

Horrors 851

Chapter 851: Yin Hong's Personality

"What is that?" There were red human shadows showing in the blood fog. Because they were of the same color as the fog, Chen Ge could not see them clearly. "Oh well. Even if the sky falls, there's someone taller to hold it."

Chen Ge turned his gaze away and opened the door. The students were studying on their own. Since they heard the door open, they all turned to look at the door.

"Carry on. We're here for one person." Chen Ge walked to the podium. His eyes scanned the class but could not find Yin Hong. "Where is she?"

He walked to an empty seat at the third row. "Is this Yin Hong's seat?"

The nearby students did not appear like they were familiar with the girl, and no one spoke.

"Aren't you guys classmates?" Chen Ge looked through the girl's textbook. It had Yin Hong's name in it. "That's right. This is her seat, but where is she?"

Chen Ge turned to Yin Hong's deskmate with a scary expression.

"Just now, an old man came to fetch her. He said he was Yin Hong's grandfather."

"Do you know where they've gone?"

"He said that he has something to tell her, but they have been gone for quite some time already. I believe she will be back soon." Yin Hong's deskmate was a bit scared of Chen Ge, or rather, he was more scared of Xu Yin and Bai Qiulin, who carried the mirror behind Chen Ge. Those two did not appear normal.

"The old headmaster has led Yin Hong away. He sure moves fast, but today, I'm not going to let him escape from me." Chen Ge shoved Yin Hong's stuff into his backpack and then passed it to Xu Yin. He stood before Yin Hong's deskmate. "Which way did they go?"

"The western corridor..."

"Okay, I won't disturb your class anymore. It's very dangerous outside. You might survive this ordeal if you stay obediently in the classroom." Chen Ge led his people out of the room. They stopped at the corner of the corridor. "Yin Bai, your grandfather is now in the school."

Chen Ge did not know how to break the news about Yin Hong to Yin Bai. The girl looked kind, but she seemed to have purposely forgotten every memory that was related to Yin Hong. Perhaps those memories were too painful, and this was the body's defense mechanism.

"Grandpa is here? Why hasn't he come to see me?"

"He would have gone to you first since he loves you that much. This only proves that something has happened to him." Chen Ge had Xu Yin search through Yin Hong's bag to look for clues. At the same

time, he took out the comic and told Yin Bai, "Your grandfather is the kindest person I've met. We can't let him suffer this danger alone. Everyone wishes for a reunion. Only with him present will the family be complete."

In few sentences, Chen Ge had convinced Yin Bai.

"I understand your grandfather's personality. Even if he's in danger, he'll try not to get us involved. He'll take it on alone, so our only option is to go find him." Chen Ge grabbed Yin Bai's cold hand. "Yin Bai, you are the only one who can help your grandfather."

When Chen Ge said that, Yin Bai understood the severity of the situation. She bit on her thin lips and whispered, "I made a promise with grandpa before. If, one day, I was very afraid and helpless and felt like I could not hold on anymore, I should go to the old campus on the western side of school..."

"Wait." Chen Ge shushed Yin Bai and had Bai Qiulin carry the mirror away. He led Yin Bai and Xu Yin away from the mirror. "Continue, what about the old campus?"

"He told me to look for a burned building. There is a red door hidden inside the ruin. I was to find it and then push it open." Yin Bai was the kind that would not lie to others.

It can't be that simple. If one could leave by pushing open that door, the old headmaster would have escaped with Yin Bai a long time ago instead of waiting for so long.

Chen Ge looked into Yin Bai's eyes. The latter's eyes were clear and clean, and they had nothing to hide. "Is that all?"

"Yes."

"Okay, we'll head there now. Perhaps we might run into your grandfather on the way." Chen Ge got everyone to rush to the western side of campus. As they moved, he accepted the backpack from Xu Yin. This was a normal school bag used by a girl, but Chen Ge found many doodling in Yin Hong's textbooks and study materials. There were patches here and there. They looked ugly and unsightly, unlike a girl's books.

"Why does she like doodling so much? Is it to cover up something?" Chen Ge looked through the books and finally found some spots that had not been fully doodled over. He held the page up to the light and managed to see some faint writing.

"Why hasn't she died? Why isn't she dead?"

"All the doodles are covering the curses toward someone?" Chen Ge put the textbook back. He picked out several balls of paper at the bottom of the bag. These had been discovered inside Yin Hong's drawer. At the time, Chen Ge did not want to miss anything, so he had shoved them into the bag as well. Opening the crumpled paper, the front side had some math formula, but the back was covered in tiny lines of words.

"I am unable to control myself any longer. I can always see her, but she has forgotten about me. That shouldn't be.

"Blood fell on my eyes. It was not a happy experience. I have helped her so many times. Why couldn't she help me once?"

"How hard is it to die? Just like what I did to them. She has forgotten the promise she made me. It is because of me that she is alive.

"Those who loved her have never appeared, and those who said they will take care of her disappeared at the most crucial moment. I am the only who stayed. She should be the most thankful toward me.

"Again and again, why can't she see what I have sacrificed for her?

"I have done so much, and I ask for nothing but for her to die. I just need her to die, but don't worry, I will live on her behalf.

"Why does she refuse to die? In this world, no one will love her other than me. What else is she hoping for?

"I think I understand it now. That fake person with a mouth full of lies is here.

"A liar who has never fulfilled any of his promises. Is that the reason she refuses to die? I understand what to do now.

"Just like those who have bullied her. Hahaha!"

The handwriting on the paper was hard to read. When Chen Ge reached the end, he sucked in a cold breath. "I'm afraid we have to move faster; the old headmaster is in real trouble."

The old headmaster was a truly kind person. With Chen Ge's understanding of him, even if Yin Hong wanted to kill him, he would not fight back.

That was because Yin Hong possessed Yin Bai's appearance, and the old headmaster had always felt guilty toward her.

"Quick! The western side!" Chen Ge really did not wish for tragedy to befall the old headmaster.

"Unprincipled kindness is cruelty toward ourselves. I hope he is safe."

Chapter 852: Outline of the Blood Red City

To find the old headmaster, Chen Ge had visited Mu Yang High School several times. This would be the first time that he had come so close to the old headmaster, so whoever stood in his way would be his enemy.

From Chen Ge's perspective, bumping into each other would only happen in dramas; he had already decided to do everything in his power to find the old headmaster. It was not only because the old headmaster knew how to leave the School of the Afterlife; it was also because he knew plenty about his parents, and that would help in Chen Ge's understanding of the Haunted House, the black phone, and even himself.

Abandoning everyone and risking his life at a four-star scenario, does he even place the students in his class in his heart?

Chen Ge wished to know the answer, so he needed to meet the old headmaster in person.

The situation at the school turned creepier. Slapping sounds echoed on the windows, red fog stuck to the glass, and he could see cracks starting to form.

Most of three-star scenarios are an enclosed scenario like Third Sick Hall. Due to the uniqueness of Li Wan City, the black phone determined it as a 3.5-star scenario...

Chen Ge looked at the window, and a question bubbled up.

I saw a broken window in the Third Sick Hall before, and Men Nan has been trying to fix it. According to him, if the broken window is not fixed and is seen by other dirty things, it might attract things that are very dangerous. The Third Sick Hall is closed upon itself. Due to his weakness, Men Nan never thought of leaving the scenario, so he did not dare imagine what the outside of Third Sick Hall looks like.

