

# Along came a spider

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*A young girl's life takes a turn for the better when she finds a mysterious artifact in an antique shop. But then she learns not everything is at it seems when the body count of her foes starts to pile up...*

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# 1 - Real Folk Blues

God things were such a damn drag, Ming Ling wanted to pull her hair out and scream. This day had started off nice and peaceful, but only took a turn for the worse yet again thanks to 'grandpa dearest'. What the hell had crawled up his @\$\$? He had gotten doggy with her just because the fact she was an insomniac and watched anime. Not only that but he blew a gasket when she failed to answer the door for him when she was truly busy cleaning the shower and couldn't hear him from the upstairs. Jesus this is what she gets for doing a good deed? Some world this was, getting a lynching for sleeping past noon and not being interested in the craptastic sitcom that was stupid Icarly or Zeke and Luther. Hey sure Fullmetal Alchemist and Durarara were cartoons, but they ran circles around those stupid @\$\$ sitcoms when it came to intellect and clever storytelling! Oh and the fact she preferred to draw and didn't have a job at the time didn't help. But try telling this jackass that was stuck in the 50s that finding a job nowadays was nearly as impossible as getting a penguin to sing opera! And that had been the high points of her argument with him that day, which resulted in her either finding a job, or moving in with her father. And she'd be damned at leaving her mother alone. Sure her brother was temporarily staying with them due to issues with his girlfriend, but that was just it, it was a temporary stay.

She just wanted to cry, it wasn't fair that her grandparents idolized her busy body cousins while turning a nose to her family just because they weren't rich or worked til they dropped dead. Out of frustration she had stormed out of the house and left to go to the library that day, she just had to clear her head and be away from him. And to think she used to idolize this jerk! Now whenever he visited she felt herself get physically sick along with her mother and brother. But that's the hell you have to endure when your grandparents are your landlords. She tucked herself into the back of the place, reading Shounen Jump's latest issue while curled up on one of the chairs, tuning out the kids running about along with the loud mouthed jocks going on about pictures on facebook and what not. Ugh, Ming Ling couldn't stand people who were all about their looks. Sure she herself had a Facebook, but good luck finding a willing picture of herself on it. No no what plastered her facebook were photos and screens of the awesomeness that was Raziel from Legacy of Kain, Edward Elric of FMA, or 2nd State Hollow Ichigo from Bleach. She made it clear that her Facebook wouldn't be shallow like 40 percent of the other ones she saw.

But when it did come to her appearance, no she wasn't ashamed of it; just camera shy like her mother was all. Her long brown hair touched the middle of her back and her bangs constantly needed to be cut. Royal blue eyes hid behind a pair of oval glasses with gold thin frames. Her skin was pale though was starting to tan a bit due to her constant bike riding in the summertime. During the warm weather which was starting to kick in due to mid May; she was usually caught wearing a mini T-shirt of Happy Bunny or something demonic on the front of the shirt like a skull, Reaper, or dragon. And she topped off the look with a badly ripped pair of cut off jeans and fingerless leather gloves. However when it was cold out, she'd wear a pair of purposely ripped jeans and a black oversized hoodie. Right now though she didn't care and just wore her regular mini t and cut offs. She was just starting to get into the story called "Psyren" that the manga had to offer, when she heard a bunch of girls mocking a certain wraith on Facebook. She didn't bother to look, Ming Ling learned from her brother not to cause attention to yourself by staring. Peripheral vision was the key to seeing without being noticed you are looking.

"Team Raziel? Ew who would love that freakshow haha! What a bunch of losers, they must be

necrophiliacs~!" One blonde bimbo barbie called out. Well she was more of a Bratz doll when it came to looks, as in she looked like a flat out date rape daddy issues whore. Ugh how Ming Ling hated when moronic little younglings looked at something with just their eyes. It wasn't a team for fangirls of Raziel, considering the fact half the team were guys. It was in fact a team of FANS, those who know what a true creature of the night really was. Not some stupid angsty little vampire or werewolf who loved a shallow little dog who wanted to be anywhere but there. She knew this well because she had brought said team together to help bring down the downfall of the Twilight retards who based everything off looks and sparkles and hurting yourself to get attention from a loser anti hygenic vampire who killed defenseless animals for blood. When the mocking got too severe, Ming Ling couldn't keep quiet anymore.

"It's not a fanclub based on lust for Raziel. For one he lacks the right parts to please another. It's a fanclub based on the example of what a true creature of the night is. And not only him, but the club celebrates the genius story that is Legacy of Kain. But then again your tiny little brains would explode if you even heard the monologue for Raziel's introduction in Soul Reaver since the terms and advanced dialogue would be too much for you all to comprehend. Besides it wasn't his choice to look like that. In fact he did look dateable back when he was a vampire, but thanks to Kain he looks like that now. Tell me, do you point and laugh at burn victims for shoots and giggles at the hospital?" Ming Ling said calmly as the girls all looked to her. A few of them got confused looks on their faces from her statement, though a few clamed up when she said the last part.

"Uh sorry we d~"

"No you didn't know. Legacy of Kain isn't about emo little vamps who sparkle and claim they are badassess and threaten to hurt the girl they love. Though it does have plenty of sorrow and angst in it, but they do it without having to add all that romance and drama bullshoo. They do it with revenge and destiny and actually back themselves up when they claim they are powerful. Kain and Raziel would make mince meat of your little Jacob and Edward and they have a real reason to fight each other. They fight cause of hatred and betrayal, not because they want the same stupid shallow girl. If it were up to me, that damn story would have ended with Bella getting hit by that van! But oh you probably wouldn't mind since you sluts probably would want that fag for yourselves." Ming Ling hissed out. Of course the blonde went running at her, nails at the ready though Ming Ling was ready for her, not even flinching, she grabbed ironically, a stupid looking hardback graphic novel of Twilight, and sent the blonde falling on her @\$ with it. "Oh look, the books good for something after all instead of just toilet paper." she replied with a smirk. Turning then she waltzed out through the back. Lucky for her the librarians had stopped the girls from chasing after her. They had known the group better than her (as in they were quite the trouble makers), and the curly haired middle aged librarian had seen that the blonde made the first move, and told her to leave if she couldn't handle a simple debate. Still though Ming Ling felt rattled and on edge.

"God I hope bro's in the mood for Mortal Kombat 9, I feel like tearing someone's spine out." Ming Ling muttered, taking a short cut on her bike through the cemetery. Though for some reason she didn't feel like going home just yet, she had forty minutes to kill so she might as well browse around town. A few minutes later she was in the upper part of town, glancing at windows with bored blue eyes. Bah the stores were going to hell nowadays in this tiny little town of Berwick. Dollar stores had little to nothing to sell, chinese and subway restaurants adorned every other street in the different sections of town. But then one shop next to the movie theatre caught her eye. It was a historical antique shop that held items from every nation named Sojourner Imports. Ah alas though, it looked as if it was going to go out of business in a few months, hence the huge cutbacks on the items that would normally sell for close to 80 or 100

bucks a peice. It was to be expected though from a small little town that worshipped it's sucky @\$\$ football team and spat on anything having to do with art and culture. Deciding to take a look inside, the brunette locked up her bike and headed inside.

"Woo damn yeah this smells like an antique shop." Ming Ling muttered, covering her nose due to the intense smell of incense that greeted her nostrils. However the place indeed looked promising. Hell the first thing she saw was a huge chinese dragon kite that hung from the ceiling. A silent snarl graced it's features while it's vast wings and tail practicly took up the whole store ceiling. At one side of the store offered all sorts of carved statues of different sizes along with different types of clothing and folded up kites of other animals. On another were jewelry stands of things ranging from mood rings to african necklaces of great authenticity. "Wow, this place has it all." She said, grinning as she looked over a huge gold mini statue of Shiva that looked like an incense holder.

"Yup, everything's imported too." Said a voice from off to the left of her. Squeaking, Ming Ling whirled around to see an elderly gentleman with an unkempt beard streaked black and grey and a muss of black and grey streaked hair tied into a bushy ponytail. He reminded her of an old samurai, and that scar across his one cheek added to the look. "Ah dont be alarmed, Im not following you around for suspesion of shoplifting or anything like that. I just prefer to greet my customers...though your the first in a long time heh." The man exclaimed with a light laugh, waving a dismissive hand as he turned and walked over to the one statue, fixing it stand upright since it was leaning to the side beforehand.

