

The Hidden Moon



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Chapter 1

The Foreign House

Under the shadows of the clouds in the afternoon of October.

I step out of the airport shuttle pulled over by the freshly watered lawn with a group of colleagues who have departed from Bangkok together. The five of us exit the vehicle one by one and stare at the impressive building amidst nature by the foothills with Doi Suthep in the background.

"Wow...I didn't expect the real thing would be this amazing," muses Tan, a photographer on the production team, in astonishment. Next to him is his girlfriend, Namwa, a coordinator. Next to her is a bulky man, Tor, an assistant. Bing is an intern. And then, me.

In a far distance from where we are stands a massive two-story ancient house made of teak with some concrete parts of the bottom floor and the hipped roofs in wood shingles. The portico jutting forward looks exquisite with delicate stenciled wood, internationally influenced by the gingerbread house. The building is painted in light beige, while the window frames and doors are in pleasant grave olive green. The house had been abandoned

for decades before being renovated into this stunning building.

"I can't imagine what it'd be like to visit this place in its old state," murmurs Namwa.

"It would probably feel like a haunted house," says Tor.

We all turn our heads to him. He mumbles, "...Just kidding," and transfers our equipment from the shuttle.

Tor wasn't exaggerating, to be honest. This house belongs to the Treasury Department, one of over a hundred valuable ancient houses in Thailand that the Treasury Department treats as auction rentals for private companies to run businesses. The original uniqueness of the house must be maintained. Currently, it's becoming part of the luxurious resort by the foothills. The bottom floor will be converted into a dining area and a café, and certain parts of the house will allow visitors.

Our agency sent our team for the preproduction with Tan as the photographer who will capture shots of this place. I'm not involved in the photography process as I'm here as a copywriter.

I, a freelance blogger and writer, accepted this job to expand my connections. My task is to do research and document the history of this house for promotion. Besides a few brochures and beautiful pictures to post on the website, the client requests an epic, sacred story to attract attention to this place, which will draw tourists to book the resort and visit the fancy café in this ancient building.

The locals call this place 'the foreign house' because the original owner was a foreigner who moved to Thailand in the Fifth Reign. Regardless of that, I know they secretly (but widely)

call it 'the haunted house.'

I don't blame them for that. The photo of this place before renovation gave me shivers. 'Dilapidated' can't even describe it accurately enough. It was so huge, desolate, lonely, and depressing that I felt like crying just by looking at it. The building was in such a dull and poor state. The wooden partitions were cracked and decayed. The walls were peeled to the point I couldn't tell what color they were. In conclusion, the atmosphere chased people away.

I recall my conversation with the advertisement manager before she sent me here.

'I would like you to fly to Chiang Mai with Tan's group to collect more information. From the documents we've received, I'm afraid they're not enough. You should go to the real location, stay there for a couple nights, and talk to the locals. That way, you might find some interesting topics to spice up our article.'

'Are you saying I have to reside at the house, Kat?'

'Are you scared of ghosts, Khen?'

'Huh...? Ah, no,' I denied, maintaining the image of the new generation not believing in unproven supernaturality to appear impressive. 'Isn't it just a rumor?'

'Right. As far as I know, nobody died in that house, and I'm talking about an unnatural death. I still have no idea where the story about the female ghost came from. But Khen, you know the client has no intention of hiding it, right? He wants us to dig it and narrate it in the most unforgettable way.'

How am I supposed to narrate a ghost story in an unforgettable way?

'Do you want me to ask or interview anyone in particular?'

'The ghost in the house.'

Kat giggled after saying that. I laughed with her, though I was unsure why.

'Well, just fly there with Tan's group. You can stay in Chiang Mai for a couple nights or more as you like. We have someone there to take care of cleaning and breakfast for you.'

'Okay,' I agree only to earn money from this.

Kat smiles in contentment and leans over to whisper, 'Find a crazy story, okay?'

I'm currently at the location to carry out my task. We met the superintendent, Mrs. Jeam, who lives near the resort and commutes to work early every morning. She is the first local person that I plan to interview.

The resort isn't fully completed. The construction of the small, detached houses lining one side of the foreign house has been finished, but they haven't been furnished and decorated internally in some areas. The lawn and trees were only recently planted and installed.