Looking at the rolling red fog outside the window, Chen Ge was reminded of the Coffin Village.

The world behind the door in that village was also red, but the ghost in the well was far more powerful than Men Nan. She was as powerful as Zhang Ya before consuming the shadow's heart, so she had the power to protect that little village. But she has been trying to research the methods to reincarnate, to shake off the identity of a ghost. She should have seen something very scary behind the door, and that's the reason behind her desperation. To be able to make a Red Specter so scared, that has to be the real terror behind the door.

His duel with Doctor Gao in the underground morgue flashed across his mind. Doctor Gao had chosen to suffer all the sin behind the door on his own. He had buried the door and personally ruined the door that he had opened. After the door collapsed, the ceiling made from blood vessels and organs had crumbled, and the glow of the blood red moon had filtered down from above. Chen Ge remembered clearly what he had seen. From the opening in the underground morgue, he had looked out and seen a red city.

It was an endless, red city, that is what is beyond these scary scenarios? Or rather, no matter how many stars the scenarios have, are they all part of this red city?

Chen Ge felt like he was getting closer to the truth, but at the same time, he grew more worried. Doctor Gao was the scariest enemy that he had ever faced; he was cautious, powerful, and had many helpers. Chen Ge even suspected that the suicide was part of his plan. However, an existence like that had become a madman entangled in chains after leaving his original scenario for a few days.

Moreover, Doctor Gao loved his wife; that was the single conviction keeping him alive. Chen Ge knew that even if Doctor Gao's soul got destroyed, he would not allow anyone to hurt his wife, not even her dead body. But in reality, when they met again, Doctor Gao only had his wife's skull left. Chen Ge could not imagine what had happened to Doctor Gao behind the door and what kind of terror he had encountered. He had decided to cooperate with Doctor Gao in Li Wan City because he wanted to know everything he could about the world behind the door. This was because he suspected that his parents had entered that red city.

I've been to many three-star scenarios. They are all closed off, so four-star scenarios...

Chen Ge was thinking when he heard something next to him.

Pa!

The window next to him suddenly shattered. Numerous glass shards sprayed at him, but thankfully, Xu Yin helped to block them all.

"The glass cracked?" The school window was broken. This scenario was connected to the outside world. There were outlines of buildings in the fog, and bizarrely, the distance between the school and those buildings was decreasing like they were moving.

"This way!" Screams and footsteps came from the end of the corridor. Chen Ge hurried and had everyone hide inside one of the classrooms. Blood fog slithered in through the broken window like a red python seeking its prey.

Moments later, seven men in staff uniforms and the teachers hurried over. The leader was Mr. Lei, whom Chen Ge had met earlier. They were carrying tools and fixed the windows in several seconds. But to Chen Ge's surprise, although seven people came to fix the window, six left.

One had disappeared.

Does each window represent a soul or lingering spirit? thought Chen Ge. *The door pusher opened the door at their most desperate moment, so their despair can be counted as a kind of lingering spirit. It is because they are unable to resolve it that they sink ever deeper. This despair isolated their heart from the world, and it is the despair that prevented their scenario from interacting with the red city, which is how a fully enclosed scenario is born.*

For three-star scenarios, a broken window is something dangerous. They have never interacted with the red city before, but it is different for four-star scenarios. Based on Mr. Lei's reaction, they appear to encounter this often. They have already gotten used to the red city outside the school.

The more Chen Ge thought about it, the more sense it made. The original door pusher at the school had already been consumed. The door had weakened greatly, but it had not been destroyed. After surviving the hardest period, the door had become something else.

The strange phenomenon happening now probably has something to do with the painter or Chang Wenyu. I cannot predict what those two mad people will do.

After Mr. Lei's group left, Chen Ge led his people out of the classroom and rushed toward the western side of the school. The alarm had stopped, and there was no one in the corridor, only a death-like stillness.

Chapter 853: I've Been Searching so Long for You

The library was at the center of the School of the Afterlife. After Chen Ge left the mirror in the library, he was given a glimpse of the real School of the Afterlife. But as he walked toward the edge of the school, more strange things started to appear around him. The school was huge, but the students and staff mostly gathered at the center of the school; the classrooms and rooms at outer edges of the school were mostly empty.

If they were just empty rooms, it would have been fine, but upon a closer inspection, Chen Ge realized that there were various stains left in those classrooms. Some of the classrooms appeared to have been

soaked in water. The wooden tables and chairs were sodden, and they gave off a strange smell. Some of the classrooms were barred with wooden boards. Looking through the gaps, he saw that all the drawers were pinned down with nails as if someone was afraid that the things inside the drawers might escape.

That was not the strangest part. When Chen Ge walked down a corridor that was far away from the center of the school, he saw an abandoned hall. The decoration of the hall was similar to the hall that he had seen when he went to challenge Xin Hai's Haunted House. The Haunted House in Xin Hai was replicated according to the diary, so the real owner of the diary had spent their life at this hall before.

Chen Ge had read the diary himself, but he realized that the description inside the diary and the real School of the Afterlife did not match up. A banner that welcomed new students hung on the wall, and several mannequins stood on the cement stage. They had cheery expressions, and stuck on their backs were pieces of paper with various negative emotions like anger and envy written on them.

These mannequins are smiling so happily when facing the students, but the words on their backs are negative emotions. Is this some kind of hint?

When Chen Ge passed the hall, he clearly saw the mannequins on stage moved their heads toward him, and the expressions on their faces changed. There was something special about this hall—a scary presence should preside there.

“What are you looking at? Look some more and I'll consume all of you.”

Through the window, Chen Ge yelled threats at the mannequins like a big bully. The mannequins reacted cleverly. They swiftly turned their heads back as if everything that Chen Ge had seen earlier was just an illusion.

“If I was not in a hurry to find the old headmaster, do you think I would let you go so easily?” Chen Ge stared at the mannequin that had glanced at him earlier. “It's pointless to hide. I've remembered you.”

There were many strange rooms at the School of the Afterlife. It was like a box of chocolate with different flavors for Chen Ge; he had no idea what he would encounter next.

I've only checked the western side of the school. If the other parts of the school are also like this, then this scenario is enormous.

The thought that he had a chance to move such a scenario to his Haunted House caused Chen Ge's eyes to turn red. To be able to possess such a large, complicated, and scary scenario should be the life-long dream of every Haunted House owner.

Just the School of the Afterlife alone covers all the scary scenarios related to schools. There are numerous classrooms and rooms for me to transform. I can even replicate all the stories I heard at the Ghost Stories Society here!

Unfortunately, the scenario unlocked by the black phone is only a shell. I will need to find the employees and stories to fill it up myself.

The thought of the black phone made Chen Ge calm down again. It was as if he was being splashed by a pail of cold water while standing next to a fireplace in winter. The backpack had been found, and

everything but the black phone had been there. Based on current information, the most likely scenario was that it had been taken away by Chang Wenyu.

I was too careless. I shan't let this happen again.

Chen Ge was good at analyzing the situation. He would take note of everything that he had experienced so that he could correct issues little by little. Finally, he would burn the records. It was this caution that allowed him to survive until now.

After leaving this place, I should make a few customized phones that looks similar to the black phone and hide a Specter inside each of them.

A while of running later, the white painted walls started to have the doodling of children. The amount of litter on the ground increased, and trash appeared around the corner. The stench of blood in the air lightened, and in its place was the smell of burning. "We're almost there. Be careful of the surroundings."