"Oh no it's not that, I was just startled is all. I dont like people sneaking up on me. But that's ok, it wasnt your fault you didnt know. But why suspect me of stealing?" Ming Ling asked, tilting her head to the side as the male gave a weak sigh.

"Alot of little pests have been breaking into my store lately at night. Stealing some of my merchandise to no doubt pwn off for drugs. It's the reason im going out of business here. I would be much better off taking my store to the bigger parts of the city like a mall or somethin. Though it's a shame since I wanted to bring alittle culture to this town. But it seems they only care about drugs and those dumb Berwick Bulldogs or whatever they are called." The man said with a bit of disappointment to his voice. Ming Ling couldnt help but give a small smile to his statement, finally someone who saw things like her when it came to this stupid town.

"It's a shame indeed. Though you'd be better off going to Bloomsburg or Columbia if you want to find people who enjoy culture and not the berwick poodles." Ming Ling exclaimed sarcasticly, giving the old man a few good laughs before he smiled back at her.

"So, what can I get you hun? Anything that suits your fancy here? Oh and im Mr. Mitsurigi Hashima." The man stated, introducing himself as Ming Ling nodded.

"I'm Ming Ling, and well; I already have one of those dragon kites...sooo, got anything unique or off the wall here?" Ming Ling asked, the man scratched his beard a few times in thought before getting an idea. Turning, he shuffled over towards a few statues. Picking one up, he showed it to her as the brunette 22 year old squeaked when she realized what the two figures in the statue were doing.

"How about a fertility statue? Thing really works too! I had some lil lady come in here with abunch of her friends a month ago and she jokingly touched the baby the woman was holding in it and a week later

she came storming in with her mom claiming she was expecting. Though of course I covered my booty and told her condoms are essential to a relationship. But I knew well that this lil number here did the damage." Mitsurugi exclaimed while winking. Ming Ling chuckled nervously while shaking her head and putting her hands up quickly.

"Thanks but no thanks...im not ready to have kids just yet. Plus the last thing I need is my sister visiting and touching that thing. She has three kids already and that's enough for her." She exclaimed, causing the man to laugh more as he shrugged.

"Ah it was worth a shot. Hmmm how about this?" He then said, turning to pick up a miniture coffin as Ming Ling sweatdropped.

"Eh I dont think so, doubt I'll fit in it sir." She stated as the shopkeeper chuckled, putting the item back down as he scratched his beard more while inspecting her.

"Hmmm, it seems from what you said about getting a dragon kite, you like eastern land of the rising sun stuff right?" He asked as Ming Ling nodded.

"Oh yes sir, though i'm mostly american, my grandmother on my father's side was japenese. I guess you could say im homesick." Ming Ling said jokingly as Mitsurugi chuckled.

"Ah then I know juuuust the thing. Come with me, I keep this lil number in the back locked up nice and tight." He said with a glint of mischief in his eyes. Ming Ling sweatdropped, oh lord she hoped he wasnt one of THOSE types of shopkeeps. She watched plenty of mystery and murder documentries to know. Though she felt she could trust him, and she had a good sense of judgement. Hell had her brother listened to her about his psycho gf, maybe he wouldnt be in such a mess and living with her and mom right now. Making her way towards the back, she stepped past the draping beads that made up the curtian before parting another set of curtians actually made up of real fabric this time. It was then that she let out a frightened yet awe inspired squeak. Eyes widening as she laid eyes in the item before her.

"Oh my god...what is it?"

## 2 - Still Doll

"Well, I believe it's one of those old fashioned life-sized dolls from China or Japan." Mr. Mitsurigi exclaimed combing his salt n' pepper beard with his fingers while he inspected the item with Ming Ling; a proud look on his face.

Ming Ling couldn't help but stare in awe. Sure she had seen plenty of Geisha or princess porcelain dolls from China...but this artifact was in a league of its own. Laying in what appeared to be a glass covered coffin or box was a porcelain life sized doll. He appeared to be male in nature due to the open vest revealing his feeble boyish chest. His hips were narrow and slid into a pair of huge sapphire blue silk hakamas. The waistline of the pants were wrapped with a pinkish sash, and a cloth with the symbol of a spider adorned said cloth. His hair was a sleek black and shining in the dim store lights overhead. Not to mention it was parted into six different strands all billowing out from the nape of his neck, a loose bang hanging in his face. Though he was far from normal looking when she noticed the next items on him, for within his raven locks were six diagonally placed crystal visors, all pointing inwards towards his eyes. Then came his hands, which were covered in huge claw-looking gauntlets of deep sapphire blue; three pink crystals also adorning these fiendish hand weapons. Ming Ling couldn't help herself, she had to get a better look. Carefully, she approached the coffin and peered in at him while adjusting her glasses. He looked radiant, and despite the odd appearance...he looked so peaceful. Though she wished she could see the doll's eyes, but no doubt he was probably one of those types that only opened their eyes when they were pushed upright into a sitting position.

"He looks like he's...asleep almost. Dang they must have put a lot of work into this guy...that hair looks real too. As if it grew on his head, not from a horse's tail. Where did you get him? I didn't see this guy on any sites I went to." Ming Ling then asked, eyes still fixated on the eccentric item before her.

"Well I found him seven years ago on an archeological dig in Japan with my brother. He was in some ancient warlord's tomb. Nearly scared the ghost right out of me when I first laid eyes on him sitting in the one chair next to the coffin; almost looked as if he was guarding it despite the fact his eyes were closed." Mitsurigi exclaimed with a light chuckle, looking towards the doll with a light grin as Ming Ling quirked a brow.

"Soo...you never saw this thing's eyes? Huh weird..to make a doll with closed eyes." Ming Ling said while frowning some, so much for that theory of why his eyes were shut.

"Nope, it's a shame cause I too am curious. Ah well, he keeps me company though. Feels like I can talk to him unlike my wife hehe. Though not many others feel comfortable with him from what I'm told." The shopkeep then stated as Ming Ling frowned, looking towards Mr. Mitsurigi now.

"What do you mean?" She asked as the old man sighed shrugging.

"Well turns out two years ago, some big time candidate running for mayor a few cities over bought this fella for full price. Three months after he bought the doll; his staff found him dead in his office, facedown in a puddle of blood with a huge hole in his chest. But here's the weird part, this fella right here was

laying next to the window, the left gauntlet covered in blood while his display case was wide open." Mitsurigi exclaimed as Ming Ling paled a little, eyes resting on the doll once more.

"You mean they think..this did it?" she said in surprise as Mitsurigi scoffed.

"That's what they told me. Asked me where I found it then told me I was crazy for removing it from that tomb. Said all sorts of hogwash like it was cursed or angry because I disturbed its warlord's resting place and all that nonsense. I told them they needed their heads checked considering the fact I had that fella out in the open for how long and it didn't once rise up and try to kill me, not even late at night when I'm locking up the store and counting the money. But they didn't listen, the little chickens handed him back and told me I was a fool to have found this thing. Ah but I don't care, look at him, he's harmless! I bet one of that candidate's competitors probably hired a hitman and killed him and pinned it on the spooky looking doll. After all he DID have a lot of enemies from what I read." Mr. Mitsurigi explained, giving a light huff as he tapped on the glass a few times. Ming Ling nodded to this, frowning some. The story was a little weird, and she herself was superstitious at heart. She believed in curses, ghosts, but not black cats being evil and UFOs as much as the other things that went bump in the night.

"Yeah I read about that guy...Mr. Iruma Tomomitsu was it? Kinda odd though..they said he just had a heart attack in the papers. Guess they didn't want a full-blown media thing on this or his family paid off the papers to keep quiet." Ming Ling replied, trailing her fingers along the thick glass as she looked back to the old shopkeeper. "Tell me though, why do you keep him locked up?" she then asked as said man chuckled.

