

Note by the author: Hello, writers! I am very glad your story on this site. This is about two teenage villains and their desire to take revenge. I went on and decided link here is the first four-headed chapter. Enjoy !!!

Chapter 1: Hardcover.

Anthony gently crouched on a giant oak bookshelf, all the time trying not to make a sound. Warm aroma of paper and leather bindings peacefully sits in silent darkness. The boy restrainedly said he heard the mother's voice. "And here I am, whether you are ready or not!" Anthony pulled the shirt over his face and covered his head with his hands. He could not find her. She always found him, but Anthony that she never comes to mind, look behind shelf 44 .

«Ты маленькая кантелопа! Куда ты убежал этот раз?» Энтони прикрыл рот, задерживаясь от смеха .

«Она никогда сюда не заглянет. Я действительно побью ее!» Он думал. Он слышал шаги своей матери, когда она усердно обыскивала трафик . Прошли минуты, потом а часы, а она его все еще не нашла . У него бы закружилась голова от волнения, но Энтони кивал .

Хлопнуть! Крушение !

Мальчик вырвался из головокружительного сна. Прежде чем выглянуть в темный коридор библиотеки, осторожно протер глаза. Даже тогда, когда он не мог разглядеть особенности больших помещений. Энтони снова потерянные глаза, медленно вставая. Его коленные дрожащие мышцы были теплыми и напряженными. «Странно, - подумал он, - мама всегда меня находит». Проходя через трафик, Энтони были значительно сильнее, чем обычно. Все настольные свечи были исключены. «Хм, - задумался он, - неужели она просто сдастся и пойдет на обед, не найдя меня?» Мальчик никогда в жизни так не нервничал.

Проходя по темным коридорам библиотеки, Энтони ощупывал каждую крупную книжную полку кончиками пальцев. Его ладони стали теплыми и влажными, а в глазах стало скучно. В море пахло дымом и пеплом. «Ага, - ругал он себя, - мама говорила тебе не плакать из-за таких вещей. Это просто тьма. Это всего лишь твое воображение. Ничего более». Даже в этом случае мальчик не мог найти ни единого объяснения дымного запаха в описании. Кроме того, была ночь лазаньи. Когда Энтони повернулся за укрупненной отраслевой библиотекой, он увидел дым, ведущий от лестничной клетки, ведущий в гостиную. Паника .

Поднявшись по лестнице и войдя в гостиную особняка семьи Мартин, Энтони сразу же начал неудержимо кашлять, густые черные клубы горячего дыма затуманили ему глаза. Что лечит? Что еще более важно, где была его мать ?

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"Anthony! Come to dinner now!"

"Yes, aunt Margaret."

"The family's all here!"

Anthony looked up into the mirror, his vision blurred by heavy tears. The young man gave his jet black hair one last comb, and set to work adjusting the spotted blue and yellow bow tie his aunt had ordered for him. He hated it, but he dared not disobey her.

"Anthony P. Martin! Don't you keep me waiting for another minute!" His aunt's voice sent a jolt of fear through his entire body.

"Okay, coming!"

As he moved slowly down the hallway, Anthony wiped his eyes and composed himself, ready to smile for the party guests. He had lived with his aunt for as long as he could remember, and he hated her. His aunt Margaret was a strict disciplinarian and Anthony was only allowed to do two things: study, and pretend to be happy. His parents were an enigma, and all he had ever seen of them was the small portrait of them that hung above his bed. He lived every day as Anthony Martin, a troubled young man trapped in his aunt's selfish little game.

"Hi there, sweetie. Go sit over by your cousin Lola."

"Yes, aunt Margaret."

"Very good." Lola gave a slight chuckle to her sister, Jamie as he walked toward the dining room table to take his seat.

"Sup, dork?", she sneered, "Missing mommy again?"

"Look at his bow tie! What a loser!", added Jamie. Anthony said nothing. He knew how that would go down. He would tell aunt Margaret that they were bothering him, and she would give him a speech on the proper way to treat a lady. He was the only boy among the family of four, and he had never been allowed to do anything that his aunt said "would be outlandish or offensive." This included sports, as well as any other form of social interaction outside of school. Anthony reluctantly scooted closer to his cousins and some other family members he could not name. He heard a defining click as a snapshot of the family was taken. Anthony hated them all: his cousins, his aunt, and the world. And he *would* exact revenge.

The bell made a shrill ringing sound and a mass of excited tenth graders poured through the door of the Biology lab and into the hallway. Anthony followed shortly behind them, his gaze fixated upon the ground. "Hey, Martin! Why don't you go join a circus?", yelled a familiarly intimidating voice, "They could use a professional loser like you!" He began to walk faster, but it wasn't too long before two boys grabbed him and pinned him to the wall.

"Go away!", he pleaded. The boys responded with amused laughter. The taller of the two began to finger Anthony's bow tie.

"Nice tie, freak.", he said sarcastically. His name was Alec. He had mercilessly bullied Anthony ever since the first grade. They had gone to the same elementary, middle, and now high schools.

"Please don't hurt me.", cried Anthony in a sheepish tone. He began to tear up.

