

Horrors 721

Chapter 721: Lies

Hearing that answer, Chen Ge trained his focus to study the man further. *The director's name is also Chang Gu. Looks like these movies are recordings of events that he's experienced.*

Studying the man's face in the movie, Chen Ge scratched his chin. *In the movie, he portrayed himself as aloof and handsome, which gives me a new understanding of the man.*

After studying the man's face for so long, Chen Ge felt like he looked strangely familiar. He suddenly turned to look at the blind man sitting next to him. Their size and frame could not have been more different, but the gloom around the eyes was startlingly similar, and there were some similarities in the facial features as well.

Are they the same person?

On the screen, Chang Gu was tall, handsome, and collected, but the blind man next to Chen Ge was old, ugly, and malnourished like he suffered from a serious illness.

According to the internet legend, Chang Gu might have perished in a fire or been trapped inside his movies...

Chen Ge thought back to the information that he had found online, and his eyes fell on the blind man's eyes, which were screwed shut.

Is it possible that it was the man himself who started these rumors? He wanted to disappear from the public eye?

Hugging the white cat, Chen Ge considered everything calmly. Whether the blind man was Chang Gu or not, it did not matter. After all, he had booked the entire private showing theater. In the movie, Chang Gu was tall and handsome, a completely different person from the blind man next to him. If not for Chen Ge's attention to detail, he would not have made the connection.

The movie was still going. Wenyu followed Chang Gu. Perhaps it was a woman's instinct or something else, but she had a feeling that Chang Gu was someone very important to her. However, Chang Gu obviously intended to stay away from Wenyu. From the man's various reactions, it was not because he hated her.

The expression that he had when looking at Wenyu was very strange. Most of time, it was the detachment of a stranger, but occasionally, there would be a rare show of gentleness. The two stood at the hospital backdoor and spoke. They barely shared a few words when footsteps came, and a slightly fat middle-aged man ran out.

Seeing the man, Chang Gu shrugged off his coat, tossed it aside, and then rushed down the nearby alley. No matter how much Wenyu called after him, he did not turn around.

"Did you see a tall, thin man run this way?" After the middle-aged man came out from the backdoor, his eyes zeroed in on the white coat on the ground.

“What’s wrong?”

“That man is a thief, a repeat offender at that! He always sneaks into our hospital!” the middle-aged man hissed through his teeth.

“Thief? He... he’s not a doctor?” Wenyu studied the coat the man was holding, and she was shocked.

“Don’t trust a word out of his lips. The man is a common thief, a liar, and somewhat crazy. To be safe, you’d better stay away from him.” The middle-aged gave the warning and planned to leave.

“Wait a moment.” Wenyu held the doctor back. “I’m here to register for the university. Have you heard of Jiujiang Private University? The online address I got pointed me to this place.”

“There was a university here in the past, but it has been abandoned already. The flyer you saw is from probably from a few years back.” The middle-aged was quite a friendly person. He stopped to answer Wenyu’s questions.

“Abandoned? Then, do you know why it was abandoned?” Wenyu finally found a reliable person, so she continued with her questioning.

“I’m not so sure, but you can find out more by going to Yong Ling Mountain. Back then, Jiujiang Private University was split into two campuses, the normal campus and the night school campus.” The doctor did not hide any information and shared everything that he knew. “The normal campus for the graduate students and our hospital was a repurposed of part of the original campus. It was no different from a normal university.

“Opening the night school was a desperate move. Jiujiang was only so big, and thus, there was a limited number of available students. Students from outside the region would rarely go over the state line to enroll at a private university that was not so popular. With the low number of students, a large piece of land remained unused, so the admin decided to turn it into a night school.

“The night school campus was just adjacent to the normal campus, but it was closer to Yong Ling Mountain. Jiujiang Private University’s night school mainly recruited adults who wished to further their studies and young adults who wished to come back to school after dropping out.”

After the doctor gave the explanation, he walked into the shadow that the sunlight could not pierce. “I can’t remember the further details, but you should be able to read them in the hospital’s filing room. We don’t have many people around now, so I can bring you there to read.”

“You want to bring me to the filing room?” Wenyu looked at the empty hospital. The interior was very clean and very quiet like there was not even one person around. “Okay...”

Before she finished, Wenyu reached out to cover her left eye. At that moment, it felt like a needle prick her eye, which had not happened for a long time.

“I’m sorry, but I’m not feeling so well. I’ll come back next time, but I thank you so much for your help.” Wenyu held her left eye and thanked the doctor.

“You’re welcome.” The middle-aged man smiled and turned back to the hospital.

“There are still many good people in the world.” Wenyu glanced at the narrow alley. Something did not feel right. It was noon, but there was no one around; it was as if the people that stayed there knew to give this place a wide berth.

“The night school is just ahead, but since the doctor didn’t give me the exact location, I’ll have to keep moving forward.” With some suspicion, Wenyu walked down the alley. After she took a few steps, someone called her name from the corner.

“There’s no need for you to go any further—you won’t be able to find that school.” Chang Gu was leaning on the wall. The middle-aged doctor had just told Wenyu that Chang Gu was a liar and madman. So, when she saw Chang Gu appear, she had trepidation of getting too close to him.

After all, this man did not appear to be more trustworthy than the middle-aged doctor, and what Chang Gu had done so far was indeed suspicious.

Seeing Wenyu’s change of attitude, Chang Gu narrowed his eyes as he walked toward her. “The thing that came out of the hospital earlier, what did it tell you?”

“That thing?” As Chang Gu approached her, Wenyu took a step back. “He said you are a thief.”

“Are you going to believe a ghost or a living human?” Chang Gu stood before Wenyu, and he looked kind of similar to Wenyu.

“Ghost?”

“Yes, a ghost that can move in daylight.” Chang Gu forced Wenyu into a corner. “Did it tell you, I’m a thief, a liar, and a madman?”

Wenyu thought that Chang Gu was being very creepy, but she still nodded.

“Did it invite you into the hospital?” Wenyu thought about it. The doctor had indeed offered to bring her into the filing room.

“Thankfully, you didn’t follow. If you had, you probably wouldn’t have been able to escape with life.” Chang Gu passed a medical record to Wenyu. On it was the middle-aged doctor’s black and white picture.

Chapter 722: Exchanged Eyes

Chang Gu told Wenyu a very scary story. The doctor earlier technically had not lied to Wenyu, but he had omitted two very important details.

First, the hospital had shut down a few weeks prior, and no one knew the exact reason. Confusingly, even after the hospital was closed down, the neighboring citizens could still see the hospital working like usually with people walking about day and night.

Second, the doctor himself was questionable. He was different from the conventional ghosts; he could move in daylight and did not seem to fear sunlight. Chang Gu did not go into detail on what kind of

existence the doctor was—he merely told Wenyu that the thing or people that would cause her left eye pain mostly came from Jiujiang Private University.

The delineation between the normal and night school campus described by the doctor was true, but the way to enter the abandoned campus was not through the trek deep into Yong Ling Mountain.

Chang Gu seemed to be a man on the run. When he reached this part of the story, he turned to leave. He left Wenyu a phone number and told her that, if she wanted to find Jiujiang Private University, she could call that number at night.

That was where the scene ended. The image lagged slightly, and when it resumed, the sky in the screen already darkened.

Did someone cut out part of the plot, or did the people in the movie not want me to see what happened in the middle?

In the darkness, Wenyu held her phone and backpack, looking down the alley. She had stopped at the hospital from earlier in the morning. She made a call and whispered two words before ending it hurriedly. "I'm here."

Ten minutes later, a window on the left side of the hospital was pushed open from inside, and a tall, thin doctor in a white coat waved at Wenyu. After Wenyu sneaked into the hospital, the doctor had her change into a nurse outfit and then led her out of the room. The scene that followed was very strange, and it had Chang Gu's directing style all over it.