"Well because he was stolen after I got him back from Mr. Tomomitsu's family. I knew the culprit too. A spoiled little short girl, always came in and stared at him with dark teal eyes. She demanded I give him to her half price and what not but I told her to take a hike after so many visits. Next night he was missing from his chained spot in the chair next to my register and the alarm was blaring. When I saw they hadn't touched the money, I had a feeling it was that mousy haired brat. However, surprising yet also freaky thing is; when I found her with the police, she was ripped to shreds in the nearby river. It appeared she had tried to cross it but the doll weighed her down and I believe the gators got to her. Though thankfully the doll was in perfect condition, not even a nibble on him from the big lizards. But they probably didn't sense he was real so left him alone. But anyways, since then I decided to play it safe, especially with the thefts recently and put him back here in a nice thick glass covered coffin. I think it did the trick too since no one has tried to nab him yet since then." The shopkeeper said, chuckling as he tapped on the glass again to prove his point. From the sound it made, it was no doubt the highest quality plexi glass made. Not even a master jewel thief could cut through it.

Ming Ling shuddered though, two mysterious deaths and the doll ends up nearby in both locations. Then again Mr. Hashima did make a valid point, hell now that she looked at the doll more..he did look harmless. Almost relaxed too..though there was a trace of something else in his face as well...he looked..lonely locked up in that coffin. This tugged at her a little, and made her see why that foolish girl who wound up as gator bait wanted this item. It felt as if he wanted out of that glass hell, to have someone take him home and made the other tiny little dolls envious of him. Hell he wasn't exactly a doll in her eyes though; more like an extreme action figure that was a cross between Stan Lee's spider man and an androgenous prepubescent Shaman King male. Mr. Mitsurigi chuckled, eyeing Ming Ling as she continued to eye the slumbering doll as he scratched his beard a few more times, other hand resting on the coffin's lid.

"Hmmm, seems I pegged you right when I showed you this fella. You look awfully fond of him. Though you dont look like you wanna rape him like that last girl did." He stated playfully as Ming Ling squeaked, she never was one for being good at a pokerface; she could only imagine what he saw on her face.

"Oh well yeah he does look awesome...though I am kinda nervous about buying him since well...the stories." Ming Ling trailed as Mitsurigi roared with laughter, slapping his knee.

"Nonsense deary! Dont let those silly stories scare ya. Trust me, all he's done since I've had him is lay there like a lazy little bugger. Plus he's collected plenty of cobwebs too. I think he'd be happy seeing a change of scenery after soo long...well you know what I mean." He stated, chuckling at the fact the doll's eyes were closed. Ming Ling pondered a few more moments, glancing over to the doll again. True he did look like he wanted to be somewhere else. Besides she had plenty of money saved. She'd let the ps3 drop another hundred dollars before buying it, after all they were everywhere, but this guy..well who knows how long he would be here? Plus he was a rare ancient artifact..and old artifacts from tombs intrigued her.

"Alright you have a deal. I just hope he doesnt take up too much space." Ming Ling said with a smile, pulling her credit card out as Mr. Mitsurigi grinned and clapped his hands together.

"That's the spirit! Ah I knew you were one with great taste the moment I saw ya. Hear that Evan? Your getting a new home, try to be a good boy this time ok?" The shopkeep then said, nudging the coffin before he went to open it up as Ming Ling laughed, sweatdropping some.

"...Evan?" She asked as the old man nodded, carefully hoisting the doll from his coffin.

"Yup, it's the name I gave him. It was my brother's middle name, thought it suited him. Plus I couldnt be rude and call him Ken now could I?" He stated as Ming Ling laughed alittle more at this giving a nod of agreement.

"So how much?" Ming Ling then asked, feeling that this fella was going to hurt her wallet if he wasnt going to hurt her physically.

"Fifty bucks, considering I see you have a sharp eye and will take good care of this fella. Plus I dont want to have to fork out tons of money for a refund if you turn up dead somewhere." Mitsurigi stated as Ming Ling laughed nervously at this morbid joke. Sliding the card and jotting down her signature, she then carefully picked up the life sized doll when the old man handed him to her.

"Careful now, he's rather fragile. Though he's not that heavy as you can see from his hips. Heh my wife told me she wishes she had hips like him." He then joked as Ming Ling chuckled, calming down abit now as she held him, carrying him in a bridal style fashion.

"Wow he is light. Well better be off, thanks Mr. Hashima I'll take good care of him!" Ming Ling then said, smiling as she waved to the shopkeep before she carried the doll out towards her bike. He felt weird in her arms, as if she was holding an unconcious human, not a possibly cursed japanese doll from centuries long forgotten. Hell he even bobbed his head and swung his arms to and fro with each step she made, unlike most porcelain dolls that had stiff joints and necks...dang he was indeed a work of art. She then pondered how to hold him while she rode said bike. She lacked spokes on the back wheels,



and putting him on the handlebars was out of the question. Then she decided to put him in a fireman's hold, slinging him over her shoulder with his head next to her chest to prevent him from slipping off the back and faceplanting into the cement. She was glad he was only 5'3, considering this would be much harder had he been taller than her. "Well buddy, time to go home so just lay back and enjoy the ride." Ming Ling then said with a smile to the slumbering doll as she then headed back towards home.

Once she reached her house, she slung the doll off her shoulders, placing him temporarily on her patio's large outdoor couch as he slumped down on it with a light 'thunk' into the pillows.

"Heh someone's tuckered out. Mr. Hashima's right, you are a lazy fella." Ming Ling said jokingly, smiling over at the doll while she locked up her bike. Then turning, she picked him up once again and headed inside. She listened for her brother's music to see if he was home downstairs in the 'man cave'. But when she didn't hear it, she assumed he was off with friends, or probably working with their cousin on a painting job. Her mother however was in the hospital at the moment...though for reasons unknown. The cause was lack of energy and extreme dehydration and possible migrane. She just hoped the doctors knew what they were doing this friggin time around. Once she made it into the living room, she squeaked, nearly dropping the doll when she felt something cling to her leg as tiny teeth knawed into her skin.

"Ack Mojo, good to see you too but we've been through this talk. No trying to gnaw on your mommy." Ming Ling said with a light huff, looking down at a small 9 week old kitten with large golden hues and fur as black as night. He merely stared back up at her in response as his tail wiggled; a hint he was both happy to see her and in a 'bounce-off-the-walls' sort of mood. But ah that was the price to pay when getting a baby kitten, they had a need to be hyper before laying around on their asses once they reached puberty. She just giggled and leaned down, scratching his ears with her free hand as she then proceeded to slide the lightweight doll off her shoulders. She then placed him on the floor in front of the kitten, laying him there since he didn't seem to want to sit up.

"Lookie here Mojo, I got you and Zuzu a new friend. But try not to tear up his outfit ok? He's really old despite his looks." Ming Ling said, placing the small kitten near the doll's face as the kitten eyed him. After a few minutes, he went up on his haunches and literally sprung onto his face, clinging to it like some alien parasite. "Ack Mojo no bad!" she meeped out, reaching over to pull him off as the kitten mewed lightly. Thankfully he hadn't clawed the face, though still it showed a hint he was probably going to try and use this doll as a scratching post despite her orders. However...it was sort of amusing, she only wished she had a camera phone like her brother. And speaking of which, how would HE react to this doll? She just prayed he wouldn't think it was some sort of asian sex doll or something...god she would die of embarrassment if he asked her that. "Well since Mojo doesn't like ya invading his turf, how about we go meet Zuzu?" Ming Ling then asked the silent being. Chuckling she then picked him up again, trying to avoid Mojo running under her feet in hot pursuit while she headed upstairs. Opening the dark maple door that had a poster of Ichigo's half hollow insane face that read "Enter At your Own Risk" she then walked over and placed the doll against the wall under her window.