"Oh we're not going to hurt you, it's just funny when you cry." Alec and his partner pushed Anthony to the ground, and the bell rang for the next period. Within seconds, they had disappeared down the hallway and Anthony, still crying, sat alone on the cold tile floor with his face buried into his arms. He'd had enough. Today, he would leave school early and never come back. He would run away from home. But first, he'd have to pick up his first place science project from the Biology lab.

Anthony was no athlete. He was just under 5'2" and was scrawny compared to most of his classmates. They'd always been mean to him, the boys *and* the girls. But the one thing that was undeniably true was the fact that Anthony Martin possessed an impeccably brilliant mind. So much so, that his reasoning and his vast knowledge of human psychology frightened his teachers.

The boy turned the brass doorknob slowly, as if to prevent being overheard by Dr. Ferguson, his Biology teacher. He gave a light sigh of relief when he entered the lab and found that no one was inside. The young man's eyes jumped restlessly around the room as he frantically scanned it for his project. "There you are.", he exhaled as he started towards it. Anthony's project had been disguised as a study of memory and depressive disorders, centered around his research of how the brain reacts to certain sounds. But it was much, much more. Of course it *looked* like a walky-talky, but Anthony had designed a device that no one would fathom could be constructed by even his mind. He gently unscrewed the small, shiny ball from the top of the project and studied it between his fingers. "We'll get them.", he whispered, "We'll get them all."

"Hey, mister, how much for that set over there?" Anthony pointed towards the clean white tuxedo which graced the front window of the tuxedo shop.

"What do ya need that for, little guy?", replied the shop clerk, a balding man in his late fifties, "You

already got a pretty nice bow tie." The clerk slapped his knee and began to laugh uncontrollably. Anthony frowned hard at the man. "Woah, take it easy, little fella....take it on the house."

"I thought you'd come around.", he replied indignantly, "...How about these shoes here?" He made a gesture towards the pair of shiny black Florsheim dress shoes on top a shelf behind the counter. The clerk walked over, took the pair down from the shelf, and placed them into a nice-looking shoe box, pushing them gently across the counter.

"Take em too, I guess."

"That's right."

Anthony packed his tux and shoes into his backpack, careful not to wrinkle the clothing. "Oh, mister? One last thing. Can I switch this polka dot tie out for a black one?....There's just something about black."

"Absolutely." Anthony untied his bow tie and handed it to the clerk. An expression of pure ecstasy had come over his face as he grabbed the new black one and placed it into his backpack with the other "purchases".

"Gee, thanks mister." With that, Anthony walked out of the shop, leaving the dazed clerk by himself in the quiet doorway. "That guy was nice....good save.", thought the boy. Next, he would stop at the nearest house and ask for the bathroom. It would give him a chance to change into his new getup and it would also give him a chance to test out his little revenge project on a living subject.

Anthony knocked on the door of a quaint little town house and waited for a few minutes. Through the slightly opened door emerged a brown-haired, middle-aged woman. "May I use your bathroom, ma'am? I'm new to this area and I seem to have gotten lost."

"Why, of course.", she replied in a sympathetic murmur, "It's right here on the left. Do you need a tele-" Before she could finish her sentence, Anthony had forced his way through the entryway and into the bathroom, locking the door behind him. He was pleasantly surprised that she had not asked about his overflowing backpack.

"Here we are.", he said in an excitedly low voice. Anthony removed the blue polo shirt his aunt Margaret had forced him to wear for the last four years. He studied it in the mirror. "No wonder people laugh at me....they won't be laughing for long." With that, he threw the shirt into a waste basket under the sink. Anthony then removed his khakis and put on the smooth white tuxedo pants with a nice white dress shirt he'd gotten with the set. Over his hands, he placed a pair of shiny black leather gloves he'd carried in his backpack to school that morning before slipping on the new dress shoes. Next, he donned a white gentleman's cap to match the new tux. "Sharp as a razor.", he said reassuredly to himself as he smiled at his reflection in the mirror. Finally, he applied the black bow tie around his neck. "Nothing manlier than a black tie....That's it! Blacktie....Dressed to kill. Anthony Martin is no more. ONLY BLACKTIE LIVES NOW!" A maniacal laugh broke out of his soul. "I wonder if this lady has ever experienced torture of the mind.", he thought.

"Is everything alright in there?", said the voice of the hospitable lady from the entryway. Anthony did not respond, for he was far too enthralled with the image he saw in the mirror.

"Now, we get serious." Blacktie swiftly dug the small, shiny ball from his project out of the pocket of his old khakis, and pressed it to the center of his bow tie. To his great delight, it attached itself as planned and blended in flawlessly. He felt his pulse quicken and a surge of powerful energy flow through his body. He cackled loudly in a state of corrupted bliss. "Showtime."

Blacktie exited the bathroom to find the lady standing in the entryway, her arms crossed, and a glint of annoyed curiosity in her gaze. "Weren't you just-"

"Shhhh." He pressed a glove-clad finger to her slightly parted lips as his own lips curled into a devious grin. Blacktie gently pinned her to the wall. "What is your name, lady?", he said in a low and sinister whisper.

"Abby.", she replied, frightened. Blacktie gently stroked her pale cheek with a single gloved hand.

"Abby? That's quite a lovely name. I once knew someone named Abby. We were acquaintances for a short while." His whisper grew more menacing by the second and his eyes began to glow a bright blue and the bow tie began to blink the same color. "She was my mother."

