

Midnight Moon

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After many countless hours of editing, I have made a clean version of Midnight Moon. When I say clean, I mean it has no mention of any yaoi-ish things.

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Midnight Moon

Written by: J. E. Chin

(A complete fiction)

Scroll I

Aka and Dark were demon siblings that lived in Midnight Village. Both of them lived on their own there.

Half-demon Dark Obsidian was the older sibling; used to be seventeen. Dark has long dark hair that was always tied into a braided pony tail that went all the way down to his waist. On one of his pointed ears is an earring that gave him power. Though, his fellow enemies didn't know it. The earring was gold and shaped like an Asian dragon. It hung from Dark's ear by its fangs. Dark wore a black haori that he inherited. His is a half dark and fire demon.

Aka Obsidian was Dark's younger sibling; used to be eight. Her height is about up to Dark's waist. She had dark, long, red hair that goes to her stomach. She just lets it blow in the wind. Both of her pointed ears have earrings on them also giving her power; though she doesn't know how to use them yet. Her earrings were just a gold chain with a ball of fire at the bottom. She wore a red kimono that had floral designs on it. She was also a half demon, like Dark. But, she had a weak heart.

Amongst the demon world, half breeds are the lowest of the chain. But Aka and Dark didn't care. Their elemental power combination was the strongest. Everywhere they walked; the other demons would sense their aura and run away or just continue what they were doing. Or at least that is what Dark hoped. Their goal, you ask? Their only goal is to survive.

"Dark, when are we going to eat?" Aka asked. She was riding on Dark's back with her head resting on his shoulder.

"Soon; I can smell some food up ahead." He said patting her head.

"Wake me up when you find the food." Aka yawned. She smiled and went to sleep. Dark also smiled

and continued walking. Aka was really light as he held her. It was almost as if he was holding nothing. She always had a peaceful aura surrounding her every time she slept. It was soothing.

It was early in the morning. The light was shining weakly between the tree leaves. The only sound heard was the crunching branches and dried leaves Dark stepped on. No birds chirped and nothing stirred. The air was a bit frigid. But it didn't bother Dark or Aka.

As Dark got closer to the food source, he heard clanking noises, as if someone was pounding on a piece of metal. Dark also heard whistling noises of arrows and then thunks of hit targets.

"Perfect! That was a dead center shot, Mitsurugi." A man said.

A village; of all the luck! Dark stopped abruptly at the edge of the forest, took Aka off of his back and kneeled out of sight.

"What's the matter, Dark?" Aka asked. She had woken up.

"Shh! Be as quiet as snake or the mongooses will hear!" Dark whispered. She nodded to show that she understood.

"What was that?" The man called Mitsurugi said looking toward our direction.

Dark looked through a hole of the bush and narrowed his black eyes. The man had great hearing for a human. He looked like a samurai; Dark could see his sheathed sword at his waist. He growled deep in his throat.

"Did you hear something?"

"Yes." Mitsurugi dipped the arrow tip into something, strung it back and took aim.

"Aka, hold onto me tight." Dark instructed.

Aka climbed up his chest and wrapped her arms around his neck.

Mitsurugi released the arrow and Dark shot out of the bushes.

But Dark fell on his back about seventeen feet away from the brush. He felt excruciating pain in his upper leg. He looked and saw that the arrow had hit him right between the bones. It was so painful, He couldn't even stand now.

"Got you! See, my hearing is true and so it my timing. This demon could've killed the whole village." Mitsurugi said triumphantly.

"Please, I was only looking for food for my younger sister!" Dark shouted in response, feeling misjudged. He tried to sit up, but his punctured leg wouldn't even move. "I didn't mean to come across this village."

"Dark, I'm still hungry." Aka whispered to him.

"I... know." Dark started to pant. His vision went slightly blurry and he started to sweat. What was wrong? "What did you... strike me... with?"

"None other than his famous poison-tipped arrows; you will die in a few hours unless you can get the right plant to cure it. Or..." Mitsurugi unsheathed his samurai sword and walked over to Dark and Aka. Aka was holding onto Dark even tighter and shaking in fear. "I can slice your head off and sell the young one."

At that moment, Aka let go of Dark's neck and started to run.

"No, Aka, stop!" Dark shouted while trying to reach her.

Some samurai that were in their huts came out and unsheathed their swords and surrounded Aka.

"Dark, help!" Aka shouted. She was shaking violently from what Dark was seeing.

Fire burned in his eyes. He had to save her! Without thinking, he violently pushed the arrow out of his leg, which broke the muscle tissue, and ran. He had to save Aka, even if it takes his life. They had to survive!

But, a crowd of village people gathered holding up spears and sword in Dark's way. He narrowed his eyes and took a mighty front flip with his good leg over the crowd.

A whistling noise caught Dark's ears attention and before he knew it, another poison arrow struck him. This time, somewhere between the shoulder blades. A stream of blood crawled out of the corner of his mouth as he landed to pick up Aka and leaped again out of the way of the samurai. He landed on the ground and rolled over twice. The arrow had broken, but the head of it sank a bit deeper, causing more pain.

"DARK!" Aka, who had come out of his grasp, ran over to him and pulled the arrow head out of his back. Dark grunted when she did so. "Are you okay?"

Dark didn't answer. He felt like blacking out; So much poison, so little energy. His wounds by now, was constantly leaking his dark blood onto his clothes. All he could do is just stay there, face down, helpless.

The ground vibrated as all the samurai, including Mitsurugi, surrounded Dark and Aka.

"What shall we do with them?" Asked one samurai.

"Let's put them to their misery!" another yelled.

"Out of the way!" Mitsurugi shouted. Some samurai moved to make a path for him. "I shall cut their heads off!" he shouted. The rest of the samurai shouted in agreement.

"STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS!" a woman shouted over the samurai.

“Huh? Oh! It's you, Priestess Sahara!”

“Leave those demons alone!” Sahara commanded. “From what I have heard, both demons meant no harm.”

The samurai had cleared a path for her. Dark raised his head and saw that she was indeed a priestess. She wore a red and white haori and she held a long bow in her hand along with a pouch full of arrows slung over her shoulder. But he didn't see anything else because his eyes started to cloud. The next moment, he was unconscious.

“Dark!” Aka's voice echoed in a distance.

Dark felt his conscious returning ever so slowly. He opened his eyes and gave a sniff. The smell was unfamiliar. But he then felt a warm presence next to him. He looked and saw that it was Aka, who was asleep, clutching his arm.

“Are you okay?” a voice said.

“Who goes..., oh. It's you.” he said about to sit up. But pain struck his back like a bolt of lightning and he fell back. Blood then trickled out of his mouth; he still felt dazed. What a horrible way to survive.

“I guess not. You still have a bit of poison in you.” Sahara said, soaking what looked like a cloth in a bucket of water. “You'll be fine in a few hours. But you got a terrible fever earlier.” She walked over to Dark and placed the wet cloth on his forehead.

“Why are you so nice? Usually, humans would run in fear or battle demons until they were dead.” Dark said wiping the blood off.

“I am not like that. I have a respect for those that have certain misfortunes; Demon or Human.” She said smiling. “Especially, if they are taking care of a young one.”

She was about to move Aka off of his arm, but Dark stopped her doing so.

“Leave her there. I don't mind.” He said stroking Aka's soft red hair. “She makes me feel like a parent when she nearby.”

“And you like that?” Sahara cocked an eyebrow.

Dark nodded as Aka turned her body to face the side of his body. He placed his hand on her small shoulders and went back to sleep.

He woke again; this time to the sounds of an ocarina's melody. Dark looked at Aka sideways. She was still asleep. He sat up and checked around her pink sash. There she usually kept his mother's ocarina.

The ocarina was dark blue and shimmered in moonlight. Aka would always clean it no matter if it was clean or not. She played it from time to time praying that her mother and father would come back. Dark didn't mind. She was young and she needed to pray for something.

Dark had his strength back. So he walked outside to find that Sahara playing his mother's ocarina. She was leaning against a tree with her eyes closed. Fireflies were flying around her, illuminating her glossy face in the darkness of the edge of the trees.

She looked so beautiful. Dark's obsidian eyes glimmered at the sight of her like that. He started to feel all tingly and warm inside. What was wrong with him? His heart picked up a fast pace. He touched his chest where his heart was. He felt it pounding at the wall inside.

Dark never felt this before. It was relaxing and soothing at the same time. All of his pains and worries went away in the breeze of the soft wind. The soft wind was the music that was being let out of the ocarina, passing through his heart.

"Oh! Dark! How are you feeling?" Sahara said running over to Dark.

"Huh?! Oh," What he was feeling drained out of him as soon as she stopped playing. "I'm fine, really! Ur... that melody you were playing... where'd you learn it?"

"Oh! I'm sorry. You sister handed this to me. And well...! Uh... I mean..." Sahara seemed a tad nervous. Why?

"Is something the matter?" Dark asked calmly.

"No, nothing! I used to have an ocarina and his mother taught me her favorite melody. It's supposed to warm people's hearts."

"I see. It warmed my heart by nearly a hundred folds. Please tell me what this melody is called."

At this point Sahara was blushing. Was it because of what Dark had just told her? Or was it because she was surprised that the melody warmed his heart?

"Urm... The melody is called, `Morning Light'. It's said that of you stand in the morning sunlight, your body warms up and so does your heart."

"It suits it. I'll be heading off in the morning anyway."