"Here ya go, hope you don't mind the company." Ming Ling said, brushing a loose strand of hair from the doll's face. "Well these are your new digs, try to be comfortable. It may not be the shop, but it's nice and cozy." She then said, nodding towards the Sasuke and Ichigo plushies sitting beside a horned owl plushie while a chinese window screen sat behind them along with one of those infinity candles set in front of a mirror. On the yellow walls of the room were posters ranging from snarling dragons all the way to Naruto Shippouden and puss in boots. The poster the doll was currently sitting under was of a

panther growling as it came out of the shadows. The center of the room held a large carpet rug, and sitting over that rug was a fake bengal tiger pelt she had bought for two bucks at a yard sale that was in mint condition. Infront of that rug was a large stand with a playstation 2 inside of it, and atop that stand was a large tv, a wizard and chinese dragon sitting on said electronic, while a Raziel action figure and Sesshoumaru figure stood at the sides of it. And in the back of the room upon the built into the wall shelves were items ranging from more dragons, to oldscool Digimon collectables, and huge Yuigoh scale models. Not to mention tons of video games and Shonun Jump mangas. And of course off to the side by the dresser was a hard plastic scythe adorned with a skull with a ruby on it's forehead. She had kept it for years, a very rare halloween item. And near the shelves and a ladder that was kept handy incase a lightbulb blew out, was the red and blue chiniese dragon kite she had gotten years ago at a store in the columbia mall. Sadly though she had no choice but to fold his magestic wings up around him since there was no room to hang him on the ceiling.

"Ah how could I forget, here's your roomie, you'll find him abit more active than the others." Ming Ling then said with a chuckle. Turning she walked over towards the back of the room before pulling out a large cage. Sitting it down, she then opened up the door and reached inside.

"This is Zuzu, dont let that cute face fool you, he can be worse than Mojo sometimes." She said jokingly, showing the doll a fuzzy little reverse colored panda hamster. He looked rather unhappy at getting woken up soo early into the day. "Zuzu, this is your roommate...Evan. Be nice to him and he wont use those guantlets on you ok?" Ming Ling then said to the tiny critter. Wiggling his nose, the hamster looked over to the doll before he turned around, shaking his butt a few times. "Aw Zu dont be like that. Must you give everyone the @\$\$?" Ming Ling stated, laughing as she kissed the hamster on the back of his head before setting him back inside his cage, where he quickly zoomed back under his plastic set of pink stairs to hide from the sunlight. Turning, she then smiled over to the doll she decided to refer to as Evan, since it did seem to fit him like the shopkeeper said.

"Alright Evan, since im bored out of my mind, how about you stick around and watch me play some games?" She asked, the doll of course stayed silent, head leaning up against the wall in that lazy fashion. Nodding she then turned and popped in God of War 2. A few hours later into the game, she gave a content sigh after ripping the hundredth gorgon's head off. "Dont you just LOVE violence like this Evvy? I only wish I could do this to anyone who pissed me off without getting in trouble. It would be such a stress reliever to silence those doges at the library once and for all. I hate preps like that. Everytime I run into one I just feel like scrubbing myself for fear of catching AIDS. That or falling in love with Twilight and Justin Beiber." Ming Ling said with a smirk, chuckling as Kratos sent a powerful undead grunt flying into the lava of the phoenix's chamber. She then jumped some when her alarm went off on her pirate's of the caribbean clock. "Oh shiznat, it's almost time for the new DBZ Kai!" She said, reading the time as she hopped up after turning the game off.

"Well I gotta go for abit, hope you arent afraid of the dark. You and Zuzu get along ya hear?" Ming Ling then said jokingly to the doll, flicking a wave as she turning and scurried out of the room, shutting it closed behind her.

"Everything...is as the master commands."

"Huh?" Ming Ling stopped, did she just hear a voice? Frowning, she opened the door to her room again. Everything was still the same pretty much and the doll hadnt moved at all and Zuzu was fast asleep once more. "Neh, I must be hearing things." She muttered, shrugging as she closed the door again. But

one thing tugged at her mind as she went downstairs...was that doll always partially smirking?

### 3 - A Toccata into Blood Soaked Darkness

Today seemed so perfect; that's what Becky thought at least. The weather, the friends, the fast food joints, the shopping; everything! Oh how perfect her life was, she loved it. She herself felt immaculate. A tall skinny blonde with a wardrobe of great envy to all and a rich parantage with daddy as a lawyer and mommy as a real estate agent. Ah yes nothing could go wrong for her today, when her birthday of tender 16 had finally come at last! Which meant lots of partying and a new car to boot! Skipping along with her friends, they all conversed on the topics that happened that day along with Becky's plans for her birthday party which would be held on the weekend due to it being a schoolday tommorrow. Ugh such a drab. She hated waiting for things, especially when it involved something being given to her.

"Hey it's going to be at the bowling alley right?" Carell; a short ravenette with brown eyes asked as Becky scoffed.

"There? Ew are you SERIOUS? No way, Skate Town is where we are throwing my shindig!" Becky said proudly while flipping a strand of her luxurious well kept blonde hair in her friend's face.

"Arent they the same thing?" Mina; a tall colored female with haunting green eyes asked raising a brow as Becky puffed her cheeks again.

"No dumbass they arent! Now quit acting stupid or you wont go to my party." Becky retorted as her friends quickly changed the subject to appease the dominate popular girl of the town.

"Hey what about today huh? That mousy brunette sure had alot of balls standing up to you eh?" Carell asked meekly as Becky rolled her eyes.

"The little dog only acted tough because she's obviously kissing the librian's lesbian asses. No matter, daddy will have that place sued for favortism with partrons if she gets bold again. Then lets see where her nerdy little @\$ goes!" Becky said proudly as the trio shared a short laugh. However, something caught the blonde's attention as she peered to her left. She tensed when she saw a looming figure perching on a street lamp a few yards ahead of them in the direction she looked. But just as quickly as she saw it, it was gone.

"Becky...what's wrong?" Carell asked as Becky shrugged.

"N..nothing. Thought I saw something, guess it's the weed's after effects huh?" Becky suggested as the others tensed still.

"Hope so, and not someone like a police officer following us. I mean..it's bad enough we are out past curfew..but smoking pot at that party yet? We're taking a gamble Becky." Mina muttered as Becky glared at her two 'minion's and folded her arms.

"You guys are such buzz kills! C'mon what's there in life if you cant have alittle adventure?! Quit acting like pussies or i'm leaving you behind." Becky then snapped before she continued walking, the other two

quickly behind her as they flooded her ears with apologies. Again though, she felt the presence of being watched, but just mistook it for the paranoia the pot gave off. Nothing was going to ruin her night, not even her straight Sally friends. Making their way down a few more streets, they came to "Cemetery Street" where the ironically named cemetery was placed between them and their destination: Another party with plenty of beer and boys.

"You think we should go through there? I mean we can walk arou-" Carell was cut off as Becky made clucking noises as she continued walking in. Scowling, the ravenette followed in suit with Mina close behind. "God there's no reasoning with her when she's like this." Carell then whispered to Mina as said female nodded in agreement. Ten minutes of walking through the dark and twisty path, Mina jumped and clung to Becky, who scowled shoving her off her form.

"Ew what the hell Mina?" Becky snapped as the young teen simpered and looked towards the east.

"I...I saw something looming in the trees I swear! It had glowing eyes and looked....creepy." Mina mewed out as Becky tensed on the inside..it sounded like the thing she saw earlier. But not letting her fear get the best of her, the blonde folded her arms and quirked a brow.

"Afraid of a itty bitty squirrel or owl Mina? You pussy, c'mon let's moter. I wanna get laid tonight dammit; it's my birthday!" Becky then huffed out, storming on ahead of the two as they followed uneasily; clinging to each other for fear of the thing showing itself again, while also trying to convince themselves it was just a trick of the shadows. However, Becky's impatience with the two's constant panicking forced her to walk on ahead of them further as she then headed down one of the random pathways, ignoring her friend's pleas to slow down.

"Dammit if we lose her we're toast!" Carell hissed out in annoyance as Mina shrugged.

"Or we could say we lost her and head to the party on our own?" The other suggested, before both screamed and bolted when they heard a snapping of twigs behind them. Running in opposite directions, they failed to see which path they took as all three were in different areas of the vast cemetery now. Unaware that a shadowed being watching them from above gave a cynical grin, baring his fangs in glee.

"Divide and conquer, easiest tactic in the book."