"Your mother?", questioned the distressed Abby.

"Yes, very good, Abigail. And do you know what happened to her, my darling?"

"No." Abby's voice began to tremble as a few light tears welled up in her eyes.

"She died." At that, the lady burst into frantic screams.

"Help! Help! Who are you!? You monster!"

"I am no monster, Abigail. I am only Blacktie, here to take you on a journey through your memory. And here to break you. Now, Abigail, look into my eyes." Abby struggled to look away and to close her eyes, but some unnameable force prevented her from doing so. Her screams became heaving sobs as she forcibly stared into the glowing pools of blue. "Very good, Abigail. Very good indeed." Abby saw her childhood at the Booker Street Orphanage. She saw the other children being adopted while she was left behind. She saw herself, just a ten-year-old girl, sleeping on the sidewalk without a place to go for the night.

"Make it stop!", she cried as she collapsed into a sobbing heap on the hardwood floor.

"What a shame, Abigail. No one to go to. No one to call your parents....I can relate." Blacktie snapped his fingers and the blue light left from his eyes and the bow tie stopped blinking. His victim laid motionless on the floor. The dapper young villain stooped down to examine the corpse. "Oh, Abigail.", he began quietly, "You make quite a lovely doormat." That devious grin once again filled his expression. Blacktie then grabbed the black pearl necklace from around his victim's neck. "At least you had good taste in pearls....There's just something about black."

He stood back up and stepped over the body and towards the front door. He spotted a black crow's-head cane propped up against some umbrellas in a corner behind the door. "Why, hello there." He gently snatched it up and studied the eyes of the crow. They shone a bright and eerie blue. "Splendid. Just splendid." Next, he made his way over to a small table in the entryway where he found a black spiral notebook and a golden fountain pen. He set to work scribbling down a few names, and then held the paper up to meet his judgmental gaze. "Very good then." He quickly thrust it into his pocket with the pearls. Blacktie straightened his tie and cleared his throat as he turned to give a waving gesture in the direction of the silent entryway. "Goodbye, Abigail.", he exuded softly. Cane in hand, he turned the doorknob and waltzed casually into the cool night, leaving the door slightly open with his victim's corpse laying inside. The outside world looked the same as it had before he'd put on the tux, but nothing was quite the same at all. For once he was the one winning, and the world was the loser. Blacktie felt a gentle breeze land against his face, and gave a deep breath as if to congratulate himself on his new-found power. "Now then, a final visit to my dear Aunt Margaret. A *real* final visit."

Chapter 2: Privilege.

Breathe in. Breathe out. Your diaphragm contracts, Your ribs move upwards. How difficult can it be?

Rebecca wasn't really sure.

She stared at her face in the mirror -- the delicate features, the flower-petal mouth and button nose. She was so familiar with that face that she could draw it in her sleep -- not that she would ever have the slightest inclination to do so. Rebecca was accomplished, that much she knew, but her oil-paintings always depicted terror and loss, blood and maelstrom. The world was a tragedy, and she was determined to pin her anger to a canvas. One day, the world would pay, she thought. And it would suffer, just like it was supposed to.

She reached for her hairbrush, but set it down just as quickly. She was agitated, and found it rather difficult to ease her nerves. It was so stupid, that *she* should be feeling like that. But she was excited as well.

Tonight, everything will change, she thought, as she paced her room. She would finally exact revenge, and there would be no one to stop her. Her mother didn't care, and neither did her father. All that mattered to them was that she didn't taint the Townsend name. All her life she had been made to feel like an accident.

It was time to start acting like one.

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"Rebecca! Hurry up! Why are you so slow?"

Rebecca rolled her eyes at her mother's nasally voice. For all her looks, Irene Townsend sounded like a clogged-up pipe-line. She smirked at the thought, but didn't answer her mother's calls. There was silence, and then Mrs. Townsend rapped at the door again.

"You're such a lazy girl, Rebecca!" she was saying, obviously vexed. "Come out this very instant!"

Rebecca sighed and glided towards the door. Unlocking it with ease, she leaned against the frame and said sweetly, "You called, mother dearest?"

Sarcasm was one of Rebecca's finer traits, and she managed to pull it off very nicely, indeed.

Irene frowned at her daughter and let out a noise that was somewhere between a huff and a groan before turning away and sashaying down the stairs. Half-way downstairs she called, "You better be down by six thirty! Sharp!" She paused for a moment before adding, "I mean it!"

Rebecca rolled her eyes once again--this was really becoming something of a habit--before muttering, "Yeah, right."

Always the eloquent one, aren't we, Rebecca?

Shut up, she told herself, scowling.

Rebecca Townsend stammered her way nervously out of her bedroom and across the hallway to meet the intimidating stairwell that stretched out before her. She placed a single trembling hand upon the railing and gently stroked the gold-leafed finish as the other hand swiftly attempted to dry her teary eyes. It was Sunday evening again, and the Townsends would be having a very important dinner guest. The day had gone just as every Sunday had ever gone at the Townsend home. The maids had been busy at work tending to the gardens and dusting the mansion's imported furniture from top to bottom, and the butlers strode frantically through the halls, relaying Chef Pepe's requests for more arigano. Mr. and Mrs. Townsend had not been seen nor heard from until the latter emerged from the master suite to call Rebecca down to the living room. Once again, it was 6:30, and the guest would be arriving at any minute. And once again, Rebecca reluctantly made her way down the giant stairwell and into the living room where her parents' critical leers met her gentle footsteps. The only thing different about this Sunday was that it was April 4th. It was Rebecca's sixteenth birthday.