Inside the hospital, people milled about. Some were waiting for doctors, others waiting at the pharmacy. There were patients with plaster on their legs shuffling slowly about, and everything looked like a normal hospital. The only difference was that none of the lights were switched on. All the patients and doctors moved in the dark. The darkness did not appear to affect them that much. They did not seem to be a part of the living world; the shadows moving in the dark appeared more like a projection of a different world.

"Come here." The doctor led Wenyu into the surgery room and then locked the door.

"Now, can you tell me the real method to get into the school?" Wenyu removed the mask and took a deep breath. The male doctor removed his mask as well, and he was none other than Chang Gu. He grabbed Wenyu's arm and led her to the surgical table.

The surgical table looked different from a normal surgical table; one could not help but wonder what kind of surgery was completed on it.

"The only way to solve the problem is from its roof, and that is..." Chang Gu picked up the sharp surgical knife from the pan. "To cut out Wenyu's left eye and find it a new host."

Chang Gu's voice was creepy, and it cause Wenyu to stagger back until she knocked into the table behind her. "You want to gouge out my eye?"

"It was Wenyu's eye. You are not Wenyu; you are a victim trapped inside her body. I will return your freedom, but I need your full cooperation."

“The doctor was right; you are a madman!” Wenyu grabbed her bag and made a beeline for the door.
“Let go, I’m leaving now!”

“Even though you have seen the shadows outside, you still refuse to believe me, huh? Those shadows carrying on with their lives like normal, I believe that you can see them clearer than I can, so you should have been...”

“You are not me. How can you know what I’ve been seeing?”

Wenyu made for the door but was blocked by Chang Gu. “I am not you, but I am familiar with your body’s real owner! I am Wenyu’s big brother!”

Hearing that proclamation, Wenyu stopped moving. She studied Chang Gu for a very long time before saying, “But I haven’t heard Wenyu mention her having a big brother at all.”

Her answer was indirectly confirming that she was not Wenyu.

“You can see dead people from your left eye, and I believe you saw all the dead people in that house already. Before Wenyu collapsed under madness, I made my escape.” Chang Gu was fidgeting with emotion. Just as he was about to explain the whole truth, the movie was cut off.

Having a horror movie cut off inside a darkened movie theater at 3 am was supposed to be something scary, but none of the audience felt afraid.

“What’s going on? Did the line get cut off? Boss!”

“This is a movie theater, not the internet café near Mu Yang High School, calm down.”

“So, what happens next?”

The employees were in a deep discussion. There was only one person that acted funnily, and that was the blind man next to Chen Ge. Shrieks echoed around theater, and a cold wind picked up, but the blind man maintained his pose, with his head lowered, appearing like he had fallen asleep.

They waited for a full three minutes before the movie resumed. However, the scene had swapped yet again, and the quality became clearer. It gave the impression that the movie had been switched to a different one.

“There is no one in the broadcast room, but the movie we’re watching is changing on its own. The one hiding in this theater probably felt threatened and is purposely trying to hide something.” The more they wished to hide, the deeper Chen Ge wanted to dig. From his perspective, only by knowing everything could he find the source of the problem and help them solve it.

The movie turned to focus on a villa. Wenyu was laid out flat on the dining table. Her head was bandaged, and it wrapped tightly around her left eye. A man with a slight hump sat next to the dining table. Her face was wrapped in bandages as well, and similarly, it covered up his left eye.

The man studied Wenyu quietly. Several seconds later, the bandage around Wenyu’s left eye started to soak with blood. The blood bloomed on the white bandage like a blood flower opening on her eye.

“This is the second week after the swap. Why is it still not working? We are biological siblings and share the blood type—why is there such a drastic body rejection?” The man became agitated, and whenever blood leaked out from Wenyu’s eye socket, the bandage around his face would be wetted by blood as well like his eye corresponded to some kind of signal given by Wenyu.

There were plenty of nerves around the eye, and it caused the man immense pain.

The man’s body was shaking, and his hands gripped the edge of the table tightly. “The pain is even more intense than yesterday. The wounds show no sign of recovering at all! What is the problem?”

He opened the shelf in the living room, which was filled with various medical implements. While the man bustled about, Wenyu remained immobile on the table like she had lost her soul

Chapter 723: Are You Coming Out or Not?

The man ransacked through the cupboards. He could only see from one eye. The pain shot through his brain, and his actions became more rugged and rough. His arm was cut on something, forming a long, disgusting-looking wound.

Blood slid down his arm before dropping on the bright, clean tiles. The image of a woman in red appeared in the pool of blood. The blood started to change like someone was writing a blood letter.

“You are not going to find the way to the school with your method. You’ve failed. You lied to me. You are not able to give me freedom, and now your life is counting down because of it.”

Pain bent the man over. The stuff in the cupboard clattered to the floor. He closed his eyes, and the world fell into darkness. His body knocked into the furniture, and his arms flailed helplessly around. He looked like he was drowning. Medicine and various medical implements littered the ground. The bookshelf was tipped over, and several professional books related to the eye fell next to the man’s feet.

“The liquid in the eye is leaking, the wound at the edge is festering, the nerves are dying, and sensitivity to light is decreasing. It affects even my original eye. It feels like something is squeezing against it, and it’s getting harder and harder to open the eye!” The man’s eyes were screwed shut. He was the only one in the room, but he yelled at the top of his lungs like he was talking to someone else. “But don’t you worry, as long as I’m alive, there is a chance for improvement!”

Eyes were windows to the soul. When one’s eyes could not open, the world inside would become dark. The man was like a beast, venting the pain that ravaged his body until he collapsed from fatigue and fainted next to the dining table.

The lights in the room flickered and dimmed. The room seemed to be changing. The blood stains on the ground turned dark brown, looking like drying scabs. In the extreme silence, a woman in a red jacket materialized in the room.

She looked completely different to Wenyu but shared some similarities to Qiumei from Deskmate. The woman shuffled silently to stand between the man and Wenyu. She picked up a diary that had fallen from the bookshelf. The cover was stained by blood, and flipping over the cover, the first page had a name written in red—Qiumei.

The front half of the diary was written using black pen, but the later parts were all in red. The woman flipped it to the last few pages.

30th November: The woman in red kept disturbing the surgery, as if by changing the eye, she will disappear forever. Looks like Chang Gu hasn't lied to me—I can finally escape this ghost's torture.

1st December: The woman in red appeared again. A few years ago, it was she who dragged me into Wenyu's body to have me become the next Wenyu. She is not my friend, even though she lives around me.

2nd December: The surgery is too risky, and that is not counting the supernatural disturbance. Like a mad woman, she kept trying to stop the surgery. It appears that Chang Gu's method really can end all the pain.

3rd December: As long as the ghost is still there, the surgery cannot be conducted normally, so we can only trap her. I've not spoken to her for years already, so this time, I guess I'll play a little game with her.

4th December: The surgery was successful. The evil red ghost that has been following me has disappeared, but I never expected it would be by this kind of method. After the surgery, I became the new red ghost.

5th December: The first time I trusted anyone other than granny, I lost my freedom and became a scapegoat; the second time I trusted another person, I lost even the husk where I could hide. What can I do now? Trust him the third time? Or...

The diary ended there. The woman in red put the book back. She leaned to the side and studied Chang Gu. His black hair lifted as if there was a breeze. The woman's right eye was completely red, but the left eye was just a black hollow. Even if she became a real Red Specter, she would not have recovered her left eye.

The lights in the room dimmed further, and the sound of marbles bouncing came from the ceiling. The sound of water came from the bathroom, and the pen rolled on the ground. The fruit knife on the coffee table moved on its own. A pale hand reached out from underneath the red shirt, and the woman held the handle of the blade with two fingers.