Carell whined, being completely lost as she called out for the others, yelping as she tripped over a nearby tombstone and landed facefirst into the cold unforgiving ground. Sitting up, she scowled seeing her favorite shirt had a huge grass stain on it now. Turning around, she took out her frustrations on the tombstone.

"Stupid old tombstone! Why you still around anyways? I bet your relatives are dust now. So you should be too!" She hissed out, knocking the tombstone over as it toppled into two separate peices. She then grinned in triumph at dismantling the offending peice of someone's grave.

"That isnt nice you know...how would you feel if someone did that to *your* tombstone?" A icy yet calm voice asked from the shadows as Carell jumped, turning about as she panicked.

"W...who are you?! Show yourself!" Carell asked defensively as she tried to calm the fear in her voice.

The voice only responded with a dark chuckle.

"Well no matter scolding you...you wont *have* a tombstone when I'm finished with you. Forgotten...like that person's grave you just desecrated." The voice responded then as Carell's face paled, her heart pounding. But when she turned around, the sight behind her caused her eyes to widen as the last thing she saw were a pair of glowing eyes.

A scream sent Mina into a panic as she looked to where she swore Carell had ran to. She managed to meet up with Becky again as the darker female whimpered, pulling out her cell phone.

"I'm calling the cops. That sounded like Carell screaming!" She said as Becky glared and snatched her phone away, breaking it on the ground.

"You do and they'll smell the weed on you dumbass. And i'm NOT letting you take me down with you cause you're afraid of a few spooky trees. C'mon she's probly just playing a prank on us or something." Becky explained, grabbing Mina harshly by the arm as she dragged her off in the direction they heard the scream. This was such a drab night now. Everything was sooo perfect, then her dumbass friends had to ruin it with their weed induced paranoia and fear! They were soooo off her top friend's list when she got back home that night! However, instead of a giggling prankster Carell waiting them, was something far less funny.

"Oh..my...god!" Mina cried out, covering her mouth in pure horror as they both beheld Carell in a gruesome sight. Lying in the arms of a tombstone's angel, her head was hanging by thin layers of skin; barely attached to her neck, throat bleeding profously...arms and legs ripped into fine ribbons of flesh from the bones..eyes wide in horror. "We have to get out of here!" Mina yelled, backing away as she panicked more.

"I..I'm sure she's just messing with us..c'mon Carell k..knock it off!" Becky yelled out, the fear evident in her voice. But Carell was silent in response as Becky then felt a shiver run down her spine when a voice greeted her ears.

"Oh she's not messing with you...but *I am*." The voice exclaimed, as that same entity Becky saw before slinked into view, perching atop the angel, Mina giving out a shrill scream as his clawlike pale hands came into view. In a flash, he landed down in front of them, causing Becky to fall on her @\$@ as Mina was gone in not even a second. One would swear she had a dust cloud behind her she moved that quickly.

"You dog, get back here!" Becky hollared in both fear and rage before her eyes turned onto the male before her once more. He was slender and tall..but not basketball tall. And his skin was an unnatural pale tone...almost like a doll's. And speaking of doll..he looked like one in a way; least in his facial features. His body was perfectly sculpted along with his face; which held two bright pink eyes with blue pupils. Though he appeared to have heavy rings under his eyes...a sign of great lack of sleep. Upon his head was a raggy reaper ish hood, hiding the rest of his face from view with the exception of those creepy glowing pink eyes. The only hair she could see was a long strand of hair hanging in his face, followed by two elegant long strands that billowed out of the hood and hung down past his elbows in length. She couldnt tell the true color of the hair though, due to the shining effect on it. It was dark in colour though; that much she could tell. The rest of his outfit was a slim form-fitting pitch black cloak that

the hood was attached to. Ragged, frayed, and torn at the bottom that barely showed two huge black combat boots strapped with belts on the sides. But the most disturbing features Becky noticed were his hands..long elegant ghostly white wrists and hands,fingers with sharp fingernails of midnight blackish blue in shade; from the wrist down they were caked in blood, fresh blood too...Carell's blood.

"W...what do you want from me...?" Becky whimpered out as the male smirked then, his lovely yet haunting features showing great amusement.

"Ah, so the little dog does show fear hmm?" The male asked as Becky glared, watching the reaper-like being as she backed away slowly, reaching into her back pocket for her can of mace.

"I'm not a dog...but you're a psychopath from the looks of it. Who gets off killing chicks in the middle of the friggin night, and then showing his handiwork off to her horrified friends?" Becky hissed out as the male gave her a dull look.

"Hmm...I dont know..maybe the same types of people that love to disobey their parents, do drugs, and be as slutty as possible?" The male asked as Becky's eyes widened before her fury escalated.

"Go frack yourself freak, you know nothing about me!" Becky hollared, leaping up as she blasted the can of mace in the odd male's face. He cringed and let out a cry of pain..causing Becky to give a satisfactory smirk..only for it to soon fade when the cry of agony turned into wicked laughter. She then yelped and recoiled when the can was slashed clean in half, the young male giving her a dull look again from under his shadowed hood.

"Please....i'm a killing machine. A simple can of pepper spray wont slow me down. And yes I DO know everything about you. I can see into your heart. *Every...little..thing.*" The male responded calmly as he walked closer, causing Becky to whimper as she backed away, being pressed up against another tombstone now as she gazed up at the eerie male before her.

"I know that you think you are perfect. That everyone who slows you down are at fault, and not you. That mommy and daddy see no wrong in you. That you tire of being told what to do. That you wish to do bad things, but since you were born perfect, you see no wrong with what you do. That everyone who stands up to you should suffer. Disgusting little dog...you bore me with your selfish little mind. Butchers are more kind and caring than you...murderers even." The male said distastefully as he spoke while Becky whimpered more and more with each dark truth he spoke about her.

"What...do you want..? Please stop mocking me and tell me." Becky then begged as the male gave her a playful smirk, grabbing her by the hair roughly as she cried out, trembling when he laced his other hand over her cheek, causing it to bleed alittle with his talon-like fingernails.

"I want you to cry, to beg, to suffer...for *daring* to step on the toes of my comrad. You may have thought Raziel was spooky, but he's NOTHING compared to me dear...for unlike myself; he has compassion." He then whispered wickedly into her ear as Becky began to fully sob now.

"P...pleaseeee spare me. I wont misbehave ever again. Have mercy!" Becky cried out, her once pretty eyes now gunked up in purple and black runny make up as the male sneered wickedly. His eyes now glowing brightly once more in that eerie shade of pinkish red from underneath the hood.

"Oh sorry...fresh out of mercy. But I can give you another gift since it *is* your birthday dear." The male exclaimed as he then gave a twisted insane grin, his left hand morphing before her very eyes into what looked like a spinning chainsaw blade with extra long jagged teeth.

"A Headline on the front page of the newspaper...of when the police find your mangled ugly little corpse the next morning." He then said as Becky's eyes widened. Unable to back away, she could only watch in what felt like slow motion as the chainsaw's blade came down upon her fragile form. The reaper's laughter filling her ears along with her own rabid heartbeat.

After that..all that was heard of dear little Becky was a shrill scream of agony as blood soaked the tombstone behind her, the words "Happy Birthday dog" being written in her own blood on said stone afterwards...as a mangled corpse that could barely pass for a human's let alone a lifeform's was now lying in a bloody heap of skin tissue and shredded splintered bone where the once superficial little birthday girl sat begging for her life. Her 'grim reaper' long gone, vanishing into the night like a dream dying in the morning.



## 4 - Bump in the Night

Ming Ling grunted, rubbing at her eyes as she currently dug through a yard sale bin filled with old school action figures. She partially wanted to get one for herself; but mostly wanted to get one for her nephew. She probably could too, since the oldest was a huge Star Wars nut and there were a few old school Luke Skywalker figures in the bin.

"Ming lookie what I found!" A voice called out eagerly as she glanced up, meeping when water squirted in her face.

"Itai what the hell Kikai?!" Ming Ling whined out, taking her glasses off as she wiped them clean while a blood red headed male sporting purple colored glasses grinned triumphantly at her, holding a Queen Alien figure in his hands.

