MU with a Zing!

by Kyukitsune

Summary

Marian Dracula had 2 goals for herself: Be with her friend Mike and be a Scarer. Attending
the same campus as her family at MU, she has to deal with all kinds of new things, also a
monster who zing her but she doesn't want anything to do with him, what is she to do with all
the drama that comes with friends, relationship and what this SCREAM QUEENS!

Notes

Sup everyone I know things have been hectic but I've been working on some things and yes I
know some are wondering if I'm going to continue the HPWD, don't worry it's still alive so
no frets, but I decided to crank this little beauty up and hope you guys like this. Please enjoy,
read and review!

Disclaimer: KyuKitsune does not own Monster Inc/University, Hotel Transylvania, only the
OCs in the make, ie Marian, Leda and others you will see. So please R and R!
Tour of the Factory and Making a Friend

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Life in the old country, especially in the midst of Europe during those times when rumors of demons and monsters whispered by many of the suspicious folks that lived in the small village and were fearful of beings that were said to stalk the night. The one they were most terrified was of those who were said to be of the living dead and drank blood.

One in particular was known as Dracul, the infamous prince of darkness. He was residing in the castle that once belong to another family of vampire before he met the lady Lubov and the two became the Count and Countess and making this their very home for almost half a century. It had been a somewhat blissful life for them but still thought his life couldn't get any better than this.

*Ah what a truly wonderful feeling!* This was Dracula's thinking as he helped arrange the nursery to the way they wanted it while his wife was busy tending to their little scamp of a daughter who was fidgeting as she was getting dress and glancing at the grandfather clock every second. The nursery was painted in a variety of blue to resemble the night with stars on the ceiling and having a family of bats that were in flight together which was of them and sure that their child would also adore when they lay eyes on them. Dracula had the last painting hanging right where he wanted and then fixing it when he notice it was angle off just a smidge. With that done, he turn his focus back onto his family and couldn't help grinning as he watch them.

Martha seem to have the patience of a saint as she work to keep their child from running off and ruining all her hard work to have her looking nice for tonight. "Now Marian just hold still. Mama is almost done here." She was tying a shiny red ribbon and arranging it to resemble bat wings before smoothing out her wavy tresses one last time.

Marian was pouting cutely as she couldn't help but whine as only a fifty-five year old who was still the equivalent of a mortal child would. "But Mummy, Grandpa is late; he said he was going to be here soon."

"And he will, little mouse, but you know how he is; it's not easy to fly from his home to ours. He's not as young as he used to be." With Castle Lubov in the Slovakia region and the two vampire parents were happy in their arrangements despite the bearing concern from Drac's father on his only son and family living so close to the human territory. But Dracula was sure that they could handle things as he would not let anything happen to his family. Martha was six months along but still just as beautiful as the day he met her that fateful moonlit night. He treasure every waking moment they share together and knew that Martha return that love tenfold with hers.

Who would have thought that a being like himself would be allow such happiness. Mortals who saw them as monsters and probably assume they had no understanding of the word emotions or even love, ah how foolish they were to think that. The dark count knew he was counting his blessing for being given this wonderful life and didn't want to see anything to happen to his wife or their children. He turned his eyes over to his daughter who was finally free from her mother and went to go look outside the large window. Marian look just like Martha but having such bright fiery green eyes that were like Martha's late great grandmother hence the given name pass on to her. They were like two sparkling emerald gemstones that shine with such brightness, seeing the glowing happiness set within her small cherub face and knowing the reason for why such enthusiasm.
Dracula had been a bit anxious on having his father come spend time with them and even hearing his plans on 'where' he wanted to take Marian this evening which made him more on edge. It had been quite a long time, ages even since he set foot in that world but his father swore he wasn't going to let anything happen on their little trip over there. Martha who seeing as Dracula look like he was ready to refuse but telling him how good an opportunity for their daughter to see what the other side was like and also give them some free time to themselves while Vlad watch over Marian in their absences.

It may have been so long since I last been there but I guess it wouldn't hurt for our little Mina to check it out, hopefully she wouldn't be causing any trouble there right? Yet his thoughts were put to a screeching halt when he heard the squeal of excitement and Marian jumping up and down shouting, "He's here, he's here!" She then transformed and took off, zipping with such fury as a tiny bat her size could before zooming straight for the hunch figure who came in through the open window down the hall. "Grandpa!"