She stood before the fainted man and dangled the blade above his head, aiming right at the man's right eye, which was not protected by the bandage. Just as the woman was about to release her fingers, she suddenly stopped as if sensing something else in the room.

Her neck turned, and her hair parted away. The hollowness where her eye should be looked straight at the camera, like she was looking at the audience beyond the screen. A strange movie started in theater—there was a sound of approaching footsteps underlying the music.

Strange noises filled up the house on screen. It came from the deep end of the cupboard, under the bed, and behind the door. It was so incessant and constant that it created the impression that the same thing was happening in real life!

One's ears could no longer discern whether the sound came from the screen or from behind oneself.

The lights flickered suddenly, and the woman neared the screen. She was not moving slowly. She looked as if she was standing still, but one minute later, as Chen Ge focused his eyes again, the distance between her and the screen closed further!

The strangeness inside the screen and outside the screen slowly overlapped, and it created a strange feeling among the audience. It felt like they were being drawn into the movie, becoming a part of it, or the scene in the movie was slowly becoming a part of real life and the ghost inside it was really coming out.

The music grew louder, and it felt like someone was blowing air into their ears.

The woman arrived at the edge of the screen, and the lights in the theater were the dimmest that they had ever been. The vacant eye socket stuck to the screen, and the emptiness stared straight at the audience beyond the screen.

The fruit knife that dripped with blood aimed outward, and a scent of blood dispersed through the enclosed theater. First, it was the overlapping of sound, then came the scent of blood. When the audience was confused by all those developments, the Red Specter stuck herself onto the screen.

Viscous blood slid down the screen and leaked out onto the stage beyond the screen. When the audience recovered, the scary face was already poking out of the screen!

The background music reached its climax, like an arrow being pulled taut. The scent of blood thickened, and the scariest scene in that theater finally arrived.

The ghost from the movie crawled out from the screen! The ghost story turned into reality!

His breathing turned heavier, and Chen Ge pressed on the armrest. The eye that was filled with blood vessels turned red almost instantly!

“The Red Specter from the movie is coming out!” He jumped, and at the same moment the Specter appeared, he screamed, “Get her! Don’t let her run back into the movie!”

Chapter 724: A Person as Gentle as You

The appearance of a Red Specter at a two-star mission was something that Chen Ge did not anticipate. Regardless, he was given no choice—all the employees that he could rely on were with him. Bai Qiulin and the water ghost were both Half Red Specters, and with the aid from the other employees, holding back the Red Specter from the movie should present no problem.

Chen Ge merely needed to hold the Red Specter off for a while. His body leaned toward the blind man next to him, and he already had a plan in his heart.

The employees were highly excited to encounter something like this—this kind of excitement was not something that a normal 3D movie could replicate. The scent of blood spread within the enclosed private screening theater, and the low murmuring soon turned into wails and shrieks.

Blood slid down the screen, and the woman in red walked out. The sound of blood dripping did not stop. She turned the head, which was losing one eye, and the remaining eye zeroed in on the young woman

sitting on the front row who was slowly lifting up her head. Water and blood stains surfaced on her clothes, and her wet hair stuck to her pale skin. Through the hair, one could catch a glimpse of the eyes that were bloated from being soaked in water for too long!

The seat was drenched, and the pool of water on the ground was expanding. One of them was on stage, the other off stage.

For one, this was her first time at the movies, and her simple mind was trying to process what kind of artistic style this was; the other was confused because this was her first time encountering an audience member like this. She looked back with a lost expression, as if suspecting that she was actually still inside the movie.

The woman in red's eyes finally moved away from the water ghost, but when she saw the rest of the audience in theater, her confusion only grew. Behind the water ghost was a row of doctors. Their white coats fluttered underneath the seats, and other than aloofness, there was no other discernible expression on their faces.

Next to the doctors was a man wearing an old pair of jeans. One of his hands was stuck inside his pocket while the other shielded Chen Ge. Yet, confusingly enough, there was another hand laid leisurely on the man's shoulder.

Most of the wailing came from the students in the room. They made a huge commotion, but that was merely for show. As loud as they were being, they also scurried away from the screen.

The last row of the audience stood up, and they looked even stranger. In the left-hand corner, there appeared to be a couple. The man's face was white, and the female looked like she could collapse at any moment. On the other end, a two-meter-tall fatty was squeezed in the corner, and he was trying his best to hold his stench in. Next to the fatty was a lanky man, and there was a rope around his neck. This time, the audience members were so different that the woman in red was briefly stunned after exiting the screen.

Of 'everyone' there, Chen Ge was the most collected. Ever since the woman appeared, he had been following her with his Yin Yang Vision. His focus paid off. He soon discovered that once the woman exited the screen, the red on her outfit lightened quite a bit. This was most obvious at the spot around the heart—the blood there was almost dry and non-existent.

This Red Specter seems like she can only unleash her full power inside the movie. Once she is out of it, her power drastically decreases.

With that understanding, Chen Ge became more confident. After all, this was merely a two-star Trial Mission.

The water ghost and Bai Qiulin faced the woman directly while the other ghosts helped to protect the movie screen. As the battle was about to erupt, Chen Ge lifted the hammer with one hand and turned to the blind man who was seated next to him.

"Chang Gu, the old movies relating to the Eye Oculus are still here. Looks like you and Qiumei have failed to find the real Wenyu." Chen Ge's every word landed on Chang Gu's heart like sharp nails. His eyelids twitched, and he stooped even further.

“We can talk this out like friends. Honestly, I am also looking for that phantom school, and I have a lead.” Chen Ge was an open person. With the situation still undecided, he shared information pertinent to the School of Afterlife and showed that he was willing to cooperate.

“Chang Gu, after watching the movies you’ve directed, I know you are a clever and very talented person, but just take a look at yourself now.

“Have you already given up? Are you willing to hide for the rest of your life in this abandoned holiday villa? Until you die, you won’t find Wenyu? Have you given up on your promise to Qiumei?

“You poured your life into works, and the movies are an extension of your life. I am affected by your movies, and I feel sorry for what happened to you. I understand your pain, and I can see why you are wasting your life away now.

“I understand you, and because of that, I wish to collaborate with you. Now is still not the time to give up!”

Through watching the movies, Chen Ge gained a brief understanding of the whole process. He aimed for the gap in Chang Gu’s heart and tried to weave through the man’s cold exterior.

“Wenyu’s soul has still not been found. Perhaps she is still trapped inside the abandoned school. I’m sure her physical body is worsening by the day. What is a person without her soul? I don’t know what happened to both of you later, but there is one thing that I am certain about, it is never too late. Everything can still be saved!”

Chang Gu’s emotions were fraying. Chen Ge saw this opportunity and added, “Do you know why I am looking for that school?”

He bent over to look Chang Gu in the eye. “I am the boss for the Haunted House at Western Jiujiang New Century Park. About six months ago, my parents disappeared, and many signs point to the fact that they have been to that school!”

Chang Gu’s eyelids twitched even harder. His chest rose unevenly, and he finally returned with a question. “Have your parents really been to that school?”

“Yes, and to find them, I’ve been to Mu Yang High School, Western Jiujiang Private Academy, Jiujiang Medical University, and so on. I have already gathered some clues.” Chen Ge shared his experience. If Chang Gu’s experience was a tale, then Chen Ge’s experience was the stuff of legends.

Without a single lie, Chen Ge shared everything like an honest child with Chang Gu. After hearing Chen Ge’s story, Chang Gu had the impression that all the things that had happened to him were not even worth mentioning, and there was no reason for him to have given up.

“We can cooperate, and that is a win-win solution. Think about it.”