"What? Already? But your wounds—"

"I am a demon. And so is Aka. Both of us cannot stay here for long, for others may be after us. And they too are demons."

“Oh, I understand. Is it because both of you are Halflings?” She whispered.

Dark went silent. For nearly three minutes there was dark silence.

Then he asked, “How'd you know?”

“Aka; she told me. She told me that both of you were together alone ever since your parents —”

“DON'T SAY IT!” Dark yelled. Sahara gasped greatly.

“I'm sorry! I didn't mean to touch any of your nerves, I swear!”

“I never wanted to hear about them! I don't want to remember them! Not ever!” Dark continued to yell. “They tried to kill us! They were ashamed of having half bread children! Then they left us with the Samurai basterds!”

Though Dark didn't know it, Aka was a few ways behind him, her eyes wide. She never knew what happened to their parents. She simply thought that they had just died from old age or a disease. Well, at least that was what Dark told her. She was a baby when their parents tried to kill them. So Dark had to make up a story so that she wouldn't think the same way he did; Hatred toward them.

“Dark... is that the truth?” Aka said.

Dark turned and saw her. Tears welled up in her gray eyes. It was a sight Dark didn't want to see on her face.

“Aka ... I... I can explain....” Dark took a step toward her and she took a step back, shaking her head.

“No... that can't be.”

“Aka ...” he took another step.

“NO!” Aka screamed. She ran inside tears falling from her eyes.

“Aka! I can explain!” Dark yelled after her.

“Dark, leave her alone for a bit.” Sahara said putting a hand on his shoulder. “Huh?”

Dark turned to look at Sahara. She was looking at the ocarina. It was glowing red. He only guessed what would happen.

“Toss the ocarina away!” Dark exclaimed. He immediately took it and threw it in the night sky. There it shattered into tiny pieces, never to be played again. The pieces fell to the ground and stayed there glimmering in the moonlight.

“What in devil's name...?” Sahara said kneeling down to look at the broken pieces. “What happened to

the ocarina?"

Dark stayed silent. The truth is he didn't know what happened to it. All he knew that he had somehow hurt Aka's feelings. So, he decided to sleep in the forest tonight. At least there Aka won't bother him and he won't see her sad face. It breaks his heart every time he does.

"Where am I?" Dark asked himself.

Dark was somewhere very unfamiliar to him. Everything was blood red. It reminded Dark of the small string of hairs in Aka's hair.

The trees' leaves were all red. Even the bushes were red. What in the world was going on?

He walked for about an hour, leaving bloody footprints on the ground. The red leaves fell to the ground, leaving light imprints of blood. As Dark continued walking, he found a village.

"What the hell!" He exclaimed.

The village was blood stained. To Dark's nose, it was human blood! The stench was horrible. His nose could barely stand it. After all, he was half demon.

He walked through the village. Every hut was covered with blood and corpses. What a horrible sight!

Dark looked ahead and saw a young lady. She looked like she was thirteen years old. She was wearing a red kimono with faded floral designs. Her hair.... Her hair... was red with small strands of hair that was even darker red. He knew that hair style. He knew who it was.

"Aka! Is that you?" he yelled.

"Dark?" the older Aka said. She turned and looked at him in horror.

"What's the matter?" Dark asked, going closer.

She took a step back.

"Look what you did, Dark." She said in a scared voice.

"Me? What are you talking about?"

"When I came back a ghost, I find that you slaughtered every one here."

"What?! But I've never been here!"

“Yes you have. Your scent is mixed with all of the blood and corpses.”

“But I—”

“Just admit it. You were on a killing spree!” She ran over to Dark and slashed at his arm. He didn't even have time to make a single move. He jumped back and felt that his arm was bleeding freely.

“Dark? Dark. Dark! WAKE UP!!”

“Huh?! What happened?” Dark asked as he bolted upright. He narrowed his eyes because of the torch Sahara was holding.

“What...? Why'd you wake me up for? It's still night.”

“I know. But, look at your arm! Did you get in a fight?” Sahara said pulling Dark's sleeve up, revealing fresh bleeding slash marks.

“What?! When did I get that?” Dark exclaimed bringing his arm closer. Something was wrong. This was the same exact place the older Aka had struck him. But how is that possible? It was only a dream.

“Wait a minute...” Dark went closer to the wound and sniffed it. “Oh no.... Sahara, take me to your hut.” Dark quickly said.

“What? Why?”

“Look, just take me, quickly!” He added.

She just nodded and led Dark to her hut. As soon as she pointed out which hut was hers, Dark ran inside.

“What's the matter?” Sahara asked. She came inside and stood in the entry way.

Dark was facing the far corner of the hut with his back to Sahara.

“You know I'm a half demon, right.” He said his back still toward her.

“Yes. But how does that matter?”

“Because I'm a half demon, half demons lose their demon blood temporarily at certain times.” He

paused to face her.

Sahara gasped.

“And that time is tonight for me.” Dark continued.

That night was the night of the crescent moon; Dark's transformation night. He really hated those nights. He would be a vulnerable human. His hair and eyes would turn dark brown and his claws would disappear and turn into human nails, leaving him without a weapon. Even his powers went away.

“Dark, take the top part of your haori off.” Sahara said.

Dark turned red. “What?! Why?”

“It's all torn and ripped. Didn't you notice?”

Dark blinked. He looked down at his haori; it was torn in several places.

“Oh, I guess I didn't. Here,” He took it off and threw it to Sahara. “Go ahead and fix it.”

She caught the haori but went silent.

“What?” He asked. “If it's his arm, it stopped bleeding.”

“No. How did you get all of those scars?”

Dark didn't say anything. There were lots of peach colored scars all over his torso and arms; they stood out against his slightly pale skin. Some of them were single while others were in pairs or even in a group of four. Dark has been attacked many demons and samurai back in his early teen years and some were self inflicted.

Dark went over to the corner and stood there. The truth behind his scars was something he didn't want to reveal to Sahara. Even Aka doesn't know about them. Though, he can't hide the truth from them forever.

Dark looked up, turned around and saw that Sahara was still staring at him.

“What?”

She widened her eyes and shook her head violently making hair swing from side to side. She then stopped and walked out quickly.

Dark was not quite sure of it, but he thought he saw her blush. He ignored the thought, sat down and went back to sleep.

Dark woke the next morning to realize that he was still a human. The crescent moon, from what Sahara told Dark, was going to be out for another day; he groaned.

“Where's Aka? I didn't see her all night.” Dark asked Sahara.

“Yeah. I didn't see since she got upset.” Sahara said handing the rest of Dark's haori to him.

He slipped it on, tucked it in, and tied the sash to secure it.

“Yuck! What is that smell?” Dark protested. He sniffed his haori and drew his nose back quickly. A strange smell was coming from it. “What did you soak this in? It has a strange scent.”

“Herbal water. It gets the stains out quite nicely.” Sahara answered smiling.

“Gee, no wonder why it smells like strong herbs.” He said darkly. Suddenly, his stomach growled. He groaned again.

“Hungry are we?”

He blushed with embarrassment and nodded.

“Don't worry, I'll cook breakfast.” Sahara smiled again.

“I'll go look for Aka.” He said adjusting his haori a bit.

“Oh! Dark, be careful there are—”

“Yeah, yeah. Call me when breakfast is done.” He then left.

“Dark! Wait!”

He just ignored her; he needed to find Aka before she gets into more trouble.

The morning was a bit brisk but still warm. His dark brown hair slightly waved in the light breeze. His human ears twitched slightly; I was listening for any sounds or movements. Though it would probably be useless anyways.

“Half-Freak!”

“You're a bad example of a human!”

“Stop it! Leave me alone!”

“Aka?” Dark looked around a hut and found some village kids throwing rocks at Aka. “Hey! Stop it!”

NOW!"

Aka turned around and saw Dark. "Dark! I'm—"

"Later Aka." Dark said stopping her. He walked in front of her and stood there. "You kids should know better not to pick on others, especially if they are part demon."

"So? What if they are?" said one of the children. Another rock was sent and it hit Dark in the forehead.

Dark bent down to Aka and gave her some instructions. After a few seconds he gave her a stick that was about two thirds of her height, got behind her and gave a little shove. "Go on," He said encouragingly.

"His brother is right." Aka recited, trying to sound convincing. "Even part demons are as dangerous." She looked back at me. I gave her a wink, telling her that she was doing it right.

"He is smart when it comes to demons because," She purposely dragged the stick behind herself as she encircled the children. "He is also part demon." As she dragged the stick, it made a circle in the dirt.

She finished the circle and dropped the stick where she stood. She then leaped away.

"F.Y.I., Dark and I are part darkness and," Aka gave a glare, causing the children to flinch. "Fire element, which is the strongest combination." The children went wide eyed.

"Now?" Aka whispered to Dark.

"Yes." he answered.

"Flames of Darkness!" Aka shouted.

At this moment, all of the children ran away. Dark started to laugh as the children ran. After his laugh he patted Aka on the head.

"Dark," Aka said. She took Dark's hand and took it off her head.

"Yes?"

"Are you sure I won't get in trouble for this?" Aka asked gripping part of his haori.

"Don't worry. As long as you're with me, you're fine." He said patting her head again. "What were you going to tell me?"

"Oh! Dark, I'm sorry."

"Sorry? Sorry for what?" He questioned.

"Dark, I'm sorry for...? Look out!"

“Wha...? AH!” a sudden constriction surrounded Dark's lungs. It wasn't tight; but it was tight enough for it hurt. He fell to his knees and started coughing constantly.