Chen Ge opened the comic to release the smelly boy from Western Jiujiang Private Academy. He was a special Specter. He had no shape or form and was made up of a bad smell. That meant that he was not easily injured and could protect his teammates from a large area. Walking forward, the paint on the wall started to peel to reveal the black and red bricks behind it. Signs of a fire started to appear.

"This should be the place." Chen Ge got Yin Bai to stand beside him. "Your grandfather is in a dangerous situation now. Someone is trying to harm him, and only we can save him."

Yin Bai's only family was the old headmaster. Hearing the stern warning from Chen Ge, she was rightfully frightened.

"Are you sure he hasn't told you any other information?"

"Yes, there's nothing else."

"Then, we'll have to look through the place ourselves." Chen Ge tried to see things from the old headmaster's perspective. Both Yin Hong and Yin Bai were part of Lee Xueyin. He would not just escape with Yin Hong and abandon Yin Bai. Chen Ge had no idea what was at the end of the School of the Afterlife. The closer he was to the edge, the greater the anxiety in his heart. After walking down two corridors, the scene before him changed completely. Signs of a fire were all over the walls, and rubble littered the ground.

"This place looks familiar." Chen Ge walked to one of the classrooms. He pushed lightly on the charred wooden door, and it collapsed easily. He looked at the tables and chairs in the rooms. His fingers touched them gingerly. "I've seen these arrangements in Mu Yang High School before. This classroom..."

A pinprick of pain came from his fingertip. Chen Ge then noticed that there were lines of words carved into the surface of the table, and he had seen the exact writing when he first explored Mu Yang High School.

Why would Mu Yang High School's classroom appear in the old section of the School of the Afterlife? Is this just a coincidence, or is the entire School of the Afterlife made up of various abandoned schools?

Chen Ge wanted to confirm the thought, so he hurried to the last classroom of the corridor. Walking down the corridor, when Chen Ge pushed open the door of the last classroom, he was baffled.

Each of the chairs in the classrooms had a burned school uniform on it, and in the middle of the room sat a cute, obedient girl. She looked eighty percent identical to Yin Bai.

Just across the girl stood a rotund old man. He was facing away from Chen Ge, but even from the back, Chen Ge felt he looked very familiar.

Chapter 854: Are You Going to Leave Us Behind?

“Similar to the person from my memory, do you know how hard I’ve been looking for you?” Chen Ge remembered it very clearly. It was a night of heavy rain, and the clock on the phone showed it was 2 am. He was rampaging down the corridors of the abandoned school. When he passed the last classroom, that was the first time that he had encountered the old headmaster. The kind, rotund old man stood at the podium. His eyes met Chen Ge’s, and their paths crossed for less than a second. Now, their paths were crossing again at the School of the Afterlife. The old headmaster probably did not expect that brief encounter to be something that would change his life forever.

His scalp turned numb, and a chill crawled down his spine. The figure who stood before Yin Hong’s desk slowly turned around. When he saw Chen Ge, his expression was very unnatural.

“You are...”

“Chen Ge.” Chen Ge took large strides toward the old man. “We have met in Mu Yang High School before. If you cannot remember it, I can show you the video because I was in the middle of a livestream back then.”

“I believe I have an impression of you, but now I have something else to do. After I’m done, we can catch up and talk.” The old headmaster seemed to know Chen Ge’s secrets. He knew that he was different from his students’ lingering spirits. Once his life entangled with Chen Ge, there would be endless problems, so he made up his decision instantly as he grabbed Yin Hong’s arm and prepared to leave.

“What is more important than the children at Mu Yang High School?” Chen Ge took out the comic from his backpack. “Headmaster, everyone misses you. When you are away, the students lose their smiles. You are the backbone of Mu Yang High School. Without you, the home is not complete.”

Be it from his expression or voice, the content or tone, Chen Ge was the epitome of sincerity. Seeing that his students were all on Chen Ge’s side, there was a change to the old headmaster’s gaze. His lips opened, but nothing came out instantly. Even though he had been alive for a long time, the old headmaster had not learned how to say no.

“Headmaster, I know that you have your difficulties, and I understand you have your own considerations, but think about this. You believe that you have given a safe home for the students and entered such a dangerous place alone. But do you think the students can rest easy not knowing how their beloved headmaster is doing? If they know their current lives are in exchange for everything you have, do you think they can continue to enjoy that life? You know your students best. If you do not wish

for them to wallow in guilt, please tell us everything so that we can discuss it together.” Chen Ge’s every word crawled into the old headmaster’s heart. He did not care about his own safety, but he cared deeply about those students. Those students were the old headmaster’s weakness, so of course, they were also his best helper.

Without giving the old headmaster more time to consider, Chen Ge took out a ballpoint pen. He handed the pen to the old man and then got a piece of paper from Yin Hong’s bag. “I’m not lying to you. I hope you can listen to their opinion.”

The old headmaster held the taped pen in his grasp. The pen shuddered, and when the tip of the pen touched the paper, it started to move on its own. “No matter what other people think, I am willing to help you.”

Chen Ge sighed under his breath when he saw the words on the paper. When the Pen Spirit found out Chen Ge was going to the School of the Afterlife, she had sworn to commit suicide if she was brought along, but now she had changed her statement after meeting the old headmaster. The old headmaster shook his head. He held the pen gingerly like he was afraid of damaging it. He looked at it like he was looking at his granddaughter.

“Not only her, there’s everybody else.” Chen Ge flipped through the comic and summoned all the students from Mu Yang High School. “They are all orphans, and you have given them a home. After they died, their lingering spirits remained in Mu yang High School because, for them, no matter how big the world is, Mu Yang High School will always be home.”

Seeing the familiar figures, the old headmaster was silent.

About ten seconds later, he turned to Chen Ge. “I am going to do something very dangerous. You shouldn’t have come, and you shouldn’t have brought them with you.”

“You have seen my parents and know about them. Since you are willing to leave the students to me, it means that you understand my personality.” Chen Ge stood before the old headmaster. “The Haunted House is my home, and the people who stay there are naturally my family. How can I let my family suffer every day with guilt?”

Be it the lingering spirits from Mu Yang High School or Bai Qiulin who was carrying the mirror, when they heard Chen Ge, they were moved. Their sense of belonging to the Haunted House grew. This was not something that Chen Ge repeated daily, but it was a feeling that had slowly been impressed upon them day after day by the way Chen Ge acted around them.

“The thing that I’m going to do is very dangerous; it’ll put you in danger, and it’ll harm them.” The headmaster’s hair was white. He stood inside the burned classroom and looked at the familiar figures. He had not thought that he would see the children again in his life.

“I have spent so much time trying to get into this school. One of the reasons behind it is to help you.” Chen Ge summoned the spirits back into the comic. They were just lingering spirits, thus very weak. If there was an accident, their souls would disperse, and their last trace on earth would be wiped out. Seeing the disappearance of his students, the headmaster had a complicated expression before he sighed in relief. “You are just like your father, meddling in other people’s business, prone to causing

trouble, and don't like to consider the consequences. However, you have a bottom line that you will not cross and a heart of kindness that glows in the dark."

This was the first time that Chen Ge had heard a comment about his father. It was completely different from his impression of his father. Afraid of stopping the old headmaster, he did not say anything to retort him.

"Looks like you're familiar with them," Chen Ge commented.