Standing up, Chen Ge dragged the hammer and walked out from the seat to the stage. Before the woman, he tossed the hammer aside, raised his arms, and uttered with gentleness in his eyes, “All the souls that have hosted the Left Eye have lost themselves and turned into monsters, but you are the only exception. For all these years, you have suffered silently.

“You are a victim, but you are also a hero.

“When bad luck befalls a person, those with darkness in their heart will curse this world. What they need is not pity but partners.

“However, for those with kindness, they will choose to suffer everything silently, to help cover up the wounds of this imperfect world and repay its bad fortune with kindness and warmth.”

Chen Ge walked up to the stage and stopped not far away from the woman.

“Whether you admit it or not, you are one such gentle person, Qiumei.”

Chapter 725: Rare Worker

Be it in life or death, this was the first time that Qiumei had received such a compliment. Her parents had imprisoned when she was young, and it had been her grandmother who took care of her. Due to the lack of attention and love from immediate parents since she was young, Qiumei’s personality had always been different from others. She was straight-forward, and some might even call her tomboyish.

As she grew older, Qiumei matured into her personality. When she decided to bid her past self goodbye and tried to work hard for once in her life, she ran into Wenyu. Before the flower had the chance to bloom, it was cut off. But due to her harsh childhood, Qiumei was not defeated by the sudden accident. She retained her personality, and that was why Chen Ge admired her.

After watching Chang Gu’s movies, Chen Ge still had no exact idea why Wenyu would enroll at the School of Afterlife and had even less of an idea why the Left Oculus would appear. He had no idea what the relationship between Wenyu and her older brother was, but he knew very well that in this whole incident, Qiumei was the most innocent party.

A strange audience appeared in theater, and stranger than this group of audience was this living man who came onstage. Qiumei’s functioning right eye slowly opened. The bloodshot eye spoke of confusion. She was comforted by the man’s words, but something just did not sit well with her.

As she turned her neck around, Qiumei stared at Chang Gu, who sat in the middle of the seat. As if sensing something, Chang Gu lifted his head, which he had kept lowered until then. Like he had come to a decision, he sighed lightly. His eyelids fluttered, and Chang Gu finally opened his eyes.

“Who are you?” Chang Gu’s left eye was as big as a normal person’s eye, but there was a ring of redness around the eyeball. His right eye, which should have been normal, looked scarier. The pupil appeared to have dissolved, and the only thing that remained was an eye that was run through with cracks.

“My left eye is Wenyu’s left eye, but the operation was not successful. This eye can merely see simple changes in color, and occasionally, I can catch glimpses of things other people wouldn’t.”

When Chang Gu spoke, he stared right at Qiumei in front of the screen. After the botched operation, only a part of the left eye’s power remained. “My right eye is already completely blind, and I can’t even give you the exact reason why. Perhaps it’s the curse of the Left Oculus.” Chang Gu coughed violently before closing his eyes again, but after only opening his eye for a few seconds, his left eye was already crying tears of blood.

“Looks like my prediction is all correct.” Chen Ge was still standing on stage. There were only several steps between him and Qiumei.

“Whether you’re right or not doesn’t matter anymore.” It took a long time before Chang Gu stopped coughing. “I can cooperate with you, but how do you expect me to believe what you said?”

Chen Ge was afraid that Chang Gu refused communication. As long as there was a chance, he had the means to befriend the guy. Taking out his phone, Chen Ge looked at the local news at Jiujiang. “I have no need to lie to you. These news articles are all proof of my statement. If you still don’t believe me, you can go online yourself to search for information on my Haunted House.”

Chen Ge showcased sincerity, but Chang Gu did not buy his story so easily. A person who relied on local crime news to prove his worth was not going to be someone simple. Working with the man might be similar to befriending a tiger—he could be eaten the next moment.

“If you are willing to cooperate, you can come back with me to the Haunted House today. Every single sentence that I’ve said is real.” The countdown for the School of Afterlife was almost up, and Chen Ge was antsy about missing it. “This will only benefit two of us. I will give you a whole morning to think about it. I will come back tomorrow night.

“Wenyu’s condition is probably not that positive, I am worried about my parents as well. Technically, we share the same goal. However, I never force others into things that they are not willing to do. If you agree, then I will come back tonight to share everything I know with you.”

Standing on the stage, there was an indescribable loneliness in Chen Ge’s eyes. “We are the same type of person. No one will help us in this world other than ourselves.”

Seeing the loneliness in Chen Ge’s eyes, Chang Gu held his bleeding eye. Looking at the roomful of ghosts, he felt a certain kinship to Chen Ge. “Let me think about it...”

“No problem, it is my sincere wish to help you because I know that helping you is helping myself.” Chen Ge was a big-picture thinker, and that was reflected in his way of thinking. “Wenyu and the school are the thing that you care about the most. I know my visit is rather sudden, and I can understand your suspicion and caution toward me. To dissolve the gap between us, I am willing to allow this Red Specter to follow me home. Ghosts are best at reading people’s hearts; you can have her observe me closely and see whether I am lying to you or not.”

“You are willing to let a ghost follow you home?” This was the first time that Chang Gu had encountered a request like that in his life.

“If you are worried about Qiumei’s safety, I can ask my friends to stay behind to act as hostages.” Chen Ge thought that he was not being unreasonable. For all parties involved, it was the fairest action.

“Letting your friends stay behind as hostage?” Chang Gu shivered. If they really stayed, it was hard to say who the hostage would be. “There’s no need for that, I believe in you.”

Chang Gu wanted to say something else, but Chen Ge had already turned to Qiumei.

“The first time you trusted others, you lost your freedom; the second time you trusted other, you lost your life; today, you are given a third choice.” Chen Ge was just a normal person, but standing before Qiumei, he showed no trace of fear. His voice was powerful and warm.

“Come, I’ll help you see a different side of the world.” Chen Ge opened the comic. When the girl was hesitating, before she even understood the scope of the situation, she was already pulled into the book. Qiumei did not resist. As Chen Ge closed the comic, the black phone vibrated.

Taking it out, Chen Ge glanced at the new message.

“Congratulations Specter’s Favored for discovering a rare Red Specter—Qiumei!

“Qiumei (Red Specter): She turned into a Red Specter due to a unique reason and doesn’t possess much resentment. She possesses a Red Specter’s power only in the movies. After leaving the movies, her power drastically decreases, and she cannot activate her special power.

“Qiumei’s Special Power: ??? (Will be unlocked after becoming an official Haunted House employee)”

After reading the message, Chen Ge was surprised. Qiumei was indeed a very special Red Specter.

Isn’t this kind of unique worker the exact thing that I’m looking for? Chen Ge put his phone away and waved at Chang Gu, appearing very happy.

Chang Gu, who sat in the middle of theater, held the bleeding left eye in his hand, and at that moment, he felt like he had lost something.

Chapter 726: I Will Go Talk with Them

Chang Gu agreed to cooperate with Chen Ge, and they had formed a basic consensus. After promising to meet up again the following night, Chen Ge pushed open the door of the private showing theater. The sky outside was brightening. The moment Chen Ge stepped out of theater, the black phone vibrated again.

“Congratulations, Specter’s Favored, you have finished watching a complete movie inside the dead’s theater. Congratulations for completing the first part of the two-star special Trial Mission—Left Oculus!

“For the second part of the mission, locate Wenyu’s elder brother, Chang Gu, and gain his affection!

“Congratulations, Specter’s Favored for completing the second part of the mission.

“For the third part of the mission, travel to Jiujiang Mental Asylum to see the color of Wenyu’s dream for yourself!

“Warning! This mission contains many uncertain factors. After completing it, you will greatly improve Wenyu, Qiumei, and Chang Gu’s affection toward you! It will unlock the two-star scenario The Dead’s Theater and equipment related to movie-making!”