“Dark!” Aka yelled.

“Step away Demon!” someone shouted.

Aka looked over and her eyes went wide. Five monks stood at the edge of the village wearing a purple robe and a staff at hand. All of them were positioned themselves as if they were protecting someone. Most of them were bald but the monk standing in the middle had a full head of dark hair. He knew that there would be monk with hair? His bangs were slightly frayed and he had a pony tail that went down to the middle of his back. His name was Sohma Ilshimari.

Aka didn't listen and she went over to Dark and wrapped her small arms around his torso. She was more afraid of monks than Samurai.

“Aka,” Dark said through his coughs. “Run... and find... Sahara.”

Aka, even with fear, listened to his requests. She let go of him and ran in the opposite direction of the monks.

The monks, for some reason, just let her go.

After seeing that Aka was out of sight and off to find Sahara, Dark slowly closed his eyes and went unconscious.

Dark woke sometime later, though he did not know how long he slept.

He got up and looked around. He was still in the same spot he was before he lost consciousness. The monks were standing in certain places that formed a pentagon. It looked like they were chanting something. Dark, on the other hand, was completely clueless. He looked up at the sky and saw that it was night. But he didn't see a crescent moon. He scratched his ear in confusion.

But that's when he realized; his ears were pointed again! He must have turned back into a human when he was still unconscious.

He panicked. Dark took a few steps back and tried to leap out of the surrounding monks' way. But, as soon as he did, he felt electricity shock him. He dropped back down like a log and rolled to his side, fully paralyzed. Then an invisible force, or so Dark thought, positioned him to face upward and sprawled; his legs and arms pointing in the direction of the four monks and his head pointing at Ilshimari. At this point,

he couldn't even move.

Dark's head was looking at the night sky. But now, the quarter moon was in his view.

He suddenly felt dizzy. It was like he was sick or something. His brain felt paralyzed and fuzzy. His vision went in and out of focus. Heat, for some reason, crawled up his neck. He felt like regurgitating and felt like sleeping some more. His senses were killed and his ears started to hurt.

“Now,” Dark heard Ilshimari say. “Purify this demon's soul and release it by our combined Shikigami powers, so that it shall never bother anyone again for all eternity.”

The ground started to glow blinding white. But, it almost seemed like the outline of a star in a circle; the monks were the five points of the star.

“Purify the soul!” Ilshimari yelled.

Dark felt immense pain in his very body. He cried out soundlessly as his pupils shrunk as the pain pursued.

I am stronger than this! Dark thought. *I must fight back!* “Spell breaker!”

A shattering-like sound was heard and Dark wasn't paralyzed anymore. But he still felt the same: severely sick. Willing to find an answer to this, he forcefully leapt from his current spot into the forest and ran. He only knew one demon that can help me, and he was nearby; Dark can sense his aura.

After an hour, He couldn't run anymore; all he can do is walk. This sick feeling grew more intense as the minutes passed. He needed to find him soon. He continuously stumbled on his feet and fell into the ground a few times, but he still kept going.

Another hour passed and Dark didn't find him yet. He was lying in a crumpled heap on the forest floor, coughing. He tightened his grip on himself and tried to keep warm. Coldness had now invaded his bloodstream.

Am I going to die from this? Dark asked himself silently.

No. He thought dully. *I need to find Kitsune.*

Kitsune was Dark and Aka's caretaker about seven years ago. He was only a decade older than Dark, but he was helpful. He taught Dark how to fight and defend for himself and to defend Aka. Dark met him a few days after his parents left them. He's their only family now.

Before long, Dark's brain was starting to hurt. He had no choice but to sleep and hopefully be better in the morning.

When he woke, he felt straw against his side and back instead of grass. He looked around and saw that he was in a den on top of a mound of straw. A wind blew and Dark shivered. He huddled in the straw hoping to keep warm again.

“Finally awake are we?” A voice said.

Dark looked around and stopped when a velvet black fox tail behind partially covered legs entered his view. He looked up and saw a young man with long pointed human ears, amber eyes and long black hair.

“Kitsune!” Dark said in surprise. He tried to get up but his arms didn't cooperate.

“Whoa, careful.” Kitsune said taking hold of his forearms. “You're really sick right now.”

“Sick? I never got sick before.” Dark said, trying to keep a cough in.

“Never got sick? Hmph, that's strange.” Kitsune sat down cross-legged in front of Dark. “So that must mean this is your first time getting sick. You must have been pretty healthy.”

“Have you gone through with it?” Dark asked.

“Yes. But it's not really fun. You have to sleep most of the time and drink lots of water. And you would be tossing around in your sleep for hours.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, it's not a happy time going through it.”

Dark sat there listening to Kitsune, explaining what Dark had to eat and to get plenty of rest. Dark liked the fact that he got to sleep a lot, but he didn't like the fact that he couldn't be moving around and making his body even more stressed.

After Kitsune was done Dark laid back down with his hands covering his face.

“So how's the eye?” Kitsune asked moving Dark's hands and bangs.

Dark usually kept his right eye covered because he couldn't see out of it. It was completely white with a black outline around his cornea. For as long as Dark could remember, he couldn't see through his right eye.

Over the next two days, Dark laid inside Kitsune's den, eating various things and took long rests. Kitsune was right; it was horrible to be sick.

The next morning, Dark got dressed in his regular attire. Apparently, Kitsune had washed them in the

lake sometime after Dark went back to sleep.

He waved goodbye to Kitsune and went off to find Aka. He hasn't seen her for a while now and she's probably worried.

It took him until nightfall to get back to the village. But, chanting caught Dark's attention. He peered through the bushes and saw the same monks from before. This time Aka was on the ground sprawled instead of him. His eyes narrowed. Dark knew what they were going to do. He has felt the pain and he didn't want Aka to feel it too.

Before the monks finished chanting, Dark sprinted out of the bushes and shouted, "Blinding light of the sun!"

A bright light enveloped the monks, distracting them. Dark ran to where Aka was, scooped her up and ran away

Scroll III

“Wind of teleportation!” A young boy's voice shouted.

A calm wind blew across Dark's eyes and invisibly through his heart. His eyes fell and his heart slowed its pace even though the adrenaline that was pumping through him continued. Before he was calmed completely, a warm light enveloped him and unconscious Aka and, from what he believed, transported them somewhere

“AHH! BIG DOG EARS! How cute!!!”

“Hey! Get away! They're fox ears and... argh! Stop yanking them!”

“Hey! Get back here! I want to touch them more!”

“Stop it!”

Dark opened his eyes and smelled mountain grass. What was he doing on a mountain?

He got up saw a beautiful site. He saw a large snow covered mountain peak tower over him. He sat in a meadow located near the base of the mountain. This place looked so familiar to him. How?

“Yay! They're so soft!”

“Hey! Get off of me!”

Dark looked over in the field and saw that Aka was sitting on top of a boy's back and was yanking his ears that were on top of his head. The boy looked familiar but Dark didn't know how.

“Looks like Aka is getting along with Kitsune-Shounen very well.” Kitsune's voice came.

Dark looked beside him and saw Kitsune sitting with one crossed leg while the other was bent upright and was supporting his arm.

“How did we get here?” He asked.

“Kitsune-Shounen; he transported you two here, that's how.”

“Kitsune-Shounen?” Dark questioned.

“He's his younger half brother. He, apparently, is half fox.” Kitsune said in a deep voice.

“Half...? I can see why he has fox ears on top of his head.” Dark looked toward Kitsune-Shounen and smiled. Kitsune-Shounen looked like Kitsune in every way; well, except that he has fox ears on top of his head. “Why does he have the name Kitsune-Shounen?”

“No, actually, his real name is Kitsune; the same as mine.” Kitsune said as he got up. “I just added `Shounen' so that others can tell us apart. Okay, get off Aka. You're hurting his back.” Kitsune added toward Aka.

Night had curtailed Dark and the rest of the group quickly. They took shelter in the den Kitsune had kept Dark in while he was sick. But it was not exactly warm. Dark didn't mind.

Howling caught his ears and he bolted straight up, only to make contact with the padded earth above. He rubbed his head and peered over the edge of the den, looking for the source of the disturbance. He then turned back to see if anyone else had awoken.

Kitsune was still slumbering with Kitsune-Shounen in his arm as if he was a rag doll and Aka was curled into a ball near Dark's feet. Neither of them had heard the noise.

Another howl caught Dark's ears. This time he leapt out quietly and stood at the den's edge. Dark's eyes hunted for the source, but no avail.

Without thinking, Dark started to walk around the field. The moon was still out and an eerie feeling surrounded the area; something was not right.

After a while, hunger burrowed within him. He hasn't eaten a decent meal since he was sick. So, he went around.

His nose started to pick up a scent.

"Is that what I think it is?" He asked himself. The scent smelled like something roasting on a bonfire. As his hunger bothered him, he grew more anxious. He didn't care what it was, he was starving!

The smell led him to a bonfire with twelve roasting fish at the edge. They looked fully cooked already. His mouth watered as he moved closer to the delectable fish. Oh, how he couldn't resist! He was so hungry.

He reached for one of the fishes and started eating. Oh the taste that he has missed for quite a while. He finished the first one quickly and went to the next one. The same method was repeated for twenty minutes until all of the fish was gone.

"Ah, that was delicious." He said using a skewered to pick some of the left over fish meat out.

"You shouldn't be out here, Dark" a voice said.

"Huh? Oh," Dark turned and saw Kitsune-Shounen standing behind him. "What are you doing here?"