Vlad Tepes or otherwise known by his enemies in the past as Vlad the Impaler, the count who once brought fear to not only the Turks who dare to march into his home terrain but those who dare to defy his ruling. People had consider him a monster long before they even realize the full truth of his origin as it was he was a creature that belong to the night and pass onto his kin.

But the time has been somewhat kind after he decided to 'retire' and settle down with a family. He had very grayish skin with slight tinting around the cheeks and tip of his nose after a nip which gave some color to his morbid appearance. His wide ears stood out on the side of his head while his pointy nose and jutting chin seem to be almost at same length to one another. The only hair he had was the two white eyebrows and what small wisp growing out of his ears. Vlad notice the incoming projectile and immediately shouting as he bare his still sharp fangs in a wide grin, "Mina there you are my little sneak! Come to grandpa!"

She transformed back into her normal self and was caught by him and was being spun around while her parents stood there watching the scene. "Boy, you got so big since I last saw you, show grampy your pearly fangs!" He saw her open her mouth, showing how they grew and he laugh smiling, "Atta girl! You've been drinking your cow's blood like a good vamp should. They keep the fangs nice and strong, plus eating your spiders and crickets do add more calcium to them I heard. Though I wish I knew that sooner myself instead of snacking on those who had too much fat and monster knows what else in their body." Vlad gave a playful shudder while Marian listen to what he said. "Trust me kiddo you have no idea what junk those mortal carry around inside their guts and how unhealthy it is to your still growing body. So 'member no supping on them otherwise you might get a girth like grampy." He point to his own hanging gut, making her giggle some more even though she knew he was telling the truth but still the way he said it made her laugh some.

Dracula had to resist rolling his eyes, listening to his dad make comments on that before he had to say, "Dad she already knows that rule, we keep a strict diet and make sure not to get noticed by the humans when we go out."

But Vlad didn't seem to pay any mind as he turn his focus back on his granddaughter, "So I heard from a little but that a special vampire was excited for today."

"Oh she was, in fact she was practically ready to crawl all over the walls and we just had those painted." Martha had came to join them and seeing their daughter was starting to come down and watching her father-in-law settle the young tyke in his hold.

"And she should be, I did make a promise and I'm not one to go breaking my promise to this little anklebiter." He nuzzle his face into her cheek, making Marian giggling as she felt the scruffy chin
brush against her face.

Dracula knew that his dad was serious yet he also couldn't help making his own concern on the matter and having to say them to him. "I still don't know how you both manage to convince me but-

"Nonsense, this will be a good experience for her, I took you and Lydia when you were her age and now she gets the chances to go with her grandpappy. Sides' there's going to be plenty of kids for her to hang about since I doubt there's any here and we being out of your hair for a few hours shouldn't be an issue."

That was also another reason for this outing; Marian didn't have friends given they live in seclusion and can't just go down to the village to hang with the mortal kids without giving away who and what she really was. And with her parents also busy trying to get ready for the new baby and Marian who had felt slightly left out and only her grandfather knew when she made mention before when they last spoke. He never did like seeing his granddaughter sad and thought how to fix that. Thankfully Vlad had a solution to that slight dilemma and figure now would be a good time as any to take her to see where other creatures like to go bumping off to when not in the human realm.

Dracula didn't like how his dad seem to word that even if it might not been unintentional. He open his mouth about to say something when Martha place her hand on his shoulder and saying in a gentle voice that made her husband listen to her, "Darling let Marian have this chance, you know as well as I she's been wanting to go since grandda promise her he would."

"Please daddy can't I, pretty please?" As if to prove her point, Marian turned again into her bat form, giving her daddy those wide sad eyes that were tearing down the last remaining defense of her father.

He could never resist those big batty eyes. "Fine, pops, you win, but make sure she's back before sunrise."

The last thing he want is to be Marian past her bedtime but seeing his father with a cheeky grin and hearing him say, "Oh we will; no worries so you two don't wait up! We'll also grab something to eat along the way." Vlad then transformed himself and fluttering about before exiting through the same window he came in.

