This will be the first time in my life there have been four digits in my bank account. I deserve some celebration tonight. Chen Ge changed into a clean outfit in the staff breakroom and was about to leave, when he saw a small ragdoll lying beside his bed. The small fella had most of her body hidden underneath the bed like she was playing hide-and-seek.

The day is still bright, but you’re out here already. Chen Ge was suddenly reminded of the thing Captain Yan had told him that morning. *The grandpa’s situation seems to be deteriorating, and he has no family around him. I should go pay him a visit.*

Chen Ge poked Xiaoxiao on her stomach before putting her in his pocket and leaving the Haunted House.

At 6:15 pm, Chen Ge exited the bureau with the reward money of 36,000, which was less than he had expected.

After purchasing a fruit basket and some milk, Chen Ge departed for Jiujiang People's Hospital. With the nurse leading the way, he entered a sickbay on the third floor. He was there only to visit the elderly grandfather, but to his surprise, he ran into a familiar face there.

"Inspector Lee, why are you here?"

Sitting beside the bed, Inspector Lee was feeding the elder some porridge. He was as careful as a little girl when he took care of the old man.

"This is weird, how come I keep on running into you everywhere I go?" Inspector Lee placed a towel on the elder's chest. "After a good night's sleep, the station manager saw how tired I was, so he assigned me a lighter job for the day."

"Law enforcement even cares about things like this?"

"The elder came into the mishap under our watch, so before we can find him a personal care-taker, it's only fair that we look after him."

Inspector Lee tried feeding him twice, but the elder man seemed to have no appetite. He did not force it but put the spoon down to point at Chen Ge, who stood at the door. "Sir, this is the young man who provided us with the crucial evidence to solve the case and the young man who called us that night to save you."

When he saw Chen Ge, the old man's arm that was still movable twitched, but it was unclear what he was trying to communicate.

"Thinking back, I should be thanking the old sir. If not for the fact you broke the bowl at Ping An Apartment to warn me, I wouldn't have realized how weird things were." Chen Ge placed the fruit basket and milk on the counter. Looking at the old man who looked like he could depart at any moment, Chen Ge's heart shook. "Inspector Lee, do you mind leaving the room for a minute? I have something personal to talk to the old sir."

Inspector Lee did not know what Chen Ge was up to, but due to trust, he walked out without asking any questions. After closing the door, Chen Ge pulled the doll out from his pocket. "Old sir, I brought Xiaoxiao to come see you."

When Chen Ge took out Xiaoxiao, the old man in the bed did not show any response, but when his murky eyes fell on the ragdoll, the man's pupils shook greatly, and a voice that sounded like it came from a broken bellow escaped from the old man's lips. The arm that could still move reached out as if to grab something.

"You can see her?"

Chen Ge did not expect this. He had brought Xiaoxiao there to see her family, but he did not expect that the senior would be able to see Xiaoxiao, who possessed the ragdoll!

He hurried to the bedside and placed the doll lightly in the old man's arm. The senior's arm hugged the doll tightly before he settled down again.

According to legends, people are able to see to the other world at the end of their life.

The black phone in Chen Ge's pocket vibrated. He exited the room to give the grandfather and the granddaughter their privacy.

"I heard some noises coming from inside the room earlier, what did you tell him? Listen to me, the senior's situation is very fragile, and he won't be able to survive too much of a shock." Inspector Lee stood outside the door. Should things turn awry, he would rush in immediately.

"I only brought the old sir the person he wished to see the most." Chen Ge sat on the bench provided in the corridor and pulled out the black phone. He realized the reason of the vibration was because on the affection page, Yin Xiaoxiao's affection level had increased from 'Slightly Favorable Opinion' to 'Can be Trusted'.

The little fella is the most unique Baleful Specter I've ever met. I wonder what will happen when I raise her affection level to the maximum. Chen Ge returned the phone to his pocket and leaned against the wall. "Uncle San Bao, don't worry, the old sir will recover."

"You sure are optimistic."

Chen Ge and Inspector Lee chatted for a long time. When they entered the room, the senior's condition had stabilized. He waved at Chen Ge, but nobody understood what he meant.

After nodding at the nurse, Chen Ge left with Xiaoxiao. The little fella hid inside the doll, apparently asleep.

After getting a quick dinner at the roadside stall, Chen Ge rushed back to the Haunted House.

I still haven't accepted today's daily mission yet, I wonder if there's still time.

Among the three Daily Missions, the most suitable was definitely the expansion. All he needed to do was choose the direction of expansion and a general location.