"It's an original Queen Alien no foolin! You know how rare this will be when Prometheus hits theatres? Why they are selling it I haven't the slightest clue!" Kikai said, looking the figure over a few times as Ming Ling sweatdropped, prodding the doll.

"It's missing something on the shoulder for one, and on the left leg it's got a hole..that or it's missing another attachment." she acknowledged as Kikai gasped before turning to the yard sale owners.

"Blasphamy! You dare let this epic figure get this bruised and battered, mixing it with toys such as Teletubbies?! For Shaaaame! No worries my pretty; I shall find your missing peices!" Kikai then yelled dramatically, diving his head and hands back into the bin while Ming Ling shook her head and sighed sweatdropping.

"Always the weird one..as your namesake implies." Ming Ling said chuckling before she tilted her head and noticed the paper the woman was reading. The headline caught her eye most of all: MURDER OF TWO IN DOWNTOWN BERWICK!

"Hey can I read that when you're finished? I think my friend's going to be awhile." Ming Ling then asked as the woman nodded with a smile, handing her the paper anyways.

"Sure sweetie, I'm done with that part anyway; I don't read stuff like that...too depressing what this town is coming to nowadays." The woman said shaking her head with a sigh as Ming Ling thanked her, reading over the story. Most of the pictures had been of tarp covered bodies, but the police described the scene as 'a slaughter house'. And some even claimed to have lost their lunch. But the faces of the girls who were killed, gave her chills. Were they those bimbos that ruffled her feathers at the library? It had to be them...then again all preps did somewhat look alike. As in cheap Icarly or Victorious knock offs.

"Woo..brutal." Kikai said, peeking over Ming Ling's shoulder as she squawked jumping, before glaring at the taller male.

"Give me a warning next time! And are ya done scuffling around for Alien Queen's parts?" She asked as

Kikai gave a solemn face, patting the Queen's head.

"Alas I could not find her AWOL limbs, but the doctor says she should make it despite the injuries from the wretched Teletubbie army." The red head exclaimed as Ming Ling facepalmed, but managed to chuckle nonetheless.

"Alright pay for her and let's get motering; i've been itching to see some new Sephiroth amvs for awhile now." Ming Ling said, turning to head for her bike while Kikai paid the woman fifty cents before following after his brunette friend.

"Ah, have a thing for the loin-lacking One winged Angel neh?" Kikai asked grinning as Ming Ling murred, glaring over her shoulder.

"He does have genetalia unlike Raziel. He just is too busy trying to become a god to use it. Did you know though in the first drafts of the script, they were going to make him and Aeris lovers? So Ha chew on that red!" Ming Ling retorted; proud of her Sephiroth knowledge whereas Kikai nodded, riding alongside her on his own bike.

"True true...but giving him the mother worshipping complex seemed more appealing....makes ya wonder how much he loves his mot-"

"Finish that sentence and your Queen Alien shall be making a hive in your stomach, entering in a rather unpleasant way; and I don't mean the mouth." Ming Ling cut in smiling as Kikai paused for a few moments.

"You mean end it with a period?" Kikai then retorted sneering, speeding up his bike as Ming Ling growled chasing after him on her's. "I regret nothing!"

A few hours of watching vids, and Kikai jokes later, the duo headed back to Ming Ling's, as the red head wished to stay a bit longer since boredom was at very high levels during this time of pre-summer season.

"I can't wait til mah future wifey comes back from the hospital tomorrow. We shall have this Queenie be our babe as practice before the real thing, and I shall name her....Eileen." Kikai exclaimed, holding the Queen Alien figure up proudly while Ming Ling growled. Eversince her mom had hit on Kikai that one time, the duo made it a great effort to annoy Ming Ling with the threat of Kikai becoming her father. Of course it would never happen; but her mom and the red headed menace still found it fun to chap the brunette's @\$@ about it.

"Ain't no way she's going to be my sis, and you my dad." Ming Ling said, locking up her bike as Kikai whined, following her inside.

"Awww come on. I won't ground ya too much!" Kikai joked, ducking a light hearted bonk Ming Ling tried on him as he grinned.

"Ha-Haa~! I am too swift for y-" he was cut off though, flailing when Mojo clung to his face as he sweatdropped. "I always wanted pussy on my face; but this is ridiculous." He muttered, flailing more when a snickering Ming Ling pried the feline off his face.

"Karma, a wonderful mistress neh? Anywhos let's go play a few of my games. I'm dying to try my new leveled up Trunks on ya. That or SS4 Vegeta." Ming Ling stated, heading up the stairs as the eccentric male followed. Grinning, she managed to beat him up to the top of the staircase, pulling her doll Evan into view as she placed him at the top, sitting there in a creepy way with his head tilted at an angle most disturbing. Kikai himself wasn't too bothered by dolls..it was the fact he somewhat resembled a spider that Ming Ling knew Kikai would freak out at. And once the red head turned the corner, she heard a small yelp before a battle cry rang out.

"Go Eileen, pwn the spider girl!" Kikai hollared, flinging the Alien action figure at Evan as Ming Ling meeped, quickly catching the offending figure before she glared.

"Kikai! Relax HE isn't real. Just a doll, see?" Ming Ling said laughing, moving Evan about to and fro to prove he was limp and harmless despite his menacing looking claws. The red head frowned, walking up to the odd looking doll as he closely inspected it, even tilting his violet specs down to get a better look. Standing up fully now, he then folded his arms.

"I'll need proof that this is a 'male' as you claim him to be." Kikai said in a professional tone, oofing when Ming Ling used Evan's gauntlet to clonk him on the head as he whined in pain.

"Mean he-she spider thingie." he muttered, following Ming Ling into her room as she dragged Evan along. "So where did ya get it, prepubescent gender confused dolls R us?" Kikai then asked as Ming Ling chuckled, placing Evan back in his spot against the wall before she went about setting up the game.

"Nah, antique store. Old fella gave him to me for fifty bucks. Said he was special and something like that." Ming Ling exclaimed, popping in the game titled 'Dragon Ball Z tenkaichi Bodokai'. Kikai nodded, stroking his chin at this before he grinned.

"Well sex dolls do sell for cheap when used." He said, yelping when Ming Ling clonked him on the head with her paddle glaring.

"He's NOT a sex doll. He's just a lifesized doll is all." Ming Ling retorted as Kikai grinned more despite the pain to his cranium.

"Did ya even check? Ya never knowwww." Kikai said in a sing song voice, causing the brunette to blush before puffing her cheeks.

"W..wha?! Why would I..?! I doubt he even has anything down there!" Ming Ling babbled out blushing darker now as Kikai pointed.

"Ha ha~! That proves it's a chick!" He then said proudly, yelping when his face got smacked with the game cover this time as he keeled over twitching.

Later after the eccentric red head had gone home, Ming Ling was greeted by the sound of her brother coming into the driveway via his old school red camero blasting the song "Bad Company". Waving to him as the beanie sporting somewhat short yet tan brunette male walked in, she grinned mischievously as he eyed her sweatdropping.

"Oh lord, what did you do? I'm not going to find another giant spider in my room again am I?" Her brother Cid asked as she shook her head chuckling.

"Nah that was payback for April fool's day. No this time I got something awesome. I think you'll like him, depending on your tastes." Ming Ling said happily, heading up the stairs for a moment to fetch the doll as Cid sweatdropped even more.

"Pleassse dont tell me you stole that life-sized naked Sephiroth doll from the Square Enix Headquarters like you kept claiming you would. I like the guy...but I kinda dont wanna see his Masamune..ya know?" he asked as Ming Ling giggled and shook her head, coming down the stairs.

"Ha! I wish. But no I'm afraid I cant mentally scar you with that. Besides; your own damn fault for making me your navigator for FF7." Ming Ling retorted, before she proudly held out Evan from under his arms, the doll's head lolling forward as if he was drunk while Cid stepped back abit, shuddering at the thing.

"Wha..that's creepy! Thing looks real almost...is it a guy or girl?" Her brother asked, sweatdropping as he poked at the doll, shuddering more. "Grah...it even feels real! Dammit what did I do to deserve this, you know dolls creep me out." Cid muttered, shuddering at the thing more as Ming Ling grinned playfully.