"Hello, Mother. And Father."

"Hello Rebecca.", replied the lady of the house, "We've got a very important guest coming over tonight.", injected Mr. Townsend.

"I know, Father." With that the Townsends moved into the dining room and sat down one at a time. Mr. Townsend, then the Mrs. and, finally, Rebecca. The birthday girl sat at across from her mother, her father at the end of the table. It seemed as though her parents' faces had been programmed to project the uneven frown that had become so familiar to her. After what felt like an eternity, the doorbell's resounding chimes broke the awkward silence that had presided over the family table since the three had sat down. Rebecca could hear the butlers cheerfully greeting a figure who's voice she could hardly make out. She then heard the excited click of expensive heels on trotting against the tile floor. It was a woman.

"Oh, hello all! Crazy with this weather out here."

"Hello, Clara! How've you been?", erupted her parents. Rebecca was confused by her parents' sudden jolt of excitement, but she had become numb to such moments.

"How are you, Becky?", inquired the visitor.

"Oh I'm fi-" began Rebecca before she was so coldly interrupted by the sound of her mother clearing her throat.

Mrs. Townsend looked quizzically at the visitor before giving Rebecca a gentle stare. This was her cue to be quiet. "She's been the same, Clara. Still quite...behind."

"Oh. How so?", asked Clara.

"Let's just say that no Townsend lady sits at the dinner table like a man. Quit slouching! As a matter of fact, no dinner tonight, young lady! Get out of my sight!" Clara did not respond.

"Yes, Mother.", replied Rebecca sadly as she left her seat and began to walk back towards the stairwell. A single tear rolled down her left cheek and landed upon her satin dress. The maids and butlers did not stare, for this was a common scene at the Townsend mansion.

"Now, Clara.", said Mr. Townsend, "About that new idea you drew up?"

"Argghhh! I hate you so much!" Rebecca ripped the pearl necklace from around her neck and flung it towards the crooked portrait of her and her parents above her bed. "You always make me feel...you make me feel...Argghhhh." The birthday girl could no longer make words. Instead, heaving sobs forced their way out of her body, leaving her nearly out of breath. The frantic young lady collapsed upon her bed. For years, nothing she had done had been good enough, and Rebecca Townsend had come to her breaking point. All her life she had been sheltered from the world, never having gone to school or even left the mansion. But, Rebecca had a gift. Not only was she strikingly intuitive, but she also possessed an uncanny hunger for knowledge. Whenever she had been sent to her room in the past, she read, and she read, and she read. Over the years, she'd come to see the outside world through a glassy-eyed vision, shaped by her readings on the human memory. She saw it as a place of great joy, and of great suffering, with nothing in between. The memory could be a wonderful thing, but it could be ten times as cruel, and Rebecca was confident that she'd found a way to exploit this.

"No! I will not cry!", protested Rebecca as she angrily dried her eyes. The troubled heiress rose from her bed and walked over to a wooden bookshelf that towered above the rest of her dimly lit room. She began to finger restlessly through the bookshelf much like a librarian searching for a misplaced novel. "There it is.", she murmured. Rebecca pulled a large white book out from the shelf and opened to a page which had been marked with a post-it note. It wasn't the text she was looking for, as an illustration of a minute blue jewel graced the middle of the wrinkled page. "Yesss.", she hissed.

Rebecca closed the book and placed it onto her bed before moving over to her walk-in closet. Her cherry-red lips curled into a devious grin. "Something white.", she sighed, "There's just something about white." The young lady swept through a few outfits before finding one she hadn't even seen before. It was as if it had been placed into her closet by some higher power. It was a clean white dress suit set with a matching trenchcoat and beret, equipped with black leather gloves and a pair of white stiletto heels.

"Wonderful.", she cackled. Rebecca swiftly undressed and donned a pair of black nylon stockings before changing into her new getup. She studied herself in the closet mirror with an evaluative glare as she placed the beret over her shiny black locks. "Something's missing.", she sighed. Rebecca found a pair of shiny black leather gloves and placed one over each delicate hand. "Something's still missing."

Rebecca walked out of the closet and over to her desk. She quietly opened a single drawer and began to feel through it. "A-ha!" Rebecca pulled a shiny silver necklace from the drawer and cupped it in her gloved hands. A bright blue stone graced the pendant. "There you are.", she grinned. This necklace was given to her by her mother and had belonged to her grandmother. It was supposed to be a symbol of "the family's longevity", or whatever her mother had called it. To Rebecca, it had always been something else. It was a symbol of freedom, of control, and, most of all, of revenge.

"Here goes.", said the girl as she closed her eyes and took a deep breath. With that, she gently placed the necklace around her neck. All of a sudden, she felt her pulse quicken and let out a resounding sigh of relief. She had never felt so much energy pulsate through her body. She felt good. She felt powerful. Rebecca opened her eyes to find an awe-inspiring sight. The room seemed to be tinted with a hazy blue film and the stone had become illuminated with a mellow glow of the same color. A fierce and maniacal laugh burst from the former heiress as her vision and the necklace began to return to their normal state.