"I was going to ask the same thing. I should warn you,"

"Warn me? About what exactly, Kitsune-chan?" Dark asked.

"About the No women and No man that are around here, of course! They can appear," he looked side to side. "*Anywhere!*" He said wiggling his fingers. "If you're not careful, they'll take your soul!"

I cocked an eyebrow. "Really? You have any proof?"

"Hmph." Was his only response and he disappeared.

"What the...?" Dark looked around but he was nowhere to be seen. "How did he do that?"

Dark started to head back to the den. But fog started to gather and he needed to get back soon or else he'll get lost for hours. The eerie feeling surrounded the area again, this time it was very strong.

"Dark...." A voice echoed.

Dark ignored it, but not entirely.

"Dark...."

"Who's there?!" He yelled into the fog. Dark was walking aimlessly, disregarding his sense of direction.

"Don't tell me you have forgotten... already."

That voice. It was so familiar. How?

Dark suddenly felt hands grab his forearms and a head leaning against his back. He froze with eyes wide.

"Hello there, Darconious dear." A woman's voice said.

"M-Mother?" he said cowardly. Shivers went down his spine continuously.

It was her, Dark's mother, Crimson Obsidian. Aka was her near exact reflection: the hair, the eyes, and the calming aura. But, his mother was a human and Aka was a demon. She always called Dark "Darconious" and he hated it; even though it was his real name.

"I'm glad you remember." She said lovingly. "Oh, you're shivering Darconious-dear. Don't worry, I'm right here." She motioned his body to sit down; it obeyed. But she remained standing. She wrapped her arms around Dark's neck and her kimono's sleeves covered his shoulders. The warmth nearly put him into a daze.

"Oh how I have missed you to be in his arms."

"You... abandoned me... and Little Aka ... to those Samurai." Dark said weakly.

"I had nothing to do with it, Darconious Kitsune Obsidian."

Dark growled weakly. He hated his full name.

"Come now, don't be like that." She said hypnotically. She caressed his chin and neck gently. Rubbing back and forth, calming him.

And sure enough, it worked. Dark flushed greatly and he fell back against her chest. She grunted, but

still held him up. She knew Dark's weakness.

"Now then. Let's see how much you have grown." She said.

She backed up and sat with her legs under her. She took Dark's head and placed it on her lap. He felt her fingers trace something that was only a claw long behind his ears in the same spots. She then removed her hands and placed them underneath Dark's inner clothing of his haori, feeling the build of his chest and rubbing it at the same time. He moaned. She just smiled and removed her hands.

"Do me a favor," She said pulling out a small piece of pottery. "Drink this,"

She held it above Dark's mouth and took the fabric off that was covering the bottles entrance and slowly started to pour.

Dark opened his mouth unconsciously and drank the substance. All he tasted was water: pure water. It was delicious too. Dark quickly took the bottle without thinking and drank the whole thing in one gulp like a human man aching for sake.

But, he suddenly felt dizzy. He got up and walked around, swaying dangerously. But then, the ground lifted up and met his face as he fell unconscious.

Dark was ten. Young and energetic without a care in the world. Aka was only one but she still had that calming aura.

At this time, Dark had an eye patch over his bandaged right eye and his hair was only a small short ponytail.

Aka was crying as the flames roared around her and Dark, along with a whole group of samurai. Dark held Aka's small body tight and close to him in his arms.

"It's okay." He said. "Mother and Father will come and protect us."

She still cried.

Dark was now huddled against the corner of the hut back in Midnight Village; the village of the demons. The samurai had come to fill their desire to kill demons, half-breeds or not. Why the demons in this village? Why not the ones in the forests?

A crash was heard and standing in front of Dark was his father, Yami Obsidian. He was a ruler of the Eastern lands and Dark was his reflection.

He started to talk to the samurai, trying to reason with them, or as Dark thought. His father held his sword at his side. But, something was dripping from it.

Dark looked up and saw his father face him with the look of anger in his eyes. His eyes were deep red. He raised his sword high; Dark's eyes went wide.

"Father... why?" said Dark's young voice.

"You *are* Worthless." He responded. But he put his sword down. He then turned and left the same way he came.

"Worthless?" Dark repeated.

The samurai came in closer. Then they charged.

Without thinking, he jumped through the hole his father made and ran toward the forest with black tears running down his eyes. He was called "Worthless" How cruel was it that his own father would call him that? How?

A few days after that day, it was raining. Dark hasn't eaten anything because he was never taught how to hunt. He was sitting in a tree with young Aka tied to his back. He was crying with his face buried in his knees. Though you can barely hear him crying through the rain.

"Hey," a voice said through the rain.

Dark looked down and saw an adult demon. He wore a clump of fox fur on both shoulders and armor that went around his front and back. Along with a blond fox fur tied around his waist draping over his upper legs. Under that was tattered a hakama. He had black shoulder length hair and a matching long glossy fox tail. And longer than average pointed human ears.

"Come down here." He said.

Dark started to shake. What did he want?

Before he knew it, Dark had leapt off of the tree branch and started to run. But he didn't get too far; the demon grabbed him by the sides of his stomach and picked him up.

"AH! Let go of me you demon! Ah, don't kill me!" He cried. As he did, Aka started to cry also.

"Whoa there young kit, I'm not going to hurt you." He put Dark down and untied Aka from his back.

"Hey! Give my little sister back!" Dark yelled jumping up and down; the demon was five feet taller than Dark was.

"Hold on. It's okay. It's alright" He said calmly to Aka.

And sure enough, she did calm down.

But then, both Dark's and her stomach growled loudly.

"Looks like someone's hungry. Come on you." He picked Dark up and placed him on his shoulder. He then started walking away from the forest and into the mountains.

Dark opened his eyes slowly to find that he was in the lake, bare skinned. The early morning light was shining near the mountain top. He realized that someone was caressing his chin and neck again. But it felt like someone else's hand. Who?

Dark let out an exhale and started keening.

"Finally awake are you? You gave me a scare." Kitsune's voice came.

"Don't... stop." Dark moaned.

"Sorry, have to or else.... Never mind." Kitsune said removing his hand.

Dark sat in the lake in silence for a few more minutes. A breeze blew and he shivered. But he still stayed in the lake. But then, it hit him.

"What happened to me?!" he asked alarmingly, making Kitsune jump a foot in the air.

"Oh now you remember? Okay, well," He scratched the back of his ear. "Aka woke me up in the early morning saying that you were gone and missing. So I went and looked for you. I only found you in a few minutes because you were near the lake which is near the den. A no woman was absorbing you into her body. So I got you out and killed her. But blood got all over you. So I took your clothes off and gave them to Aka to clean somewhere else; Kitsune-Shounen accompanied her of course. Then I put you in the lake, gave you a quick wash and tried to wake you up." He explained.

"Okay.... But did I say anything or do anything?"

"Urm... you... didn't say anything. But you were twitching as if you were having a seizure." He said lowly.

"Kitsune! The clothes are dry!" Aka's voice said from a distance.

Dark looked back and saw Aka running with his clothes in her arms. But then he looked down at himself and started to blush. He then ducked down under water. Why did he do it though?

"Oh? Where's Dark?" she asked.

Kitsune pointed out where Dark was.

He blushed even more, only this time of anger. He felt so tormented sometimes.

Scroll IV

Five years slipped out of Dark's grasp before he knew it. Dark has grown a few inches and so has Aka. She had grown to be as tall as his shoulder from his original height. Now that she was thirteen, her hair had grown a few inches and was a bit redder. Her ears had extended and claws have formed on her fingers at last. Her eyes have darkened; now they were nearly black. Now Aka was able to control her elemental powers and her fears. Her training with Dark has given her strength. Before she could not even hit him. But now she lands about more than a dozen hits.

Dark, on the other hand, had grown mentally and physically. His ears also had extended and his claws only a centimeter. Now he was as tall as Kitsune, even though he was thirty-two years old, he still remained the same height. Dark had, unfortunately, obtained some more scars across his arms and

chest. The things that the No Woman was rubbing were demon markings that have grown longer over the years as Dark got older. Now two black stripes curved under his eyes that went back over his ears to the place the no woman had rubbed.

“Well, we're off.”

“What? Already, Dark? Come on, stay for a boar.”

“Kitsune-kun, Dark and I need to go. We have the whole island of Japan to explore!”

“We're not going to explore that far, Aka.” Dark said. “We're only traveling until we find a place of our own to live in.”

“I was only joking around.” Aka said.

“Yeah, I know. Well, we're off.” Dark waved goodbye to Kitsune and turned to leave.

“Hey! Wait, Aka! Wait!”

Aka and Dark turned around and saw Kitsune-Shounen running toward them. Behind him was one of his young foxes he commands, running. The fox was Kitsune-Shounen's height. He was about two inches taller than Aka.

Only some fox demons have that gift and he had it; the ability to talk with foxes. Aka had it too, but Dark was unfortunate.

“What is it, Kitsune-san?” Aka asked going a bit pink.

“Urm... I want you to have Chouwa.” Kitsune-Shounen said, scratching the back of his head and going red.

“Chouwa?! But why? He's your best fox you raised. I couldn't.” Aka disagreed shaking her head.

“Please, I want you to remember me by having one of my foxes.”

“Won't they make a fine couple?” Kitsune said scooting over to Dark.

“What...What do you mean by that?!” he exclaimed quietly.

“Think about it. Why else would Kitsune-Shounen give up one of his best foxes?”