"Yes, it was your father who told me that Xueyin is trapped inside the School of the Afterlife. Without asking for anything in return, he helped me find a way to get in here. He helped me so much, and now you have personally entered the school to look for me... I owe your family too much."

Chen Ge's father was built up in the headmaster's words, but Chen Ge felt a bit unsettled hearing that. It was an accident that he had taken over the Haunted House, and he did not even consider that his life would be entwined with the old headmaster before this. Before, he had thought that everything was too coincidental, but now that the old headmaster mentioned it, Chen Ge suddenly realized that the headmaster appeared to have been scammed.

"Perhaps I am acting too selfishly, just thinking about myself and not anyone else." The old headmaster was reflecting, and Chen Ge did not know what to say.

Chapter 855: Thinking into the Future?

"Sir, don't say that. That is all in the past, and we need to live in the present." Chen Ge coughed. He really did not expect to run into the old headmaster in the School of the Afterlife. It was an accident that he had entered the school. Thankfully, he retained his habit of bringing all his employees with him no matter where he went. With numbers came power. It was hard to tell when a worker's special power would be useful. Even if they had no special power, they would be good company. Due to various coincidences, this situation was formed. It felt coincidental but inevitable. It caused his head to go numb.

"One is prone to look back into the past when one is old. Seeing you reminded me of your parents. They have helped me a lot," the old headmaster said with guilt. "Actually, when you first entered Mu Yang High School, I noticed you. It was then that I came up with the plan to enter this school to come and save Xueyin."

"Don't mind all that." Chen Ge was worried that Yin Hong might harm the old headmaster, so he took several steps forward.

"Let me talk. I've been holding these things in for so long, and I wish to share them." The old headmaster shook his head. "The School of the Afterlife is very dangerous, and I know the chance of saving Xueyin is not high. If I was not able to return, the students back in the class would get into trouble without anyone looking after them. I didn't feel good leaving them behind, so I left them with you."

"Your parents have helped me, but I've made use of you, and now to find me, you have voluntarily come to somewhere so dangerous. I don't know what to say."

"Sir, even though this place is dangerous, there's no need to despair." Chen Ge's eyes skipped over the headmaster to look at Yin Hong, who was hiding behind the old man. "I came here fully prepared."

He flipped through the comic, and the yellowed pages ruffled in the night. Fresh blood leaked out from it. This comic that looked normal had a page that was fully red.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The sound of knocking echoed around them. A pale hand reached out from inside the book. There was a curl of black hair wound around her wrist. The smell of blood thickened. Fingers, arm, shoulder, finally a headless woman crawled out from the comic. That was not all. She reached into the pages to search for a long time before pulling out a woman's head. The blood red dress swung in the wind. The ghost held her head and stood next to Chen Ge quietly.

"Don't be afraid. They're all allies." Chen Ge pulled open the backpack, put the comic away, and took out a blood red high heels from the deepest part of the bag. He placed the heels on the nearby table, and a clicking sound echoed in the room. Red footprints appeared on the ground before stopping right next to Chen Ge.

"Xu Yin." Chen Ge called after Xu Yin lightly. The stench of blood rushed at them. Xu Yin, who stopped hiding himself, tilted his head to look at the old headmaster. The whole classroom felt like it was submerged in a red sea!

Not including Bai Qiulin, Chen Ge was surrounded by three Red Specters!

"Are these enough?"

The old headmaster had no idea that Chen Ge would bring so many Red Specters into the school with him. His eyes were round. "That's enough. As long as we're careful, we..."

"I know it's not enough." Before the headmaster finished, Chen Ge continued. "So before I entered this world, I discussed cooperating with three other Red Specters in this school. We have the same goal, so they have agreed to cooperate with me."

"In other words, there will be six... six Red Specters who will help us?" The old headmaster was familiar with how scary Red Specters were. They were the representation of despair and cruelty. If he ran into one alone, other than being consumed, he could see no other ending.

"The six Specters are chess pieces that I might use to distract the enemy." Chen Ge turned to look at his shadow, and his gaze softened. "My real trump card is a Greater Red Specter!"

Hearing those few words from Chen Ge's lips, the old headmaster started to doubt his hearing, but he did not dare ask him to repeat those words. This young man before him was too scary. If he did not see the three Red Specters with his own eyes, he would have thought that Chen Ge was kidding. He was just a Half Red Specter; they were not on the same level.

"Now, what are our odds of success?" Chen Ge stood before the old man. His expression was serious, not kidding at all.

"If what you're saying is true, we have a ninety-percent chance of leaving the school safely."

“Only ninety percent? And that’s just escaping from the school?” Chen Ge frowned slightly. Counting the hibernating Zhang Ya, they only had a ninety-percent chance of escaping. It seemed like they would still need to follow the school’s consciousness if they wanted to prevail.

“I will share my plan with you.” The old headmaster treated Chen Ge as one of his own. “Your father didn’t tell me why this school would appear—he only told me that the door of this school had been looking for children who were bullied and helpless. Because of that, Xueyin was pulled behind the door. He had studied this door closely before and noticed something special. The school inside this door was actually made up from different schools, and it was a mixture of all the bullied kids’ memories.”

“But what does that have to do with your plan?” Chen Ge was confused.

“Of course, the link is huge. One of these places in their memory is Mu Yang High School.” The old headmaster sighed. “It was my irresponsibility. There was a sad thing that happened at Mu Yang High School. A student was expelled because of it. Later, his adopted father sent him back to the countryside. The child was an honest one. Even though his results were not good, he is very talented at painting.”

“Painting?”

“Yes, what’s wrong?”

“Nothing, go on.” Chen Ge waved his hands.

“It is a coincidence that Mu Yang High School in the School of the Afterlife is like an opening, a wound that the owner of the memory was unable to heal.”

“Where is this opening?”

“The abandoned well behind the field. The well is directly connected to the world outside the School of the Afterlife.” What the old headmaster said was surprising to Chen Ge. “After leaving the school, we will enter a city covered in red fog. We need to continue to head west. No matter what we see, do not turn back. No matter who calls your name, do not respond. Keep walking until you enter an abandoned mental asylum. There is a broken window in the third block of the mental asylum. After crawling through that window, we’ll be safe.”

“Third block of an abandoned mental asylum?” That sounded familiar to Chen Ge. The headmaster was describing Men Nan’s Third Sick Hall!

“Yes, that’s what your father told me. When I first came to visit Xueyin, it was with your father’s company. We sneaked into the school through that window. Unfortunately, your parents disappeared after that, and the door was taken over by some menacing ghosts. I went back with the determination to die but realized that there was already no one there.” The old headmaster sighed. “Perhaps even God wishes for me to go and accompany Xueyin.”

There is no such coincidence in the world. Chen Ge’s brain was spinning. After entering the blood city, Doctor Gao lost his mind in a week, so the old headmaster could not have passed through the blood city alone from the Third Sick Hall to School of the Afterlife unscathed!

Someone or something had to be protecting him from behind!

With his eyes red, an answer floated up in Chen Ge's heart. He gritted his teeth to stop himself from voicing it out loud.

It was Chen Ge's father who had passed on all the information about the school to the old headmaster, and it was Chen Ge's father who had broken the window in the Third Sick Hall!

Why would he waste so much energy to send the old headmaster to the School of the Afterlife?

Chen Ge clenched his fists, and his eyes accidentally scanned the red sun outside the window. The consciousness made from despair was boiling. These children sought no escape; they were crying in pain, but no one could hear their voice, no one would understand them, and no one was willing to accompany them.