Kat managed to get us accommodation in the restricted part of the foreign house. I'm uncertain if she placed us here because the detached houses were still being decorated. Although we will be staying in the regular rooms and not the master bedroom, they are in the same building.

This house is unbelievably spacious, indicating how wealthy the original owner was in that period. The building is U-shaped. Walking through the portico on the bottom floor, you will step into a gigantic hall that serves as a lobby. Next is a dining area, and further down is a café. Even without furniture or adornment, I can tell this place will be as magnificent as in its prime time once completed.

"Namwa and I will stay in the room on the bottom floor. We don't want to walk up the stairs," says Tan. We've been informed that there are rooms provided on both the upper and bottom floors.

The rest of us and I don't mind that. Since Tan and Namwa have chosen the room downstairs, Tor, Bing, and I head upstairs. Mrs. Jeam told us they'd prepared three rooms. One downstairs and two upstairs.

We walk through the massive hall and ascend the stairs to the top floor. My breath catches when I see the full view of the upper hall.

It's a living area leading to the balcony over the portico at the front with the floor-to-ceiling outer curtains left parted. The flimsy inner curtains display the green trees outside. The skylight above the balcony door is strikingly stenciled with a vine motif, and the floor of approximately one-cubit wooden boards is flawlessly polished. An antique grandfather clock is set against a wall near two light beige striped armchairs made of silk, flanking a semicircle wooden table. Everything looks extremely elegant, but the most outstanding object is an old piano,

a centerpiece on a large rug in the middle of the room.

"I wouldn't be surprised if I heard the piano playing at night," muses Tor. Bing abruptly glares at him.

Our rooms are on the left wing, prepared to be our temporary accommodation. The furniture will presumably be removed once the resort is completed and ready to open for business. Next to our rooms are empty rooms without a single piece of furniture. The right wing of the house, where the bedrooms of the original owner and his offspring are, is reserved for visitors to view. The furniture in those rooms is the remaining items from the old days.

Curious about those rooms, we walk to the right wing. Each of my footsteps is filled with guilty conscience as I head down the corridor to the other side. Every room is barred with thick ropes, so we can only observe them by the doors. There is one master bedroom and two small ones. The rest is empty. All the pieces of furniture feel mystical, be it the beds, cabinets, stools, or even the metal hooks fastening the chests to the floor.

After admiring the priceless ancient objects to our hearts' content, we return to the modernized wing. I choose the room near the stairs for convenience while Tor heads to the room next door.

I heave a sigh of relief at the sight of brand-new furniture, not the pass-on ancient one because that would've been strange. I step toward the wooden window, push it open, and inhale the fresh air.

The room overlooks a green meadow stretching to the

foothills. The blowing grass feels pleasant and relaxing. Farther away stand the uneven mountains, deep green and abundant from months of rainy season. I peer at a brown spot amidst the meadow. It looks like a hut. The land must belong to a local person, which will soon be distinctly divided by a concrete wall.

As I appreciate the view, someone pokes my arm, startling me. I turn to find Bing making an odd face beside me.

"Khen, can you share the room with me?" asks Bing.

"Oh...why?"

"I have a sixth sense." He glances back and forth in paranoia before lowering his voice into a whisper. "If this place has no ghosts, then it's fine. But if it does...I'm afraid I will see them."

I laugh, "Hey...so what? I'm not a monk. How will I help you?"

"Please, Khen...I'm begging you. Just keep me company. I can't stay with someone who keeps mentioning ghosts like Tor." Bing grasps my arm with pitiful conduct. "The bed is large in this room. I don't move around when I sleep."

I stare at Bing. I really want to refuse, but his face is both pitiful and amusing.

"Okay."

I agree, in the end. Nothing will happen between us. I'm attracted to men, and Bing is a good-looking guy in a fair, Chinese-looking way. However, my type is definitely not a young student like Bing. I prefer mature men my age or older—someone who can have sensible conversations with me, has the same level of wit, and isn't irritatingly whiny.

This is just a general description. I'm not saying I prefer

experienced men who are good in bed or something like that.