"I don't know. Why?"

"He loves her. Listen," he went closer to his ear and whispered something.

His body shivered at the sound of what he was telling me.

His face then turned red and he said, "When it's his turn, he'll only do it with—"

"Mm-mm" Kitsune smugly said. "It's a surprise that he's deciding on his true love already. It's too early now. He even told me."

Dark slowly turned his head toward Kitsune-Shounen and Aka and, for some reason, imagined them getting married. He shook his head to get the image out.

"So, does that mean Aka loves him back?"

Kitsune nodded again.

"You'll learn more on your own, very soon." Kitsune said putting a hand on Dark's shoulder.

"Okay, I'll accept him. But keep this in return." Dark panicked when Aka was about to take her pink sash off until she said, "Dark, can you hold his kimono shut?"

He sighed in relief and went over to her and held her kimono shut. She then took her sash off, ripped it in half, and tied one of the halves back onto her kimono.

"Okay, you can let go. Here," After Dark had let go, Aka went over to Kitsune-Shounen and tied the other half of the sash onto his armor until it was a little bow. "Please remember me by having part of his sash." She then gave him an unexpected kiss and ran over to Dark, blushing.

"Let's go, quickly." She said blushing even more. She took hold of his haori and started to drag him.

"Bye, see you later!" Dark said waving his free arm at Kitsune and his surprised brother. Chouwa ran over to Dark and Aka and stayed with them.

He then caught up with Aka, went between her legs, and scooped her up onto his back which caused her to gasp.

"Warn me next time, Chouwa." Aka said patting his head.

"Be careful!" Kitsune shouted.

“Chouwa sure has gotten big.” Dark said giving him a scrap of meat. Chouwa took it in his mouth, sat next to Aka, and started eating it.

“What do you mean?” Aka asked stroking Chouwa's glossy blond head.

“When you were a year old,” Dark started. “Chouwa was a kit, like you; though he was older. Kitsune had only taken care of him for only a certain time. But, in that time, Chouwa would always carry you on his back, like he did this morning.”

“I don't remember that, Dark.”

“Well, you *were* only a year old. So, I didn't expect you to remember. You two were so cute together. You'd fall asleep on his back and he'd take care of you as if you were his little sister. He even let you use him as a pillow. I trusted him so much, that I would even leave him alone with you.”

“I didn't even know that. Thanks Chouwa.” Aka said nuzzling his neck. He just keened in happiness and nuzzled her back.

Scroll V

Aka and Dark continued their journey to the west where a town has captured their attention for a while. Also, it was said that a demon sword smith has been living there against his will. Kitsune told Dark all this a few months back, though, he sounded upset when he explained it. Dark had asked what was wrong but he just said, "Nothing.", lowly.

"Hey, Dark,"

"What is it?"

"It's about Kitsune-kun. He's been acting strange lately." Aka said, looking toward Dark with her near black eyes.

"You mean ever since he told us about the village we're going to?" Dark asked sternly looking back at her.

"Yes. He seems to be... well... worried about something."

"Like what?"

"I don't know..., a relative maybe?" Aka suggested.

"Maybe. But I don't know anyone that both Kitsune and I know." Dark said, scratching his head. "We might as well find out."

Nightfall came quickly. Aka and Dark had set up in an opening surrounded by trees and brush. Dark had built a fire and Aka gathered small sticks to keep it burning.

After they had eaten, Dark went to lean against one of the trees and fell asleep. Aka had curled next to Chouwa and nestled there to sleep. She had done that many times when Chouwa was around.

Dark awoke in the middle of the night to a rustling noise in the brush near Aka. He got up quickly and

cracked his fingers, making them go stiff and in their attack position. He then slowly moved toward the spot, claws ready to strike.

“Dark? What are you doing?” Aka mumbled.

“Shush. Something is in the bushes.” He answered. Dark got against the tree next to the source of the noise and waited.

As soon as it moved, he slashed at it, making the leaves and twigs fly.

“Huh?”

A small girl was kneeling and covering her head. She looked under Aka's age. She wore a tattered light blue kimono and a water lily in her hair like a hair clip. No ears were visible because she was covering them and her eyes shut tight, not letting Dark see what color they are. Her hair color was blue and there weren't any claws.

“Don't hurt me. I was sent here to spy on you.” The young girl said. She kept her head ducked. “I was just following orders.”

“It's okay.” Dark said kneeling down to her. “I was just being protective of my younger sister.”

“Hey! I can protect myself!” Aka said angrily.

Dark ignored her. “What's your name?”

“Mizu. Mizu Shinrin.” She answered still frightened.

“Who sent you?” He moved his hand to touch her head, but she quickly slapped it. In the fraction of a second, Dark saw a fin like ear.

Dark gasped. “You're... a Water Sprite!”

At this moment she got up and ran off while yelling, “Master Kendo!”

Dark stared at the direction she had run off to. A water sprite! He couldn't believe his eyes. At this time, Water Sprites were really lucky to have around. But their lucky power only lasts for a certain time.

“Dark, was that a real Water Sprite?” Aka asked as she propped herself on her elbows.

“Yes,” He answered still looking in the same direction. “It was.”

The next morning, Aka got onto Chouwa's back, and followed Dark to the village. She still felt a bit tired, but she was okay. But, Dark was not acting like himself. He kept coughing a few times. What was he doing?

But all of a sudden, Chouwa started to slow his pace.

“What's wrong?” Aka asked him.

“It's Master Dark's aura.” He said to Aka. To Dark, he would hear nothing. But to Aka, she can hear Chouwa speak. Meaning that only she can understand what he is saying.

“What's wrong with it?” Aka asked.

“He is becoming sick and I don't want to be infected.” He said.

“That is not good.”

In the afternoon Aka, Chouwa and Dark settled on a patch of grass next to a river. There, Dark was taking a drink while Aka lied on top of Chouwa's back looking at the clouds float by.

“How much father are we from the village?” She asked Chouwa.

“How far do you think?” Chouwa asked.

“I don't have a single thought. But we should get there by night—” Aka suddenly heard a splash. She bolted upright and looked around. Dark was no where in sight!

“Dark! Dark where are you?!”

Aka ran over to the river and saw that Dark was facing up and moving down stream fast.

“You idiot. Get out of the water!” Aka yelled at him.

“Look there!” Chouwa said. He indicated at the end of the river. Aka looked and gasped. The river ends as a waterfall!

“Dark! I mean it! Get out of the water!”

He didn't hear her. And then, before she knew it, he had fallen off the river and went down the waterfall.

“DARK!!!!”

Dark fell through the layers of mist along with the water behind him. He heard Aka yell his name through the mighty roars of water. Though, he hardly noticed it because of his sickness.

It felt like forever as he fell next to the tall waterfall growing as he went down. Why didn't he yell? Or make a single sound? Did he unconsciously know that he was going to die? But no, Dark still had enough awareness to say one spell that may save him. All he'd have to say is...

“Reduction: falling rate!”

His falling rate slowed down a bit, but something else happened. He heard a shattering noise right next to his ear with his earring. But, his earring wasn't there anymore. There in front of his eyes were the remaining pieces of the earring. His power all used up.

Tears welled up in his eyes and he reached for the pieces. His only power of the elements, his power controller, gone.

Before his spell abandoned him because of the earring, he managed to grab the pieces and then he fell even faster than before.

He hit the water hard, making a pillar of it above him. Before he lost consciousness, he mouthed out, “Aka...”

A hooded figure went by a river near the waterfall. He then took out a newly made sword and dipped it in the river, cleansing it. He then took it back out and flicked it. It made a high pitched tone that rang smoothly.

“Ah,” he said. “A nice tone. A nice tone indeed.” He then heard a loud splash. He looked up just in time to see a pillar of water go back down. He waited for the water to calm and then saw a bubble pop at the surface.

“Now, what was that?” He sheathed the sword without looking and went into the river. But as soon as he got close enough, he gasped.

“It's a young man!” He exclaimed. “He's sick. Poor lad.”

He dragged the young man to land and examined him.

“Let's see. Fox demon, in his early twenties, been through very few sicknesses, a constant fighter judging by the scars, and he's still alive.” He said.

“What's this? He's clutching something.” The hooded figure opened the young man's clutched hand and

saw silver pieces of a dragon earring. "This must have been his power controller."

He closed the hand back up and threw young man on his back and rushed him to his home village that was a ways ahead.

Scroll VI

“Dark! Dark! Where are you?” Aka called out.

Chouwa and Aka had climbed down the cliff next to the waterfall. The waterfall was big alright, but not big enough to kill someone.

“Chouwa, can you pick up Dark's scent?” Aka asked him.

“No,” he said putting his nose near to water. “His scent disappears right here. He was on land though. Someone must have carried him off.”

“Damn it!” Aka cursed to herself punching the ground. She then got back up and got onto Chouwa's back. “Go to the nearest village.”

“But, Young Master Aka, we'll be seen!”

“I don't care. Dark is sick. If he was carried off by someone into the village, we got to get him out!”

Chouwa stayed silent for a minute. He then said, “Yes, Young Master Aka.” He then started running to the west toward the closest village.

Soft crackling noises caught Dark's ears attention. He felt hay against him instead of his wet clothes. His

muscles were aching all over.

He opened his eyes slowly and gave out a small moan. Dark then started coughing while spitting up water at the same time.

“Whoa there lad, you inhaled a lot of water.” Someone's voice said.

“Kitsune?” Dark asked. But then he coughed up more water.