She looked into the portrait of her and her parents' with an expression of false sympathy. A jagged blue crack now ran down the middle where a young Rebecca Townsend used to be. "Goodbye, sweetie.", she whispered to the shattered portrait, "Only Whiteshade lives now." (Work in Progress.)

Chapter 3: Blacktie Dinner.

The nighttime air was calm and the sky was dyed with a deep and reflective blue-black shade. Blacktie was still giddy over the successful trial run of his mental recall technology. He brushed himself off lightly and straightened his bow tie as he began to walk down Meredith Street towards his final destination: 4444 Desperata Ave. "It's Friday.", he whispered indignantly to himself, "Too glad it's Friday." Blacktie casually strode on for a good ten minutes before he noticed something uncannily disturbing. For the first time, Blacktie was panicking. He quickly set his cane down upon the sidewalk and put a finger to the center of his bow tie. "Goodness!", he exclaimed, "The device! What on Earth happened to the device?" The small metal ball containing the radiation necessary for brainwave interference had been lost. "How could it have fallen-" His train of thought was interrupted and an insane burst of laughter erupted from the tuxedo-ed murderer. "No matter." He picked the cane back up and began to gently coax the crow's head handle. "The real power lies within our minds." Once again, he felt his pulse quicken and his senses sharpen as his vision became blanketed by that familiar blue film. The tie began to blink more slowly than it had the previous night, as if deciding between the eerie blue glow and it's regular black shade. Soon, it had settled entirely on the blue glow. "That's more like it." Blacktie then closed his eyes and reopened them to find that his vision had returned back to normal, and the tie back to the elegantly fierce black. "The control....", he hissed.

"So much...*control*."

"Push me faster mommy! Push me faster!"

"Alright, sweetheart." Blacktie's head jerked towards an image of a short young woman pushing a small child on a swing at the park across the street. The park was a ghosttown and the lady and her child were the only two there that evening.

"Disgusting.", he spat as his gait quickened.

"Mommy, mommy! Look at that man over there! He looks funny!"

"Don't say that.", the lady replied in a motherly tone, "It's not polite to point, sweetie." Blacktie suddenly stopped walking and let out an amused chuckle.

"Kids these days.", he whispered. Without a pause in between, he began to walk eagerly towards the two.

"Good evening, ma'am.", he inquired as he removed his cap and extended an open hand, "Might I ask what you lovely folks are doing out at this hour." A little taken aback by the villain's eloquence, the young lady nervously took his hand and shook it slowly.

"Well, I just thought Junior and I could use some mommy-son time.", she replied playfully, "...His father is never around. He's out on a business trip."

"Oh, really." A thinly disguised sneer took refuge underneath Blacktie's sympathetic frown.

"My father was often...away. I see how that could be quite...taxing for a boy such as your Junior here." He cleared his throat. "I believe I haven't taken the liberty of properly introducing myself. I am Dr. R.E. Venge, master psychologist."

"...Uh, pleased to meet you Dr. Venge. I'm Amy. And this is James Jr."

"Hiya, mister!", the boy exclaimed.

"Hello, Junior. How are you tonight?" Blacktie stared gently into the boy's eyes as his vision re-assumed the blue tint. He was quite pleased with what he saw. The child's gleeful expression shifted into a dazed stare.

"I'm alright. How are you?"

"Oh, me?", he replied. "I'm just incredible tonight. I'm going to a dinner party." A wicked smile appeared on the well-dressed villain's face and his vision and tie returned to normal.

"Uh, okay Dr. Venge, I think we otta go.", said Amy, more nervous than before. She picked Junior up off of the swing and grabbed his hand tightly. He seemed to be slightly dizzy.

"Oh, do you really have to go now? That's quite a shame Mrs....Witherspoon."

"How did yo-"

"Let's just say I'm a different sort of doctor." With that, Amy and her son disappeared into a crimson

Mercedes E-Class, and sped down Meredith Street away from the park and the dimly lit swing set. "Still working like a charm.", grinned Blacktie.

"Be right back, everyone. Someone's at the door." Margaret Baker walked out of the living room and toward her front door with gentle feet. "Hi, sir. Who are you? I'm not interested in your product." Typical aunt Margaret.

"Oh, I'm not selling anything, ma'am.", said Blacktie politely. "You see, my name is Dr. R.E. Venge. I am a master psychologist. I heard that there was a gathering here tonight."

"You heard correctly." Margaret raised a skeptical brow.

"Have I seen you before, sir."

"Maybe. I'm quite well known in the field of psychology. I've come to inquire about your nephew, Anthony. I've been hearing that he is in dire need of help."

"My Anthony? Oh no, sir you must be mistaken. Are you one of those crackpot teachers up at that school? I'll have you know that I am an excellent guardian and that there is absolutely nothing wrong with my Anthony!"

"Well, hasn't he been lost for the last day or so?", Blacktie injected, feeling accomplished in dismantling his aunt's argument.

"Why, yes...but, I'm going to-"

"When are you going to look for him?"

"Well, when...uh, when..." "Let's hear it." "When..uh...tomorrow. After tea is over....Sir I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

"Looking for him won't be necessary. He's right here."