"Bye mama, bye daddy!" She followed her grandfather out and having the two bats flitting through the air, flying past the castle ground towards the forests that went beyond the village and heading deep inside the woods themselves. Marian was curious about what her grandfather had planned especially as they kept flying until Vlad had them come across an old hovel that look to seen better days.

Marian had no idea why he would bring them to this spot until he transform into his normal form and walked towards a very old door that seemed to be still standing despite there was no longer any walls or mortar to hold the rest of the frame up.

Vlad was please to see it was still in one piece before reaching inside his cloak, rummaging around in his inner pocket before pulling a very old key that had a skull for a base and holding it in his wizened finger. "Huh, knew I kept that in there." Marian had join him and watch as he went to insert it inside the keyhole before twisting and unlocking it. At first nothing seem to happen but then hearing a strange humming sound and saw the small glass orb on the top start glowing red, Vlad was smiling as he saw this before turning his attention to Marian who was looking at it with so much curiosity he was sure a cat would die from.

"You're going to love this kid, this place is where your grandpappy did all sorts of scaring back in the day!" He held out his hand and Marian slip hers into his, feeling him grab hold of her before he
threw the door open and the two stepping inside and over the threshold into another realm.

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Marian had no clue what was to happen as soon as they got in but then it seem almost instantaneous. Everything was dark before it turn real bright, almost blinding before her eyesight adjust to such lighting that seem unnatural in her young mind. When she could see again, Marian had to blink a couple times before realizing what she saw was really before them. They were standing in some sort of working room, gray floors that were made of stone and seeing other similar doors also standing, some look to be on the floor while others were hanging above their heads and shuffling about in every which direction with a certain designation to them. Marian had never thought to see so many doors, all in different shades and designs as they all seem to be going in and out and heading to who knows where…

She felt like she was in a dream, a wild scary unbelievable one and yet it didn't stop her tiny little heartbeat from thumping and seem to be giving her the giggles as she wanted to go find out where each lead to. What other fortuitous worlds did they belong to?

Her grandfather seem to have read her mind as he said, "Uh uh sorry sweetbat but those doors are for other monsters to go into, I got something better to show you, come along!" This didn't dismay her but she was still wondering as to where all those doors belong to and wish she could peek into them, just one. The one they came through was close and saw her gramps putting the key back in his pocket, knowing he would get it out again when it was time to head home.

Vlad had to keep from chuckling as he saw his granddaughter staring around the new place with awe and curiosity as this place seem so different and beautiful all at once. It was also bright and saw the sun but she didn't feel it burning her.

"The one good thing about this place is this world where monsters like us can come out and enjoy the daytime; course I recommend not staying out too long, otherwise you'll look like that guy over there!" Vlad was pointing to a very large bird-like monster with tentacles and was indeed a bright red color that definitely got Marian's attention to what her grandfather meant.

"C'mon there's more to see and we got a full day to do it!"

Marian wanted to ask her grandfather about this place, so many questions buzzing around inside her head like angry hornets but didn't even know where to begin. She had heard him tell stories but never in her wildest dream would she ever expect something like this. Even when they left the room with the many door and were walking down and heading for the lobby area that seemed to be very crowded as soon as they got in.

She saw all kinds of monsters along the way, some chatting and a few looking in their direction; a couple were staring right at her grandfather and glancing at her, making her inch closer to the elderly vampire.

They were all muttering and could make out some of what they said, "...Is that...it can't be...wow Vlad Tepes...he's a five time Scarer....I wonder if I can get his autograph?...who's that child with him?"

Vlad saw a few familiar faces though some he didn't recognize but still gave greeting to before he saw just the person he wanted to see, "Well I'll be, Henry is that you?!"

Marian lift her head from watching the lady behind the desk talking to that strange device in her talon and seeing who her grandfather was referring to. She saw it was a large obese gray monster that had
crab-like legs with black tips, a pair of seven fingers with navy claws and had really sharp fangs. He had a big poof of hair on his head along with a tiny beard on his chin. But the thing that really got her attention was the way he was dressed. He wore a black tuxedo coat and bowtie, white undershirt with each gold button on both bottom sides that had a red vest over that and each couple of silver buttons vertically on both sides.