His eyes narrowed as a possibility suddenly came to Chen Ge.

Did he want to have the headmaster from Mu Yang High School come and take over as the headmaster for School of the Afterlife?

His heart was thumping. Chen Ge held the edge of the table and took a deep breath before he could calm down.

Chapter 856: I Have Another Solution

The owner of the door at Third Sick Hall is Men Nan. There are not many with the surname Men ¹. Perhaps the child's name is a hint left for me.

Door represented the unknown, but it also represented the exit.

Now that I think about it, there have been plenty of clues. What kind of trouble have my parents gotten themselves into? Why is it that I must use this method to approach the truth?

Certain questions needed more probing. After the conversation with the old headmaster, Chen Ge knew that his parents were hiding many things; they were not as simple as they appeared. Problems that even Doctor Gao could not solve, Chen Ge's parents could resolve easily, but even so, they did not dare to tell Chen Ge the truth. They only kept releasing hints and clues for him. This reaction caused unease in Chen Ge.

I have no idea what I need to be careful of, but now I can be certain my family has encountered something incredibly troublesome.

Chen Ge stood next to the table. His brain was spinning; every word mentioned by the old headmaster was important to him.

"Chen Ge, are you alright?" Seeing how frozen Chen Ge was, he wanted to go over to the young man but was afraid of the Red Specters surrounding him.

"I'm fine." Chen Ge waved his hands. "The path you mentioned is too dangerous. I am not confident about leaving this place. The red city is filled with all sorts of monster."

The happenstance of Doctor Gao had greatly impacted Chen Ge. A perfectly fine person became insane in a week—that was too much of an ordeal.

“I cannot risk my workers’ lives.” Chen Ge sat at the table. Perhaps due to the overthinking, his face was pale.

“But that is the only exit!” The headmaster did not expect Chen Ge to reject his idea.

“I actually know there’s another exit.” Chen Ge slowly raised his head to look at the old headmaster. “Every scenario has a door. We can leave from the School of the Afterlife’s door.”

“That’s impossible. The school will not allow any students to leave. It has provided the children a home, and the children have become a part to the scenario; there is not one without the other.” The headmaster pointed out the window. “Do you see the red eye out there? All the students’ negative emotions are gathered there. Once it realizes someone is trying to escape, they will be stopped by the school. It will not allow any students to leave, much less open the door for Xueyin to exit.”

“You don’t know this door well enough. Based on my knowledge, a girl managed to leave this school from that door a long time ago. Her name is Chang Wenyu.” Chen Ge was knowledgeable about the school’s limitations.

“Are you sure? How did she manage that?” The headmaster was shocked. This was the first time that he had heard something like that.

“Currently, this school is controlled by the consciousness of the collective student body. The despairing students will not let us leave, but if one of us replaces the school’s consciousness to become the new owner of the school, we will be able to control the whole school and open the door.” When Chen Ge spoke, his eyes were kept on the old headmaster, marking every single change to his expression.

“We?” The headmaster looked at Chen Ge like he was mad. “That’s impossible. Over the past few years, the school’s consciousness has kept growing; it has become a monster. Even a Red Specter is no match for it...”

The old headmaster added to stress as if worried that he had not gotten his point across, “Even if there are six Red Specters!”

He wanted Chen Ge to abandon that dangerous thought in his mind. From his perspective, trying to replace the school’s consciousness was a dead end.

“Aren’t you curious why I’d rather challenge the school than venture into the blood red city?” Chen Ge’s father’s shadow appeared in Chen Ge’s mind, but the image that he had of his father was completely different from the man whom the old headmaster had described. He had trouble seeing things from his father’s perspective. Honestly, he had no idea what his family was thinking—he merely believed that they would not harm him.

“Why?” The old headmaster was confused. He had come from that way. In his mind, that was a perfectly safe path.

“You have greatly underestimated the danger level of the city.” Chen Ge told the headmaster about Doctor Gao, not hiding anything. “I have many witnesses with me, like Xu Yin, Bai Qiulin; and your

student, the Pen Spirit. The past has stuck to us like a nightmare. Even now, when I close my eyes, I can still see myself back there.”

To prove that he was not exaggerating, Chen Ge summoned the Pen Spirit. She had been there when Doctor Gao showed up in Li Wan City. She had experienced everything that Chen Ge had. The Pen Spirit had a unique talent when it came to describing something. She drew on the paper, and the content was enough to scar the old headmaster for life.

“The city is so dangerous?” The old headmaster was shocked.

“Yes, I was surprised when I heard you managed to get here through the city. But perhaps it’s because you have done a lot of good things in your life, and a power has been guiding you in the dark.” Chen Ge put it in a subtle way.

“I was just lucky.”

“Luck is part of one’s power. I plan to treat the abandoned well behind the field as our back-up. If my plan fails, we will leave that way. With insurance like this, this should be the safest way.” Chen Ge was not prepared to enter the red city; the place was filled with too many unknowns. He did not take much time to convince the old headmaster, and the latter soon promised to follow Chen Ge.

“Sir, now that we’re a team, we have to clear up all the inconsistencies within us to prevent future misunderstanding.” Chen Ge pulled over Yin Bai, who was hiding among the ‘people’. “You are looking for Lee Xueyin, but why are there two ‘Lee Xueyin’s in this school? Which of them is real? Which one is fake?”

Yin Bai did not expect herself to be named. She was happy when she saw the old headmaster, but when her eyes landed on Yin Hong behind the headmaster, her heart became congested like the thing most precious to her had been stolen. When Yin Hong saw Yin Bai, her expression became nervous. She gripped the old man’s shirt from behind and did not dare breathe a word.

To prevent an accident, Chen Ge summoned all the Red Specters. This was to stun Yin Hong into submission. He did not wish to get into an altercation with the old headmaster for something small, so he used his landslide advantage to bulldoze the possible conflict from forming.

Chapter 857: Another Clue?

Yin Hong hid behind the old headmaster, unwilling to come out. She looked very nervous, but Chen Ge did not see too much fear on her face. In other words, even when facing three Red Specters, Yin Hong was confident that she could run away. Chen Ge had no idea where her confidence came from, so he could only approach this carefully.

“Sir?” Seeing the silence from the old headmaster, it appeared like he had something to hide.

“Both of these children are Lee Xueyin; they are one and the same.” The way the headmaster regarded the two girls was filled with love and guilt. “I know one of them is Yin Bai and the other Yin Hong, but no matter what they’re called, they are my family.”

He reached out to touch Yin Hong's head as he guarded the girl behind him. Being touched by the old headmaster, a trace of disgust crossed Yin Hong's eyes, but perhaps she knew that the situation put her in too much of a disadvantage, and she knew that she needed the old headmaster's support, so she did not resist and put forth an obedient persona.

"Actually, if we're splitting hairs, Yin Hong is more like Xueyin. Facing the drunk father and a mother who was too weak to leave the wheelchair, she only had herself to rely on." The old headmaster put the blame on himself. "This is all my fault. It was me who had the blind trust in Xueyin's father, and it was me who pushed them into the fire pit."

What the old headmaster said sounded new to Yin Bai; she looked at the old headmaster blankly. Her beautiful and clear eyes were filled with confusion, and her lips kept mumbling the word, "Grandpa."