"Well now I know who to bring down into your room when you go to try and steal my CDs. And dont worry he's a friendly fella..give him a hug!" The younger sibling cooed out, sneering as she pushed Evan forward, lolling his arms out in an attempt to glomp Cid as he flailed and ducked out of it's reach, skittering off down towards the sanctuary of his Man Cave.

"Evil..all you women of this house are pure eviiii!" Cid cried out in fake sadness before he closed the door behind him, causing Ming Ling to laugh before she smiled to the doll's calm sleeping face.

"I think he likes you. Anyways, let's get you up to the room, dont want grandpa popping up and spotting you. Last thing I need his him whining about how I spend my damn money yadda yadda. Bad enough I have to hide Zuzu from him!" Ming Ling said with a sigh, carrying the doll back up to her room. Later that night, Ming Ling had chosen to go to sleep early which was a rare thing for her; considering she was usually an owl, happily watching shows ranging from American Dad, all the way into ATHF and Squidbillies. Due to lacking a bed in her room, she slept on the couch in the living room, snuggled up to her pillow and a blanket stretched loosely over her form which consisted of a tiny black T and red and black ski boxers. Grunting in her sleep, she tried to tune out the sounds of bumps sounding upstairs. She just assumed it was her kitten Mojo running about like a spazz as he always did to wear himself out before sleeping.

"Mojo..no noisemaking. Mommy is sle-" She trailed off though, her heart skipping a few beats when she felt the kitten sleeping soundly next to her. Lifting her head up and staring into the darkness, she tried to calm herself then. "Maybe it's bro rummaging around downstairs..yeah..that's it." she then whispered sitting up more as she rubbed the sleep from her eyes. Hearing another loud 'thunk' though caused her to yelp, jumping on the couch as Mojo yelped and fell off, giving an angry glare towards his master before she glomped a nearby pillow close to her chest. That sound was defiantly coming from the upstairs..and her brother rarely went up there unless he had to shower or pamper and pretty himself for hours on end. Working up her courage, she skittered into the nearby adjacent kitchen, grabbing a long

knife from the drawer.

The newslines of the paper from that morning flashing through her mind. No way was a murderer making her the next victim in their killing spree! Carefully she headed up the stairs, one step at a time, listening for signs of the intruder. Her heart picking up speed with each step that felt like an eternity inbetween movements. Finally reaching the bathroom, she could hear what sounded like the shower running. Odd...her brother and herself had already taken showers that day. There was no reason for Cid to take another one. Taking a deep breathe to calm her shaking, Ming Ling then tip toed towards the tub; curtian closed to veil the being from her view which she could clearly see a silloute of in the moonlight from the nearby window. Raising her knife, she glared and yanked back the curtians, only to squeak falling back in surprise...

(To be Continued~! Bahahaha -bricked- Itai! >\_o

Anyways Author's note: Kikai does not belong to me, he proudly belongs to my good friend Lackadaisydragon, along with the name Eileen. Just clearing that up for ya in advance! nn)

## 5 - I Am Reaper

Ming Ling squeaked in fear, falling on her backside on the floor of the bathroom as she stared at the eccentric sight before her in the bathtub. It was turned on, yet the only occupant of the shower was the plunger..sitting in the middle of the tub.

"The hell...?" Ming Ling muttered, standing up slowly as she eyed the plunger for a few moments..expecting it to spring to life and shout 'do you mind?' or something to that degree; she needed to stop watching soo much cartoons. Shaking her head, she leaned forward, shutting off the water as she gave a sigh and placed the plunger in it's rightful spot next to the toilet. "Must have turned on by itself...weirder crap has happened." she then said to herself reassuringly. Sure, a few of her lamps have turned on while unplugged, and strange messages had been scrawled on the mirrors. But this was a new one to chalk up. Then again; haunted houses never had an explanation for what they did. Deadmen tell now tales after all. Turning to the window, she then shut it tightly; just to be sure no one was trying to break in. Weird though, she could have sworn the screen was shut too. Nevertheless, she closed the sliding door behind her and headed back downstairs to bed after checking every room in the upstairs just to be safe.

The moon hung like a ghostly galleon riding through the soft wispy clouds, it was a beautiful sight and the air was crisp and cool; rare for a pre-summer night which was usually muggy and stifling. A lone figure walked through the streets of the tiny town of Berwick, a soft breeze whipping through his long black cloak as he reached up to pull his hood down more over his face. Boots echoing off the semi wet pavement of pitch black. Hair as dark as the night sky partially billowed from the hood in two long luxurious strands reaching down past his elbows, a lose hair hanging partially in his face. His skin was as pale as snow, making his pink hues even more haunting from underneath his hood as he gazed up at the sky. It felt good to move around again...after god knows how many years of being trapt in that damn stifling hell of a place. Yes the air smelled wonderful, and the simple act of moving around was bliss to this male. He hadnt felt this good in eons..and yesterday was the pure heights of his joy of freedom....oh those girl's faces. Their screams of agony and begging for their lives as he tore through their delicate flesh, yes it brought back soo many wonderful memories of his past.

How his master ordered him to strike down those who opposed him, dictators, warlords, etc. Visions of brutally torn up corpses; heads barely clinging to their necks..others hardly recognizable..some even torn to sheer ribbons or evaporated. His attack was always quick and fierce; made vicious by the sheer joy of killing, of feeling the blood stain his marble white skin, of the sounds that greeted his ears of his vitem's screams of agony. Ah yes it was a drug he couldnt get enough of. As he looked back on these memories, he glanced down at his one hand, a hand that had, just the night before, been stained in blood as thick as it could get for tearing someone apart. He sneered and nibbled lightly on his sharp black fingernails, sucking on the index nail in hopes of getting some left over caked blood out from underneath. Alas to no avail, he had cleaned himself thoroughly after the massacare to make sure he left no trail. The taste just before made him giddy though. Ah the girls may have been sluts, but their blood tasted oh soo good. Humans were such tasty creatures...despite their ugly nature. How he wanted to kick Dr. Dunstan at times for forcing him to serve them.

The cloaked male turned a corner, passing by a drunken cluster of females and a few males. They shared a few chuckles at the male's choice of clothing. Some even whistling at him to catch his attention. The dark haired youth payed them no mind, soon the cries of the lark or the whispers of the sandman would send them back to their homes. Turning into a nearby alley, he treked down the path, passing by a few businesses, a shut down chinese restruant, a tanning salon, a roof and carpenter outlet, etc. Mostly houses greeted his vision though, some were fancy, though most were on the brink of ruin or had that 'wolf in sheeps clothing' appearence. Lovely on the outside, but horrendous on the inside. Conversations filled his ears, arguements, discussions about finances, family matters, the whole shebang. Humans and their bothersome worries..soo fickle they were, and obnoxious. It turned his stomach at how high up on the food chain they thought they were, just because they were smarter than apes and had thumbs; tch! If only they knew what walked amongst them. Continuing to walk on through the alley, he caught sight of a weed choked lot with an abandoned run-down barn far past it's prime. Walking over, he looked up at the roof before giving a quick yet agile leap, landing on a sturdy part of the structure. Taking a seat then, he layed back and gazed up at the moon more. Still though..not all humans were annoying and kill-worthy. There was that one that caught his attention. One that ingtrigued him greatly. They were human in nature yes; but had the personality of a demon when pushed enough to the brink. They also reminded him of a venus fly trap. A simple looking plant upon first glance...but get too close and you'll lose your fingers. He chuckled at the thought; carrying out that deed for them made sense now.

"Hey boy!" A call sounded from the high brick wall next to the barn caught the male's ears. A leg was flung over into sight, and then a scrungy youth of about adolescent age, perhaps sixteen pulled himself into view. *Boy* the cloaked male thought sarcastically. If only they knew, he thought, smirking in anticapation while he sat up.

"Yeah you!" Came a deeper voice. Another adolescent youth, perhaps a tad older, stepped out from behind some shrubs adjacent the alleyway path. He was a big fella in jeans and a plaid shirt, giving off the appearence of a lumberjack. Then a sneering boy clad in a sterotypical leather jacket followed close behind.