“Kitsune? My, that name sounds familiar.” The man said.

“Who... are you?” Dark choked. He turned over to face the man who saved him.

In fact he wasn't a man. He was a demon. Messy short dark hair covered his dark amber eyes. His haori was covered with soot and loosely open, revealing his muscular chest. His hakama was torn at the bottom and three-toed feet stuck out from them. And a long fox tail was wavering behind him. Two gold ring earrings hung from both long pointed ears.

“Me? I'm Kendo: The demon sword smith.” He answered.

“Demon... sword... smith?” Dark repeated. It sounded so familiar. He couldn't think straight because of his sickness.

“Yeah. I was forced to live here because this is the feudal times. So the warriors in this village need weapons made by demons. But that's rare to come by.” Kendo said.

Dark stayed silent. He turned to lay on his back and stared at the ceiling. He started to cough again.

“How long have I... been asleep?” Dark asked weakly.

“Just a day. I found you face down in the river near the waterfall.”

Dark widened his eyes. He then shot up and asked, “Where's Aka?!”

“Aka? That name also sounds familiar.”

“I've got to go find her!” Dark got up on his feet and wobbled to the door way.

“Now hold on a minute!” Kendo said. He got up and took hold of his forearm.

“Let go of me! I have to find Aka!” Dark wrenched his arm out of his grip and headed for the doorway.

“Not while you look like this!” He leaped onto Dark and pinned him to the wall. “Look at you! You wearing nothing but the boar skin blanket I wrapped around your waist!”

Dark stayed silent. He relaxed his body, knowing that if he pushes it now, he'll be even sicker.

Dark moved Kendo's arms off and walked over to his sleeping spot. There, he sat down and stared at the wall.

"Hey, do you have any leeks?" Dark asked.

"No, but I can ask the villagers for some. Why?"

"No reason," Dark answered looking at Kendo. "I just like to munch on those."

Scroll VII

A few days later, Dark was asleep with a blanket over him in the corner of Kendo's hut, still resting from his sickness. Aka, who had found Dark with the help of Chouwa, was cleaning Kendo's hut while he went to eat. Apparently, Dark made quite a mess since he was tossing and turning a lot.

Aka was trying to keep an eye or both eyes on Dark. She had a feeling that even if his sickness was over, something was wrong. Chouwa told her likewise. Occasionally, she would take a break and sit next to Dark while he slept. She could feel the heat from his high fevers radiating off of him, but it was disappearing slowly.

"I'm back." Kendo said coming through the entry way, moving the bamboo net aside.

"Welcome back, Kendo." Aka said, while getting up from her spot.

"Has Dark woken up yet?" he asked.

"No, he hasn't. Though he should be awake by now."

"Really? I thought he'd be really exhausted." Kendo went over to Dark and kneeled down.

"Dark, wake up now." He said prodding him. "Get up Dark. You need to eat something before you get skinnier than now."

He didn't move for a minute. But he then opened his eyes slowly, groaning at the same time.

"Welcome back. You've been sleeping for a while. Now how long was it? Five days?"

"Three, Kendo. Three." Aka corrected him.

Dark stayed silent. He blinked a few times and asked, "Where am I?"

"You're in my hut in a village to the West of Kitsune's Mountain home. You forget already?" Kendo asked.

At this point Dark shot up from the bed and yelled, "Kitsune!?! You know him? Where is he?!" The

blanket fell from his bare body to the floor.

Kendo was just staring at him with an expressionless face and Aka had run to the corner facing it while covering her eyes.

“Ahem... may I suggest you put some clothes on and go take a bath. You really stink and... ahem... you are scaring Aka.”

Dark looked down and gasped. He sat back down quickly and put the blanket back over his lower half.

“Where are my clothes?” He asked.

“They are next to you. Aka, go outside with Chouwa. I'll call you when he's done.”

“Okay...” she answered. She then got up and went outside.

“So, how long has it been, Dark?”

“I don't know. I didn't recognize you earlier. You've changed.” Dark commented putting his hakama on.

“So have you. Anything happen?” Kendo asked.

Dark didn't say anything. He pulled up his hakama and he threw his top haori over his shoulders. His under haori was already on. “Nothing special.” He finally said.

“I see. Well, come on. Let's go to the hot springs.”

“Hot springs? There's one near by?”

“Yeah. Aka can come along too if she wants. I'll go ask.”

Dark watched as Kendo got up and left to go outside and ask Aka if she wanted to go. Dark has only been to a hot spring once. But, he got dizzy and passed out. Kitsune had to drag him out of the water and cool him off. By the time Dark came to, Kitsune had left; Aka been by his side of course.

Kendo came back in holding Aka in his arms. Her arms were wrapped around his neck and her head was leaning against her shoulder. She was asleep.

“Chouwa said she fell asleep on his back. She was exhausted from looking for you.” Kendo whispered. Even though Aka was thirteen, she was small compared to Kendo's size. He also must be able to talk to foxes.

“Let's go. She can join us when she wakes up.”

Dark nodded and went outside where Chouwa stood.

Kendo came out holding a sword with a crescent moon shaped hand guard on it in a crystal blue colored

scabbard.

“What's that for Kendo?” Dark asked.

“It's one of my new ones. If I cleanse it in the hot spring, it'll be a beautiful sword.”

“Really? What's the sword's name?”

“A name? I was thinking of ‘Crescent Moon Blade’, its sort of has a ring to it. Plus the sword has a crescent moon shaped hand guard, so why not?”

“That's a name fit for a master sword.” Dark complimented.

Kendo smiled smugly. He always liked to take compliments. After all, he was professional demon sword smith.

That afternoon, Dark and Kendo sat in the hot spring. Something was different about him. He didn't know what, but something was a miss. He didn't feel as powerful as before: before he fell down the waterfall.

“Is something the matter?” Kendo said looking at Dark sideways. “You seem disturbed by something.”

“It's nothing.” Dark lied. Something was bothersome, but what?

“Is it your power controller?”

“Huh?” Dark thought for a minute; his power controller? “Oh no!”

He felt around his left earlobe. He finally remembered that it broke when he fell. No wonder why he didn't feel the same.

“Damn it.... My powers are going to go wild if I feel too much of one emotion.” Dark said as a drooping look was added to his face.

“I can make you a new one.” Kendo said proudly. “I haven't made one in a while.”

“But doesn't it require a hair from each parent of the user? Both of mine are dead to me; and they are dead.”

“Oh.... But how do you even know?”

“I can feel it because of his hatred toward them *that one night.*”

“That seems to be a bit of a lie. But I'll take the reason anyway.” Kendo said. “Give me your arm.”

Dark held his arm out. “What are you going...? AH!” Dark yelled. Kendo had bitten into his arm viciously.

Kendo's eyes had turned red and his hair was moving as if wind blew gently under him. But then, he turned back to normal and let go of his arm; His fang marks deep within. He then reached out for his sword he had brought took the scabbard off and let his blood from his mouth drip over the sword's wide arc.

Dark has never seen such a sword. It was double-edged and it was nothing like a samurai sword. The tip of the sword was like a spear which narrowed down slightly until it reached the hilt.

The blood on the sword suddenly disappeared and started to glow red. The glow vanished and Kendo smiled. He then took a mouthful of the spring's water and spat it out onto the dirt.

"Okay, all set." He said.

"All set'? Why in seven hells did you bite me?!"

"It's so that the sword can be yours. It'll act like your power controller."

"Tell me that before you bite. Now I need to bind this before I bleed to death." Dark said covering the marks with his left hand.

"No problem. Give it here."

"Oh no! You're not touching this arm again! I don't want another bite!"

"I'm not going to bite, young kit. Just give it here."

Flustered with anger, Dark stretched out his bleeding arm to Kendo. He placed his hand over it and muttered something. In two seconds a white light came from his hand and disappeared.

"You're all done." He said removing his hand.

Dark looked at his arm. The bite marks were gone and the bleeding ceased.

"How did you do that?" Dark questioned.

"My powers." He answered. "How else?" He took sword and dipped the blade into the hot spring. He then took it back out and swung it away from Dark, launching the water off its arc. He then brought it close to him and he flicked it, making a low ringing noise.

"The most powerful sword made and it goes to a great young friend of my son." He whispered absently, his eyes glistening at his handy work.

"What?! Your son is Kitsune?!" Dark exclaimed.

"Whoops, did I let that slip?" He asked. He sighed and said, "Yes, Kitsune is my son. But we've been separated for some time now. I miss him dearly."

No wonder why Kitsune seem upset when he told us about the village. Dark thought.

Kendo sighed again and placed the sword back in its scabbard.

“How did you two part?”

Kendo didn't answer. He got up from the spring and went to put his clothes on. Was it something Dark said? Dark looked at his tail; it wasn't moving even though Kendo was moving himself. He had upset him.

Later that day, Dark wondered why Kendo was upset. But he focused on other things. Aka hadn't woken up since she fell asleep on Chouwa, who was guarding her the whole time. Concern enveloped both Chouwa and Dark. Was Aka really as tired as Chouwa had said? Or was it more than that? Dark couldn't even talk about it with Chouwa because of his lack of the ability to speak the foxes. He only hoped that she would wake up soon.

Scroll VIII

Dark watched over Aka for several days. But she has yet to awaken. Her breathing grew slow and her body was frail. She kept muttering something, but he never caught a single word. She kept tossing around in her sleep, even after they had left Kendo's village. Dark also kept his ears strained, listening the Aka's heart beat.