Yin Hong's reaction was completely different from Yin Bai's. She was trying her best to suppress the anger in her heart. There was no visible change to her expression, but a flash of red had already appeared in her eyes. The past memory hurt her, and her body was slowly changing.

"Sir, I'm afraid things are not as simple as you think." Chen Ge did not want to hide anything from the old headmaster. He opened Yin Hong's bag and took out the crumpled papers that he had found in Yin Hong's drawer. Seeing those crumpled papers, the calm on Yin Hong's face was shattered. She looked like a murderer whose victim had just been found. The papers were filled with Yin Hong's dissatisfaction with the world and the desire to kill the old headmaster. Holding the papers in his hand, Chen Ge looked at the old headmaster, who would give everything to shelter Yin Hong, and Yin Hong, who was holding onto the old headmaster with tears in her eyes. He started to hesitate.

Shaking his head slightly, Chen Ge placed the papers back into the bag. "Sir, can you tell me in detail what really happened to Xueyin?"

After putting the papers filled with maddened claims away, Chen Ge noticed both Yin Hong and the old headmaster sigh in relief. It was then that Chen Ge realized that perhaps the old headmaster already knew everything.

"Yin Bai is the purest side within Xueyin's heart. She is pure, kind, and innocent, but the only reason she is able to survive like that is because all the anxiety, fear, and hatred has been taken away by Yin Hong." There was regret and pain in the headmaster's voice. "Xueyin's mother is the first child I adopted. Due to her physical limitation, she was unable to be pregnant, so she adopted Xueyin. At the time, it was me who accompanied them during the adoption. Xueyin was still so young. Seeing how happy the family of three was, I was glad. But later, I found out that things were not what they seemed."

Chen Ge heard an undercurrent of hatred from the old headmaster's story. It surprised him that such a kind person would feel hatred toward someone.

"You can't judge a book by its cover. Xueyin's father was a liar. He approached Xueyin's mother not because he liked her but because he was after the few estates under my name. He knew that I have no biological children, so he purposely came into our lives. Even adopting Xueyin was just a performance that he did for us."

If that was everything, the old headmaster might not have been that mad, but what he said next was the real reason behind his anger. "After he found out that I planned to donate all my estates and have

already put that in my will with the lawyer's help, he turned into a different person. Every day, he came up with a new reason to find trouble and even beat Xueyin's mother. One time, he tried to turn his anger on Xueyin. Thankfully, she was discovered and rescued by her mother."

The old man's voice was shaking. He was a kind person, but that did not mean that he would not get angry. From another perspective, with the old headmaster's personality, he probably would not consume another ghost, but he was still a Half Red Specter. That could only mean that he had a very deep reason to stay behind, and there was something that he needed to complete.

"I found out all this from Xueyin's diary after she passed away. Do you know how much my heart hurt when I was reading that diary?" The headmaster gently guarded Yin Hong behind him. "Yin Bai would have been unable to survive in that kind of place, so that is why Yin Hong appeared."

After hearing the explanation from the headmaster, Chen Ge was glad that he did not show the papers immediately. He studied Yin Hong and was suddenly reminded of something. Yin Bai had said that her father suddenly left home one day and then did not return. Chen Ge did not think much of it then, but now that he was looking at Yin Hong, he had a feeling that he knew what had happened to the man. He would not return; he would never return.

Yin Hong harbored resentment toward the old headmaster; she even wanted to harm him. But she did not expect what happened next. When facing three Red Specters, the headmaster guarded her and became her savior. This changed her perspective of the old headmaster. Then she saw how regretful the headmaster was. An unsettling feeling rose in her heart, and her cold, hard heart started to crack slightly.

"I didn't expect that she would have such a past. I can understand it, but..." Chen Ge did not finish what he began. He put the headless woman and red high heels away. Those two could not be considered workers yet. The headless woman was there unwillingly, and the red high heels was there because of a contract. Even though the heels were placed inside the backpack, more bloody footprints appeared on the table.

Chen Ge was making a stance by putting the two Red Specters away. Chen Ge decided to hand this over to the old headmaster himself. Even though Yin Hong was a vessel of negative emotions, she was Yin Bai's essential other half. With his hands on Yin Bai's shoulders, Chen Ge's eyes moved between Yin Bai and Yin Hong. He was about to ask the old headmaster some questions when something suddenly hit him.

How come this feels so familiar? Yin Hong and Yin Bai are just like me and my shadow in Li Wan City!

To be precise, Chen Ge was reminded of himself and the ghost fetus. One was a happy-go-lucky Haunted House owner, while the other carried an entire four-star scenario on his back.

Wait a minute... Chen Ge rubbed his temples. It was my parents who told the old headmaster that Lee Xueyin was in the School of the Afterlife. This means that they know about Xueyin's condition. Could this be another clue left by them?

Chapter 858: Why Did I Appear?

Chen Ge stood in the classroom unmovable like a statue. The old headmaster's appearance left a deep impression on him. A hidden clue had been discovered, and his world was slowly being turned around, which introduced change to his way of thinking.

Mu Yang High School and the Third Sick Hall are among the earliest scenarios I experienced. It has already been so long, and I didn't expect I'll run into things connected to them at a four-star scenario.

No one went to disturb Chen Ge—they stood like guards around him. Mu Yang High School was the first two-star scenario that Chen Ge had experienced, and the Third Sick Hall was the first three-star scenario. Now, the School of the Afterlife was his first four-star scenario. These three scenarios were linked in curious ways, and this surprised Chen Ge. He suspected that none of the missions given by the black phone were random, and each of them served a specific purpose.

All the missions given by the phone have the word trial before them. Could such a difficult mission just be a Trial Mission?

One-star scenarios deal with people, two-star scenarios deal with Specters, three-star scenarios deal with Red Specters, and four-star scenarios deal with Greater Red Specters. Logically speaking, the difference in star level means a difference in difficulty, but actually they are also interconnected. This feels like someone is behind this... They want me to experience certain things through these scenarios to achieve a certain goal.

Chen Ge's brows were creased deeply. It was rare for him to have this kind of expression.

Why would someone do something like that? What is there for me to know, or what exactly have I lost?

Lowering his head to look at Yin Hong and Yin Bai, the two girls looked away in fear.

Could it be that I have lost a version of myself, too?

Chen Ge did not know what kind of expression he should show. His brain was a mess, and for some reason, he was reminded of his Haunted House and the door inside it. When he found out about the blood door in his Haunted House for the first time, he had been really scared. The most unsettling thing was, when the door was opened at midnight, he could hear someone calling his name from inside. He had a fresh memory of that voice. It was very familiar, but he could not pinpoint it. It sounded like himself.

My voice calling my own name?

Thinking back to this strange experience, Chen Ge felt a chill run up his spine.

Perhaps I have lost my real self.

Chen Ge had many secrets that he could not share with others. He had to shoulder them himself. He would not be afraid; he would hold everything in.

When Doctor Gao entered the door in my Haunted House, he was almost scared to death, and he hurriedly escaped. With ghost story society's power at the time, only a four-star scenario would warrant a reaction like that.

The door was in the Haunted House's toilet, so in other words, the world behind the door was a reflection of Chen Ge's Haunted House.

I wonder what the Haunted House behind the door looks like.

Chen Ge was curious, but with his current power, if he went in, he would probably not come out.

Since the person behind the door is calling my name, won't I walk into their trap if I enter the door voluntarily? Before I understand everything, I have to control myself.

