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Rigor Mortis

By Lai-Yin Leung

I left the village when I was thirteen.
I became a leading actor at sixteen.
I was once very successful.
But if you ask me again,
I did it all just to get by.
I never imagined I would end up
in this shit hole...
...at this point in my life.
Many people say the film world is ridiculous.
However, life is even more ridiculous.
I once said, if I lose my memory one day.
Someone will have to teach me how to smile again.
Smiling is tiring.
I'm very tired.
And I don't want to go on.
Hey, let me help you.
I was having lunch,
and completely lost track of time.
You're the one they call Uncle Yin?
Well, most of the time they just call me Gramps.
But those who have been here for
a while call me 'Uncle Yin'.
It's just a name. It's whatever.
Uncle Yin, are you the only security guard here?
There's no one but me.
I know everyone and everybody here.
Family backgrounds,
even when they take out the trash and stuff.
It's a safe neighborhood, don't you worry.
Come on in.
It's not too bad in here.
No one's lived here for a while.
It just needs to be tidied up and
it will be as good as new.
Uncle Yin.
What is this? That's really not necessary.
Please take it.
It will be.
I only opened the door for you.
I was just doing my job.
You're too kind.
Most people leave this place and move up,
never the other way around.
But I've never seen someone famous move in here.

Well, since you are moving into a new place...
it is important to perform the rituals.
You know, just to say hi.
Put your stuff down...
Here, take this. It's just a polite gesture.
Shall we?
Calm down now...
Nothing crazy, alright? Show respect.
Don't do anything crazy now.
With respect...
I'll leave you alone now.
What time is it, Mr. Fox?
It's twelve now Daddy.
Mommy wants me to go to sleep.
When are you coming back?
Today, she made me wash off the watch you drew.
I haven't seen you for days...
When are you coming back to draw me another one?
Don't forget your blanket.
Lights out...
...who are you talking to?
Hear my prayer... do no evil...
get out you devils...
Everything's alright now.
Let him be. He needs to be alone.
Let's go.
Get some rest then.
Off you go, everyone...
Everything's good now.
You should all go home and get ready for dinner.
What time is it, Mr. Fox?
It's twelve now Daddy.
Mommy wants me to go to sleep.
When are you coming back?
Today, she made me wash off the watch you drew.
When are you coming back to draw me another one?
Don't forget your blanket.
Lights out...
Pardon me, pardon me... Good luck to you...
You don't have to thank me.
I'm sorry for eating your chicken.
I'm sorry... I'm sorry...
I'm sorry, I'm sorry...
I beg your pardon, sorry to be a bother...

Good luck to you...
you need to watch out for yourself...
He's been here for an hour nursing that one beer.
He's probably waiting for you.
Why are you so late?
It's going to be busy as hell in a minute.
So? We never have that much customers anyways.
I know exactly who sits where and who orders what.
Ping always has the steamed
meat with preserved vegetables
and a double order of
the house special glutinous rice.
Old Chung and Jill have
the stir fried fish with noodles,
vegetables, and some of our rice with extra oil.
Wing Ping will have
the steamed fish with scallions, less oil,
and some pork with
a double order of glutinous rice.
Yung, Keung and Kit always have
the Soup of the Day along with our rice,
and salty fish with vegetables to eat here.
Auntie Lai, a bowl of white rice with
the Soup of the Day; but to go.
Auntie Lai passed away last month.
So? She still needs to eat, doesn't she?
We prepare exactly 28 bowls of
glutinous rice every day.
Who is this order for?
I'll cook these myself. On the house.
If it wasn't for Brother Yau's generosity,
you would be charged double for that!
House special kale and fried ribs.
Two bowls of congee! Split two ways.
Auntie Mui.
Wait a minute. I'll be right there.
Auntie Lai, you should be on your way now
after you have had a good meal.
You should eat while it's hot.
Why do you have your food split two ways?
I have diabetes,
and I can't eat salt. Doctor's orders.
Yau is very kind.
He makes two portions for me.

One half is regular. The other is low sodium.

So it's good for both my husband and I.

- Is the steamed rice ready?

- Fuck off.

He's not as kind as Auntie Mui though.

She's an angel.

She helps out by sewing everyone's clothes.

She takes care of the kids in the building.

Cooks and helps with groceries too.

Listen to all those sweet words.

What is it you need this time?