The monster who was in midst talking to another coworking and when he heard his name, turned and all five eyes wide when he recognized him, "Ah, Vlad, why isn't this a sight for sore eyes!" He scurried over and went to shake hands with him, Marian watching her grandpa and the other monster interact and seeing were on good terms as they made small talk before he turned his beady eyes towards her.

"And oh I see you brought company; why, hello, little one. Is she one of yours?" He stared at the small pale child in the black-red dress and with a pair of fang poking out of her mouth just like Vlad's.

The elder vampire seem to puff up his chest some as he went to introduce him to Marian, "Yep, this here is my granddaughter." Then Vlad had his eyes to her, "Marian, meet Henry Wateroose. He runs the whole company here. He and I go back some, even when his great grandfather and I were in the same school together; ahhh those were the days."

Wateroose chuckled. "Yes, I remember those stories about you two, never could go without hearing about your wild times at MU, especially when you both took on the Scare Games and came out on top. That never gets old." He look back down to Marian and smiling kindly, "Your grandfather here was quite the legend around the campus while he was there and when he join this company as well. He was the best and broke the scare record five times."

"Would have been six if not for the annoying Spork flu that went around seventy years ago, really did a number to my chest." He pat it and sigh inwardly, "Doc told me to take it easy even though I told him I didn't feel nothing wrong with my lungs and showed him what I know."

"Yes but unfortunately it was company policy and you weren't the only one who had to be given leave. I had to hire a bunch of new Scarers just fresh out of school but I do believe I saw Derek and some of the others around from time to time though you know they are busy now with their new line of work."

"Oh I heard that, I'll have to send a memo to Derek when I see the big orange fossil around." Wateroose smirk, "You should and hey why don't you come swing by my office, I just got some fine bovine scartoeane, 1313 and I don't mind sharing and talking of old times sake with someone like you."

"Mmm that is rather tempting but hey is it alright if my grandkid here gets a tour of the factory first? See she loves hearing me tell the tales about this place and I wanted to give her a chance to see what this company has to offer. Who knows maybe she might be your next Scarer when you see her again?"

This got a large bellow out of the spider-crustacean monster but seeing it was in jolly matter, "Haha there's no need to go twisting my arms like that, I don't see any problem allowing this. Why you're in luck, actually; there's a school tour group coming in just now and I'm sure she can be a part of it." Wateroose look to Marian as he gesture for her and her grandfather to follow him. "Come along my dear, I promise you will have a good time here, I can assure you as we at Monster Incorporate do care because we scare."

Vlad and Marian kept up with Wateroose as they head outside of the building, finding like he had
said there was a group heading in. There was a large yellow bus sitting park by the curb while a bunch of young monsters were all filing out and being counted by the pink-skinned monster who was rounding up the wild bunch. Vlad knew about these school trips as tour of the factory were given to mold the mind of young monsters in hopes they chose the field but seeing his Marian eying all those kids and could feel her looking like she wanted to run over and introduce herself to the entire lot.

Here was the wonderful golden opportunity for her to find and make friends and hopefully they will accept her once they got to know this little vampire girl in their midst. The trio walk straight towards the one in charge of this small group and having Henry clear his throat, grabbing the teacher's immediate attention to them.

"Excuse me, are you Mrs. Grave? I'm Mr. Waternoose and this is Vladimir Tepes, one of our former top Scarers. I hope this isn't something too imposing, but we have another monster who's here to see the working of Monster Inc. Would it trouble you that she tags along with your group?"

The pink monster seemed to flush a bit, finding herself being asked by the CEO of the company and shook her head. "Oh, my, well I'm sure if one of the kids doesn't mind partnering up then…” The teacher turned to her students, seeing everyone already in pairs, well except for one.

The small green cyclops who was standing on the pavement after trying to ask one of the other kids to buddy up with him. He could tell that being the odd monster out, he was likely to be paired with his teacher again when there was a sudden silver lining when those monsters came and said another kid was to join them.

Was this going to be Mike Wazowski's lucky day? First finding a nickel and now a new buddy? He saw his teacher who was leading another towards him but goggling at the kid who caught all their attention yet had to blink a few times at what he saw.