After unpacking and resting for a while, we're ready to explore Chiang Mai. Well...we will get to work eventually. But since we've just arrived, sightseeing for a bit wouldn't hurt anyone. Namwa suggests we check out Nimmanhaemin, the area full of stylish shops selling handmade products, restaurants, and unique cafés.

Chiang Mai is a city of cafés. We find one after every few steps. I try a coffee from a local brand and it tastes quite flavorful. We enjoy the atmosphere of the area before going to the rooftop of a department store to look at the view from a high angle. Then, we find something to eat on the street behind Chiang Mai University in the evening.

Street food stalls behind CMU start from the Agriculture Department gate to the Engineering Department gate. There are food carts and stalls lining the sidewalks, selling Thai dishes, Japanese dishes, noodles, steak, bakery, boba tea, shaved ice, or even soy milk.

We stumble across a superb dry ramen stall with around 6-7 tables, though they're mostly occupied by students. I have two dishes here. With our special stomachs set for savory food and desserts, we cross the road to try some sweet treats despite being full.

We arrive back at the foreign house at ten, feeling so full that we might crawl up the stairs. However, we promise to find something to eat on the street in front of CMU tomorrow together. Since I worked late last night, I'm already feeling sleepy. I take

a shower and go straight to bed.

The first night passes without any trouble. The weather is so pleasant that I fall into a deep sleep and wake up feeling refreshed in the morning.

For our first breakfast in Chiang Mai, we have aromatic coffee with toast and crispy bacon, served by Mrs. Jeam. She mentions that she didn't know our preferences, so she made the dishes, but we reassure her that it's totally okay and express our gratitude for the breakfast. We promise to take care of the other meals ourselves.

While everyone is enjoying breakfast in the atmosphere near the foothills, I take the opportunity to sneak into the kitchen to speak with Mrs. Jeam and gain more information about the house, beyond what was provided in the documents.

Mrs. Jeam has an assistant named Noi, a Shan girl who helps her with trivial tasks as ordered. When Noi carries a jug out of the kitchen, I grab the chance to approach Mrs. Jeam.

In ten minutes, I learn that Mrs. Jeam's first name is Pikul, whose tongue seems to have been gotten by a cat. She's a woman with few words, only saying, 'I don't know...I don't know,' or, 'Never heard of it,' or sometimes just going silent. I change my target to Noi. Although she's eager to chat, she has only been living in Chiang Mai for a few months and has not yet mastered the Thai language, not to mention her accent.

After having breakfast prepared by Mrs. Jeam, we head to the nearby Ton Payom Market to grab something to eat before starting our work.

Yes...we're going to eat again right after breakfast. This is not about filling our stomachs but the perk of being on an off-site project.

We settle at a congee place in the Ton Payom Market. I've heard that the pork blood soup and fried dough here are delicious. We order everything as if we haven't eaten anything.

"Bing...try this. It's good." Tan pushes a plate of fried dough and a cup of pandan custard toward him.

"You have it. I'm full," replies Bing.

"If you don't eat it, all mine," says Tor, shoving a large piece of fried dough into his mouth and humming like it's the best thing ever. He pulls the plate closer to himself.

Bing nods without a word. I notice Bing has been acting strange since morning. He looks oddly uncomfortable and fidgety. Soon, he blurts, "Hey, I'm thinking of booking a hotel tonight."

"Huh?!" we all shout.

"What's wrong?" asks Tor.

"Did you guys seriously feel nothing?"

"What did you feel?" asks Tor, again.

Apprehension seeps into Bing's face. "I got chills since I stepped into the house yesterday."

"Didn't you just need to poop?"

"No," Bing snaps. "There was really something. I have a sixth sense. When I walked inside, I felt it. I kept telling myself that it was all in my head until I saw it."

"What did you see?" Namwa's eyes widen in curiosity.

"Didn't you hear anything?" Bing is on the verge of tears.

"Thai music. It'd been playing since I returned to the house the second time last night. I drank beer, so I thought it came from somewhere else."

"What happened next?" asks Namwa.

