

In the Cemetery. Part 5

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Three months had passed since Vince first ventured into the cemetery and sought permission to fix it up, and fix it up he had. Some of longtime city residents could not believe how good the place looked. "The kid did a great job," the city elders would often say. Vince's returned to school for his senior year and still worked part time on the truck docks where he was considered a good employee. The employees there nicknamed the "Crypt Keeper" but he took no offense as all the employees had nicknames, and some were not nice at all.. Vince saw Alexandra almost everyday during Summer break. He always packed an extra sandwich and a Coke in his lunch and always offered it to her, but she only smiled and refused. Outside of that they got along great. She still would not talk about her family life or divulge where she lived and the only bad scene between them was when they were sitting on one of the stone benches and he leaned into try and kiss her. "Don't touch me," she screamed and she ran toward the back of the cemetery. Vince did not see her for almost a week and he was very depressed. He continued the work on the old rocker he had found by the Di Winter mausoleum and though it took many weeks he managed to restore its outward appearance, but it would never hold the weight of a body again. He went to the Di Winter crypt and attempted to open the gates with the key that he discovered inside the cottage but the lock was frozen shut. So once again he coated the lock with Kroil as he did with the front gates and would wait a few days for the oil permeate the internal locking mechanism. He bumped into Alexandra as he headed back to the cottage and he ran to her, she stopped him with a gesture. "Vincent, please forgive my outburst but I disliked being touched." "I am sorry I upset you." "Do not feel sorry, there was no way you could know." "Still friends?" he asked. "Of course," she responded with a smile. Fall was full upon them and the nights were growing cold and Vince knew that his time there would be limited due to the weather. He wondered if he could build a fire in the cottage's fireplace. He would have to get it inspected and cleaned first. He made some calls to companies that specialized in this kind of work and offered free inspections. The chimney sweep company came out and inspected the entire fireplace and were surprised that all the parts were in great shape. They quoted the cleaning price but it would have to wait as he couldn't afford the out of pocket cost at this time. He would see Mr Thames and inquire if the city would foot the bill. Three days later he tried the lock on the Di Winter mausoleum and to his surprise it opened. He then placed the rocking chair inside next to the stone coffin on the floor. He apologized to its occupant that it took so long to repair and then exited securing the door and gate behind him. One week later as he was finishing cleaning the last of the stone benches he

saw something glint in the sunlight that was laying on the steps of the Di Winter crypt and he walked over and picked it up. It was a gold coin, a very old looking gold coin. He then looked inside and a chill ran up his spine. The rocking chair was no longer next to the stone coffin where he had placed it, it had been moved so now it was close to the gates. The chain and lock were still secured and there were no footprints visible in the dust save for the ones he left when he carried the chair inside. Now the imprints of the rockers were visible as it had been slid toward the entrance. For the first time since he started visiting and working there he felt very afraid. He gathered up his tools and literally ran to the cottage to store them and locked up. He bumped into Alexandra while he was moving toward the entrance and she questioned the cause for his haste. He told her everything as he continued moving. "Are you afraid of ghosts?" "Yes." "Are you afraid of me?" "No, why should I be?" "Because I am a ghost." "Bullshit." "Vincent, would you please kiss me?" "But you hate being touched." "No, I don't, I just didn't want to alarm you." So Vince leaned forward closed his eyes and placed his lips on hers. He felt nothing except a patch of cold and a tingling sensation. Vince felt his knees weaken and he sat down on one of the benches and she joined him. Suddenly it all made sense, her refusal to talk about family and her home life and why he never saw her drink or eat. "Are you frightened?" she asked. "A little, How come I can see you?" "Because I wish you too." "May I touch you?" "If you wish." His hand passed through her and again he felt cold and the tingling sensation. Her smile never wavered as she continued sitting next to him. "But you change clothes." "I wear what you have seen during your day. I can wear any outfit that you can envision." Vince closed his eyes and though hard about the stunning girl he saw at the store the other night. Black satin hot pants, low cut almost see-through blouse and knee-high go-go boots. When he opened them she was wearing the exact outfit. "That's a little risqué for my tastes, but if you like it I have no objections." "You may change back if you wish," he commented. "No, I will wear it for now." "It's a shame that I cannot kiss you," he stated. "Yes, it is a pity." "We need to talk, but not out here where someone might see me talking to myself." Vince reopened the cottage door and he allowed her to enter first.