It had pink skin, no fur except for the one on its head and small brow, the face so plain looking and just two eyes and one nose and lips. It had no claws or tentacles and it look so...weird. The thing wore a dress so it was obviously a girl and saw she was staring at him and had a crooked smile which he try to return but came out hesitate.

Marian had seen the small cyclops and had try to remain calm as she walk towards him with the teacher, Mrs. Grave letting her partner with her field trip buddy. Yet watching his reaction and feeling that small dread growing inside her chest, that he wasn't going to like her and judging how the others were staring, already could tell this wasn't going to go as plan.

Her grandfather had already went with Mr. Waternoose but wishing he had stay behind with her. But she told herself she would be a brave vampire and make the best even in a bad situation like this. The teacher didn't seem to notice the growing awkwardness between the two, thinking that it was just them trying to get use to one another. But seeing that all the kids were now buddy up and wouldn't need to worry about anyone feeling left out.

"Well Mike, looks like you now have a buddy for this tour; you two be nice. C'mon everyone let's go inside so we can begin our tour." She then turned to the rest and having the children follow her inside.

Marian and Mike were the last to go in as the two were unsure before she decided to introduce herself to him as they walk together side by side. "Hi it's nice to meet you. I'm Marian but you can call me Mina if you like." She try to be friendly and hope he would accept this open gesture.

"I'm Mike Wazowski, and yeah, I guess." He was looking anywhere but her, feeling a bit out of
place, especially standing so close to a monster that looked so...human. He remember those stories his grandparents said about 'humans' and how some were dangerous or that to be wary of them. Yet why was she here then, he knew that the one with the CEO was said to been a Scarer monster, so did that mean she was one too?

Marian tried not to let it show, given she really was hoping to make friends with others her age but noticing they were lagging behind the other kids as they followed the teacher, Marian thought to try to make some small talk so he can see she wasn't so bad. "What's that you got there?"

"A nickel: I found it on the bus but don't have any pockets." He noticed she seem perplexed by the words 'nickel' and 'bus' but guessing she was new to Monstropolis.

"Would you like me to hold onto it for you? I'll give it back to you later promise." Mike didn't say anything before finally relenting and handing the silver coin to her. She slipped it into the pocket of her dress before seeing the others getting ahead and having the two rushing to catch up.

"So, why are you here?" Mike whispered so not to get anyone else's attention on the odd pair. His mom always said he was inquisitive curious as he loved to find out stuff and couldn't help trying to figure her out. He as well as the other kids couldn't help gawking at her when she made her appearance from behind that elderly monster - the girl who was looking back shyly and almost seemed to hate all the attention given her way.

He was unsure but when Karen brought her forward and having her pair with him, it was hard not to keep staring or being unsure what to make of this other kid. But at least she wasn't like Jeremy or his cousin who didn't even know they carpooled together; she was at least nice and polite. Marian wasn't listening to what the tour guide was saying as she already heard what Scream energy was and turning to Mike who also seemed to be also not paying any attention. Where was all the action or fun to listen how many functions a canister was used for?

"Mommy and Daddy are home preparing the room for my baby sister, and Grandpa thought I should come and see the factory. Granddaddy said he had done all kinds of scaring when he was Daddy’s age. Same with my Aunt Lydia and my other Auntie Abby; Daddy wasn't because he wanted to do some other stuff and then met Mummy." That was all she really knew as dad never went to say anything about it but never even bother to ask at the very least.

"Oh that's cool." The two then were being led away and quickly catching up to their group where they were finally going to see something very exciting and had all the children all ready to bounce on their little feet and tentacles.

They finally reached the main floor of the factory, seeing all kinds of monsters moving about in the area: monsters wearing blue hard caps holding clipboards and standing at stations, others were pushing canisters through and setting them near so that they could be picked up and set into the designated holder once the door was summoned. Everyone was getting into position, knowing this was to be a sight to behold for them. The tiny group was out to where the scaring was done, seeing that all of the children were in awe by the monsters coming in and about the floor.

"This is where we collect the scream energy to power our whole world. And can anyone tell me whose job it is to go get that scream?"