"Anthony!?", she screamed before falling into a dazed stupor.

"Now, aunt Margaret. Tell me where my parents are."

"I don't know," She was struggling to stand and her body went cold. "They've been dead for years."

"The truth, Margaret!", he demanded.

"I don't know."

"You liar!", he yelled. By this time, the whole entryway had been set ablaze by bright blue flames, and the eyes and bow tie shone brightly. "Now look at me, Margaret." The woman involuntarily stared into his hazy blue eye sockets.

"Oh no!", she screamed, "Anthony, please!" Her pleas were ignored.

"What do you see?" Margaret was crying heavy tears and knelt down upon the ground as if begging him for mercy. She saw four little girls at church, one of which was separate from the others. She saw that same little girl sitting in the corner of a U.S History classroom, a dunce cap on her head and a bright red nose strapped across her face. She heard boisterous laughs from the rest of the students. But, most of all, Margaret saw the silhouette of an angry middle-aged teacher holding a wooden rod and frowning coldly at the frightened little girl. Blacktie's eyes and bow tie ceased glowing. "Anthony. I'm sorry.", whispered Margaret as she fell gradually deeper into an endless slumber.

"Sorry?", he murmured. "No you aren't. The glowing blue flames left the entryway and everything was as it was before, but Margaret Baker was dead. Blacktie overheard laughter and lighthearted conversation from the living room. "Jamie.", he hissed angrily, "And Lola."

Chapter 4: Two's Company.

Anthony gently pulled at his bow tie and unbuttoned his coat as he peered devilishly towards the living room. By now, his aunt's body had become nothing more than an empty shell, her skin imbued with the ghastly pallor that only death can bring. As the sharp young villain stepped calmly over the corpse and through the entryway, he could still hear the lighthearted chatter coming from the parlor of his aunt's home. "Jamie and Lola.", he muttered, "Always the life of the party." Before he reached the gathering, he heard his cousin Lola speak in that same jeering tone she used to tease him in before his transformation. "Geez, guys. Where's mom at? She take a walk all around town or something?" Blacktie clenched his fist as and gritted his teeth as he overheard the resounding laughter of the party guests. Apparently, they had far been too busy joking to hear their hostess's screams for mercy. It was time, The gentlemanly murderer casually waltzed into the living room, crow's head cane in hand, and into the center of the room, right in front of Jamie and Lola. It was as if the very life had been sucked from the gathering. The laughter had

stopped and the lighthearted conversation gave way to an eerie silence. The uninvited Blacktie was now the center of attention.

"Hello, all.", said Blacktie quietly, staring deeply into the baffled gazes of his cousins, "Great party tonight." There was something very familiar about this strange visitor, but neither Jamie nor Lola had the slightest idea of what it was. After a few minutes of unbroken silence, an tall young man stepped through the crowd to confront Blacktie. It was Alec, the boy who had bullied Anthony ever since he could remember.

"What's the deal, man. Who are you and why are you crashin' our party? We just got the old lady to leave, you hear? We don't want any freaks ruining this night." "Is that so?", replied Blacktie calmly. "What are you gonna do....*Alec*?"

The guests had begun to whisper nervously to one another about who this well-dressed stranger could be, and Alec's face wore a blank expression of mild confusion.

"Uh, hey man, I don't want any trouble. Just...who are you?"

"Oh me? I'm just Blacktie, here to make you suffer." With those words, Anthony lifted his cane and pointed it towards Alec. The villain's lips curled into a hellish grin. Alec saw a blue light flash before his eyes, and fell to the ground. The party guests were gone, and he could see nothing but darkness. The only lights he could make out were the beady blue eyes and glowing bow tie of the mysterious suited figure that towered before him. "Jamie?", he screamed, "Lola?...Anybody?!"

"Alec Wilson.", hissed the towering figure, "You've got quite the nerve to trifle with someone such as myself. Always walking around with a chip on your shoulder, ready to pounce on anything and anyone weaker than yourself....you're a grade A coward." The bewildered and frightened Alec let out another scream as he attempted to slide away from the strange suited figure.

"Hey. man I don't wanna have to hurt you. I only thumped that Anthony kid a few times. Don't make me thump you too, buddy!"

"It's quite sad, Alec. It really is. You believe that you can fight your way out of anything don't you? Always looking for someone to hurt. Always looking for a victim. Well, here I am. Here's Anthony Martin." Before Alec could respond, he felt himself falling into an obscure dream. A nightmare. Alec saw himself at the 3rd Street cemetery, knelling before a melancholy gravestone. It read, "Janice Wilson. 1970-2013." He saw himself placing a bouquet of purple tulips onto the grave.

"Make it stop! Please!"

"Oh, it will stop alright! Right now, it will end.", replied Blacktie. He snapped his fingers and the two were back in the living room, the party guests all wearing stunned expressions of extreme terror. Alec laid sprawled out on the floor, dead.

"Who are you?" demanded Jamie. "What did you do to him?" Both she and Lola began to cry frightened tears.

"I just jogged his memory a little bit.", replied the proud young killer.

"Who are you?" Where's our mom?", the girls screamed. Blacktie gently smiled at Jamie. He lifted a single gloved hand to her face and began to lightly caress her cheek. His finger caught a hot tear as it rolled down the side of her face.

