

# **A Titleless Story**

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*A strange story of Henri, Cornelius, Regina, and Jamaica: Some out-of-place people in a psyched out world.*

*((FYI, Henri is a French name pronounced Aun-ray, he's not Henry))*

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# 1 - Cornelius and Jamaica

Cornelius walked quietly down the busy street, the hood of his sweatshirt pulled carefully over large, floppy cat ears. Humans despised catkids: people with DNA with an extra supernatural element woven in. Humans related them back to werewolves and vampires. "If bitten," was their theory, "You will become one of their kind." We weren't like that, and if we were, what catkid would bite a human..? They taste awful anyway..

The boy stepped into a shop. He was wary of this shop, it was where he'd blown his cover once before, that was an unpleasant experience, was a painful one too. The shopkeeper had bumped into a coat hanger, one of the hooks swung out and hooked the boy's hood down, exposing his ears. Yeah, the whole thing was a pain in the neck. The upside of it all was that the shopkeeper had been reduced to a snuffling lump sitting behind the cash register. He sat there, his feet off of the floor, eating his lunch. Cornelius used his penname where ever he went in the human world, of course, but with this man, he was especially picky. The hooded figure slipped behind a rack of chips as a woman walked in and started talking animatedly to the cashier, who surprisingly enough spoke back in that same happy voice. Cornelius snatched a bag of chips and a soda at random and headed to the counter.

Just as the boy reached the counter, the woman looked around, scanning him. "Hey, cutie." She giggled.

"Hello, miss.." Was Cornelius's reply, making an extreme effort to make sure his cattish, vampire's teeth didn't click as he talked. The man behind the counter rang up the chips and soda, "So, like I was saying, he runs the motorbike off of the jump and he goes, 'What the heck'd I do that for?!' and then he hits the lake." The girl returns to listening intently to the man, laughing at an unseen joke in the perfectly logical sentence the cashier belted out. Cornelius could see saying "What the heck'd I do that for?!" if he ran a motorcycle off of a ramp and into a lake perfectly acceptable.. or he just didn't see the humor in human logic.

He handed a five dollar bill to the man for the two dollar item and headed for the door, not waiting for change. And then it happened again, the girl reached out, meaning to grab the boys shoulder and pulling the hood off instead. A shaggy, brown haired head appeared, ears clearly visible now. He turned around and hissed, having just enough time to kick the girl in the shins before that man behind the counter yelled, "*You!?!?!?*" and he pulled a tranquilizing gun out from under the countertop. Cornelius didn't have enough time to turn and run, because the dart hit his shoulder with a *thump*. He felt the tranquilizer seep into his veins. His vision clouded, but he was determined to destroy anything before he blacked out. He ran at the girl and knocked her over, leaping over her onto the counter. He had just enough time to slash the man's arm before he shot the boy a second time, this dart pierced his arm. A second wave of exhaustion sliced into his brain like a steak knife, but he smiled, revealing vampiric teeth to the man, and slumped over backwards dramatically, landing headfirst on the tiled floor.

Cornelius awoke in a dark room, his head throbbing painfully. *Have I been captured?* Meandered across his addled brain. He raised a shaking hand, feeling for the box that was surely incasing him, but he felt nothing. Puzzled, he lowered it again, it landed upon soft sheets. *Ah, I'm in bed, but where?* Thought He. He heard a knocking, and his eyes flickered open. "Come in." He croaked, struggling into a sitting position. A door opened in the corner. "Hi! Glad to see you're awake." Said a voice filled to the brim with sunshine. "Don't mind if I turn the lights on, do you?"

"No, go ahead." Replied Cornelius. Lights burst into life above him, dazzling his weary eyes. A girl, who couldn't be any older than thirteen walked into the room, a clipboard in her heavily bandaged hands.

"My name's Jamaica. I'm just going to ask you a few questions." Said Jamaica kindly and the clipboard slipped from her hands.

"Are you okay?" Asked he, pointing at her band-aided hands.

"Oh, yes. That's nothing. I just.. er.." She picked up the dropped board.

"Come on, I won't laugh if that's what your thinking." He urged.

"Okay, fine. I.. I don't.." She stuttered, "I don't like needles." She finished, crossing the room quickly.

"They make me shake, and when I try to do something with them, they just.. go where I didn't intend."

She raised her hands. "But, I deal with needles, and if I need to scrape a living, I guess a couple of pin pricks isn't a bad exchange."

"Ah." He sighed, listening to her story.

"Okay. Number one." Said Jamaica, pulling a rolling chair up next to the bed. "Do you know where you are?"

"No." He replied truthfully.

"You're at Lexis Hospital for Catkids and other Socially Challenged Beings." She shrugged, pointing to his ears, then hers. "Number two: How old are you?"