Can you alter the waist a bit?

Yes, of course.

But please don't let Uncle Tung know.

Last time he found out,

he was telling me off the whole way home.

Have to get back to work.

I don't want to piss my boss off.

Are you good with sewing?

Not really.

I have nothing else to do. So...

I look for something to do.

Just trying to help where I can.

Do you have clothes that need repairing?

Well...

I have some old film costumes

from my movies.

I've kept them for years.

It's a pity how damaged

they have become over the years.

I can help you...

so you can keep them in better condition.

So... how long are you planning to stay here?

Why do you ask?

Nothing really.

I'm sorry for being nosy.

Have you noticed anything

in apartment 2442?

It's been vacant for so long.

You know what I mean, don't you?

I don't believe in those things.

It's probably for the best you don't.

Is this meant to be worn by humans?

Why does a pig need to wear clothes?

Stop moving or I'll prick you!
Have you seen those pig feet of hers?
She's so fucking fat.
Just you wait and see.
Yau's place is going to close down.
That fat pig eats everything!
Gosh... that mouth of yours!
You know what I think. It's a conspiracy.
Yau and that fat pig want us to
end up fatter than her!
Her squinty little pig eyes.
Old man, they don't charge us for it, you know.
That's the point! Free food and large portions.
How is that not a conspiracy?
I'm telling you.
Someday, I'm going to kill them with
a fucking nuclear bomb.
Ouch! That hurts!
Fucking parents, letting their kids out
at this time of the night.
Your glutinous rice is amazing.
So, where does that get me?
You make the best in town.
What more do you want?
My great-great grandfather
started carrying glutinous rice,
with him way back in the old days.
You probably know that it's
not just used for cooking, right?
What else? For hunting Vampires?
Oh? So you know that Vampires
are afraid of glutinous rice? Eh?
In the old days, all successful Vampire Hunters,
had special relationships with
the best rice shops.
They get discounts for
the glutinous rice they needed.
Rice was really worth something back then.
Vampire hunters carried glutinous rice
with them at all times.
This relationship was passed down
from generation to generation.
And subsequently to me.
All the Vampires have miraculously vanished,

along with all the Vampire hunters.
So what do Vampire Hunters do
when there are no fucking Vampires left?
They cook.
Thank you for saving my life this morning.
You mean getting in your way?
But just because I stopped you once,
doesn't mean I can stop you the next time.
Save it and thank me
if you're still around next time.
Old man, where have you been?
It's late.
I was looking for you.
I was here.
I was afraid of losing you.
Why are your feet still so cold?
Soaking isn't helping?
Are you not feeling well?
I'm alright.
I'll be back in a few days.
Wait for me.
Master, I'll leave it to you then.
Don't worry. I will take care of it.
This is a token of my appreciation.
Please accept it.
I'll be on my way now.
Gau.
Let's talk privately.
Auntie Mui, that's a lot of groceries.
Yes. Tung... Tung is coming home.
He loves fish.
How is he?
He's good. He is coming home.
I should get back to work now.
Auntie Mui.
Pak.
You can't come here anymore.
Run along now. Be a good boy.
To preserve the body we must choose a dark place,
within the place where he was last living.
In order to be discreet.
We bury his body in soil in the bathtub.
Later, we move the body into a coffin,
in total darkness,

suspended off the ground.
We will use crows' blood instead of chicken blood,
which will work with the amulet on his chest,
collecting the essence of his "yin" spirit.
Clouds of the spirits...
open... against the gods' will...
Remember, never take the mask off.
How much longer until Tung comes back?
In seven days,
Tung's spirit will come back.
It may be the perfect time then.
May be?
What if it doesn't work?
If it doesn't work, there's another way.
What is it?
It's very extreme. A last resort.
We will talk later.
Clouds of the spirits... open...
blessed by the ashes...
spirits... grant me the power...
against the gods' will...
Mommy!
The roast pork is nice.
They are gone now. They won't come back.
Just walk against the wall
at this hour every night.
Good luck to you. Good luck to you.
Good luck to you.
Honey, The dying plant you brought home last week,
it blossomed last night.
Please don't misunderstand.
I'm seventy-two.
If I weren't looking after the two of them,
I would have retired long ago.
I didn't want them sent away!
They've been asked to leave many times...
So I found them a place to stay.
Why is that woman hanging around all the time?
She lived in 2442 for years.
She was reserved and didn't speak much.
She had a warm smile.
Her husband seemed like a nice man.
He was a tutor to two twin girls
in the neighborhood.

