

# Happy Halloween

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*Ever since last year's failed scheme, Junior promised his friends that they would regain their status. What does Eris have to say about that?*

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# 1 - Chapter 1

Happy Halloween.1

Disclaimer: Nergal Junior and Jack O'Lantern belong to Maxwell Atoms, half the credit for Nina goes to me, the other half goes to the almighty Tim Burton because ever since I saw TNBC, I have been obsessed with ragdolls.

Summary: Ever since last year's failed scheme, Junior promised his friends that they would regain their status. What does Eris have to say about that?

(This story takes place when Junior is about 16.)

Nergal Junior sat at the desk in his room; all the lights were turned off, except the adjustable table lamp which shone on the large drawing pad the hybrid boy was hunched in front of. He scribbled down any idea that popped into his head, and then soon after, crossed it out in frustration. Junior even began mumbling about the ideas that he depicted as positively useless: "Horrible...highly unethical... wouldn't work even if we convinced Grim to help!... Not worth the effort... Eris has probably done that at least twelve times..." He ran a hand through his hair in frustration.

Junior had let his hair grow out of the upwards swoop from his childhood years and now parted down the center; he kept it at a medium length and a few strands on each side of his head fell over his eyes. He kept his black sweater and pants, but his scarf had changed slightly. On the ends of his scarf were checkered with black squares that soon ended at a diagonal angle. His eyes had become more like his father's with purple irises and the neon green where the whites should have been.

'C'mon, Junior, think!' He mentally scolded himself, glaring over the rim of his glasses at the paper, which was decorated with furious scribbles. If Junior had pressed the pencil against the paper any harder, there would have been holes worn in the material! Junior's angry glare melted into a look of an idea hitting with the force of a speeding truck. He quickly jotted down the idea quickly and made a few hurried sketches with notes about the details; it was very late and he didn't want to be caught by—

“Junior..?” A British-accented voice called through the door. Too late. “What are you doing up? It's a school night!” Junior had practically jumped out of his skin at the unexpected approach of his father, but he regained his annoyed glare in a few moments.

“Yeah, yeah... I'm going..!” He responded, failing horribly at hiding the bitterness that oozed from his tone. Another thing Junior had picked up from his father was a light accent in his voice that developed over the years. eHe didn't have anything against it; it was just a little embarrassing at school, with everyone around him having normal American voices. If he had a dime for every time his classmates dissolved into fits of giggles whenever he answered a question, he'd be the richest man alive because, believe me, he answered a lot of questions.

Flipping the switch on the lamp, the light faded and the room was plunged into darkness. The irises and pupils disappeared in his eyes, leaving nothing but the bright green that began to glow, which actually allowed him to see in the dark as well as he could during the day. He strolled to his bed and scrambled into it, sighing as his head finally had something to rest on. He stared at his room, cluttered objects of metal and the sketches of previous projects were strung about the shelves, desk, and even the walls.

“I really hope that this will bring back our reputations from the gutter,” he grumbled as he slowly slipped off to sleep. Junior's eyes moved back and forth beneath his eyelids, indicating a dream of some kind. What he meant by `our reputations' was him and his two friends - just about the only people he tolerated, parents, Billy, and Mandy aside - Jack O'Lantern and Nina.

## Jack's House

“You know, Halloween is next month and September is almost over...” Jack glanced momentarily away from the calendar he had previously been studying intently before turning back to it. Nina hummed a slow `what-exactly-are-you-getting-at?' response as she looked up from her book. Her white stitches jumped out compared to her skin, which was the color of tar. Unlike Junior's, her eyes were always orbs of glowing, empty neon green, but they still seemed to be able to focus on one thing. Her hair, which was as black as her skin, was tied back in a bun with wisps of hair that face down the sides of her face. “Junior hasn't come up with any new ideas.” Jack continued nonchalantly.

Nina chuckled inwardly at the mention of the annual Halloween pranks they had been pulling ever since she had met them. Last year's 'Exploding Jawbreaker' plot ended up with the trick-or-treaters who figured it out hurling ball after ball of the molten candy at them; they had been in lock-down at Jack's place the entire night! She let out a sigh and responded, "Jack, don't worry! I'm positive that Junior will think of something.... He always does...!" She fell silent as Jack said nothing in response, but simply paced over towards the window and peered out from behind the purple curtains.

"Look at that!" The pumpkin-headed man gestured for his friend to come to the window. Curiosity piqued, Nina stumbled towards him, and pulled the curtain back a bit more to look out the window as well. Grim was walking by himself on the sidewalk at the base of the hill, but they could clearly see him eyeing the house from the corner of his eye as he passed. Nina turned her head towards a glowering Jack questioningly.

"Grim has walked by here everyday for months, watching us." He spat bitterly, glaring down the hill where the Grim Reaper had walked a few moments ago. "I've seen him... I can't believe that he would stoop so low as to spy on us!" Jack stormed a few feet away from the window, muttering to himself. He felt Nina's eyes on his back and Jack let out a very loud sigh of defeat. "I guess I'm just jumpy because of the lack of time and lack of ideas." The prankster admitted and his carved eyes fell to the floor.