"Girls. You always did think you were the prettiest things around. So...fake....Where's your little cousin?" Both girls gave a quizzical stare and then began to cry harder.

"Anthony's gone. He ran away.", said Lola.

"Why do you think he left?" Blacktie inquired in a sinister whisper. There was no response. "I asked you a question!", he screamed. The guests cowered as his eyes and bow tie began to glow a deadly light blue.

"Why did he leave, girls?"

"Uh, well, I guess he just-"

"He what?"

"We don't know.", cried Lola. Both girls fell into a sobbing heap on the floor, holding each other tightly. "Well, it seems you've learned nothing from this experience. *I* left to find peace. And to find power. *I* left to make you pay!" Blacktie sent a beam of blue light out from his cane, striking the chandelier above the living room table. The room was now ablaze with the strange blue glow that had become the only source of light.

Anthony cleared his throat and adjusted his bow tie once again. "Attention, everyone! Thank you for coming to tonight's gathering hosted by the lovely family of Mrs. Margaret Baker. Tonight, you all will witness the unthinkable. Tonight, you will relive all the things you always wished you would never relive. And then, you will die, just as Mrs. Baker did an hour ago." The room was silent, save for the whimpering cries of Jamie and Lola and a few frightened sighs from the crowd. The young villain's eyed and bow tie reassumed their glow. "For those of you who were unobservant enough not to find out, I am Antony Martin." A few surprised gasps made their way through the mass of frightened party-goers. "I am here tonight to congratulate my beloved cousins, Jamie and Lola, on being the two most spoiled, superficial, and self-centered brats I knew." Blacktie snapped his fingers, and Jamie and Lola began to scream once again, much louder than before. They both felt the top of their heads to find that their beautiful hair had disappeared.

"Anthony! Why?" Screamed the girls.

"Because you deserved it.", he grinned.

"Anthony, you don't have to do this. We're sorr-"

"Enough!", he yelled. "Tell it to your dear mother!" With a single wave of his cane, Blacktie released a wave of blue light towards the girls and another towards the guests. The victims began to spasm uncontrollably, and filled the room with tortured screams for mercy. Just as Anthony was about to deliver the fatal memories, a mysterious voice reverberated throughout the living room.

"Dust!", it said, "That's all you are! From the dust you were made, and to the dust you shall return!" With that, a flash of bright green light engulfed the room and the victims bodies fell limply to the ground. Within seconds, the room was full of nothing more than towering heaps of light green dust. Even Alec's body had turned to dust.

"What!?", Blacktie exclaimed. "I didn't do that."

The blue glow dissipated and Blacktie stood in the center of the room, surrounded by the green dust that was once the human flesh of his cousins and the party-goers. He ran his gloved finger down the side of one of the dust plies and studied the residue with a curious humility. "What on Earth?.." Blacktie exited the living room and walked quietly back into the entryway. Apparently Aunt Margaret's corpse had turned to dust as well. The dapper young villain leaned against the wall and removed his gentleman's cap, holding it wearily at his side. He began to think hard to himself about the events of the night. "I'm sure I couldn't have done all that. Not even with this much power.", he murmured. He stared into his hands with a quizzical expression on his face. This was the first time he'd felt so confused since his fateful transformation. Blacktie looked up to find a sight that not even he could have ever predicted.

In front of him stood a short, slender, black-haired young lady about his age, and strikingly beautiful. She was dressed in a white trenchcoat with four large black buttons. Around her neck was a silver necklace, with an emerald pendant embedded in the center. She wore white leather gloves over each graceful hand and shiny black stiletto heels graced her feet, black stockings covering her legs. Her piercing green eyes peered deeply into his own, and her cherry red lips formed an amused grin. Anthony's pulse quickened, and he felt his cheeks grow hot. Never before had the presence of a female captivated him so. Anthony began to panic. Who was this mysterious and beautiful young lady? Had she really survived the night's events? If so, how? These questions soon gave way to a single, more important thought. Had *she* been the one responsible for the fatal events of this evening? The nervous teenager began to speak. "Uh, hello. Who-" The girl gave an amused chuckle as she interrupted him in mid sentence.

"You know, you really shouldn't be so theatrical about it, Anthony. You had me quite bored for a minute there.", she retorted.

"Uh...oh...uh...yeah.", he replied. This was all he could say, for Anthony was stricken by the girl's graceful mannerisms and cutting remarks.

"The name's Rebecca...Rebecca Townsend." The young lady's expression was clear evidence that this statement had left a bad taste in her mouth.

"Uh, h-hello. I'm A-Anthony Mart-"

"Yes, I know.", chuckled Rebecca dryly, "You're not the first man I've left...speechless. Great party, huh? Excellent finish, wouldn't you say?"

Anthony nervously pulled on his shirt collar. "Uh, yeah....did you-"

"Yes.", she grinned deviously.

"How did you-"

"Let's just say you're not the only one with...a special skill set."

"But how did-"

"Shhhhh.", urged a frustrated Rebecca as she placed a white-gloved finger to his lips and moved in closer to her subject. She began to whisper into his ear. It was right then that Anthony had learned something very important about his beautiful accomplice. Rebecca loved control even more so then he did.

"Listen to me," she snapped "How i got this power doesn't matter, now does it?"

"No. Not at all!", he replied.

