

"Content Warning: >!Mentions of self-harm.!<"

I am a lab cleaner, and people have been staring at me recently.

This morning, I went out to work. A little girl was staring at me in the elevator of my apartment. She was staring at me from the 14th floor to the 1st floor. And her eyes never blinked once.

"Everyone will die."

She monotonically said when I left, she was still in the elevator. Everyone will die; no one is immortal; it is common sense. I thought she was a bit weird, but I wasn't horrified.

But this fearless state did not last long.

After I left the elevator, I rode a bicycle to the lab where I work. While riding, I saw people staring at me and smiling.

They were eating their breakfast; their breakfast was fish eyeballs porridge.

It is a traditional Cantonese dish with numerous fish eyeballs mixed with rice porridge. Countless fish eyes, big and small, rolled in the white rice porridge and were sucked into the mouths of those people. They were smiling, and their innumerable fish eyes were staring at me.

I felt a chill. Why were their eyes open so wide? They were dead white eyes, like dead white porridge. Their eyeballs looked fishy, and I smelled a fishy odour from their eyes.

A police car was passing me, roaring, sirening, flashing.

I looked at the street again; those people who ate fish eyeballs porridge disappeared, just leaving their empty chairs and porridge, fishy eyeballs porridge.

I turned to another road, and I saw that police car again. It stopped on the roadside, its door wide open. It was still sirening and flashing, but no police were in it.

I stopped my bike and shouted.

"Is anyone there? The police forgot to close the car door! The car will be stolen!"

A policeman emerged from a dark Alley.

"Everything is fine; I forgot to close the car door. I apologise."

He closed that car door. He was staring at me.

His eyes were wide open and bloodshot, with a tear of blood running down from the corner of his eye.

“Everything is fine; I forgot to close the car door. I apologise.”

He repeated; his eyes never blinked. He repeated the words like a tape recorder without changing his voice or tone. His voice is monotonous, just like that little girl I met in an elevator.

More police officers emerged from the dark, all staring at me.

I got on my bike and rode away as fast as I could.

My workplace is a high-security level lab, with many heavily armed soldiers guarding there. They were all staring at me through their mask of chemical protective suits.

I noticed in the lab yard that some soldiers were burning something with flamethrowers. They were burning corpses of animals, perhaps destroying animals used in experiments. I saw a woodcreeper burning. It was staring at me until its eyes gulped by the fire.

I entered the lab, and I am a cleaner there.

This job requires signing a non-disclosure agreement and a Disclaimer. The salary is very high, and there is a risk of contracting diseases. I don't care. Why should I care? I'm just a poor guy with no future.

A Sergeant told me the first mission of my work was to clean a room. His eyes are slightly red; it looks like he cried before. He was a good friend to me; we had previously smoked the same pack of cigarettes. But he was also my superior; I did not want to bother him.

I opened the door and smelt a fishy odour. I saw a woman lying on the ground, her blood-stained white coat telling me she was a researcher. She had been dead for a while. But her facial expression was still panicking.

She was staring at me; her eyes were wide open. I saw she was holding a surgical knife; she had used it to slice her wrist. There was blood everywhere. I spent a lot of time cleaning the mess. “just another suicide case.” I thought. I felt chilly but not very shocked. Many people committed suicide in this lab. Maybe some of them didn't really kill themselves. They may have been silenced.....

It is not my business.

I had to move the body and clean up the blood.

The body was too heavy to move; it seemed like there was iron in her body; she was just a tiny dead woman. Why did her body seem like more than 100kg? Getting the body into my cleaning trolley took me a lot of effort.

Suddenly, I noticed something on the wall.

It was a sentence written in blood:

“They are staring at me.”

I screamed aloud and ran away.

I met another researcher in the corridor.

Her name is Leslie Cotton. She is another woman researcher, but she is from the United States. She looks beautiful, and we always play VALORANT together during break time. I have a crush on her, and she treats me as a friend.

“ They are staring at me.....” I quivered, repeating that sentence Involuntarily.

But she seems to understand.

"Quit your job and leave the lab within one day. Go as far away as you can. That's all I can tell you."

I packed my package and prepared to leave. I told the director I wanted to resign. “Finish the job that the sergeant assigned you before you leave,” the director told me. He wore deep, dark sunglasses to cover his eyes.

I met the Sergeant in the corridor. He was smiling at me.

“Thank you,” he said.

“What?”

“Have you learned first aid?” the Sergeant laughed, his eyes wide-opened. His eyeballs were so extensive and bloodshot.

“Thank you for rescuing her!” he laughed hysterically.

I did not know what was wrong with him. Did he do drugs? But I had no chance to ask questions.