Chapter 68: Midnight Ticket Counter

Last night, before leaving for Western Jiujiang's Private Academy, Chen Ge had glossed through the three Daily Missions. The simple mission was to check for hidden security threats; the normal mission was to find a suitable location to expand the Haunted House; the Nightmare mission was to identify the other individual that shared his room.

If he wanted the biggest reward, naturally, the Nightmare Mission was the best choice. However, according to his previous two experience, Nightmare Missions had a time requirement, and they were mostly around midnight. Once he missed that period, there was high chance the mission would fail automatically.

There's no need to risk it. Chen Ge selected to accept the Normal Mission.

“Normal Mission: You’ve achieved the criteria to enable the first expansion of the Haunted House, do search for a suitable location soon!”

This was the first time that Chen Ge had expanded the Haunted House. He did not know how to go about it, and the black phone did not give him any instructions.

I can’t find a guide, so it looks like I’ll have to slowly research it on my own. Chen Ge looked at the interface of the app, and two places captured his attention.

My Team of Ghosts and Ghouls was still empty, which meant that neither Zhang Ya nor Yin Xiaoxiao had become part of the Haunted House. Yin Xiaoxiao was probably because he had not earned enough affection points, while Zhang Ya... Chen Ge would be thankful if she just stopped trying to kill him, much less asking her to join the Haunted House.

The second thing that attracted Chen Ge’s attention was the tab for Haunted House Expansion. The original gray font had turned red. After clicking on it, a sentence appeared on screen.

“Please select the location of the entrance.”

If the words become red, it means that they’re clickable. The location of the entrance you say...

The underground parking lot Chen Ge rented was huge, but the only downside was that the entrance to the parking lot was outside of the park. The path was not streamlined, so he planned to open a new path underneath the Haunted House, one that directly led to the underground parking lot.

Normally, large attractions like rollercoasters or Ferris Wheels were not allowed to have any space underneath them, but since the Haunted House was located at the isolated corner, it was the sole exception at New Century Park. In fact, the space right underneath Chen Ge’s building was the parking lot.

Holding the black phone, Chen Ge walked to the entrance to the Night of the Living Dead scenario that was on the first floor. After gaining the two one-star scenarios, Minghun and Murder by Midnight, this scenario had pretty much been abandoned.

I’ll set the door beside the entrance to this scenario. If it is necessary in the future, I can just remove and replace the Night of the Living Dead scenario.

That was Chen Ge’s plan. He used a piece of chalk to mark out an area on the floor, but he realized after drawing it that he had no way of communicating his plan to the black phone. Since he received the mysterious phone, it had been a one-way communication.

Have I missed something? Chen Ge clicked through the app. When he tried tapping the home page twice, the Haunted House that was used as the background suddenly zoomed out until Chen Ge could see its layout, which was similar to his actual Haunted House, including the locations and set-up of the many scenarios.

So, I do it here?

Chen Ge found the scenario for Night of the Living Dead on screen. He clicked on an empty space beside the entrance, and a question instantly popped up on screen.

“Are you sure you want to place the entrance here?”

“Yes.”

“Please select the expansion direction.”

“Downward.”

After making his choice, the screen returned to normal, and several other messages popped up.

“Only through continuous expansion will your Haunted House be able to play host to more homeless spirits and thus collect more screams. Congratulations for completing the Normal Mission. Obtained reward—A free spin at the Wheel of Misfortune!

“Congratulations for completing your first ever expansion. Special reward, a unique construct obtained—Midnight Ticket Counter (Broken)!

“Midnight Ticket Counter (Broken): There’s a one in one thousand chance for you to attract special ‘visitors’. They are different from others and might lend you a helping hand.”

Chen Ge read the messages carefully. The mission had rewarded him with a free spin at the Wheel of Misfortune, but there was too much of uncertainty to this reward. Only by trading a hundred Screams would he get the chance to spin it once. According to the description on the phone, there were definitely some useful things that could be won from the lucky draw.

However, even Chen Ge had scared himself with how ‘lucky’ he was. What if he won another cursed love letter?

The two baleful specters might just split himself perfectly in half so that each of them could have their way with him equally. An image of the two spirits holding bloodied knives in their hands arguing over who would lay claim to his skull and body appeared in his mind.

Too soon, too soon.

The Wheel of Misfortune was thus put on the backburner, so Chen Ge turned to look at the other reward—the broken Midnight Ticket Counter. His Haunted House had been missing a specialized ticket counter. After all, before obtaining the black phone, he had at most ten visitors in a week, hence there was no reason to build a ticket counter.

The black phone has helped me solve a problem, but what is the meaning of this one in one thousand chance of attracting special visitors? Does it mean ghosts?