Even though he has a new power controller, which is the Crescent Moon Blade, Dark a still worried.

"I wish I could understand what you are saying, Chouwa." Dark said scratching behind Chouwa's cheek bone.

He had a worried look on his face and his tail drooped. Dark has never even seen him like this. Was something wrong?

Dark tried everything he could to communicate with Chouwa. But nothing worked. He tried speaking the fox language. But it sounded like that he was speaking gibberish. Then he tried body gestures. But, he looked like a fool when he did. Dark even tried making Aka's unconscious body into a puppet just to communicate! Desperate, wasn't he?

After many failed attempts, Dark thought about seeking out help.

He thought of Priestess Sahara at first, but then he hasn't seen her since those monks had tried to purify and kill him. So, heck, why not? Dark started toward her village.

"Dark?" Aka's voice echoed.

He turned around. But Dark saw nothing but darkness.

"Look what you did, Dark." Her voiced echoed again.

"Did what?!" Dark shouted into the blackness. "What did I do?!"

"When I came back a ghost, I find that you slaughtered every one here."

"A ghost?! Aka, stop this! Now! I never slaughtered anyone but my enemies!"

"Yes you have. Your scent is mixed with all of the blood and corpses."

The village from his dreams five years ago appeared in front of him. This time, he was near the corpses and covered with their blood.

"No! I did none of the sort!" He yelled, looking into his bloody palms.

"Just admit it. You were on a killing spree!"

"NO!" The gash that was inflicted five years ago reopened and bled freely.

Dark ran into the village and tried to reach the other side. But he met with someone as if he was placed at the edge of the village as a message or interference.

He was sitting in a puddle of fresh blood; practically bathing in it, ten feet away. His top half of his body was bare and covered with blood and scars: *his scars*. His hakama ripped in various places. His long hair tied into a ponytail that was also covered with blood. Claws dug in the earth and head down dripping blood.

It was *Dark*.

Dark gaped at himself and took a step back as the other Dark raised.

As he rose, his right hand that was dug in the earth drew out a red sword in its matching scabbard.

But it wasn't red. It was actually drenched in the blood. It dripped off of the scabbard and revealed a dull blue one. It was The Crescent Moon Blade.

He lifted his face and Dark yelled soundlessly. His eyes grew wide. Yes it was him, but something was completely wrong.

His eyes were a scary light blue that was surrounded by black. The stripes on the side of his cheeks were jagged and extended over his nose and connected there. The fangs were twice as long, making them point out, adding a vicious look.

Was this the true demon Dark?!

Before Dark knew it, the other was only a foot away from his face.

“Look up.” He said. His voice was much deeper than his current voice.

Dark didn't move.

“I said... LOOK UP!” The other Dark caught hold of Dark's neck and forced him to look up.

What he saw made his eyes go wide again. A red moon. His eyes shook in their sockets, fear filling his very bowels.

His demon self let go of his neck and Dark continued to look. He was hypnotized by the sight.

Dark's eyes were locked onto the red moon. His eyes were blank and his conscious slipping away from him.

As the red moon grew larger, Dark's eyes followed its magnificence without moving his feet. He started leaning back with his eyes still locked with the moon.

He then fell backwards with his right hand flung in front of him. But the other Dark caught it. The other Dark's right hand was securely holding onto Half Demon Dark behind his back.

The other Dark looked into Dark's empty eyes.

“Wonder why the red moon enchants you?” Demon Dark said, closing in on Half Demon Dark's face.

“It's because,” He continued. “It's your full demon transformation night.”

With the hand that was clasping Dark's hand, he closed his eyes and pressed a light kiss onto his lips.

Dark awoke with a start and fell from his spot on a branch. He continuously fell on the thick branches and got scratched by the limbs and leaves. By the time he got to the bottom, he had scrapes and cuts on his face and hands. Why did sleep in a high tree?

He jolted up right and started wiping his mouth furiously. He blushed as he did so.

"I can't believe that happened!" Dark shouted to himself.

Remembering that it was only a dream, he stopped wiping his mouth.

It has been a fortnight since Aka didn't wake.

Dark looked around and saw that Chouwa was looking over Aka. His tail didn't move and his ears were against his head in a sad way. He went over and looked.

"Is something the...."

Dark strained his ears. It was the last time he ever did.

His eyes watered and he picked Aka up and cried into her body. She was dead. Her heart no longer beats in her chest.

One of her earring started to glow. It then came off and levitated to Chouwa and attached to his ear. His body began to glow a bright white and he changed.

Normally no one ever sees this happen to a fox that has an owner. Because the owner is dead and no one else is around to see this. Dark was the first.

Chouwa changed into his human form. Every fox feature, except his tail and ears, changed into human features. Chouwa was now going to be a humanoid fox demon.

Half of his blond fur coat changed into his long hair while the other half changed into his clothes. His yellow eyes reformed into human looking ones. His limbs lengthened to become hairless human arms and legs. His ears were in the place of human ears and his tail remained in the same place.

When his transformation was complete, he looked at Dark with somber eyes and said, "I am finally human."

"I can understand you." Dark sobbed.

"Yes. But it's unfortunate For Young Master Aka." Chouwa said touching Aka's head. "It's too bad that she can never see me like this. Unless I die and my soul lives."

Dark remained silent. But he clenched Aka's body tighter and cried more.

It was too hard for Dark to bare. His only real family was gone. She didn't even had her first kill yet. All these years that he has trained her, was wasted, like dust in the wind.

That evening Dark buried her ashes near their home village: Midnight Village, a.k.a. The Demon Village.

Dark then went off with Chouwa on an adventure to no where. He didn't have a destination. His goal had

disappeared as soon as Aka did.

When Dark and Chouwa settled in a forest near a village, Dark had went up a tree and looked at the stars.

Chouwa had gone hunting and came back with a boar. Dark was waiting for it to be done cooking.

"It's going to be a while before it's done Master Dark." Chouwa shouted up the tree Dark was settled in.

"Fine." he answered. he looked back up at the sky and gasped. It caused him to fall out of the tree like before.

"Goodness! Are you okay?" Chouwa asked when Dark reached the bottom.

"Keep away!" Dark yelled grasping his head.

"But...why?"

"I said GO!!"

"As you wish, Master Dark." Chouwa then left in a hurry.

Dark started yelling at the top of his lungs as he felt immense pain in his whole body. What he saw, at the top of the tree, moments ago, was... The Red Moon.

Dark started tossing himself around. The pain was powerful and beyond his control. His claws painfully and slowly grew to their full extent; his fangs did the same. His demon blood over powered his human blood and took over coursing through his veins. Dark was ramming himself into the trees, making his head bleed and the bark splinter greatly.

He hunched over and ripped his top haori off revealing his scars and growing muscles. One eye opened and looked toward the village nearby. His eyes now have light blue pupils that are surrounded by black.

He got up and looked around. He located The Crescent Moon Sword and picked it up and ran toward the village, snarling.

As he ran, he took the blade out of its scabbard and threw the scabbard carelessly behind him. And disappeared in the brush.

Kendo walked up to the abandoned scabbard and picked it up. His head lowered and saw traces of dripped blood on the forest floor. He then bent low over the blood and sniffed it as he slung the scabbard on his back.

"Dark," he whispered. "You abandon Master Ki's wood that made the scabbard. Hence, your blood has taken over for the night. I do not pity."

The scabbard vibrated violently.

“Yes,” Kendo said. “You are too far from The Blade. We shall go.” With a swish of his cloak and flash of white light, he disappeared.

Author's Note: This part of the story is somewhat gory. If you do not like gory parts, then you may skip this. The beginning and end is marked with asterisks ***

“RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!!!” a woman shouted to the village people. “A DEMON COMES TO SEEK BLO—” but before she could finish, Dark slashed her in half with the sword. Her blood flooded out like a fountain onto the blade, staining it.

“Who's next?!” Dark shouted with his deep demonic voice.

Every villager screamed, yelled and shrieked and ran off in the opposite direction of Dark. Dark sneered and ran after the terrified people.

He then leaped over the crowd and landed in front of them and yelled, “SURROUNDING FIRE!”

A ring of flames surrounded the whole village, causing the villagers to stop in their tracks.

“There's no escape from my ravage.” Dark said moving in on his pray.

“Damn you, you cruel monster!!!” a child shouted. His mother tried to prevent him from saying anything, but it was already too late.

“Cruel' am I?” Dark asked leaping toward the child.

“Please,” the boy's mother pleaded. “he's just a child. Please spare him!”

“Spare him?” he then sliced the mother and child in half, covering himself in their blood. “I spare no one!”

He then slashed at the closest villagers and continued his ravage. Blood from every mother, father, child, elder, priest, priestess, etc. covered Dark from head to toe to blade. His demon blood raced as he made each kill and made victims scream. Each kill deepened his desire for more and more blood he would soon be bathing in. Soon after, he had killed one and all....

“Dark!” a woman's voice shouted.

He turned around and found an arrow had struck him in the arm. In the distance stood Sahara with her long bow and readied arrow. He yanked out the arrow without a sound and lunged at Sahara.

She launched another arrow but it missed. He eyes widened and she shouted, "Kendo!!!"

At that instant, right before Dark struck her down; Kendo had leaped over her and swung the scabbard at Dark's head. It knocked him to the ground sideways and his head leaked his black blood.

"Are you okay, Sahara?" Kendo asked behind him where Sahara still stood.

"Yes. But, what's wrong with Dark?"

"You'll pay for that!" Dark said lunging at the pair.