"I went to bed normally like you guys, but then I needed to pee and headed to the restroom on the bottom floor. Everything was all right when I went there, but when I walked back, I saw your door was left ajar, Tan. The room was bright. I assumed you and Namwa were working and decided to tease you a little."

"Hey...Namwa and I went to bed before eleven," Tan points out.

"I thought it was your room. The farthest one in the corridor."

"That's not our room," says Tan.

"I know it now," Bing screeches.

I stroke his arm. "Calm down, Bing. Go on."

"I really saw it, Khen. Not just a glimpse of it. I saw it with my own two eyes. The long-haired woman was brushing her hair at the vanity, dressed in ancient Lanna attire. I was scared shitless. Good thing I peed, or I would've peed my pants. My legs froze and I couldn't move until..." Bing gulps. "She looked at me in the mirror."

"Shit...! I got goosebumps." Tor rubs his arms.

"I ran back to my room and squeezed next to Khen on the bed."

"Oh...I thought you were cold." I nod, remembering he was squeezing himself against me in the middle of the night.

"Are you sure you weren't dreaming? I slept near that room

and didn't hear or see anything unusual." Tan tries to rationalize it, either not to scare Namwa or because he doesn't believe in ghosts.

Bing's face darkens. "I don't know, but I'll stay in a hotel from now on and go back to work in the morning. I promise I won't be late and ruin the process. You guys didn't see anything. If you wish to stay there, that's up to you. Just count me out. Yesterday was a regular day, and yet that happened. Today is a Buddhist holy day with a full moon. I won't risk it."

Acknowledging his seriousness, none of us forces him to stay at the foreign house. Tor slides the plate of fried dough back to Bing as a consolation, but he turns away.

Once our stomachs are full, we return to the foreign house to start our work. Tan and the others transfer the equipment to the front of the building while I search for my working corner.

I choose the veranda near the dining area as my workplace. There's a table and chairs in this cool air, the breeze, and the weak sunlight. I turn on my laptop to check the information I've received and play piano music for the aesthetic.

As I read through the information, I start feeling stressed. The history of this house is quite fascinating. The original owner, Thomas H. Coleridge, was a British missionary who came to Thailand during the Fifth Reign to teach Christianity. Later, his timber business thrived, and he acquired this land from his business partner, who had a lineage of the royal family in the north. He built this grand house to reflect his wealth.

According to the records, he took his family back to England

and left the house to his close associate, who had served him before. His associate later moved out due to health issues, leaving the house to someone else until there was no one left. Eventually, the house was abandoned until it was taken over by the Treasury Department.

I let out a sigh. Although the information I have should be sufficient to promote the resort, I find it less captivating than I hoped. I wonder about the original owner's descendants. Did they not marry anyone in Thailand? What about the woman in ancient attire many people, including Bing, claim to have seen? This is not mentioned in any of the documents.

I continue working until noon, and then Tan asks me to join him for lunch. After the meal, I excuse myself to visit the CMU library in the hopes of finding more information than what I have found on the internet. The kind librarian assists me in searching for books about the people and events of that period that could be useful.

In the evening, we have dinner on the street in front of CMU as planned. I take a shuttle past Ang Kaew, a reservoir on a hill in CMU, shady and cool with a vast knoll and trees. People are chilling out and jogging here. The atmosphere is utterly pleasant. Nearby, there's a cute café for relaxation. I'm thinking of making time to jog at this place.

Since Bing is staying at the hotel, I will spend the night alone. I chant prayers before going to bed to calm my mind, and, as it turns out, I sleep well without seeing the ghost he talked about.

For three days, I spend time in the area. I went to cafés with my laptop, visited the library, and jogged at Ang Kaew as intended. This evening, after we've finished work and gotten ready for dinner, Tan suddenly suggests something.

"Let's go to Doi Ang Khang tomorrow."

"Oh...is your work done?" I ask.

"No, but almost. I could use a change of scenery. We haven't gone to any attractions since we got here, just eating. When I come back here again with the main team, I will have even less time. I want to spend a night at Doi Ang Khang and return here in the afternoon. Are you coming with us, Khen? Bing is going, too."

"Sure. I haven't been to Doi Ang Khang."