"This is our turf." hissed the leather clad boy. He carried a half empty brown bottle of liquior and weaved about; signs that he couldnt carry his drink well. His right hand flashed silver; a knife no doubt. Heh; like that pitiful weapon could slow the cloaked youth down. A scuffling announced the descent of the wall straddler, a thud his official landing. The trio spread out and converged on the cloaked male. He rose slightly from his perch, muscles tightening. The boys then advanced once the cloaked male stood up, walking over casually as he dropped down from the barn of the roof, hands tucking behind his back in that elegant fashion. They circled him like vultures would a dying animal..heh little did they know how foolish they were at deciding to be brave tonight.

"Isn't it alittle *early* for Halloween?" The lumberjack asked noticing the eccentric cloak the dark haired youth wore; laughing as he said it.

"Where you from?"

"You aint from around here it looks."

"Nobody here knows you."

"Yeah." said the wall climber. "And if nobody knows you, you aint nobody." He giggled, a high-pitched nervous sound, and wiped his hands off on his ragged ACDC T-shirt.

Nobody. Even this *scum* called him nobody. This defiantly was going to be a fun night now. The cloaked youth stepped forward towards the impending danger, into their net. Little did they know, these punks had caught a shark this time. Showing no signs of annoyance, he simply smiled at the trio of dimwitted boys.

"Pretty tough eh?" Said the big male mockingly. The boy with the leather jacket placed his bottle in between two bricks lying near the barn where he stood.

"Pretty stupid you mean." He corrected, tossing his knife from hand to hand. "You a retard or somethin?"

"Yeah, he's too stupid to be afraid of us." The hooded cloak wearer turned his back on the third teen, the one who exclaimed this. He was a sheep. The lumberjack was a bully, but the leather-clad one was a problem. He was crazy. He smoked herb, the cloaked one could smell it clearly on him. It reeked like burning plastic and it killed the brain. It made people think they couldn't die. How he'd love to disprove that logic to this punk. The weak did indeed love to bear their fangs when in packs. And though the cloaked male loved to tear people to shreds...conflict was rarely on his mind at times. He just preferred to relax and enjoy the quiet tranquility. But a display of power was necessary at times; and this seemed like a wonderful time to educate these mindless saps.

"This is our playground little man." The leather clad one exclaimed confidently.

"Yeah, wanna play?" The big one added, cracking his knuckles as he looked down upon his victim, who seemed like a mouse in comparison.

The cloaked male then finally spoke. "Funny, your mother said the same thing to me last night."

"Son of a.." The big one charged, swinging his huge fists in a rage. Cute how a simple mother joke flared tempers; far too easy. The cloaked youth stepped aside with ease, far faster than thought could comprehend. The lumbering male stumbled looking confused. Turning then like an angry bear to attack his opponent again. The cloaked male smiled, stepping aside once more. The big brute was starting to breathe heavily. The hooded male sneered. Get the biggest one and the rest scramble like startled geese. However he kept the crazy one in his sights at all times, you never really knew with dusters.

The duo danced a lopsided waltz on the wast ground, and the big youth's fury escalated more and more. Then the cloaked youth stood still. The brute grabbed, he expected to miss, but to his surprise, found that the quarry was his. Panting heavily, he managed an evil grin, having the smaller cloaked male's arm in a crushing hold as he swung his arm back, readying to punch. And the cloaked youth, who didnt even come up to his chin in height, clutched the boy's belt with his free hand and lifted him into the air as if he were light as an infant kitten. The large male waved his arms like an insect and gurgled with fear. The boy in the jacket spat an oath, but was frozen like a deer in headlights. The sheep of the flock trembled but couldnt move either. The cloaked male threw his opponent then, an impossible distance. The hulk of a boy sailed through the air for a moment, then crashed into a pile of debris. The sound broke the spell and the cloaked male heard the weakling of the group retreat like a terrified mouse. But the boy with the



knife laughed. He slinked forward, steel flickering in the streetlight. He had no doubt been in a fight or two the cloaked male surmised; but probably won through sheer viciousness, not skill. Best to deal with him as a cat does a rat- no playing, snap it fast.

The leather clad boy was expecting another dance, not for his victim to walk up to him. He hesitated a second, confronted with insanity far greater than his own. He slashed then, his knife digging into the flesh of his opponent's face. Sneering confidently, he laughed, but it went dry in his throat when he was greeted with an eerie sight. Lifting his head up after the knife dug into his skin, creating a gash across the bridge of his nose and under both eyes, blood poured freely down his face as the cloaked male sneered wildly, revealing his sharp canines while his pink eyes glowed brightly with excitement. The leather clad male staggered backwards as the cloaked male then licked the blood that oozed out of his own wound when it dripped around the corners of his mouth; not caring about the severity of the cut. Walking forward now, he kept that insane smile on the leather clad male..oh how quickly the tables turned, the big bad snake hadn't expected the prey to turn and face him. The leather clad youth slashed wildly in fear, but too late. His knife went flying. His arm captured, for a second, went limp, and searing, now useless as he screamed in agony. Backing away, he trembled.

It was the cloaked youth's turn to laugh; a sound dark and maniacal. The punch he landed snapped the leather clad boy back and smashed him against the wall. The boy started to slide to the ground, but elegant white hands reached for him delicately and slammed him once more against the wall. The third blow left him unconscious and flooded the cloaked male's mind with the sweet warm pleasure to kill.

"Call me nobody?" He whispered, and bared his fangs. "Call me nobody?!" He screamed again, this time as if in pain. He then hoisted his victim up, tearing the leather clad boy's wrist open with a savage scissoring of claws. He raised the boy's arm up, and with the pulsing blood, wrote wavering letters on the wall behind him: I AM REAPER.

The dark, raw smell of blood intoxicated the cloaked male. He found himself embracing the boy and pulling the bleeding wrist up to his mouth. Faintly, somewhere, he felt disgust. A distant echo cried for him to stop. But the joy of death and the scent of blood was far too great. He almost placed a reverent kiss upon the wound until the sound of sirens came too close. Growling, he pushed the limp body away from him, but it seemed to cling. For a moment he felt trapped, but anger soon took hold as he snarled, hands raising up and morphing into serrated claws of epic proportions. Bringing them down upon the victim, he sliced the body into three separate ragged sections, freeing himself.

Then the hooded male was running. He fled past his first assailant, now staring with white faced horror, through the rubble of the barn. Out into the night the cloaked male ran, on and on through the city, dodging cars as they honked their disapproval as he vanished from their sights just as quickly as he came, on and through yards, ignoring the yelping and snarling of startled dogs. Until at last he came to his destination, a quaint brown bricked house with a large backyard and a long old crumbling fence. The house next to it was long abandoned, and sported a large garage that was currently open. Leaping over the fence, he made his way into the garage, panting as he huddled in a corner. That was far too close...and why the hell did he scrawl that message on the wall?! People did strange things when in the midst of a high..so he guessed that was the explanation. Well; at least he didn't give his true name. Reaper..heh. It seemed to fit; what with the outfit he chose to wear during his nightly travels. Leaning his head back against the decaying wood, he glanced out of the garage's opening, looking up at the brown bricked house next door. A smirk coming to his lips as he idly licked at the blood on his fingers. The

person he carried the deed out for, she lived here. After that rude inneruption from his train of thoughts, he could now return to them finally as he pondered why he served her; even though they hadnt made the vow. Maybe it wasent just the fact she had a very evil mind when angered enough. It was something though..something not even his heart or mind reading could discern. Something warm...peaceful dwelling within her. Was it something that he longed for too? Is that why he stuck around like he did?

"Heh...I guess that's just my namesake. Envyng those who have what I dont." He then muttered to himself bitterly, before he closed his eyes, sighing. "shoot, this is going to be a long long summer."

(Author's Note yet again weee! -bricked-

Anyways, for those of you who probly recognized the clothing this fella is wearing in both this chapter and chapter 3, it was indeed inspired by Tensa Zangetsu of Bleach. And this chapter was also inspired abit from a very old vampire story I read long ago in grade school, so props to them for giving me the idear. nn)