Chen Ge decided to add another door to the toilet cubicle after he returned to the Haunted House. Perhaps he might add a cement wall as well, pinning it down with wooden planks now felt too weak.

The door only opens at midnight. If I can deal with this problem, my Haunted House can open at night. That will increase the operating hours and increase income.

Shaking his head, Chen Ge stopped himself from thinking too far ahead. He put down his bag and squatted down between Yin Hong and Yin Bai.

Regardless of whether or not they were a hint left behind by his family, he had some questions for them.

"I will not harm you; I merely see my past self in you. So, I need to understand one thing. When did this happen to you? Or should I say, when did Yin Hong show up?" Chen Ge was getting closer to the truth step by step. It was like he was walking through the fog. Any source of light was something that he needed to hold onto.

"I don't know." Yin Bai was helpless. Her hands were gripped together. Of everyone there, she was closest to the old headmaster, but the headmaster was shielding another girl, and the girl looked so much like her. Chen Ge did not force Yin Bai, instead turning to Yin Hong.

Scrutinized by him, Yin Hong was first afraid and nervous, reacting the same way Yin Bai did. But when she realized that this would not work and could not earn her sympathy from Chen Ge, her real self surfaced. The red eyes stared at her own bag on the ground. Yin Hong kept her head lowered so others could not see her expression. "If I tell you the answer, will you return my bag?"

Yin Hong's schoolbag looked normal; it was very feminine and youthlike. Who would have thought it would be filled with papers reciting curses and murders?

"Okay." Chen Ge gave his promise.

"It was nighttime when I first opened my eyes, around 2 am. I heard movement from inside the bedroom, and when I turned to look, I saw my adopted father inside my room." Yin Hong's voice was eerily calm like she was telling another person's story. "I was spooked, and a scream escaped. My adopted father opened the door and ran."

After some pause, she said, "I surfaced on that day. I only appeared after Yin Bai fell asleep. I know everything that she's experienced, but she never remembers me.

"I do not blame her because I understand her best in this world. I know the kind of hell she lives in, the fears that she must face. I don't know why I appeared. Perhaps Yin Bai was too scared, too cowardly, but

couldn't seek help, so she created me." Yin Hong glanced at Yin Bai. "Of course, it could be that I am a ghost who happened to come across her."

A cruel smile lit up her lips. Yin Hong reached out wanting to touch Yin Bai's face, but the latter shied away. "In the morning, I was the innocent, cute angel, but I can't even describe what I am at night. I tried to find meaning to my existence, and I eventually found it."

Yin Hong pulled back her long sleeves. There were signs of burn on them. "The old dog liked to come into my bedroom at night. I prepared a glass of hot water by my bedside. That was the first time I resisted, but because I was too weak, the result wasn't perfect. Still, it did give him quite a scare."

Yin Hong's term of reference to her adopted father kept changing. The girl had started to slowly shed her disguise.

Chapter 859: What Have I Seen?

"From a normal person's perspective, I might be crazy or at least that was what the old dog kept saying. He even said that he would kill me." Yin Hong scoffed with condescension. She did not continue like, if she did, it might pull up yet another secret.

"I think I get it. The reason for your appearance is because Yin Bai suffered constant fear, but she had no one to rely on, so a persona that is completely different from her own surfaced within her." Chen Ge tried looking for similarities between Yin Hong and Yin Bai and himself, but he tried for a long time and still failed to find anything. From a young age, he had been cared for, and he did not have to worry about anything. Other than his parents' unique parenting style, his childhood had not been that different from that of any other child.

My childhood was very normal. There is no instance of torture. Chen Ge turned to Yin Hong. "So, now the two of you have split? Is it possible that you two can recombine?"

"I don't know. I haven't tried it myself. But that should be impossible. She has been avoiding me, so she probably doesn't wish to be stuck with me." Yin Hong's eyes landed on the old headmaster with a trace of envy in them. "It was me who helped her at her lowest point, but look how scared she is of me. In fact, she is still so close to an outsider."

Yin Hong was very dissatisfied with the old headmaster. Her heart was swirling with negative emotions. The way she saw it, the reason Yin Bai experienced those things was partly due to the old headmaster. She hated everything and wanted to destroy everything, but she was unlimitedly kind toward Yin Bai. However, the kindness had a condition to it. Perhaps one day, when Yin Hong lost herself in the spiral, she would do something irreparable to Yin Bai, to completely take over her body.

"You suddenly woke up one night, without any warning..." Chen Ge was considering another scenario. "Could it be because you were traumatized and the trauma was beyond what you could handle?"

Chen Ge felt like this explanation suited his situation better. They said that a child could see things that normal people could not. Even though the memory back then was already blurry, he suspected that he had seen something beyond his psychological threshold, and an accident had occurred, causing him to split from the ghost fetus.

Before the previous question was answered, another new problem surfaced. What kind of thing can be so scary that a mental breakdown happened from one glance?

“Are you done with your questioning. Can you give my bag back now?” Yin Hong’s tone and expression shifted greatly from before; if he did not see it in person, Chen Ge would have had a hard time imagining how these two people who had the same face could have such wildly different personalities.

“Okay.” Chen Ge passed schoolbag back to Yin Hong. “We’ve stayed here for too long. The school is no longer safe; we need to move.”

After getting all the information that he needed, Chen Ge led the old headmaster and the girls out of the classroom. Turning back to look at Mu Yang High School behind him, a strange feeling arose in his heart. Everything looked like it was a coincidence, but there might be a hand controlling everything behind it.

This is not a good feeling, but there is something about me that cannot be controlled.

Chen Ge moved his gaze to his shadow. An unexpected change had happened to him, and that was Zhang Ya. In Li Wan City, Chen Ge had found out from Xiao Bu that his parents had wanted Xiao Bu to become his shadow. They had even made a contract with Xiao Bu, but even they could not have expected that Chen Ge would have Zhang Ya move into his shadow at the rooftop of a highest building at Li Wan City.

The future is constantly changing; no one can control everything. What I’ve lost will return eventually. The School of the Afterlife, Mu Yang High School, and the Third Sick Hall are related, but no matter how many secrets or unknown things are hidden here, there is one thing that shall never change.

It was Zhang Ya who consumed the original door-pusher for the School of the Afterlife, so she is the most qualified to become the new door-pusher.

When Chen Ge was thinking, he would radiate this special quality without even realizing it. The employees had gotten used to it, but this was the first time for the old headmaster and Yin Hong, and they reacted to it differently. There was surprise in the old headmaster’s eyes, but at the same time, it felt like he saw something familiar. Yin Hong had a complicated expression—it felt like she had given up some dangerous thoughts.

“Sir, we shall go and check out the well behind the field first, to ensure that the path is safe.” Chen Ge would be worried if he did not see it for himself.

“Okay.” The old headmaster held Yin Hong’s hand and walked ahead. They reached the end of the corridor, and the road ahead was blocked by wooden planks. There was no way forward.

“In a bit, some monsters might be let in here. You’d better be prepared and move fast, or else the school might realize it and send over staff and teachers.” The old headmaster half-squatted on the ground and very easily removed the few planks closest to the wall. As the planks loosened, a large amount of blood fog leaked in from the gap.

“Quick!”

To save time, Chen Ge did not take everyone through. He only brought Xu Yin. Pulling back the planks, the old headmaster, Chen Ge, and Xu Yin crawled through the gap. After they left, the headmaster swiftly replaced the planks.