The next day, we all stand in front of a rental car to travel to Doi Ang Khang in District Fang of Chiang Mai to experience the morning fog and stargaze at the never-ending sky at night.

I look up at the sky, bright with the sunlight at this moment. The streaks of clouds resemble cotton candy. I turn my head to the foreign house under the blue sky and have no words to describe it but beautiful. This house is so stunning that it grasps your attention to the point that you lose track of time. This is a beauty from the past that still holds its charm in the present day.

After admiring the house, I shift my attention to the upcoming trip. I will have fun today and come back to wrap up my work tomorrow.

Stepping out of the property, the wind signals the end of the rainy season and the beginning of winter, wafting chilliness and

the refreshing scent of plants over me. Nothing implies that today and tomorrow will be different.

The sight before me will jarringly change and alter my life path in a way that I can never imagine.

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Chapter 2

See

It takes over two hours to reach Doi Ang Khang, but there are attractions on the way—a flower garden and a strawberry farm. Namwa rushes into the field of Margaret flowers as if drawn by a mysterious force.

I'm not a fan of flower gardens, but I absolutely love appreciating the view on a winding road in the mountain. Instead of turning on the air conditioner, we leave the windows open to breathe the fresh air.

How wonderful it is to flee from the hectic city life to nature. Even though it's a short time, I feel recharged. My mind is as clear as the view I'm seeing right now. The bends between mountains look like they're carpeted in green sheep fur with clouds dotting close to the surfaces. Layers of ridges extend endlessly. Green tea farm terraces line the mountain slopes. The damp smell of the rain mixed with the scent of the trees refreshes me with every breath.

We arrive at the resort at around four, our accommodation consisting of two huts with a wide balcony in the middle. I'm

sharing one with Bing and Tor.

Our dinner is a feast of fish and vegetable dishes. Fried sturgeon with garlic is incredibly delicious, and so is chayote fried with bacon. After dinner, we enjoy the view from the balcony. The air is so chilly that we need to wrap ourselves in blankets.

Fortunately, it's not raining tonight. The sky is open and speckled with stars. Bing brought his guitar. He strums on it and sings while Tor taps his wooden chopsticks to the rhythm. Tan and Namwa snuggle against each other under the starlight. How enviable. The atmosphere is incredibly comfy, like a different world.

But then, I accidentally ruin the happy moment when we get inside due to the intolerable frigid air. I take my laptop out of my backpack and place it on the bed.

Bing stares at me, his eyes popping out. "Khen, are you going to work?"

I laugh because he looks like he has just seen me tearing down raw chicken. "My head is clear in this nice weather. I'd better grab this chance to work."

"Do as you wish, but count me out." Bing looks appalled.

I turn on my laptop and open my file. Besides the foreign house project, I'm working on my own blog. Lately, I've been writing about the atmosphere and situations in Chiang Mai, including interesting attractions and great restaurants. Now that I'm here, I might as well make the best of it.

Bing plops on the soft mattress comfortably and pulls out

his phone. "This is nice. The signal here isn't as strong as in the city."

Tor and I exchange puzzled glances before Tor asks, "What the hell? How is a weak signal nice?"

"A strong signal is good as long as it sends only the necessary signal."

Acknowledging our confusion, Bing explains.

"Here's the thing, from my experience, which could be unlike other people's, I've noticed that places near cell towers, routers, or telecommunication spots that emit radio waves, phone or television signals, or internet connections seem to have something that allows me to sense other signals, like a junction system. I experienced the same thing in the foreign house...Ugh, the signal was deafeningly strong even when I just stood there. Very terrifying."

"Are you saying those signals make you see ghosts?"

"You don't have to say it out loud, Tor!" Bing glowers. "We're in an unfamiliar place right now."

"Wouldn't people who work for internet service providers be haunted all year long, then?" Tor is skeptical.

"Come on...Tor, not everyone has a sixth sense. I don't know if it has anything to do with your brainwaves. Some people can't see ghosts even if they want to. You can only see them when the waves collide."

"You'll definitely see one tonight."

"Huh...?"

"A blanket ghost." Tor appears resolute. "I...will go under your blanket."