Kendo held out the scabbard and it made a barrier around them.

Dark was suspended in midair because of the force of the barrier.

"Dark... has turned... full demon!" Kendo grunted pushing Dark away with the barrier.

Dark flew several feet away and he landed on his hunches.

"Crescent Moon Blade," Kendo shouted holding the scabbard's open end toward Dark. "Return to your scabbard and be purified of your tainted arc!" The scabbard then glowed blue and so did the sword.

The Blade started moving toward the scabbard on its own accord while Dark dragged it back. But he then sneered. He kept a tight grip on the hilt of the sword, but he didn't resist the withdrawal. He moved with the sword that sped into the scabbard. Kendo and Sahara gasped at this.

When the sword was settled in the scabbard, Dark said, "*Fool!*" He took a hold of the scabbard and kicked sideways at Kendo's hands, knocking it out of them. He then kicked hard at Kendo's stomach, which sent him soaring toward Sahara. Dark then back-flipped into a puddle of blood and rolled around in it like dog rolling in grass; causing the sword *and* scabbard to be soaked in human blood.

He then got up and said to the sheathed sword, "Now absorb the human blood and become more powerful and of stature of my great demon power!!" The sheathed sword glowed red and then gave off a pulsating feel that tingled Dark's demonic blood.

He growled with pure content of evil and looked over at Kendo and Sahara. But when he did, his eyes widened with surprise: Kendo and Sahara were kissing each other.

"Hey! You mind?! I'm being evil here!!!" they ignored him. "Fine! I'LL ERADICATE YOU BOTH!!!" He made a move to try and kill them but something happened.

He stopped after taking one step. His pupils shrunk and he eyes lids shut. Behind him, the early morning light was shining faintly. He fell to his knees and doubled over in the puddle of blood. His closed eyes returned to their regular selves and so did the rest of his body.

Kendo and Sahara broke apart and looked at Dark's bloody body.

"Now what?" Sahara asked. She made a move toward Dark but Kendo stopped her.

"Leave him."

"Why?"

"He has tasted human blood and has killed many. We cannot help him now."

"Then who will?"

"Our future family."

There was a short pause. But then Sahara asked, "Kendo, what's your last name?"

"Crescent' Why?"

"Nothing."

Kendo picked Sahara up and disappeared, leaving Dark in the puddle of blood

The next morning, Dark woke up with his nose filled with the scent of human blood. He bolted up and regurgitated as he saw what he had done.

It was exactly like in the dream: blood and corpses everywhere you look. Dark wiped his mouth and realized that he was drenched with human blood.

"No..." He muttered shakily. "It... can't be."

Dark looked around again. He then clawed his arm to see if he'd feel pain. And he did.

"NO!!! IT CAN'T BE!!!"

Final Scroll

(100 years later)

Dark stared at a cave's ceiling for countless hours. His eyes were full of somber. He couldn't bare Aka's death any longer. It drove him into lunacy. He didn't say a word nor did he bother to move. But he knew he had to move on.

He got up slowly. The weight upon him dragged, crating difficulty for him the have any spirit to move so much. Once he got up, he walked to the entrance of the cave. He looked up at the orange sky. Very late in the afternoon Dark calculated. The clouds had turned into a pinkish color along with lots of orange. He walked off to the side of the cave and left Aka's grave of her ashes.

The only thing he had that remained of her was her earrings. They were silver when they used to be gold. Her powers in them had diminished when she died. Her earrings hung on Chouwa's ear and his ear now.

He left The Crescent Moon Blade at Aka's grave. It was stuck into the ground with the tip of the blade; the scabbard next to it buried under the ground. He hoped that when his son, Shiro, who is fourteen,

grew up and had a family of his own, he would also bare a son and let the Obsidian family name be carried on for centuries to come. His very young daughter Kuroi, who looked like Aka except for some aspects, would raise a family of her own. She and Shiro were seven years apart.

Dark's wife, Ai, had died by being attacked by a random, yet powerful, demon; which left him to raise his teenage child and young kid alone.

He reached Midnight Village. He and his son and daughter were the only ones who inhabited it now. Most of the land was still burnt from all of that time long ago. He only bothered to make a hut that would give him and his family shelter. No one has ever stepped foot here as long as Dark could remember.

"Father!" a girl's voice sounded off.

Dark looked over and saw Kuroi and Shiro running over to him. They must have been fishing; Shiro was carrying fish in his hands.

"Look what Kuroi caught by herself." Shiro said placing six fishes down.

"Good. That's enough for all of us." Dark said pretending to be happy.

"Father, is something wrong?" Shiro asked catching his act.

"Kuroi thinks Father doesn't feel well." Kuroi said. She has a habit of talking in third person. "Kuroi can sense it."

"Nay, don't worry. Just start a bonfire to cook the fish with. Go get wood from the forest, Kuroi." Dark said. He then looked at Shiro.

Shiro nodded.

"Alright! Kuroi will be back!" she answered. She then went off into the woods.

Dark and Shiro waited until Kuroi was out of earshot.

"Did you visit Aunt Aka's grave and mourned in the cave again?"

"You can say that." Dark responded looking at the sky; it was now near the moon's shining time. "Help me tomorrow night."

"Help you? With what exactly."

"I'll tell you when it's time. Promise me you'll help."

Shiro looked into his father's graying eyes. He saw the truth behind their dull sheen. He knew what he was going to do.

"I promise."

"That's my son. Promise me this also."

"What?"

"Take care of Kuroi better than I had done with my sister, your aunt, Aka."

"I promise on her grave."

Dark smiled.

"Kuroi got the wood!" Kuroi shouted.

"Just put it over there!" Dark shouted back.

"Father, I'll miss you." Shiro said quietly.

"I'll miss both of you." Dark hugged his son and then called over Kuroi and gave her a hug too, saying it was for catching many fish on her own.

That night, they ate in silence around the fire. Afterwards he put Kuroi to sleep and called Shiro to the roof top of their hut.

"So how are we going to do it?" Shiro had figured out what Dark had planned.

"I haven't thought of it yet. I was thinking of you bringing me down."

"But I don't even match half of your power. I don't stand a chance."

"Who ever said I was going fight back? Listen," Dark dropped his voice and looked around. "I have a felling that I'm going to get sick very late in the afternoon tomorrow. So meet me in the cave. And then you can do whatever to kill me."

"But, I don't have the heart to do so."

"I'm sure you'll find it. But before you enter that cave, pray for your aunt and leave a Sakura at her grave."

"You mean the flower, right?"

"Yes. Good night." Dark leapt down from the roof and left to the forest.

Shiro stared after him and lowered his head. How was he going to kill the great Demon Ruler of the South-Western Lands: His Father?

Over the years that Dark had wandered, he had claimed land and killed rulers, just to make his future family gain respect from many.

The next night, Shiro noticed that his father wasn't in the hut. He checked if Kuroi was asleep. He sighed in relief seeing that she was. Moving quietly, he went outside and went into the forest where he had last seen his father.

The moon was out and it was near the top of the black sky. He pushed through the darkness in the forest shoving brushed aside.

Shiro hoped that Dark didn't kill himself already. But he then pushed the thought aside, knowing about his promise to help his father die.

Then his nose picked up Dark's scent. But he also smelled something unexpected. He ran.

There, lying on the ground in a heap was Dark. He was lying next to Aka's grave and holding onto the blade of his sword as blood dripped down the arc.

"Father!" Shiro shouted. "Are you willing for your body to be dried from blood?!"

"No..." Dark mumbled. "I am giving... the sword more... blood so that... no one... but our family can... use it." He then let go and turned over onto his back.

"Father..." Shiro went to touch his father's bleeding hand. He then placed his hand on top of Dark's palm.

"Not a word, Shiro. Just listen." He turned his gaze toward his son, while tightening his grip. "Darkness is... covering my eyes slowly and... pain is subduing me. Though it may not look it..., it is."

"What about the promise I made last night?"

"I haven't... forgotten. Take... the blade... from the mount." Dark instructed.

"The Crescent Moon Blade?"

"Yes... quickly."

Shiro got up and took hold of the hilt of the blade and yanked it out.

"Now run... me through... with it. Then put it... back in the... mount."

"What?! I would never—!"

"Just... do it. If you were... in my place, you... would say the... same."

Shiro hesitated. If he killed his own father, it would scar him for life. But his father was suffering; he didn't want him to suffer.

He then decided.

“Are you ready?” Shiro asked.

“Yes.” Dark then closed his eyes.

Shiro's own eyes cried. But not of tears. But of black liquid. It ran down his face like water. He raised the sword above his father's heart.

“Goodbye... Father.” He trusted the blade downward and closed his eyes at the last second to avoid seeing the blood spew. Though he couldn't avoid hearing it. He then took the sword out, placed it in the mount and fell to his knees sobbing. Shiro's ears heard his father's heart stop and the blood that pumped through it cease.

Footsteps approached and Shiro turned around. Standing in a short distance was Chouwa in his humanoid form. His face was expressionless, but he was sad for his young master, Shiro. Chouwa opened his arms and Shiro ran into them.

“Was it his wish?” Chouwa asked.

Shiro nodded into Chouwa's clothing.

“Then I won't question any further, Young Master Shiro.”

Chouwa let go of Shiro and went to Dark's body to bury it next to Aka's.

Shiro looked up at the sky. His black tears matched it. Up above was a full moon at the very top of the sky. He knew the time and it scarred his mind for life: The Midnight Moon.

End of Story