His walkie-talkie abruptly started to make a sound.

“Code 1408! There is an emergency! Call for reinforcements!”

He seemed stunned, grabbed his gun and ran away.

I walked toward my cleaning trolley. I found it blood-stained.

Distant bursts of gunfire were heard in the distance.

The laboratory alarm suddenly sounded, and footsteps and vague shouts were heard in the distance.

The cleaning trolley slowly slid towards me, leaving two long, bloody trails.

It suddenly accelerated toward me. I freaked out and ran, hoping to get rid of it around the corner.

I hit a woman at the corner.

She was Leslie Cotton.

We both fell, and the cleaning trolley hit me as well. I found it damaged and torn, with numerous holes. It seemed like some bugs were locked in it, but they broke free. It slid because a bottle of detergent leaked and spurted. But what about all that blood? Why was the body gone? I opened the bottle of detergent and found a half-corroded eyeball inside. It wriggled slowly, staring at me.

“What the fuck is this?” I yelled.

Leslie Cotton did not answer; she poked my shoulder and pointed her finger toward another side of the corridor.

It was the dead woman I cleaned in the morning. Or at least it was the corpse of her. It stumbled toward us in an unnatural gesture. It seems like a legion of worms devoured it from the inside and used its skin as a muppet. It squirmed towards us. And it started smiling, its mouth splintered, and an enormous eyeball was gazing at us from its throat.

Leslie Cotton and I huddled together, screaming. Because of our fear, we forgot to run away.

The thing was getting closer. The eyeball inside its throat was fissioning. It split into two, and one of them bounced toward us. I blocked it with a wooden mop. But it stuck to the wood.

The eyeball is multiplied on my wooden mop, absorbing the wood as nutrients. They were like mushrooms on a tree, splitting, multiplying, and popping up. I threw the mop away in fear. The corpse, which was controlled by the eyeballs, slowly approached.

It was staring at me. A third eye grew in its forehead.

It was about to bounce in my eye.

Fire.

It was devoured by fire, eyeballs contorting and shrieking in the blaze. And it burned into ashes.

A soldier wearing a chemical protective suit stands behind us. He holds a flamethrower in his hand. He is the sergeant I met before.

"You guys are safe now," he said.

"I thought she was still alive, but it looks like she is already a corpse controlled by monsters."

The sergeant's face, hidden by a transparent mask, looked melancholy and calm.

"Do you know how to use this?" He handed me a pistol, a Type 54 pistol—the Communist army's large-calibre weapon, capable of killing an elephant with one shot.

"Yeah," I said, "I learned how to shoot when I served in Militia."

I took his pistol.

After I took the gun, we found a body on the ground. It was a dead security guard holding a riot shield. The sergeant set the body on fire, sterilised the shield with flames, and when the shield cooled, Leslie picked up the shield as a weapon.

"There is something wrong with this lab. I suspect an insider sabotaged something and caused the leak." the Sergeant said.

"Bullet can only slow those things." he pointed toward the stairs. "There are some spare weapons and flamethrowers in the basement. The passcode is 1408. Normally, I shouldn't tell you guys that. But we are in an emergency; those damn things are proliferating so fast. We need more soldiers....."

I walked toward the stairs, Leslie Cotton still standing beside him.

"What voice?" he suddenly paused.

"Hold your guns tight. I hear some squirming noises." the Sergeant spoke alarmingly.

"What voice?" Leslie Cotton and I replied.

"We heard nothing."

"I was kidding!" the Sergeant laughed. We relaxed.

But he was still laughing. He laughed harder and harder.

"What? What? What voice?" His eyes widened; there were four pupils in them.

"The crawling voice is inside me!"

His protective suit busted open. He struggled on the ground, countless eyeballs pouring out of his torn chemical protective suit, those eyeballs jumping, squirming, fissioning and

proliferating. Myriad eyeballs were moving closer to the corner, closer to Leslie Cotton, who was cornered, curled up in the corner and crying.

"Don't!" I yelled. Those eyeballs did something awful to me. They killed my friend. Those disturbing monsters killed the Sergeant, who was one of my only two friends, my superior and my saviour. And now they want to hurt Leslie Cotton; I would not let this kind of thing happen again. I would not let them hurt my other friend.

I pulled out my gun, turned on the safety and aimed it at the countless eyeballs.

"Don't hurt my friends," I said to the pile of eyeballs.

Those things felt my wrath, and thousands of eyeballs turned around, their eyes overlaying Leslie's terrified gaze.

They are staring at [me.](<https://youtube.com/@misszhang1408?si=aKNIApJ2d6ytnp9C>)