Feng goes back to 2442 every day.
She gets scared, then leaves,
and returns the next day.
She doesn't dare to go inside,
but she can't stop herself from going back.
Her kid is a good boy.
She gathers the food offerings her neighbors
leave outside their doors.
He just gobbles it all up without a word.
Is the bike yours?
How about I fix it for you?
Dear, you don't like the food?
You haven't touched your plate at all.
It's been getting windy lately.
It's harder for me to go up and down the stairs.
Maybe I gained weight.
Maybe I did.
Maybe it's a conspiracy.
Yau... and that fat pig.
It's a big conspiracy.
Yes it is, yes it is...
Gosh, that mouth of yours!
Dear, we are not young anymore.
We will be a hundred years old sooner or later.
If you get cold, you have to bundle up.
Take care of yourself.
If you're not happy, you have to speak up.
Don't keep it inside, okay?
The flowers are all dried out.
You told me not to climb up and down for them.
I can't do it all on my own.
There are only two of us left, you know?
Did I prick you? You have to tell me if I did.
Please don't leave me alone.
You said you would come back.
Why aren't you eating? You don't like the food?
You shouldn't smoke too much.
I need to get one more pair of chopsticks.
Take a seat.
You expecting company?
Nah, just my flat mates.
You can see them?
Sometimes.
And you still stay here?

Do you think they are all haunted?
They are attached to the land itself,
not to the house.
I have stayed here for decades,
but they have been here for centuries.
I will probably be living here when I die.
It makes sense to develop
a good relationship beforehand.
I need your help.
It's about apartment 2442.
Do you think any museum will want this stuff?
Should I sell them to one of
those places that collects scrap metal?
Are these things from your father?
Yes, from many generations.
The brown stains, that's blood.
It's so deep that it can't be washed away,
No matter how hard I tried.
Back in the days, there were a lot of
eerie things in my village.
We took care of them with these tools.
Where is your family now?
In this business, no one gets a happy end.
Five hours, Five Hours...
I will return before midnight.
Five Hours.
Four hours?
I just remembered my father
would leave me at our neighbor's place,
whenever he went to work.
Being a Taoist monk, he really didn't earn much.
The money he earned wasn't
even enough to pay the babysitting fees.
Thanks.
For many generations,
my family called wherever home.
But there was never a fucking home.
This was the last place my father brought me.
He planned for us to stay for a few days.
We ended up living here for decades.
How come?
I will come back for you before midnight.
He went out one night and never came back.
After all, it's all fate.

Pak drew this.
So what?
I did all I could the last time.
If you are scared, that's your problem.
It's not their fault.
Feng is mentally ill. She should go to a doctor.
After all, I'm just a cook.
You can help, why don't you?
Why the hell is it your business?
How do you know I can help?
You don't even know me.
Do you even fucking know them?
Cut that shit, are you helping or not?
Are you even capable of helping others?
Look at yourself. You're a fucking mess!
What's that supposed to mean?
That's obviously drawn by a kid,
The ink's already faded and
you're still keeping it.
Couldn't let it go, could you?
If you really didn't care,
you wouldn't bother
keeping all these things, would you?
In humans, there are both the good and the bad.
It is with spells as well.
The darker the color of the amulet paper,
the greater the power of the spell.
To ask for power from the gods this way is evil.
It is an extreme measure
that endangers yourself and others.
Trust me, this is not that simple.
Thank you.
You son of a bitch!
You used his life as bait for the twins.
I've asked for your help before,
but you refused.
I didn't have a choice.
I might as well have done it on my own.
You know how powerful those twins are.
You forced me to get involved.
At least it's all over now.
You don't look that great. You're really pale.
Like you're running out of time or something.
The cabinet can't possibly