Nina silently admitted that she shared that feeling. Halloween was coming up swiftly, and it didn't show signs of waiting just because they were at a loss for pranks to pull. She fixed her gaze on the wall just above Jack's purple hat. A little voice at the back of her mind tugged at the confidence she had but a few moments ago, bringing it back into view. "He'll come up with something." She whispered lowly, but with very little doubt which made Jack turn around; she was now looking him straight in the eye with that eerie stare. "He won't let us down..." She turned her head back to the window, staring at the curtains, she was quiet once again, but she couldn't see Jack nodding in agreement.

[Well, wasn't that fun? Sorry if this chapter is lame, it'll get better soon (I hope)! Anyways, here is just a little description of Nina, my OC.

Gender: Female (duh)

Species: Whatever the heck Nergal is, except she's a ragdoll version

Basics: She has black skin with white stitches holding her together, her black hair is tied into a bun and a

few strands fall down the side of her face. When her hair is done, it reaches her shoulder blades.

Clothes: A black, unzipped windbreaker over a red hoodie, black pants, and red, pull-on shoes.

P.S.: Anyone who thinks that Jack and Nina are a couple will be shot.]

## 2 - Chapter 2

Happy Halloween.2

Disclaimer: See chapter 1

(Whee, new chapter! -awkward silence- Okay, okay... on with the show!)

It was already three o'clock on Thursday and *still* no sign of Junior. Nina was hunched over a coffee table, her chin rested on her crossed forearms as she wordlessly watched at the face of the battery-powered alarm clock that sat in the center, while Jack was looking out the window with an impatient air hovering about him. Nergal Junior's school got out at two-thirty, and it was a ten minute walk to Jack's from the school, so where was he? Jack growled and finally broke the silence: "Where on earth is that boy?!" Nina lifted her head and looked over at the man who appeared to be stuck in the medieval era, clothing-wise.

"Mmm," she shrugged and turned her stare to the door expectantly. Nina shifted her weight to sit on her heels as Jack grumpily stalked over and slumped into a wooden chair. The demon ragdoll didn't understand how Jack could put up with those old fashioned chairs, which she found only slightly more comfortable than sitting on a pile of rocks. She yelped and fell on her back as the door abruptly swung open and slammed against the wall, Jack stood up slightly while still clutching the arm rests to get a better view of the intruder.

"Hey! Didn't you ever hear of knocking?!" Jack feigned complaining with a smirk. Nina propped herself up on her elbows to see who it was, "Junior!" She cried happily when she saw him stringing his scarf on the coat rack. Junior's head hung as if he regretted something and Jack frowned suspiciously at that fact. The hybrid staggered over to another nearby chair and sunk into it. Nina dreaded what his behavior meant; it probably foretold another day closer to Halloween and still no prank. The boy's shoulder began to tremble as if he were crying.

About to say something as consolation, Nina's jaw dropped as Junior's head snapped back and he

began to laugh outwardly. Jack joined into the laughter, which made Nina snap her head over to him. He reached for a string that Nina had saw him attach to the chair Junior was currently sitting on a few hours ago and began to howl with laughter along with the two boys. Jack gave the string a hard tug and a leg was torn off of Nergal Junior's chair, causing the whole thing to collapse.

Junior hit the floor with a loud grunt, but only laughed harder. When the laughter finally died down, Nina wiped away a saline tear and stared at Junior with a smile and asked, "So, did you come up with anything?" Junior casually pulled splinter from his palm and looked up at the ragdoll with an eager grin, showing off his vicious looking fangs. He rummaged through the ruins of the chair to free his schoolbag. The green-eyed boy tugged at rolled up piece of paper wedged between two text books until it finally was free of its shackles.

After pulling the rubber band off of the paper, it snapped against his hand causing him to howl in shock. Jack and Nina stared as he began to waggle his hand in the air before they registered what had happened and they erupted into even more laughter. Junior growled reproachfully and shot the rubber band at the pumpkin-headed prankster and grinned triumphantly as it hit Jack on the side of his head. Such a hit certainly shut him up, but it only made Nina crack up even more.

A startled hush fell over the room as a voice with a Jamaican twang resounded through the room: "Hello, whatcha got dere?" Junior let out a yelp when he realized that Grim had appeared right behind him and accidentally threw the paper on the ground. The paper unraveled and Grim leaned down to see it, but Nina threw herself on top of it before he could realize what any of the markings were and whistled innocently. Jack stepped away from his chair, face contorted with rage.