"SCARERS!" The tour guide was pleased by that answer. "That's right! Now which one of you can give me the scariest roar?"

"Oh, oh, me! Me!" Every monster was raising his or her hand, all of them shouting as one and begging to be picked. This was a chance to prove to the other he can, too, scare!
"Ooh, sir! Right here, little green guy at 2 o'clock!" Mike was also trying to get his attention while they all went to prove they could roar just like any of the others. All the kids then tried to muster a roar to show they could, but Marian didn't as she knew she wasn't at that same level like her family yet, but Grandpappy said once she managed to get her full-on powers, she could. Sure she could transform and lift object that didn't weigh as much as her, but controlling or hypnotizing took lots of effort, and your will had to be stronger than the one you were trying to bend under your control.

Marian then saw Mike was still trying to get the guide's attention until he let loose one of his own and with a small nudge from Marian and letting him rip a loud one for the whole group to hear: "RAAAAAOOWRRRRRRRRR!"

All the kids turned to see who did that, finding it was Mike with his mouth open and Marian standing right by him. There was awe written over their young faces, and Mike was feeling that he was finally being noticed. Marian, though, sense something approaching and tapped his shoulder to have him look behind and seeing the true reason why the kids were looking so starstruck all of a sudden.

There walking with cool confident, monsters big and small, some hairy while others covered in horns - but these were the elite - they were the top scarers and were coming this way.

The vampire immediately grabbed the still frozen Mike, pulling him out of the way just as everyone else was doing the same to allow them to pass by.

Marian couldn't take her eyes off them; she had never seen monsters like them before back home. One in particular was a very striking blue monster with lots of tentacles and wearing an old ratty hat noticed them first. "Well, hey there, kids! Are you on a tour with your school?"

Everyone shouted yes while the teacher said it was also to let them learn about Scare Energy, but none of the kids were paying much attention to that. Now that the real entertainment finally arrived!

The monster smiled down at the group. "Well, hey, you're in luck. Because I just happen to be a scarer! I learned everything I know from my school, Monsters University. It's the best scaring school there is."

One of the other monster seem to hear this and came to intrude, grabbing the hat off him and scoff. "You wish Fear Tech is the best!"

"No, it ain't. Grandpa says it isn't!" Marian piped up grabbing the two scarers' attention, and they saw it was her who spoke out.

The former Fear Tech scowl at her. "Oh, really, and how does he know, little girl?"

"Because my grandpappy is Vlad Tepes!" This caused the greenish monster to go a tad pale and look at her closely; he saw her tiny fangs and the glare she was giving him. Yep, she was a vampire, and hearing the already spreading rumor that the former five time Scarer was here at the factory and that this was his granddaughter he was talking to. He heard the stories about the monster and the legend he was even in the human realm, knowing what he did to those that dare cross him or worst, badmouth in front of his own grandkid.

"Um, my bad, so yeah-I-I oh gotta go!" He threw the cap back to the other scarer and rushed to where his station was, everyone seeing he looked like he had seen a human.

This saw the other monster chuckling as he adjusted the cap back on, seeing how he nearly jumped out of his skin and turned to the two before him. "Heh, nicely done there, kid; never seen Greg lose his cool before. You definitely got him running." He turned to the rest of the students and said for
them to hear, "Okay, you guys watch us and tell me which school's the best. Alright?" He looked to everyone, pointing to his cap and whispered, "MU is."

The group watched the monsters heading to their stations while the tour guide ushered the kids to get a better view of the scene. Marian and Mike were the first to beat the rest to stand there and see this, but then the guide held his tentacle, pushing the two back.

"Oops. Stop right there. Don't cross over that safety line; human children are extremely toxic." He pointed to the sign, and while Marian knew not all humans were considered poisonous, given her grandfather use to sup on a few necks before turning to another suitable source, but the other children seemed to be staring at it and flinching inwardly at it.

She stood beside the cyclop, watching the action and seeing it was to start. Just then, someone pushed her, and hearing Mike cry out, she saw him being dragged to the back thanks to the other kids wanting to watch this. Marian nudge her way through and managed to find him as he picked himself up. "You okay, Mike?"