"Sigh..." Bing exhales a sigh and flips to the other side in resignation, knowing Tor isn't gay, just playful.

The next morning, we've woken up at five to see the sunrise from the Monson viewpoint. The first light cascades across the sky in a golden orange hue, creating a breathtakingly beautiful scene. Tan takes countless photos to capture this unforgettable moment as much as he can.

The sky soon brightens, displaying the white fog shrouding the mountains. Yesterday, the clouds seemed to lower to the ground, but today we're witnessing a sea of fog. I can no longer tell if we're standing on the ground or on the clouds floating in the sky. The frosty air makes my hands and cheeks cold.

In the afternoon, after checking out of the resort and having lunch, we drive to a tea farm. The drizzle darkens and wets the leaves, which feels refreshing in a new way. The farmers are harvesting the tea leaves despite the occasional light rain.

We spend hours at the farm, admiring and absorbing nature as much as possible before returning to our normal lives. I've never felt this amazing drinking tea, all because of the smells of rain, earth, and fragrant plants in the wind.

When the sky dims with grey clouds, Tan speaks.

"Should we leave now? It gets dark quickly at the beginning of winter. We won't get to the city in time. I don't want to drive down the mountain in the dark."

Agreeing, we bid farewell to the tea farm and the mountain views before heading down the road.

As it turns out, darkness isn't our obstacle. It starts raining heavily on our way down, making the road slippery and requiring extra focus. Despite the winding road with sharp turns, Tan is able to concentrate and control the car well even with poor visibility.

However, no matter how in control you are, it has nothing to do with others.

Tan stomps on the brake when we make a turn and suddenly faces the other car accelerating up. That car swerves out of its lane and soars toward us, forcing Tan to turn abruptly. Namwa shrieks as our car slides off the road and plunges down the mountainside! Our car rocks back and forth from the impacts and bumps.

BAM!

Our car crashes into a tree. The right side of my head slams against the window and I black out in an instant.

"...Khen."

"Khen!"

The voices and the shaking on my arm bring me back to my senses.

I slowly open my eyes with a twinge in my head, my blurry vision gradually growing clearer. I tilt my head and feel sticky liquid trickling down my forehead to my right eye, causing difficulty in opening it. I touch the liquid to find that it's my blood.

"Khen, slow down," says Bing, hovering over me. "You hit your head. Use this towel to stop the bleeding."

He dabs the blood on my forehead and eye with the towel before pressing it on my hairline. I flick my eyes around. We're still

in the unmoving car that has just crashed into the tree. The front bumper is all crumpled. I must've lost consciousness for some time.

"Khen, how are you feeling? Does it hurt anywhere else?" asks Tan.

"Just my head," I answer.

"I'll call an ambulance," Namwa quavers, grabbing her phone.

"Wait," Bing cuts in. "Won't it be faster if we drive to the hospital?"

We look at each other. Bing actually made sense. It would take longer to wait for the ambulance to bring us to the hospital.

Tor asks Tan immediately, "Can you do that, Tan?"

"Yes," replies Tan without a pause.

We decide to drive down to the nearest hospital ourselves. Tan reverses the car slowly as I look out in terror. Had the tree not stopped us, we would've fallen off the cliff to the trees down there.

Tan safely brings us back to the road, to everyone's relief. The other car has fled the scene. Among all of us, I'm the most injured with my head hitting the window. The others got some bruises and sprains. Namwa's left arm aches, and Bing massages his neck all the way.

We reach the foreign house late at night, each of us all knackered. My head is throbbing after getting stitches. Tor is staggering on one leg, and Tan and Namwa look completely worn out. We must look like a group of zombies wandering around the neighborhood at night. What a long day.

The rain stopped a while ago, leaving only the chilly wind.

I walk across the damp lawn to the gigantic two-story house under the moonlight. The building looks dark, with only the light on the veranda. All windows are closed. It's also unlit and lifeless through the skylight.

I frown, noticing the shadow of curtains on the upper hall moving. There's a window next to the door opening to the balcony above the portico. I peer at it in perplexity. Nobody else resides in that area. Is it the wind?

"I'm not sure if we can work tomorrow," says Tan.

"How am I supposed to work while limping like this?" grumbles Tor.

