



# THE DEATH-DEFYING OUT OF THE DEATH-DEFYING OUT OF THE DEATH-DEFYING OUT OF THE DEATH-DEFYING

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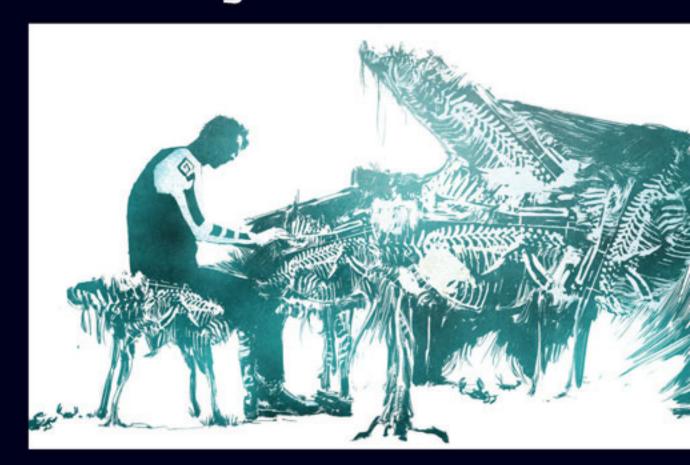
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#### THE DEATH-DEFYING DOCTOR MIRAGE® #4 (of5)

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# The story so far...



Doctor Mirage talks to the dead...but the only spirit she couldn't reach was her late husband, Hwen.

Today, Shan Fong-Mirage is haunted and raw. Since losing her husband and partner, the professional paranormal investigator has been working through her grief and struggling to keep herself together. Relucantly, Mirage agreed to a lucrative freelance job, in order to save the beloved home she shared with Hwen. She met an eccentric billionaire named Linton March, who asked Mirage to sever the binding that tethered him to a powerful, otherworldly creature kept prisoner in his basement. Mirage was about to refuse the shady job, when the prisoner secretly told her that if she accepted, she could seek the spirit of Li Hwen Mirage in the underworld, with the Pale Mistress.

Mirage filled her coat pockets with objects of spiritual power, performed an arcane rite, stepped outside her physical body, and crossed an astral doorway from her home office into the worlds beyond ours. But she didn't know March had friends. Fellow members of March's Cold War-era team of occult researchers found out that he had hired Mirage. For enslaving this creature's power to their will decades ago, these five men became wealthy, long-lived, and successful-but March wanted to cut them out.

On the other side, Mirage discovered that the wall separating our world from the beyond was crumbling-torn to pieces by irresponsible magic users like March and his cronies, who take power from other worlds without repairing the rift. Should the wall crumble any further, a demon named lyros stands at the head of an invading army, determined to take our world in a reign of blood. Ivros was about to capture Mirage for her power, but she tricked him into a cage that can only be opened by someone who will take your place. It was a gamble, because if Ivros gets out, Shan's obliged to owe him a favor.

In the physical world, March's team of occultists found the location of Shan's unconscious body inside her home, and abducted her, unawares. But within the worlds of the dead, Shan finally arrived at the court of the Pale Mistress, a capricious deity who wanted what only the Mirages could give her: an item imbued with the spirits of the dead at sea...a staff lost at the bottom of the ocean when Hwen and Shan drowned, and only Shan was resuscitated. The staff had belonged to the Pale Mistress's favorite trophy...the inanimate spirit of Hwen Mirage!