"Thirteen." Replied he. She scribbled something down on the clipboard.

"Number three: What happened to you?"

"Uh.." He thought hard. "My ears were exposed in a human infested.. I mean, inhabited area."

"And?" Jamaica tempted.

He sighed. "And I inflicted bodily harm to a human." He stared at her. "Happy?"

"Yes, I am." She smiled and set a plate of breakfast in front of Cornelius. He thanked her and she departed. He had a feeling, being in bed all day was going to get real boring, real fast..

## 2 - Henri

Henri leaned against a wall outside of a fancy French restaurant, tossing a coin he'd found on the sidewalk up and down.. up and down in a mesmerizing sort of way. He yawned lazily and pocketed the coin, stepping through the door after a couple of humans. He pulled his hat down over his eyes and skirted the entryway, his eyes on the waiter, whom was busy with the couple he'd followed. He sneaked through the door that led to the kitchen. He found a plate of food that was waiting for a waiter to pick it up. Snickering, he plucked the steak carefully from the plate and began gnawing on it happily beneath the table. Henri heard the door open and he pulled his feet in beneath the table.

A waitress walked into the kitchen with a tray, she went to pick up the plates Henri had just stolen from. "Oy, Terance, you missed something!" She yelled back at the cook. He looked around at her. "Hmm?"

"This plate looks like it's missing something.." She brought it over to him.

"That's odd, I put the steak on here not a minute before."

"Uugh, it must be Puss stealing the meat again." Groaned the waitress, walking into another room and picking up a hissing, spitting cat. *Ha ha, blame it on the cat. They always blame it on the cat.* Henri thought as the cook left the room and walked into the bar. Thirsty, the teenager crept along the floor to the refrigerator. Looking around, he opened it quietly, grabbing a bottle of Pellegrino. Too fancy, but it would work. He scurried into another corner and grabbed a lemon from a basket, then returned to under the table. The Pellegrino opened with a faint pop just as the cook walked into the room. Henri froze, clutching the bottle tightly.. Apparently, the cook thought his mind was playing tricks on him, because he walked back to the stove. The boy sighed quietly and took a drink of the fizzy water. He grimaced and ripped the lemon open.

Murphy's Law is limitless in length, but one law states that whenever one squeezes, rips, or punctures a citrus fruit, the juice always lands in someone's eye; and most fruits of that nature are often very acidic. This is no different when it comes to Henri. The lemon was torn in two, and a shower of juice sprayed directly into his pale face. He gasped and bit back a cry of pain as the acidic juice stung his eyes. The cook turned around at a sudden gasp behind him. Something was definitely not right here. He stared around, then shrugged and returned to his cooking. Henri let out his breath, and returned to stuffing the lime into the bottle of fizzy water. He continued to eat quietly underneath the table. Deciding he was in the mood for some dessert, he waited for the chef to leave again. He did, walking with a tray of desserts to the door nearest Henri. On his way out, he set the tray on top of Henri's table. *How convenient!* He waited for the door to stop swinging, then he reached up without looking and grabbed a cup of something. He pulled it back under, it was a jell-o parfait. He shrugged, not his favorite, but began eating it anyway. When the cook returned, he looked back at the tray and counted the desserts.

"One, two, three, four, fi.." He stopped, "Wait a minute..." He counted again. Four. One was missing. At that moment, the spoon dropped from Henri's fingers. As it clanged across the floor, he became white as a ghost, his heart pounding in his throat. The chef's eyes followed the progress of the spoon, it came from under the table. He slowly leaned over to look underneath the surface. To gain time, Henri desperately shoved the lemon into the cook's face, leaped over him, and ran toward the door.

The waitress turned the corner at just that moment, looking up just in time to see a teenager with long, pointy ears slam into her, sending them both to the ground. They both yelled as Henri landed on top of her. Before she had time to ask, he was off of her and almost out of the restaurant. But again, he crashed into someone, some tourists at the front door.

The woman, seeing what he was, grabbed his wrist yelling, "I got him! I got him!" "Get off me!" Squawked Henri, clawing at the lady. The cook and waitress reached the battle. He reached down and plucked the struggling elf from the woman, holding him at arm's length. Henri grabbed the man's arm with both of his clawed hands, scratching him like a psychotic, rabid cat until he let go. He dropped to the sidewalk, scraping his knees, and getting to his feet inhumanly fast. He ran down the street, humans didn't give up chases very fast, but he could easily outrun a car if he needed, just not a helicopter. He glanced up and sighed. No helicopters, but that didn't let him off the hook. He turned into an alley and leaned against the wall, sliding to the floor. He was safe.. for now..