Chen Ge purposely walked to the front door, but the gate had remained the same; nothing had changed. *Perhaps the change will happen after midnight like how it did with the Murder by Midnight scenario.*

Since he had received the rewards, Chen Ge stopped worrying about them. He cleaned the place while waiting for midnight to arrive. Even though the mirror monster had been vanquished, it did not mean that the number on the mirror would disappear.

Chen Ge rolled up his sleeves as he cleaned the fake blood off the toilet’s mirror.

He was acting in such a hurry because there had been a little incident that afternoon. A visitor had asked to use the toilet when he was inside the Haunted House. Chen Ge had led him to the toilet, but when the man had seen the fake blood that pooled around the floor, he had refused to enter the toilet. He had held his pee in until his face was green as Chen Ge led him out of the Haunted House.

“The scary places should be scary, but other places should be as comfortable as possible. After all, we’re in the service business.”

That was some advice that Chen Ge’s father had once given him, and he remembered it to this day.

Chen Ge finished cleaning the fake blood at around 11 pm. He also fixed the broken toilet door. Then he stood before the mirror with his phone.

He checked his profile on the video-sharing app. His number of followers was slowly increasing, and his videos were heavily shared. In fact, some advertisers had come to him with offers already.

I need to pay attention to the videos and livestreams as well. After all, they’re my main source of promotion.

When it was 11:59 pm, Chen Ge put away his phone and stood before the mirror. Similar to his first Nightmare mission, he locked the toilet from within and turned off all the lights.

Chapter 69: Door in the Mirror

The toilet was dark and the world was so silent that Chen Ge could hear his own heartbeat. He stared unblinkingly at the mirror before him. When the clock struck 12, the mirror turned blurry like it was starting to mist. Then, a number appeared in the middle of the mirror—0.

The changing number surprised Chen Ge. He had thought this number was something left behind by the mirror monster. Since the monster had been consumed by Zhang Ya already, the number should have disappeared along with it.

The number has nothing to do with the mirror monster? He took out his phone to snap a picture of the number, but as he raised his arms, his whole body froze. The reflection in the mirror shifted from reality, and the door to one of the cubicles turned red!

It was a red that was unmistakable; it was as if the cubicle was filled with blood, and fresh blood was still leaking out from the cervixes.

Why would this change happen to the cubicle with the squatting toilet?

Using his phone to record this curious phenomenon, he slowly turned around to slowly push open the cubicle’s door.

As the door in reality was pushed open, so was the door in the mirror. There was nothing inside the cubicle in reality, but in the mirror, everything inside the cubicle was dyed red, including the toilet paper holder, the toilet paper, the flush, and even the small advertisements pasted on the wall.

In the darkened room, the blood red cubicle was exceptionally eye-grabbing.

Chen Ge did not understand what was happening. He took a cautious step forward, and when half of his upper body reached into the cubicle, a strange sensation overwhelmed him. Something sticky covered his skin like he was being swallowed and compressed.

He immediately retreated, and one minute later, the cubicle in the mirror returned to normal. When Chen Ge walked into the cubicle again, the strange sensation was no longer there. The red door in the mirror only appeared for one minute after midnight, and everything returned to normal after that.

Why would the cubicle door in the mirror turn red? And beyond that, even the walls and paraphernalia behind it were all blood red. Chen Ge switched on the light. He leaned against the window and started to think. *Could that be the mirror world? The mirror monster escaped from this blood red world?*

To confirm his suspicion, he searched for the details of his first Nightmare Mission on the black phone.

“It requires plenty of courage, incredible luck, and a bit of luck to see the hidden world.”

Then, there’s a high chance that the hidden world mentioned in the phone refers to the blood red world inside the cubicle.

Chen Ge tried to think back to the situation that night. Even though he did not open his eyes, he did pay plenty of attention to his surroundings with his ears.

Thinking back, I do remember hearing the cubicle door creak! It was also after that noise that weird things started to happen.

At the time, Chen Ge had assumed it was the wind, but now he revised his theory. Perhaps the cause of the creaking was the mirror monster escaping the blood red world.

The mirror is most likely the buffer space between the two worlds. The cubicle in the mirror was opened, and the monster escaped from the blood red world. However, due to the disruption from the doll, it was trapped inside the mirror. Chen Ge looked at the wooden door of the cubicle in question, and a weird thought cropped up his mind. *What if I enter the cubicle in the real world when the door turns red in the mirror? Will that transport me to the other world?*

Shaking that crazy thought out of his mind, Chen Ge returned to stand before the mirror. *The blood red cubicle appeared in the mirror after the number dropped to zero. Looks like all my previous speculation was wrong—the number has nothing to do with killing. It is probably a countdown, perhaps representing how many more days the mirror monster could exist in the real world.*

The door in the mirror had returned to normal, but Chen Ge did not dare assume that it would not appear again. There was a possibility that it would continue to appear every night at midnight as long as the mirror monster did not return to it.