"How the heck did you—" He cut himself short when he saw that the door had been forgotten and was poised half-way open. Jack's eye twitched in annoyance and faced the Grim Reaper with the same expression of fury he had lost a moment ago. He began to speak in a venom-laced whisper, "Stop spying on us... Stop pestering us... and one—more—thing," his voice abruptly transformed into a shout that shook the foundation, "GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!!!" Grim would have jumped out of his skin if he had any, giving Junior enough time to grab the distracted reaper by the hood of his robe and roughly `escort' Grim to the door and promptly kicked him out.

Grumbling something under his breath, Junior closed the door with a flick of his wrist. "Wow, NJ, a little bit malevolent, isn't it?" Nina called to the half-demon who was in the process of calming down. He wheeled around to tell Nina that Grim got what he deserved when he noticed she was glancing over his Halloween plans. Jack was peering over Nina's shoulder to get a better look at the plans when Junior snatched them away and spread the parchment out on the coffee table, moving the alarm clock out of

the way. Jack's eyes widened at the strange device scrawled out on the sheet of paper.

There was an odd little doll with a horizontal zipper, and when it was opened a strange little robot sprang out. It consisted an accordion-like spring that enabled it to move, and a cylindrical head. The little eyes appeared to be lights above its mouth, which cut its head in half and a hinge allowed it to snap its jaws back to a 90 degree angle. A mechanical spider jumped out of the top of its head, but, sadly, the spider was labeled *`only for show'*. Nina saw that Junior was very excited about this little machine and finally asked what it was supposed to do.

"Well," Junior began to explain with the grin on his face only widening, "Inside the mouth, there will be little bumps that fit together when it's closed. And-" Jack interrupted at this point to straighten something out.

"You mean like a waffle iron?" He quirked his substituted head to the side. Junior stared at him blankly for a moment before the relentless smile grew back into place. Nergal Junior jabbed a finger at him, the smile changed briefly into a confident smirk, and replied, "Precisely!"

Raising an eyebrow, Nina turned to Junior, who was returning to his original position. "You were saying..?" She urged, swirling her hand in the air as a signal for him to continue. He took a quick breath and continued to explain the strange device.

"Uhhmm - Okay, as for the eyes, we can place little sensors inside them and program them to go after only one thing, so that they don't just cause random havoc." Jack and Nina leaned forward slightly, eyes widening with anticipation. "We can program them to go after one substance: sugar. That way, it'll only crush their poor little spirits instead of the trick-or-treaters." Junior fought back the urge to laugh at the expressions on his friends' faces - they looked like little kids looking through the window of a candy store. "The spider, though basically useless, can cause a bit more mayhem." Jack's face fell slightly when the *`useless'* spider was mentioned, and remained quiet for a moment.

"Nice plan, Junior!" Jack finally piped up again, but his grin began to fade into a concerned frown, "But where are we going to the materials? We can't afford all of that metal!" He knew very well that they would need a ton of those little robots in order to take a step towards repairing their currently wrecked reputations. Junior gaped at him with a fake look of insult, crossing his arms indignantly.



“Oh, yes!” He cried out sarcastically, smirking devilishly, “Let's completely forget about the boy who's immune to the temperatures of the earth's molten core and is able to pull liquid metals out of the magma for free. Let's just go down to the market and buy the exact same things for over a hundred something dollars!” Nina laughed at this comment, but quickly caught it in her throat and used her hand to cover her mouth at the glare she had earned from Jack. “Don't worry guys, we can handle this. Besides, what could possibly happen in a month?”

## Mount Olympus

“Oh, much more than you think, my dear hybrid...” Eris crooned jeeringly, watching at the scene in Jack's home which was being shown on the skin of her Apple of Discord. Grim stood in the background, twiddling his thumbs nervously at the goddess' response to Nergal Junior's rhetorical question. “So those three twits think they can outshine me? Well, we'll just have to teach them a lesson, won't we, Grimmy?” She turned to the nervous reaper.

Grim flinched as she acknowledged him, he did hate the trio, but he didn't feel right spying on them. Eris had sent him to plant a small spying device in the cottage so she could find out what they were planning. “Hey, Eris!” He shouted resentfully, “I held up my end of the deal and put dat confounded t'ing in the house, now you have to throw dose pictures away!” Grim winced slightly at the mention of the blackmail. Eris rose an eyebrow and held up the disc which contained said pictures and smiled cruelly.

“Oh, do you mean these pictures?” She inquired, her voice dripping with false innocence. “Listen up, Grimmy,” The Goddess of Chaos snapped, her tone turning venomous, “I have the disc, I am able to put them on the internet, so I decide when you can stop doing what I say! *Got it?*” Grim cringed at the new level of low his reputation would reach if those pictures were seen.

He nodded sullenly and stalked off, leaving Eris by herself. Eris looked at the scene again, trying to come up with a way to stop them. She froze the scene at a certain point and with the wave of her hand, it zoomed in on Jack. “Hmmm... I bet I could give this one a motive to work for me...” She began to cackle like a stereotypical villain, causing a few of her fellow Olympians to peer inside the deserted temple she used as her home, but the looks went unnoticed as her laughter echoed into the darkening sky.