

# A Haunted Sunset

by  
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*Have you ever done something that you wish you could just go back and stop yourself from doing? It's called regret, and it can come back to bite you like a spider. Just like our hero will discover, oh so many times.*

# CHAPTER

# 1

## A LOOMING SHADOW

Navigating through rush hour traffic, Paul made his way to the local restaurant. He was fifteen minutes late, and counting. Nervously, but quickly, he made his way to the back entrance.

Paul worked as a garbage boy. He would have liked the job more if it weren't for two things: one, his boss, Dom Bender, was **very** cruel.

When Tom, the sauce man, burned his hand on a saucepan once, Bender almost died from laughter. Unfortunately, he didn't.

Oh, I forgot to introduce you to Paul! Paul, the hero of our story, is, at the moment of telling, seventeen years old. He has fire red hair and blue eyes, wears a tye-dye T-shirt, and he is very resourceful. Enough of that though, on with the book!

Now, where was I? Oh Yes! The second thing he didn't like about his job was... the pay. It was horrible! It was worse for Paul because he was so low ranking. Eighteen dollars a month!

If he lived alone, (he lived in his mom's basement), his home would be a tent. Thankfully, his mom was awesome. But still, Paul wanted to kick Bender in the butt. That would probably get him fired though, so he mentally chained himself when he went to work so he wouldn't punch Bender in the face.

Anyways, back to the story! Paul made it to the restaurant and walked to the storage room to grab his tools. When he opened the door, a werewolf jumped out! Paul tried to scream, but no sound came out.

Paul quickly realized that the beast was Bender, due to the telltale laugh that followed.

“That was rich!” said Bender, “Got to work on that scream though, Ginger. Ha ha ha!”

Paul replied with a sarcastic, “Yeah,” and a smile.

“Anyways,” Bender sighed, “That was a good laugh. Scare you later, alligator.”

“This day is off to a great start,” Paul muttered, as he collected his tools.

When he finished, he entered the kitchen to take a look at what had to be done. “Another day at King’s Restaurant,” he said as he mopped the floor.

Bender pulled two more pranks that day. He hid a mannequin, that he had splattered with tomato sauce, in the fridge. When Charlie, the butcher, went in to get some lamb, he was scared out of his wits.

The second one, Bender put six flies in the soup he told Monsieur Adam, the soup man, to make. Bender told him a critic wanted it. Adam freaked out.

At the end of the day, everyone was relieved that tomorrow was a weekend, and they were free for a few days from Bender's tyranny.

# CHAPTER

# 2

## AN INVITATION

“Wake up sweetie, I made omelettes.”

“Nice, mom! Be down in a sec!” Paul said as he thought to himself, *•I have the best mom in the world.•*

While they ate breakfast, Paul told his mom all the pranks Bender had pulled the previous day.

“Oh, I hate that Bender! I just want to walk up to him and slap him!”

“Please don’t mom, he would automatically fire me!”

“Fine,” his mom said, “But if you ever resign, you can’t stop me!”

After breakfast, Paul called his best friend, Zach. Zach wasn’t your conventional kid, he’s the awesome-est nerd ever, with brown hair, green eyes, and a whole lot of smarts. His parents were historians and some day, he wanted to be a philosopher.

“How was work yesterday?” Zach asked over the phone. He got his own personal phone for his birthday. He only used it for studying and calling people though.

“Just as horrible as it could have gone,” said Paul, causing the two to laugh.

They ended the call at lunch time, the same time trouble came knocking.



Later on, his mom checked the mailbox to find a government letter sitting inside!

“Paul! Come to the living room right now!”

“What is it mom?” Paul asked, startled. “We have a government letter!”

“Oh really? Woah!”

The letter read:

*Hello Paul, Your great great great grandmother has recently passed away at the ripe old age of one hundred.*

*You have inherited her house, named ‘Black Castle’. And just in case you were wondering, there is no money in this inheritance.*

*Signed, The Government.*

“Wow,” Paul said, “I wish there was money included!” The two burst out laughing.

Then, his mom put on her serious face. “I didn’t even know we had living relatives,” his mom said, studying the letter closely.