"What matters, Anthony, is how I use it....and I understand that you and I want use it for the very same reasons."

"Yes, we do.", he whispered back. All of a sudden, Anthony began to feel far more comfortable than before, but he would never be entirely the same, for Anthony had fallen deeply and passionately in love.

"Well.", he began sheepishly, "It takes two to tango."

"I'm glad you see it that way.", she replied as she lightly caressed his cheek, "Follow my lead, Anthony, and we're gonna be powerful enough to make it rain fire over this city...and then over the world!"

"Whatever you say, Reb-"

"It's Whiteshade to you!"

"Alright Whiteshade.", he nodded.

"Very good."

After a short silence, the young man could not help but feel as if he needed to compliment this striking new acquaintance.

"Uh, you have beautiful hair.", he muttered.

"Yeah," she sighed indifferently, "But I find myself to be more of a...proper lady than to have my hair down. And, oh yeah, flattery will get you nowhere." Rebecca pulled a black hair tie out of the pocket of her trenchcoat and fashioned her hair into a sleek bun. She then reached into the black leather bag that had been hanging around her left shoulder and pulled out an elegant white beret. The beautiful murderer placed it upon her head and gave a subtle wink to her love-stricken partner. All the while, Anthony had been unable to take his eyes off of her own. "You know, Anthony,", she started confidently, "There's just something about white."

"Indeed there is."

Chapter 5: Stars.

The sunset air was cool in GreenGate city and the leaves upon the sidewalk seemed to dance with each gentle autumn breeze. It was as if the very earth had awoken from a long and ceaseless slumber, and Anthony was overwhelmed with a happiness he had never felt before. It had been exactly one week since the events of his cousins' demise, and Anthony and his new-found love interest had begun to develop their plans for further exploits. However, he could not figure out why the striking young lady called Whiteshade would cringe at the simple thought of being called by her birthright, Rebecca. If there was one thing Anthony *did* know, it was that a discovered identity was the least of their worries, for a victory won in disguise is a victory won in vain. "Hey,", Anthony started quietly, "Where are you taking me?"

"Oh nowhere too fantastic.", replied Whiteshade with a slight expression of amusement, "Just a little place I like to call my little corner of reality."

"Sounds...nice.", Anthony smiled nervously.

Within half an hour, the sun had come to it's final resting place in the heavens above, and Anthony and Rebecca had reached the outskirts of the bustling metropolis.

"You know what?", exuded Whiteshade, "I think we otta take a seat for awhile. C'mon over here, Anthony."

"If you say so.", he nodded compliantly.

The two accomplices sat at opposite ends of a small wooden bench that sat underneath an old oak grove. The nighttime sky was a blue-black sea of unanswered questions, the full moon and the constellations

providing the only small glimpses into the waiting future. Whiteshade removed her handbag from around her shoulder and set it down by her side on the bench, in between her and her nervous partner. She then removed her gloves and placed them beside the handbag.

"Gosh.", thought Blacktie, "What now?" His palms began to dampen and he tightly clutched his cane as he struggled in vain to keep his knees from buckling.

"Oh!", chuckled the young lady, "I almost forgot." She reached into her handbag and began to feel around inside of it. Nothing could have prepared Anthony for the object his acquaintance would pull out in the coming moments.

"No way?", he gasped "Is that what I think it is?"

"Oh this here?" laughed Rebecca dryly as her green eyes met his brown ones, "It's just a little volume of poetry I've been reading. Good for the wandering mind I guess..." For the first time since their fateful meeting at Aunt Margaret's dinner party, Anthony saw something other than a beautiful girl in Rebecca. He saw someone like himself; someone with a story and a reason to want to change it, and he didn't feel so nervous anymore.

"Well," he inquired, "Do you have a favorite poet?" The girl's expression lit up as does the expression of a small child upon hearing an ice cream truck turn the street corner.

"Oh gosh, I wish I could list them all; Longfellow, Frost, Dickinson. There's just so much great literature out there."

"Yeah, I guess there is.", replied Blacktie in a hushed tone.

"...I used to read poetry...You know, when things got tough."

"Yeah. I get you." By now, Rebecca's expression was ablaze with a wonderful enthusiasm that almost made Blacktie feel as if there was no way she could have been the murderer behind last week's events, only adding more fire to the burning question which had been dancing through his head and even more potency to the kindred affection for her that had begun to originate within his weary heart.

"You see," began Whiteshade, "When I was a little girl I would go to the library with my moth-...*my mother*." It was as if the very life had been sucked from the scene and Rebecca hurriedly put her gloves back on. She then placed the book of poems into her handbag and stood up from her seat, a restless and dutiful expression marking her pale face. The young lady cleared throat before speaking once again. "I think we should keep moving. We need to find a good place to sleep." This was the first time Anthony had felt an obligation to oppose Rebecca on anything.

"Well, how about here. These trees are good rain shelter...and I don't even think it's going to rain."

"Look Anthony...we *can't* stay here... C'mon." A melancholy feeling of false guilt radiated through the young man's heart as he mournfully grabbed his cane and stood up as well. His questions about his partner's past would go unanswered once again, but, most of all, Anthony was that much further from learning the secret to Rebecca's affection. "Alright.", he whispered sadly, "Let's go then."

TO BE CONTINUED.