hold them for much longer.
Burn it.
Let me take care of it.
Once I perform the ceremony.
I'll burn it.
We have to stay like this forever.
Yes, forever.
When can we go home?
As long as we are together,
anywhere is our home.
Look, it's still here.
Thank you.
Pak, stop playing and eat some food.
It won't snow in Hong Kong, will it?
No, I haven't seen it.
So, will it?
It may.
Mommy said, white is
the most beautiful color in the world.
Is it?
Yes.
Glutinous rice with vegetables!
What's wrong with you people?
Prepping for a funeral?
You all smell like menthol and eucalyptus oil.
We didn't use any.
Iced lemon tea!
Iced lemon tea.
One iced lemon tea, coming right up!
Eat it while it's hot. Okay.
Hey, did all of you get
your clothes repaired by Mui?
Yeah.
Has anyone seen Uncle Tung lately?
Nope. How about you ask Uncle Yin?
Feng told me that some guy killed Tung.
She said that the guy had a lot of kids with him.
Kids? Here?
Feng is nuts. You believe what she says?
The railing on the stairwell
is all bent and screwed up.
Look at this. I found
this tooth beside it.
What? Is there a name on it?

It looks like Tung's gold teeth.
Every night at eleven,
he opens his eyes.
His feet bang the top of the coffin.
As if he wants to jump.
Did you take off the mask?
This is normal.
Don't take off the mask.
Everything will be fine.
How much longer do I need to wait?
Besides the growth of his hair and his nails,
it doesn't seem like anything is happening.
I've been feeding him crows' blood every day.
Should I get some blood from a black dog?
The blood of black dogs is useless.
Trust me, just go home.
Gau, you said that there was another way.
What is it? Please tell me.
What I need is the blood of a virgin.
Do you know how to get it?
Don't draw any attention to yourself,
Tung will come back for sure.
Just remember, never ever take the mask off.
Uncle Yin, what do you want?
Sorry to bother you, Gau.
I received some complaints.
Someone said there are kids
making noises late at night.
I told them, it's impossible. You don't have kids.
It's my responsibility to come by and check.
Well, thanks.
Auntie Mui!
What a surprise to see you.
I went to your place,
but it's been locked the past few days.
I thought you went back to your home town.
How is Tung?
He's fine. Thank you.
Really?
Hey Gau.
I've known you since you were a kid.
You're still messing around with
that black magic shit.
Where is Tung?

Pak, are you going to Auntie Mui's apartment?
Hi there Auntie Mui. I haven't
seen you around lately.
Is everything okay?
Everything's fine.
Tung is unwell. I need to take care of him.
He's just getting old. It's nothing.
Take care of him.
Pak!
Don't bother Uncle Tung!
It's alright. He's just a child.
Well, I'm off then.
Auntie Mui, I need to pee.
You really want to go to the bathroom?
Alright then.
I created it.
It started out as an accident.
You always warned me that
my evil ways would be within me.
My final years has been unpleasant.
Terminal stage of lung cancer.
The cigarettes I smoke
are made from ashes of the unborn.
Their yin for my yang. It's the choice I've made.
The smell coming out of Auntie Mui's apartment,
was from the preservatives.
You were in the process of
turning Tung's corpse into a vampire.
The twin ghosts
were needed to bring him back to life.
At eleven every night, you must scatter
a packet of this onto his body.
This will get rid of the smell of rotting flesh.
I will come over tonight.
The twin ghosts are different from
the unborn child.
Two lives as one. They are more potent.
I need a body that was big enough as a vessel
to hold them.
If we didn't use the mask and the oil,
Tung's corpse would have been out of control.
I never thought it would turn out like this.
Iran out of time.
Pak!

Pak!

Pak!

Pak, where are you?

Pak, where are you?

Tung was the body without the spirit.

The twins were the spirits without the body.

I'll prepare a trap in the hallway.

I'll try to attract the vampire with the corpse oil.

Go find Feng.

Be quick!

Pak...

Pak...

The twins have possessed the vampire.

It happened so fast,

they were gone blink of an eye.

Is there any way, you can help me fight?

No! If I do that, you'll fucking die.

I should have died the first day I was here.

I still owe you my appreciation from that.

We're even now.

Let's give it a try.

Let's hope the corpse oil will attract the vampire.

Once you're inside the trap,

a cigarette is all the time you have.

Once it burns up,

you'll never be able to come back.

It's all on you now.

WATER:

WOOD:

We're running out of time!

Hurry the fuck up!

EARTH:

METAL:

FIRE:

My dear Tung,

let's leave together.

Shall we?

Trimming your toenails again?

Get to work, you burn!

Would you like pork chops, sweetie?

Help, somebody! Help!

Dr. Choy, someone's here to ID the body.

You are...?

I am his son.