“Hey mom, there is something on the back!” said Paul, pointing at the back of the letter. “It’s an address, 666 Devils Boulevard.”

“Sounds good to me! What do you think, Paul?”

“Sure...”

There will be much regret in this story, but this single word, began it all.

# CHAPTER

# 3

## BLACK CASTLE

Driving down Devils Boulevard, Paul and his mom caught their first look at their new property. It was a castle, neither of them expected that. What's more, it was Baron Crimson's house, born in 1753. He had left England in 1795 to become the richest man in Canada, at the time. The coal industry had made him a millionaire. But rumour has it, he locked his daughter in the basement of the castle.

“Wow. We are in trouble,” Paul said with a look of sheer terror, sharing his expression with his mom.

In real estate, there's a thing called land tax. Basically, the more land you own, the more tax you pay for it. And the castle took up a good acre, much less the garden, which took up a good five acres. It also depended on the location and value. So lots of land, plus really good condition, and a desirable location, equals, hopefully you are a millionaire!

“Mom, how much tax is this going to be?” Paul asked his mom, somewhat stunned.

“A lot, Paul.”

That's when Paul got an idea, an unnecessary idea. He had a perfect, unnecessary idea.

“Mom! I have a perfect plan to get out of ALL of our problems!” Paul said, as the two walked forward, towards a portal of doom. Towards... regret.

## CHAPTER

# 4

## LAUGHTER IN THE BASEMENT

When the entered the building, Paul told his mom the plan that he had come up with.

“My plan is simple. We fix the place up, put it on the market for a really large amount of money, and boom! We are millionaires!” He said with a very excited vigor, this his mother hadn’t seen in years.

“Paul, I haven’t seen you so happy in years, what has gotten into you?”

“I am sick and tired of working for Bender. It’s hell there!” Paul said with all due seriousness. “And my pay sucks.”

After that, they got to work on the house. His mom took the top half and Paul took the other half.

“Man! Whoever that grandmother was, she did NOT know how to keep a house tidy! Even my moms house is better than this!”

That is when he noticed a small door at the end of the hall. He should have turned back then to help his mom (who had just gotten stuck in a giant cobweb). But instead, Paul walked towards the little door. One of the hinges had long rusted away, the frame and door were almost gone, and the doorknob was covered with a thick layer of grease.

“Yeesh, this door has seen better days. It looks like no one has touched it in years!”

Paul thought to himself, *‘If we are going to sell the place, we need to clean down there as well.’* He reached for the door handle. When he touched it, it was the grossest feeling ever recorded. He almost threw up. But he slowly and steadily, opened the door. The smell was unbearable! He quickly, (but gently), closed the door behind him.

He was thinking about what had just happened, when his mom called, “Paul, sweetie! Please come help me, I am stuck in a giant cobweb!”

Later, they decided to sleep at Black Castle for the night. His mom slept soundly that night. As for Paul, he was kept awake the whole night. Due to a... laughter in the basement.

# CHAPTER

# 5

## A CRIMSON SHADOW

While humming the Star Wars theme song to himself, Paul hung the Christmas wreaths on the rickety old chandelier. Then he looked over at the little door, which was now a bright red, because a doll had painted it and then started repeating, “Wake up!”

Paul woke up. It had been two weeks since the first time they visited the castle. And since then, he had that exact dream every night. Weird things were happening at the castle. Tools went missing, they heard laughter in the basement at night, and they often felt like they were being watched.



After breakfast, Paul called Zach for the first time in two weeks. Zach almost instantly answered.

“Paul! It’s you! Why haven’t you called me in so long, are you okay?”

Zach said, so fast, not even an Olympic champion could match!

“If by okay you mean, that Bender only pranks me now, because I have a castle, that I think is H-A-U-N-T-E-D! Our tools are going missing and we hear laughter in the basement, and we are really creeped out! And ever since I opened up the basement door, I have dreams about a doll yelling at me! Then yes, I am okay.”

Zach replied, “First of all, Paul, that is not what I meant. And second of all, do you have Baron Crimson’s castle?”

“How did you know Zach? Also, honestly, I think it may be haunted.”

Then Paul immediately realized what he had said and regretted every word, because Zach was a total ghost nerd, (just in case you didn't know).