He nodded. "Yeah, I think so. Oh man, I can't see! Hey guys c'mon, watch the eye. Excuse me, fellas. How about we do tallest in the back?" Their view was blocked by all the kids in the way, and Mike was trying to find a spot for him and Marian to see what was happening, but so far no such luck.

Marian scowled as she couldn't believe the nerve of those bigger kids and then had a brilliant idea. She transformed herself into a bat and put her tiny talons onto Mike's shoulder, surprising him as he was being slowly lifted in the air and actually could see the scare floor. He glanced up at the small green-eyed bat who was grinning down at him. Unfortunately one of the monsters notice and yelled for the teacher. "Mrs. Graves. you said not to fly, but she's doing it."

Mrs. Graves look and saw that it was, going over the two. "I'm afraid Jeremy's right, young lady, I did say no flying, so please change back." This made both monsters groan, thinking how unfair it was, especially as they were seeing the doors were being opened, and monsters rushing in and out of them. The teacher turned her attention to Marian.

"Ms. Dracula, I know I'm not your teacher, but I would like if you try to pay attention while you are with my group. I do not think you should go and be showing off to the other students just because you're not with the class."

Marian had to keep from pouting she held her tongue, yet looking to Mike who also was a bit disappointed. "Sorry Mrs. Graves." If only she could use her full power and have her compel to let them do as they pleased, but she knew that her parents would be ever so disappointed if she were to abuse them for such.

So looking from the back while having to see and telling Mike about what was happening was the best she could offer. She would have allow him to climb her shoulders, but thought that was also a no-no. So doing what she could and helping Mike out who was also trying to do the same himself. She had really astounded him with what she did, not only talking back to that bigger monster and then trying to help him see the floor even if it did get them both into trouble.

Mike heard two of his classmates, Wallace and Haley talking saying how they were going to be scarers and Mike once again begging to see. Finally the two looked at him and were scowling at him.

"Out of the way, Wazowski; you don't belong on a scare floor." Mike's smile faded and Marian, hearing what the other kid said, jumped in and barked back.
"He so can be on the floor just like everyone else here. You don't know that! I bet you're just scared of the future competition that will one day wipe the floor with yours! Mike is bound to be a better Scarer than you could ever be in this lifetime!" Before Wallace could make a comeback, Mrs. Grave went over and grabbed her arm.

"Young lady, we do not go around saying such things. Now that's two strikes. One more and I'll have someone get your grandfather here." Mrs. Graves hated to pull such, but she couldn't allow someone to cause trouble among her students, especially if someone was not from this area.

Marian wanted to say that she was only saying the truth, but then saw Mike and seeing him watching them made her change her mind.

"Yes Mrs. Graves, it won't happen again I promise." She went back to the lot but gave one final glare at Wallace, eyes red and showing her lengthen fangs, seeing that got his attention before turning back to Mike who was saying nothing. "Sorry about that Mike, but no one should go and say such things. Mama says monsters should always stick together, no matter what or who we are."

"Yeah, thanks Marian." He never had someone have his back like that, especially to the likes of Wallace, who was probably stewing at how she called him a future scarer. Scarer, he kinda like that; he now felt he should do something in return and that was when he saw one of the wranglers pushing the scare canisters.

He grabbed Marian who immediately turned to him and saw him indicating towards something, Marian lifted her head before realizing it as she got what he was trying to tell her. Both monsters had mischievous smirk and rushed to get into position, waiting until it was in reach before getting in between the canisters.

Mike was able to with his small stature while Marian shift to a garden snake and coiled herself around Mike's arm, glad that he didn't freak when she transformed, waiting until they got past the other and onto the floor itself.

"Brian, do not step over the line." The teacher saw that one of them had been inches from going over it, but them Emmet pointed out and said to her, "Mrs. Graves, Michael and the other kid went over the line."

The teacher and the others whirled and saw that she was right, finding Mike and Marian were indeed on the floor. Oh no, her eyes widened and cried out, "MICHAEL?!"

But the two monsters didn't notice the commotion they were making as Marian reached to grab the knob, twisting it to allow them to slip by unnoticed. The first thing Marian found was that it was dark with barely any light other than to the one coming outside the window, the small nightlight by the wall and under another door to their left. Marian had adjusted her eyesight, seeing they could make out it was a child's bedroom: the floor littered with a variety of toys but then that blue spikey-head monster managed to avoid stepping or tripping on any of them.