"I need to nail them back so that it will not be discovered by the school." The headmaster held the planks and looked for the nails that just fell. "The nails aren't normal nails. They can harm the things outside the school, and they come with curses..."

"Are the nails like these?" Chen Ge sought out some nails from his pocket. When he first entered the school, he had been cursed. His body had been poked with nails at irregular intervals, so he had many such nails.

"Yes." The way that the headmaster looked at Chen Ge was strange. "Where did you get so many of them?"

"It's a long story." Chen Ge did not want to waste time on this subject. He opened his backpack. "Do you need a hammer?"

After dealing with the planks, Chen Ge took his time looking around. Blood fog drifted around them, and there was a stench in the air. The visibility was very poor.

"I wonder if it's on purpose that the school's consciousness arranged for Mu Yang High School to be on the most outer layer." The old headmaster led Chen Ge through the blood fog. "Actually, we are still inside the school. If we walk further, you'll come across a red wall, and the wall sequesters the school from the outside world."

"Does that mean that we will be able to leave this school by jumping over the wall? Then why are we wasting time looking for a well?" Chen Ge did not get it.

"When you get close to the wall, you'll be discovered by the school. Endless souls of despairing children will rush at you and tear you into pieces." The headmaster shivered. "If you wish to leave the school quietly, the well is the only path."

Chapter 860: Red in Human Heart

Through the veil of the blood fog, Chen Ge could only make out the shape of a field, but the scene before his eyes slowly overlapped with his memory of Mu Yang High School.

"The well is over there." The old headmaster cared for Chen Ge. He was worried that an accident might happen to Chen Ge, so he guarded Chen Ge behind him and walked ahead. Walking through the field, with the headmaster leading the way, Chen Ge finally found the well. Once he got near, he could hear the many crying sounds coming from inside the well. There were male, female, and children's—it sounded scary.

"Is the exit at the bottom?" With the thick fog, even with Yin Yang Vision, Chen Ge could not tell what was at the bottom.

"Yes."

"Is this how you entered the School of the Afterlife?" Chen Ge stood at the edge of the well. Xu Yin reached out to stop him; the well made him uneasy.

"Yes, the blood fog at the bottom is very thick. It is basically palpable. That is probably how the well escaped the school's detection." The headmaster signaled for Chen Ge not to stay by the well for too long to prevent attracting the school's attention. "There is only one way forward when you reach the bottom of the well. Follow that path, and after a three- to fifteen-minute walk, you can leave the School of the Afterlife and enter the blood red city. There, we will need to find a way to go back to the surface."

The whole process sounded easy, but there were too many uncertainties. Chen Ge held the rim of the well and turned back to look at the headmaster. "After entering the well, you need to walk for three to fifteen minutes? Why the time difference? If the journey is the same, even if you slow down a lot, the time should not be so different!"

"I have no answer to that. Every time the path is the same, but sometimes, it takes longer to travel through it, and sometimes it's shorter. Do you want to go down to take a look?" The old headmaster did not get it himself. If this was someone else giving the suggestion, not only would Chen Ge not go down, he would suspect that it was a trap. He would toss the person down first. But the old headmaster was different; he trusted this old man implicitly.

With this back-up plan, I will have nothing to lose. I can go on to do things that I might be afraid of, but the condition is that this is not a dead end.

Chen Ge thought for a long time and asked for Xu Yin's opinion. After getting Xu Yin's approval, he decided to go down the well with the old headmaster.

"I used this path alone, and there was no one to help me. This time, there's so many of us, and with the accompaniment of a Red Specter, there won't be any problems." To help Chen Ge calm down, the old headmaster was the first to walk into the well. Just as he was going to jump, Chen Ge stopped him.

"Wait a minute." Chen Ge took out some rope from Lin Sisi's bag. This was the leftover from when he jumped over the wall between the western and eastern campus. "Tie this to your waist so that we won't get separated."

"Why do you have everything?" The old headmaster was no longer that surprised.

"How deep is this well? Will two ropes be enough?"

"Should be." The headmaster held the rim of the well with both hands. His old jacket slowly bloomed with black-red flowers, and his eyes were slowly consumed by redness.

Seeing the change in the old headmaster, Chen Ge only noticed how different this Half Red Specter was to the other Specters that he had encountered. The old headmaster gave him a strange feeling that was hard to describe. Standing next to the headmaster, he would not treat him like a ghost but a living person.

Even a Red Specter hasn't given me this kind of feeling before. Is it because the old headmaster has done so much charitable work in his life that even though he turned into a ghost, he doesn't have the ghost's cruel nature?

Seeing the old headmaster slowly disappearing into the well, Chen Ge rushed over. He had Xu Yin walk at the back, and he took the middle spot. Once he entered the old well, the smell of blood hit him like a wall. The blood fog inside the well was much thicker than outside. It was unclear why, but the well appeared to be a natural spot for negative emotions to gather, and thus, a thick layer of blood fog was found there. Entering it was like falling into a pool of blood. His clothes stuck to his body, and Chen Ge felt prickling pain coming from his skin like someone was biting him. However, when he looked with his Yin Yang Vision, he could not see anything.

Xu Yin did not give a warning, so it should be safe. Everything is still within control.

Their surroundings were completely enveloped by blood fog. Nothing could be seen clearly. If not for Xu Yin, Chen Ge would not have gone down there no matter what.

"We haven't reached the bottom?" The well was deeper than he thought. No wonder the school could not detect this loophole. The lower they went, the greater the pressure. Chen Ge was worried that something might happen to the old headmaster. He was afraid that when he reached the bottom, it would not be the old headmaster at the other end of the rope. The rope stopped being pulled taut, and the old headmaster's figure clarified. They had not reached the bottom of the well, but the headmaster had stopped.

"Why aren't we moving anymore?" Chen Ge was confused, he noticed something wrong about the old man.

"We can't go on..." The headmaster's voice was shaking. Chen Ge moved his body to get close to the headmaster. He followed the man's gaze, and cold sweat slid down his face. It was no longer a red fog under the headmaster's feet but a red pool of water, and human faces could be seen poking out from the water!

As the blood fog gathered, the water level inside the well was rising at a visible rate. The monsters hidden in the water had their mouths gaping like they could not wait to sink their teeth into Chen Ge.

"When I came last time, there aren't these monsters..." The old headmaster was desperate.

"It's fine." The reason Chen Ge said that was because Xu Yin showed no reaction. "I saw them in the school in the mirror created by the painter. They have no skin, and they're covered in blood and guts, surrounded by a horrible stench."

These monsters were hardly any different from those that Chen Ge had seen. The only difference was that they were not walking upside down.

How did these monsters appear? Did they come from the blood city outside the school, or is this well their place of birth? If the monsters come from the city, why would I encounter them in the painter's school? And are they all upside down, or has the painter been rearing them? Is it because of him that strange things have been happening to the school?

Chen Ge felt like he was getting closer to the center of the secret. He yanked on the rope lightly. "Sir, let's go back for now."

"I feel like I've seen them somewhere before." The old headmaster stared at the monster inside the well. "They're harvesting the blood fog. They survive on human's negative emotions. I've heard about

them before! But... this is strange. Why would they show up here, and why are there so many negative emotions gathered here?"

"They survive on human's negative emotions? Appear inside the well?" Something occurred to Chen Ge. He was reminded of the hint given by the black phone regarding Mu Yang High School.

Everyone has a deep well inside their heart where shameful and unknowable secrets stay buried.