"Really?" said Zach. "Don't you know that The Black Castle is the most haunted place in the world?"

"What?!" said Paul, perfectly surprised.

"If there is a ghost, it's probably Baron Crimson's daughter! Rumor has it he locked her in the basement and the basement has never been opened again," said Zach with a hint of ominousness. "But I have a plan! So Paul, ghosts always have unfinished business. Hey Paul, didn't you mention there was a doll next to the basement door in your dreams?"

"Zach, I think those were more like nightmares," said Paul, "Maybe she wants the doll."

“Of course, Paul! That’s probably it, but there are two problems.”

“What are they Zach?”

“First of all, we have to find the doll, and second, we’ll have to go in the basement! Who knows what could be down there!” Zach said, a little scared.

“Okay! Let’s get moving. I think I saw a weird doll inside a closet by the basement door. Can you come over now? I can’t do this alone and honestly, the basement smells like a cemetery of skunk butts.”

# CHAPTER

# 6

# JUSTICE MADE

Paul, Zach, and the creepy doll they had just found in a closet, stood in front of the basement door. They put on dust masks they had found lying around from the renovations, and prepared to open the door.

“You open it, Zach. I cannot physically do this again,” Paul said.

A few vomit inducing seconds after, Zach had opened up the door, with the same expression Paul had when he had first opened up the door.

Paul had a flashlight and turned it on. They crept down the web encrusted stairs, careful not to break them. In the corner of the basement, they saw a strange red glow. They slowly walked towards the source of the light. When they got there, they saw the light was radiating from a small skeleton that was dressed in a crimson ball gown, encrusted with rubies.

“Well, this is disturbing!” said Zach, looking at the skeleton with a hint of disgust.

“I’m surprised there are no rats or spiders down here. You would expect it to be swarming!” said Paul.

Suddenly, the ghost of Anne Crimson erupted from the skeleton. She looked like a hazy hologram, as if the skeleton had come to life, floating. Her bones were glowing a hazy blue. She looked at the two of them, and then noticed the doll.

She startled them by saying, in a booming, raspy voice, “Thank you.”

She then reached for the doll. Once she had it in her grasp, she and the doll vanished in mid-air, finally at peace.

Paul noticed that in the skeletons grasp, there was now a letter.

Paul took the letter and when they walked up the stairs to daylight again, Paul opened the letter. The note inside stated these words:

*Thank you for returning this doll. It was very important to me. I shall now grant you a wish. Simply write in the space provided your wish, then place it under your pillow as you sleep. The next day, your wish shall be granted.*

Paul stored the letter carefully in his breast pocket and the two went back home for a well deserved rest.

# CHAPTER

# 7

## A CONCLUSION

Three weeks later, Paul was back at work, packing spoons and forks into the dishwasher, when Bender walked right up to him.

“Paul, I am so sorry for being so cruel to you for so long. Let me make it up to you!”

Everyone in the kitchen looked at each other with puzzled looks on their faces.

“I’m giving everyone a raise!” Bender announced with a smile, so big it could have made the Grinch sick. He walked back to his office with the occasional jump.

Everyone got back to work, processing what had just happened. After work, Bender even gave out chocolate chip cookies!

When Paul got home, he told his Mom everything that had happened that day, and after lunch, Paul called Zach.

“Hi Paul! How was work?” said Zach.

“Perfect.”

There was silence.

“What do you mean by ‘perfect’?” Zach said, puzzled.

Paul explained excitedly, “Bender gave everyone a raise!”



“Woah, really?!”

“Yeah, it’s all due to my wish. I wished that Bender would be nicer to everyone,” said Paul, smiling.

“Oh yeah, I completely forgot about the ghost! That was amazing!” Zach said with a hint of insanity.

“You know Zach, I don’t know why I accepted that letter in the first place,” said Paul as he thought. *‘That is called regret Paul, and it can come back to bite you like a spider, just like you’ve discovered oh so many times.’*

The End

## About the Author



My name is Jori. At the time of writing I am twelve years old. I own a zero-waste business that makes cotton handkerchiefs called Pocket Rags. I ain't afraid of no ghosts! (Maybe some).