Seeing the message on the black phone, Chen Ge’s desire to complete this two-star mission only grew. Other than giving him a new two-star mission, he was going to get plenty of valuable equipment. Previously, he had promised the suicide line operator to help him finish shooting a movie. Currently, he

had the director and the actors, and after the mission was completed, he would have the equipment needed as well.

“Even though this Trial Mission is quite complicated, the reward is correspondingly lucrative. I wonder, what does the uncertain factor the black phone warned about mean?” Chen Ge had already discerned the rules to the mission given by the black phone—the reward was often proportional to the level of danger.

“Discern the color of Wenyu’s dream? One’s dream has a color?” The mission description was rather vague. Chen Ge could not even tell whether the Wenyu in question was the Wenyu in real life or Wenyu’s soul.

“Oh well, I’m sure it’ll all pan out in the end. There’s no point thinking about it. Tomorrow night, I’ll get Chang Gu to come with me to go visit Wenyu.” Chen Ge would never go back on his word. Be it Qiumei or Wenyu, Chen Ge valued them both.

With further insistence from Chang Gu, Chen Ge grabbed all of his employees and left Yong Ling Mountain Holiday Villa. He walked for a long stretch before he located a taxi that would pick him up.

Taking not even one second of sleep, Chen Ge did not feel tired. The appearance of Left Oculus brought a change to the four-star School of the Afterlife mission, and a brave idea appeared in his mind. Based on current situation, Zhang Ya would not have woken up before the time limit for the School of Afterlife ended. Without her, the mission’s difficulty would rise to an impossible level.

Chen Ge had been hesitating whether he should take this risk or not. The futuristic theme park was about to open. Without a new and exciting scenario, the popularity that New Century Park had gathered might be overtaken by the new theme park. He had worked so hard for the sake of this day, and now it was the last leg.

“If I can find valuable information related to the School of Afterlife during the mission for Left Oculus, then I will go scout around the phantom school before the time limit ends.” Giving up without even paying the place a visit was something that Chen Ge could not do.

Leaning against the seat, Chen Ge stared at his shadow and sunk into deep thought. He returned to New Century Park at 8 am. He had only entered the gate when he saw two figures walking around the entrance to his Haunted House.

“Uncle Xu? Jingjiu? You two sure are early today.” Chen Ge placed his backpack on the wooden bench, and the bench creaked noisily from the pressure.

“You wandered out alone last night?” Uncle Xu looked at the bench, which might collapse at any moment.

“I merely went for a morning jog.” Chen Ge gave a casual excuse.

“Jogging with such a loaded bag?” Uncle Xu sighed helplessly. “You are not young anymore. Stop wasting your life on those nightly activities. Better go and find yourself a wife to get your life back together.”

“Uncle Xu, did you come so early in the morning to introduce me to a prospective partner?” Chen Ge glanced at his shadow and wiped the beads of sweat that travelled down his face.

“I’m not that free.” Uncle Xu sighed. “Just now, I accepted the call from Director Luo. Last night, the people from Xin Hai’s Nightmare Academy opened several threads on the largest online forum about your Haunted House. They question the safety of your Haunted House, and the threads are fast gathering popularity. Director Luo believes that it is the people at the futuristic theme park who is behind this.”

“Nightmare Academy? Them again? I haven’t even gone to them to demand an explanation, and they’re coming after us already?” Chen Ge’s voice was laced with danger.

“What are you planning to do? Calm down! Don’t act recklessly!” Uncle Xu quickly stopped Chen Ge.

“Director Luo had me come early to remind you, to tell you to keep a low profile. Do not let them have any advantage on you. After we survive the opening of the futuristic theme park, everything will be fine.”

“We’ve always been open with our activities. What kind of advantage can they possibly have on us?”

“You are not wrong, but we cannot guarantee that they will not go below the belt and come up with false accusations.” Uncle Xu wanted Chen Ge to be more careful.

“You said it yourself, Uncle Xu, they will stoop to the lowest level to make trouble for us. In that case, I think we should adopt a different solution to deal with this problem.” Chen Ge picked up the heavy backpack and looked inside it.

“What are you planning to do?” Uncle Xu had a bad feeling.

“Since they will find flaws with us even if there are none, then if I can take them all down, there won’t be anyone who will find faults with us, right?” Chen Ge answered matter-of-factly.

“Take, take them down?” Uncle Xu took one step forward, like he could not hear Chen Ge clearly and wanted a clarification.

“It’s going to be easy. I’ll go to Xin Hai today.” Chen Ge patted Uncle Xu’s shoulders. “Don’t worry, now that there is an intercity train, the travel back and forth will only take two hours. I’ll be back before the night falls.”

“Do you really think I’m worried about that?” Uncle Xu pushed Chen Ge’s arm aside. “This is just a business problem. Please don’t elevate it into a...”

“Don’t worry, leave it to me, I won’t leave any evidence.”

“What evidence? Please don’t go creating trouble!”

After pacifying Uncle Xu, Chen Ge turned to Zhang Jingjiu. “Jingjiu, why are you so early today?”

“Boss, I wish to ask you for a day off.” Zhang Jingjiu took out his phone. There was a short message on it. “My father has been hospitalized, so I wish to visit him.”

“No problem.” Chen Ge agreed easily. “If I remember correctly, you said your father lives in Xin Hai City.”

“Yes.”

“Then, this is perfect. I will go with you to Xin Hai. We’ll see this as a field trip.” Chen Ge’s eyes moved away from the two and gazed down the horizon. “After we survive the opening of the futuristic theme park and have nothing else to worry about, we can consider opening a branch in Xin Hai. The people there will be overjoyed to know that they can finally experience the true meaning of horror.”

Chapter 727: He Has Arrived

“Chen Ge, are you sure you want to go to Xin Hai?” Uncle Xu was still worried.

“Director Luo once told me that we need to look at the big picture. This trip to Xin Hai has two purposes—give Nightmare Academy a warning and get a better understanding of the market,” Chen Ge said seriously. “It’ll be fine, don’t worry.”

Opening the gate, Chen Ge and Zhang Jingjiu entered the Haunted House.

“Wait for me here. I need to go to the underground scenario to grab something.” Chen Ge placed most of the employees back into their places and only held onto a few that he still could not control fully like the red high heels, the headless woman, and Qiumei. He was not doing that to take revenge on Nightmare Academy—he was merely worried that these Red Specters might cause trouble at his Haunted House once he left.

For the sake of balance, Chen Ge brought along Yan Dalian’s group and Xu Yin.

“The hammer is definitely not going through the security check, so I’ll leave it here.” After removing the hammer, the backpack felt so light that Chen Ge needed some time to get used to it. Returning to the surface, Chen Ge and Zhang Jingjiu waited for the other workers to arrive, and Chen Ge helped them with their make-up before leaving.

At 11 am, Chen Ge and Zhang Jingjiu took the train heading to Xin Hai City. The two cities were adjacent to each other, but the temperature had a drastic change. Xin Hai’s average temperature was higher than that of Jiujiang for reasons that eluded Chen Ge.

“Jingjiu, you have to go visit your father.” Chen Ge shoved a red packet to Zhang Jingjiu. “Use this to buy some things for him. I won’t accompany you any further. Call me if you need anything.”

Before Zhang Jingjiu could reject him, Chen Ge grabbed his backpack and ran out of the train station. Chen Ge hailed a taxi and gave the driver the address for Nightmare Academy that he had found online.

Unlike Chen Ge’s Haunted House, Nightmare Academy was situated on Xin Hai’s busiest merchant street. As the oldest and most famous Haunted House in Xin Hai, they rented an entire building.