If it continues to appear tomorrow night, I’ll need to remove the mirror; that’s the only thing I can do now. Chen Ge found a heavy black cloth to cover the mirror and left the toilet. After returning to the staff breakroom, Chen Ge pulled out the black phone to check the newly refreshed Daily Missions.

Easy Mission: A normal Haunted House experience should not create permanent trauma to its visitors; I hope you understand this simple theory. Please improve the Haunted House’s security by inspecting the security threats hidden around the Haunted House.

Normal Mission: A single hand cannot clap. A good Haunted House needs a good management team. Recruit more talents; they will definitely help when the situation demands it.

Nightmare Mission: There has always been a second occupant inside your room, wouldn't you like to meet said person?

Chen Ge was familiar with these three missions. He was conflicted. Nightmare Mission was the best choice if he wanted to expand his Haunted House faster, but after the incident with the mirror monster, he was wary of choosing Nightmare Missions.

I'll think about it tomorrow; I deserve a good sleep tonight.

Ever since he received the black phone, Chen Ge had not had a good night's sleep. If this continued, his physical body might not be able to withstand it.

Pulling the sheet around him, Chen Ge soon fell asleep.

The next morning at 8 am, Chen Ge, who was fully recovered, rushed out of his room. The first place he visited was the entrance to the Night of the Living Dead scenario. The space that he had selected last night had experienced some changes—there was now an additional path leading downward.

The black phone sure is effective.

A tunnel had been dug through the ground. He walked down the stairs and soon reached the abandoned underground parking lot. The space was empty and destitute, and there was barely a working light.

That's it? The expansion is only adding a set of stairs? Chen Ge was rather disappointed, but reminding himself that the large space was his to toy with relit his passion and desire. *There are three more months until Eastern Jiujiang's Virtual Reality Futuristic Carnival is completed. I'll need to unlock as many scenarios as I can within these three months to upgrade the Haunted House to build a theme park that is no less interesting than the opposing park.*

Returning to the first floor, Chen Ge walked to the Haunted House's front door with the black phone. Between the gates and the Haunted House's entrance corridor stood a new semi-transparent wooden construct that was painted black. It looked like two dressers that had been sewn together.

This is the Midnight Ticket Counter? It looks so damn crude.

Chen Ge opened the door and took a seat within. The interior of the place was so cramped that he felt like he was lying inside an uncomfortable coffin.

Chapter 70: Special Visitor

This Midnight Ticket Counter is broken, but there's no noticeable way to fix it. This black phone keeps on giving weird stuff.

Chen Ge exited the counter. The more he looked at the construct, the more he felt it was not made for living souls.

“Boss!” Xu Wan jogged toward him in her casual outfit, holding two steaming buns in her hands.

Looking at the cheerful Xu Wan, Chen Ge’s mood brightened instantly. This girl tended to be a bit clueless at times, but she had a natural charm that could brighten up the gloomiest of days.

Accepting the offering from Xu Wan, Chen Ge chomped on the bun happily. “Why are you here so early today?”

“Boss, look!” Xu Wan sat down beside Chen Ge on the steps. She pulled out her phone to show Chen Ge the long list of news and videos that were all on the case at Ping An Apartments. “These are all about you, Boss—you’re famous!”

“Let me see.” Chen Ge looked at the articles, not expecting the short interview from the day before to have gone viral. “Such a waste.”

“Waste? Why? I think it’s rather swell.” Xu Wan’s face was flushed, probably from the little jog earlier.

“At the time, I was too focused on the reward money that I forgot this was a perfect promotional opportunity,” Chen Ge said grumpily as he swiped through the articles. “If I knew it would go viral, I would have interrupted Captain Yan to promote our Haunted House! Look at some of these articles, they even got the facts wrong. They didn’t even put down the address of our Haunted House!”

“Xiao Wan, this is your job for the day. Later, we will both go onto these comment sections to announce our identity and drop the address of the Haunted House. Those who come with proof of our comments will get a twenty percent discount!”

“That sounds so unethical...” Xu Wan was embarrassed doing such a thing, but she did end up following Chen Ge’s instructions.

At 9 am, when the park opened for business, both of them put away their phones and prepared to work. After opening the gates, Xu Wan finally saw the Midnight Ticket Counter.