"If we can, we will. But if we can't, we'll take a day off. We don't have much left to do, after all," says Namwa before turning to Bing. "Stay here tonight, Bing. Don't go to the hotel. If anything happens, at least we're together."

"Okay." He nods.

We enter the foreign house and go to our respective rooms. Bing carries his bag into Tor's room as it has two single beds. Meanwhile, my room has one double bed. He probably wants me to have a comfortable night's sleep without him taking up the space.

"Tell me if you need anything," says Bing, sticking his head out the door.

"Okay."

After taking care of my business, I collapse on the bed in exhaustion, my head stuffed with dark clouds. Hoping to feel better tomorrow, I take some paracetamol and fall asleep.

In the middle of the night, I'm jolted awake by thunder. I turn my head to the window by the headboard and realize it's raining. I switch on the nightstand lamp and get up to close the window to block the rain. I extend my arm toward the window with uncertainty...Wasn't it closed before? Did I leave it open before going to bed?

I shut the double-door window, struggle to bolt it because the frame has recently been painted, and step back. Before I reach the bed, the window bursts open and lightning strikes. The sight of a person standing by my side startles me to death!

But it's not a person. It's just a reflection in the closet mirror. I close the panel and place my hand over my chest, breathing slowly to calm my nerves. The house exudes an eerie vibe that's starting to get to me.

"Shit...I almost had a heart attack," I mumble.

Suddenly, I hear something moving behind me.

Tap...

Tap...tap.

I slowly turn around. The noise is coming from the bed...no, under the bed.

I stand rigid, engulfed by this strange wave that feels nothing like normal air. The noise is still audible, soft yet relentless, like it refuses to be ignored. I creep forward, not even imagining what I'm about to see under the bed.

When I reach the bed, I take my phone from the nightstand and turn on the flashlight since the area under the bed is safe from the lamplight. I crouch beside the bed, set one hand on the floor,

and bend down to check what's under it.

My eyes widen in stupefaction when the light touches an antique galvanized wind-up toy—a long-eared bunny riding a bicycle with its eyes brightly red on its white face, standing there on the floor. I pick it up to inspect it closely.

The galvanized metal feels cool in my hand. This item seems to be an ancient toy imported from abroad in the Fifth Reign. The pattern on the galvanized metal is vibrantly colorful, and the person-shaped bunny is in overalls. I flip it back and forth in wonder.

How long has it been under the bed? Since the first day I got here? Did someone leave it here or accidentally drop it? The winder still works well. Could this be an imitation of a toy in the old era? It can't be something from the 60's or 70's.

...And who wound it?

Before I can find the answer, the hair on my neck stands up. I detect movements on the bed out of the corner of my eye and quickly turn toward it. The sight shocks me!

A boy is sitting on the bed. His small face is pale, his body full of scratches. He's in a shirt and shorts topped with overalls like the bunny toy. He stares at me in resentment before he parts his crimson lips and lets out an ear-splitting scream.

"AH!!!!!!!"

"Whoa!"

I fall back and the window slams shut! It bursts open again, the panels hitting the wall. Lightning blinds me, followed by deafening thunder. I curl up and cover my ears, my heart pounding.

Once it quiets, I lower my hands.

I shift my gaze to the bed. The boy is gone.

In the nightstand light and the nippy air through the window,
I tremble on the floor and stare at the emptiness before me.

What did I see?

...Don't tell me that was a ghost.

A ghost of a foreign boy who died in this house!

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A massive, two-story ancient house is situated in a natural setting near the foothills, exuding a mysterious aura, awaiting the arrival of a group of people from the capital. Among them is **Khen**, a young, passionate copywriter whose job is to promote this conservation resort.

Despite the eerie and unsettling atmosphere and the frightening incidents involving a mysterious woman in the room at the far end of the corridor, Khen, who lacks a sixth sense, remains unfazed.

However, following a concussion from an accident, he begins to see and hear things he shouldn't, including encountering **Matthew Mas Coleridge**, the son of the original owner of the house, whose name, like his, means 'moon.'

Warning: violence, mental and emotional abuse, death, murder, attempted suicide, childhood trauma