Coincidentally enough, when the contractor was designing the merchant street, there was a small oversight. One of the smaller buildings was surrounded by other skyscrapers, creating this situation where it would never receive any sunlight no matter the time of day. Many people refused to rent this

building, which always ‘faced away from the sun’. In the end, it had been selected by the founder of Nightmare Academy. He had used a very low price to rent the side of the building that could not receive any sunlight and transformed it into the biggest Haunted House in Xin Hai.

The side of the building that occasionally received some sunlight had many restaurants and shops, whereas the other side had windows that were always closed. One Yin and one Yang, this eventually became a landmark for Xin Hai City and had great popularity online.

But that was several years ago. The popularity of physical Haunted Houses was dropping, and fewer and fewer people came to visit Nightmare Academy. They tried to come up with new updates, but it did nothing to stop the popularity from slipping.

After paying the fare, Chen Ge stood at the entrance of the merchant street. There were many vehicles, and the buildings rose into the sky. Even though it was a working day, the place was packed.

“Do these people not need to work?” Carrying his tattered backpack, Chen Ge, who could not have looked more normal, stood out conspicuously on the largest merchant street in the big city. However, Chen Ge did not mind that. Compared to appearance, he paid more attention to a being’s soul.

Following the map on his phone, Chen Ge soon found Nightmare Academy. Situated at a secluded corner of the merchant street, the size of the crowd there diminished tremendously.

Before he got near, Chen Ge saw a worker standing at the entrance, yelling loudly on the speaker.

“A 4D Haunted House experience! Experience the greatest horror in your life! A world-standard Haunted House—Nightmare Academy—starting a new semester with screams!

“The experience at Nightmare Academy combines the element of Haunted Houses, escape rooms, exploration, and real life interaction! It is a new indoor theme park! Only by sharpening your intelligence, courage, and physical ability will you be able to survive!

“Be it in terms of design, props, scenarios, and make-up, we are much better than all other Haunted Houses on the market!”

The worker yelled at the top of his lungs, but there were few visitors who were interested. Even if an occasional person stopped, it was due to curiosity, and they would leave seconds later.

“Sir, would you like to come and challenge our Haunted House?” The worker had noticed Chen Ge a long time ago. He saw Chen Ge standing there for a long time, but seeing the old-fashioned way that Chen Ge was dressed, he did not rush forward to welcome him. He did not think that Chen Ge would be a potential customer.

“Is your Haunted House really scary?” Chen Ge was curious. Even though their morality left much to be desired, Nightmare Academy had to have something going for them, or else they would not have ended up as the biggest Haunted House in Xin Hai City.

“You won’t believe me even if I say it is scary—the best way is for you to find out yourself.” The worker tried his sales pitch, but probably afraid that Chen Ge might just leave, he quickly added, “I will only say that a world-standard Haunted House is not for jokes. Our Haunted House has maintained a thirty-three

percent surrender rate and ten percent completion rate. There is a record of a visitor lining up for three hours but giving up in less than three minutes.”

“Only ten percent completion rate?”

“Indeed, I’m not lying to you. The horror inside our Nightmare Academy is not simple scares but an exploration of the unknown inside the human heart,” the worker said haughtily. “So, what do you think? Would you like to come and experience it? Since it’s a working day, there’s a promotion. Normally, the ticket costs two hundred RMB, but now it will only cost you one hundred and eighty.”

“That expensive?” Chen Ge could not help but draw a comparison. For his Haunted House, the visitors had to buy the ticket to enter theme park first, but Nightmare Academy was only the visit to a Haunted House. *In the future, when I expand to Xin Hai, I should raise the ticket price, following the local custom.*

Chen Ge was still thinking, but the worker was getting impatient. “The value is equivalent to the price. Our Haunted House will definitely provide you with the best experience.”

“Alright then, give me one ticket.” Chen Ge entered the Haunted House. The interior design was atmospheric. The ticket selling lobby was decorated as a place for new students to register, and the elevator that led into the scenario was decorated as a school gate. There were various pictures and posters related to ghost stories pasted on the wall.

Before entering the actual scenario, the atmosphere was already there—this Nightmare Academy was not simple.

When Chen Ge entered the place, there were two other visitors inside the room, and they appeared to have been waiting for a long time.

“I’m sorry, the minimum number for a single visit is five people. Would you please wait a little while longer?” The female employee inside the ticket booth waved at Chen Ge. “Why don’t you register your name first? When we have enough people, we will start the tour immediately.”

“Okay.” Chen Ge took out his ID and walked to the ticket booth.

The employee inside the booth had her head lowered, but when she saw Chen Ge’s ID, she suddenly looked up.

“Chen Ge?”

Chapter 728: Visiting a Haunted House with a Tape Recorder?

“Is there a problem?” Chen Ge took out two hundred RMB and placed it on the counter. The ticket seller quickly recovered from a shock and said, “Sorry, I just thought your name was very familiar. It sounds the same as one of my friends’.”

“Is it?” Chen Ge smiled lightly and did not push for more details. The worker moved conspicuously faster and only took several seconds to finish the registration. The ticket for Nightmare Academy was quite interesting—it was an offer letter, and Chen Ge’s name was written on it.

“Hold onto your offer letter and document, and please wait in line. When the visitor number reaches five, we can start the tour.” After helping Chen Ge with his registration, the worker did not appear too well. With her hands over her stomach, she left the ticket booth in a hurry. Chen Ge carried his bag and lined up behind the other two visitors; he looked very much at ease like he had returned to his own home.

“Brother, did you come alone?” Standing before him was a couple. Their hands were laced together, and they appeared rather nervous.

“Yes, I was rather bored, so I came in for a stroll.”

“You sure are brave to have come here alone. This place is very scary. I was just discussing with my girlfriend that if there were not enough people, then we would surrender directly.” The man was about 1.7 meters tall and wore a black outfit with wide-rimmed glasses. He looked rather kind and friendly.

“But doesn’t that mean you’re going to waste your ticket money?” Chen Ge did not quite understand it.

“That is better compared to running out in tears after being scared!” The man thought that Chen Ge’s question was rather strange. “My colleague visited this Haunted House before, and it is very scary. Later, we’d better stick together.”

“Okay.” Chen Ge operated a Haunted House himself, so he would not underestimate his enemy. There had to be a reason for Nightmare Academy’s past success. The man appeared to be quite a coward; he kept telling his girlfriend how scary this Haunted House was. His girlfriend cooperated fully—just from his description, her face was already white.

They waited for another minute before a woman about twenty years old and three students walked in. They did not appear to know each other. The three students kept chatting among themselves and sounded quite excited. One of them said that he had attempted this Haunted House before but had given up halfway because it was too scary.

The female visitor looked normal, and there was nothing particularly unique about her—she was the kind who would easily disappear in a crowd. She did not speak much and stood in the corner alone.

“There are enough visitors now. Everyone, please come with me.” The worker who needed to use the toilet earlier came out from the staff passage. She carried an old red school bag and several blue storage boxes. “Please do not use your phones when you are inside the Haunted House. We will provide you with the necessary lighting equipment. Do not run or try to instigate a fight inside the Haunted House. Do not touch the actors, and of course, the actors will not touch you.”

The worker rattled off the rules of the Haunted House before reaching her hand into the bag and taking out a small flashlight. “Now, please line up and retrieve your flashlight from me.”

When the couple in front walked through, the worker handed them the flashlight immediately, but when it was Chen Ge’s turn, the worker raised her hand to stop him. “Sir, do you mind leaving your backpack here with us? We will return it to you after the tour is completed.”

Chen Ge shook his head. There were four Red Specters inside his backpack. He was worried the whole building would suffer if some kind of accident happened.

“I’m sorry, but those are the rules. I hope you can cooperate with us.” The worker stood her ground.