“Boss, did you make this yesterday?”

“Yes, it’s ugly, but it’s usable.”

“Indeed, I also think it’s about time we have a ticket counter.”

Looking at the serious expression on Xu Wan’s face, Chen Ge sighed internally. *Such a good worker, never once doubted my words.*

They both entered the Haunted House. Xu Wan went to put on her make-up while Chen Ge hauled several wooden planks out from the Props Room to block the entrance to the underground parking lot. The new scenarios had not been unlocked yet, so the place still had no use.

After all the preparation had been made, it was time to start the day. Even though it was a holiday period, there was already a line in front of the Haunted House. It was not that long a line, but it was already an impressive improvement compared to before.

Xu Wan was busy chasing people around as the ghost bride inside the Minghun scenario while Chen Ge had to split himself between selling tickets and scaring people as Doctor Skull-cracker inside the Murder by Midnight scenario. It was harsh maintaining the large Haunted House with just the two of them.

It was worth noting that Xiaoxiao would have surprise interactions with the visitors inside the Murder by Midnight scenario. This ragdoll had a penchant of trailing behind the visitors, which worried Chen Ge because he was afraid that the visitors might just snatch her home.

The two finally caught a break around noon. Chen Ge checked on the black phone—both reputation and visitor number had increased tremendously, and he wasn't far from the second expansion.

Two workers managing two scenarios is already at its limit. After unlocking the new scenario, I'll need to recruit new workers.

Chen Ge looked at the black phone. The Nightmare Missions were often ridiculous, but Easy and Normal Missions normally would point out the weaknesses of the Haunted House directly, and completing them would improve the establishment.

Even the phone has issued a recruitment mission... looks like I'll need to get on that soon. Ever since the old workers that followed Chen Ge's parents handed in their resignation, he had been wary of hiring new blood. *If only Xiaoxiao and Zhang Ya would listen to my commands, they would be the perfect employees.*

Of course, this was merely a fanciful thought. To have Xiaoxiao and Zhang Ya scare people inside the Haunted House... Xiaoxiao would be fine, but Zhang Ya would probably create an actual crime scene.

My Team of Ghosts and Ghouls is still empty. I wonder when that will change. Chen Ge sat on the steps outside the Haunted House. He was catching a much-needed breather before throwing himself back into work.

The sun rose to its highest point, and the visitors started to dwindle to avoid the sun. It was then that Chen Ge's black phone vibrated. He clicked the message open, and the content gave him quite a shock.

"The Midnight Ticket Counter's effect has been triggered. The first special visitor has appeared! Please make use of this opportunity, the result will be different based on your choice!"

The effect has been triggered? Even at the one in a thousand chance? Based on my previous experience, this cannot be anything good! Chen Ge stood up straight like a soldier preparing for war. He scanned around the Haunted House. *The sun is shining bright, so it cannot be a specter.*

It was the point of the day when the heat was at its highest. The visitors that walked around the park had visibly decreased.

Is it that an arguing couple? The girl is so pretty, but the guy is so ugly; there must be some problem. Who is Uncle Xu talking to? A new worker? How come I have not seen that person before?

While Chen Ge was speculating, a skinny, dark-skinned woman about thirty wandered over with light steps.

Could it be her?

Chen Ge studied the woman's appearance silently. Her skin was darker in tone, and she was not tall. She gave a reserved smile and was wearing a faded jacket.

"Hello, how much for a ticket to visit the Haunted House?" The woman's voice was surprising shrill, but it was not to the point where it would hurt one's ears.

"We currently have two scenarios; one ticket is 20 RMB, and you can choose which one you would like to experience," Chen Ge answered with a business smile.

"Okay, then give me two tickets." The woman handed Chen Ge the money.

"You wish to experience both scenarios?"

"No, it's for the both of us." The woman smiled apologetically as she waved at a boy who looked to be eight or nine. He ran toward her from underneath the shade.

The boy was quite shy around people. He stopped beside the woman, but he did not reach out to grab her hand. He just stood there expressionlessly.

"I'm sorry, but our Haunted House has an age requirement—no entry to those under fourteen." Chen Ge took a look at this boy and had a feeling he was different from normal boys, but he could not pinpoint why he felt that way.

"Can you please make an exception for us? This boy loves visiting Haunted Houses. There aren't that many visitors now, so even if we go in, people won't notice. I promise we won't cause any trouble."

"A child that small likes to visit Haunted Houses?" Chen Ge slid the black phone stealthily back into his pocket and shook his head. "I'm sorry, but those are the rules."