“You are worried that I might carry illegal items with me? That’s fine, I can open my backpack for you to check.” Compared to the worker of Nightmare Academy, Chen Ge appeared to be more reasonable. He opened his backpack before the crowd. “I’ve read through your rules. I am not allowed to bring any flammable objects, sharp blades, and video recording devices into your Haunted House. As you can see, there are no such things.”

Everyone looked into Chen Ge’s backpack, and their expressions slowly turned curious.

“What are all these?” Bright red high heels and cute cartoon doll could be understood as the man’s strange hobby, but what about the recorder? To study English? But he was visiting a Haunted House, why would he take such things with him?

The way that the other visitors looked at Chen Ge became weird, and the mind of the worker was filled with question marks.

“Indeed, there are no dangerous objects in here, but...” The worker picked up the recorder. She suspected there might be a small camera installed inside this thing. The worker pressed the play button. The tape turned, and it elicited a static sound. It really did appear to be a normal recorder.

“What do you mean? I can’t even bring a recorder when I visit your Haunted House? There were no such rules when I visited other Haunted House!” Chen Ge argued firmly.

“But the point is that no one would have considered carrying such things when visiting a Haunted House.” After a moment’s hesitation, the worker placed the recorder back into the bag and looked through the other items. In an inside slit of the bag, the worker found a hand-drawn horror comic and a ballpoint pen wrapped in cellophane tape.

“Are you a comic book artist?”

“Do I not look like one?” Chen Ge did not deny it or admit it; he just looked at the worker silently.

The worker did not know how to answer. She put everything back into the backpack and returned it to Chen Ge. “Take your offer letter and flashlight. Go in.”

She searched inside the schoolbag for a long time before she found a red flashlight and handed it to Chen Ge. This flashlight looked similar to the other flashlights, but the casing for Chen Ge’s was red in color while the others were all green.

After walking through the security door, the few visitors filed into the elevator.

“In ten seconds, your journey of nightmares will become. If you cannot carry on and wish to surrender, you just need to scream at the camera.” The worker watched the visitors walk into the elevator and then pointed at the offer letters that every member of the group was holding. With a strange smile on her face, she said, “This time, the visiting number is quite small. To balance out the difficulty, I shall give you an additional hint—think about it, what exactly is the definition of a nightmare?”

The worker pressed the elevator button. The doors closed, and the elevator started to move up.

“Chui Ming, you’ve been here before, do you know what other secret might be hidden in the offer letter?” one of the students asked the boy next to him.

“Don’t read it. Just keep your eyes on your feet after the tour starts.” Chui Ming looked just shy of eighteen, and he was very timid.

“Is it that scary?” The other student had a hard time believing it. He tried to open the offer letter, but he was only halfway through when the lights in the elevator went off!

The darkness arrived suddenly, and the elevator was instantly filled with screams. Then, an eerie green light appeared from the four walls of the elevator.

Chapter 729: Photography Club

There was no screen in the elevator to show which floor they were on. Under the glow of the green light, the visitors’ panicked faces looked quite scary. They looked like ghosts who had returned on the seventh day of their death.

“Since there is no worker accompanying us, who can explain whether this means that the visit has officially started or not?” the man who walked at the front asked. He had come with his girlfriend, so he decided the he would not give up so easily.

“Oh! Chui has been here once. If you have any questions, you can ask him.” The shortest of the three students pulled on Chui Ming’s arm. The former appeared to be unfazed by the scare, but his body was more honest. The elevator continued to move up, and the few visitors all turned to Chui Ming.

The boy was taller than his peers. His skin was very white, and he blushed from being the center of attention. “We haven’t officially entered the scenario yet. The elevator will open to send us into the scenario. Nightmare Academy has six floors in total, and each floor has its own unique story. It is totally random which floor the elevator will stop at.”

“Which floor did you get the last time you came here?” the man in black asked.

“I can’t say for sure. The number of the floor is written in the corridor, but that day, I surrendered before even walking into the corridor.” Chui Ming looked like an honest child. He would answer all the questions that people asked.

“Didn’t dare enter the corridor? Is it because there are actors hidden inside the corridor?” Once Chen Ge spoke, he exuded an air of professionalism.

Chui Ming nodded. “There are a lot of actors working here, and they are very good at their job. The corridor is one of the places where they focus. Unless it is absolutely necessary, we’d better avoid that place.”

“Understood.” Chen Ge turned to look at the three students. As time moved forward, the atmosphere in the elevator became suffocating. The three students were squeezed together, and it was the timid Chui Ming who appeared the most collected.

“Based on my understanding, the entire tour of Nightmare Academy can last for two hours. Later, there will be plenty of parts where we’re required to work together.” Chen Ge looked at his teammates. “My name is Chen Ge. How shall I refer to the rest of you?”

“We are classmates. His name is Chui Ming, this is Lee Bo, and my surname is Gou, so you can call me Xiao Gou.” Of the three students, Chui Ming was the tallest and the shyest; Lee Bo was on the larger side, and he looked quite cute; Xiao Gou was very thin and was the shortest of them all. He was quite a chatterbox even though he was about as timid as Chui Ming.

“I am Lee Yuan, and this is my girlfriend, Xue Li.” After the couple gave their introduction, everyone turned to the silent woman who stood in the corner. The woman appeared like she had just survived a break-up, and she was still caught in its aftermath. Her eyes were red and puffy, and she was probably there to vent.

She is emotionally unstable. Hopefully, she won’t collapse inside the Haunted House.

Chen Ge studied the woman with his Yin Yang Vision. When he gave the worker his ID, he had already been recognized by Nightmare Academy’s workers. When the worker was handing out the items, he had purposely been singled out. Chen Ge obviously noticed that, but he was too kind-hearted to take issue with such things.

Now that there was such a strange person within their ranks, Chen Ge’s first thought was to suspect that she was actually a Nightmare Academy employee.

He studied her for a long time but could not find any residue of special make-up on her face. Assuming that she was really a worker there, it meant that she was an actor who would not rely on special make-up.

After jotting down this detail in his mind, Chen Ge stopped paying her any attention.

Hong!

The elevator shuddered, and the visitors all went to grab the railings on the walls. Several seconds later, the doors slowly opened, and a strange stench drifted into the cramped space. Compared to the natural presence at Chen Ge’s Haunted House, the smell was chemically enhanced, and it stung the visitors’ nostrils. The elevator doors opened to a world of darkness.

“Should we go out?”

“Brother Chui, is it this floor that you visited last time?”

“It doesn’t look like it. When the door opened last time, it led to a large hall with a new student welcoming ceremony.”

“What the... why is it so dark in here?”

“Is someone there?” Xiao Gou grabbed Chui Ming’s arm as he slowly nudged to the elevator doors. He switched open the flashlight and was about to aim the light outward when a head suddenly poked out from one side of the door.

Screams echoed in the elevator immediately. The three students knocked into each other, and Lee Yuan and Xue Li hugged each other tightly. The silent woman staggered one step backward, and her back knocked into the elevator wall. Of the whole group, only Chen Ge was unaffected as if he already predicted that this would happen.

After the screams petered out, the owner of the head switched on the lights in the corridor. The green light in the elevator went out, and the old-fashioned ceiling lamp in the corridor came on. The lamp flickered on and off. The wire was exposed, and the light pulled the shadows of the visitors long.

“Are you the new students?” The worker outside the elevator stood under the light. He was wearing an ill-fitting school uniform. “May I take a look at your offer letters?”

After checking the tickets, the worker made a vague gesture. “We haven’t had new students for a very long time. There are rumors saying that this place is not safe, that it’s haunted, but those are merely malicious rumors created by our competitors. This is just a normal school.”

Lee Yuan and Xue Li were the first to enter the elevator, so when they left the elevator, they were also at the front. Just as the couple were about to step out, a voice suddenly appeared next to their ears. “Don’t leave! Run! Do not go there!”

Xue Li was given the fright of her life, and she rushed out of the elevator while screaming. The other visitors followed suit. When everyone was out of the elevator, someone finally turned back to look. The innermost wall of the elevator had a pale green face that was screaming. Unfortunately, the visitors had already left the elevator. The blood red elevator doors that were decorated with strange electrical wires slowly closed. The sound of the man’s screams echoed in the empty elevator.

“3D projection?” Chen Ge had been staring at that face. It looked very real, but the eyes were rather empty as they stared fixatedly at a certain spot. This should be some sort of set program. If someone was standing there, it would be very scary, but unfortunately, since there was no one there, it was rather awkward.

“Look, there are always people who are trying to smear our name, but we are actually a very normal school.” The senior in the school uniform led the new students deeper into the corridor. “The school organized a welcoming ceremony for all of you. You should go take some pictures and hand in your physical check report. If there’s no problem, please come to the third floor for the welcoming ceremony.”

After walking a few steps, the senior stopped. He pushed open the door of an adjacent room. “Come and take some pictures.”

The words ‘photography club’ were written on the wooden door. The space inside was bigger than anticipated. A bunch of photography equipment was left in the corner, and the projector in the middle of the room was showing some kind of movie.

Chapter 730: Consecutive Scares

“Come, stand before the background.” The senior in the ill-fitting uniform picked up the polaroid camera from the table and urged the visitors to stand on the left side of the projector. “On the count of three, say cheese.”

The senior pressed on the snap button. His finger did not move away from the flash, so the flashes kept coming. Inside the dark room, the flashes were blinding, and the visitors all raised their hands to shield their eyes.

“Alright, the pictures are ready. I will go check and see whether the doctor has arrived or not. You should spread these pictures among yourselves. One last piece of advice, do not touch anything in this room.”

When the senior spoke, the camera kept ‘vomiting’ pictures. He picked up a random one, shoved it inside his pocket, and left after placing the camera back on the table.

The temperature of the air-conditioning in the room was low. The wind caressed the visitors’ exposed skin. The boys by the name of Chui Ming and Lee Bo assisted each other, and they edged toward the table. They picked up the pictures from the ground. “We’d better follow their instructions. There are many puzzle-solving missions inside the abandoned school, and the clues are normally hidden inside these small props.”

Chui Ming had his previous experience to attest to. The previous time, he had skipped over the job of collecting and analyzing these props, so in the end, he could only give up. Picking up the pictures, Chui Ming handed them out to the other teammates when he suddenly stopped. “Why is there an extra one?”

Chui Ming stood next to Chen Ge, who was at the back of the group. Chen Ge had not gotten his picture yet, but there were three pictures in Chui Ming’s grasp. Not counting his own and Chen Ge’s, there was an extra one.

“There must be some problem with that picture! What the f*ck! Take a look at this!” Lee Yuan screamed as he pointed at the picture that he was holding, “There is one extra person in the group picture!”

When the visitors heard that, they all looked down to check their own pictures, and they were shocked to find that an extra person had been standing next to Xue Li when they took the picture. She was wearing Nightmare Academy’s uniform, her face was pale, and she stared right at the camera with her head leaning softly on Xue Li’s shoulder.

“What the! But I didn’t notice anything at all!” Xue Li kept brushing her shoulder. She was normally an educated woman who would never allow herself to curse.

Chen Ge stared at the picture. “This hasn’t been tampered with. In other words, the actor, who had already hidden herself in the room earlier, sneaked out when the pictures were taken.”

It was the senior who chose where they should stand when taking the picture. The color of the wall behind them had a slightly different hue from the rest. Upon closer inspection, one could discern a spot where it was slightly bulging.

“I don’t want to stay here anymore. Let’s go.” Xue Li hugged Lee Yuan like a bullied marsupial.

“Don’t wander off alone. It’s safest to listen to the worker’s instructions,” Chui Ming warned. “No matter how scary the scenario is, you will not run into anything too creepy, but if you stray from the designated plot, you might run into the other ghosts and monsters hidden in the different scenarios, and then you’ll know the real meaning of despair.”

“Okay.” Xue Li leaned on Lee Yuan’s shoulder. She quickly tossed the picture aside. She was too scared to hold onto it. Her pretty eyes scanned the projected image on the screen. Xue Li had not seen this movie before. The main actors were mainly students; they had photography club’s nametags on, and the movie was shot right in that room. “Wait, come and look at this movie. This is rather strange.”

Everyone turned to the movie. The students in the movie were cleaning the room when one of the students found a dusty video tape at the back of the one of the cupboards. The students gathered together. They were confused and decided to see what was on the tape.

The movie did not have any sound—it felt like they were watching a silent movie. Thankfully, the actors had good acting skill, and they managed to explain the plot through expressions and actions. In the movie, the students placed the tape inside the player, and a strange scene followed. The visitors in the Haunted House stood inside the room for photography club and watched a movie about photography club’s students watching a movie inside the very same room.

The location overlapped, and even the angle of the movie was similar, only the viewers had changed. This kind of similarity could easily lead to some sort of psychological illusion. After adjusting the player, the movie started to play. It seemed to record an official activity carried out by the school.

The recording was very short, only one minute long. After the movie ended, the students repeated it several times, and they got into an argument. Since the movie was silent, the visitors could not tell what the subject of their argument was. After the argument settled down somewhat, they replayed the movie again.

When the movie ran to the forty-fourth second, one of the students pressed the pause button. His finger was pointing at the corridor at the corner of the screen and said something with a fear-stricken face.

The still of the movie zoomed in, and the visitors got a clearer view of what was happening. When the school was organizing some kind of activity, a shadow flashed across the corridor.

The students got into another argument, probably because some of them voiced their disagreement, thinking that it was merely a recording mistake. Their argument went nowhere, and the students gradually filed out of the room, leaving behind the student who was the first to discover the shadow.

The student repeated the movie several times like he was trying to prove something. Weirdly enough, whenever he repeated the movie, the human shadow in the corridor would get clearer until a human face could eventually be seen.

It felt as if the person in the corridor was moving closer. When he played it for the third time, one could see it was a pale-faced woman covered in blood standing in the corridor.

The visitors' attention was increasingly drawn to the movie. The focus of the movie shifted constantly between the student in the movie and the projection on the screen. Finally, on the fifth replay, the face in the corridor became the clearest!

The twisted expression caused the student much discomfort, and it caused the visitors' hearts to squeeze with trepidation. The student in the movie started to shake. With shaking hand, he tried to play the movie for the sixth time.

Once again, the movie stopped at forty-fourth second but this time, the shadow in the corridor disappeared. The student scratched his head and leaned closer to the screen. He studied the corridor at the corner of the screen closely. Right then, the screen hanging from the wall slid off, and a creepy face materialized on the wall behind the screen!

Bang!

Before the visitors had the chance to scream, the door to the photography club was pushed open, and the senior screamed at the top of his lungs. "Quick! Run! Didn't I tell you not to touch anything inside the room?"

Before the visitors understood what was happening, Xue Li felt a tug on the back of her head. She turned back to look, and the face that should have belonged inside the movie had appeared behind her!

"AH!" Her mind was broken. Xue Li dragged Lee Yuan and ran out of the room as fast as she could manage. This caused chaos to spread through the rest of the group. Only Chen Ge remained where he was, holding his backpack, studying the projector and the wall at the back of the photography club.

"One of them pulled open the door to attract the visitors' attention while the other sneaked out from the worker's passageway. The timing is flawless. This can only be achieved through multiple rehearsals. Nightmare Academy shouldn't be underestimated."