She also noticed the easel to the side and saw a crude version of the monster himself, guessing the kid must've either witnessed him before or he just had a very active imagination. Mike, on the other hand, was impressed by the scarer as he didn't step on any of those squeaky toys that surely would awake the kid. Mike wanted to get a better look and grabbed Marian, having her follow him to get under the table, seeing the Scarer moving into position.

He had himself getting into position, claws outstretched and mouth wide open, but before he could wake the kid, there was a sound, grabbing all three of their attentions. Marian pulled Mike against her, holding her finger to his mouth, shushing him, but thankfully they were well hidden and the
door was only half ajar but seeing more light filtering in with each passing second. The two young monsters saw the Scarer sensing this, as well, but he didn't panic or freak at the incoming intrusion.

No, he went to leap to where a hanger was, pretending to be a bunch of clothes and lying still without so much as make a sound or indicate it was more than just the kid's jacket. Mike and Marian were both quiet, listening to the voices from behind their spot, guessing was the child's parents who came to check in and seeing nothing was wrong. Finally the door was closed, and the Scarer went to get himself ready once more.

They watch as he used his claws to scratch the post, making the child stir as he heard that noise. Mike couldn't take his eyes off him while Marian was also practically ready to jump as soon as the kid sat up, looking around with sleepy eyes and seeing nothing amidst. The scarer had slithered under the bed and went to be close to the kid when it sensed him and soon let it have it.

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Frank could hear the scream coming in after he stepped out of the door, feeling very satisfied to see the can was full and added more numbers to his name on the board.

Another solid scare, another- But his thoughts came to a sudden halt and then turned to one of confusion when he saw everyone standing close to his station, every monsters, even seeing the other Scarers had stopped what they were doing, all looking like in a state of panic.

This was so unlike them; he even saw one holding the first aid kit and knowing he hadn't gotten attacked or anything of the sort. Had a child touched one of them and now the CDA was on it way, but why were they all standing there gawking at him as if he grew a human face or something?

"What?" He didn't know what was wrong, but then heard a noise and stepped aside to see it was those two children he saw earlier. That cyclop and the Dracul child. They didn't seem to be hurt; the small green one was grinning while the vampire seemed to have been also alongside him. Frank had no clue until one of the Scarers pulled him to the side to explain the situation while everyone crowd around the two children.

Just as the other monsters were about to start questioning them, seeing whether they were hurt or if they touch something, a gravelly voice was barking out, "Outta the way, one side coming through! Age before beauty, you smuck! Ugh gotta do this the easy way then!"

The crowd was frozen but then found itself being parted like Moses with the Red Sea before an older gray-skinned vampire who look like he had aged a couple more centuries as soon as he heard what was going on and immediately rushed to his granddaughter and picking her up in his arms, feeling a rush of overwhelming relief go through him as he held her.

Then he set her back down and was scowling at her, "MARIAN BELLE DRACULA, what is this I hear about you getting behind a door and without warning?! Don't you know what could've happen to you?" He turn his focus onto the green cyclops, "And you I-"

"Hey, allow me, sir, it's my fault they got in." Frank finally got all the pieces together and went to go look at the two who were seeing they were now in big trouble. The Scarers stared at them and had his arms crossed, saying in a disappointed matter.

"That was real dangerous for the both of you. I didn't even know you were in there." Marian and Mike seeing that they had really gone and done it, both ready to apologize but then the tone in the Scarer's voice changed, and he said while laughing. "Wow, I didn't even know you were in there. Not bad, you two."
He then reached to place his hat onto Mike's head. "Here take care of this for me, why dontcha?"

Then Frank looked to the other and gave her a wry grin. "I got to give kudos to you as well; maybe you got what it takes to be in the big league. Just like your grandfather here." Frank turn to Vlad and added, "It's an honor to meet you, sir, and I must say I think your granddaughter really has a fiery spirit and sure she could be something here on the floor."

"Hey, what can I say: scaring is in our genes." Vlad was no longer upset, but seeing now he best take Marian home, given that was enough excitement to even cause his own ticker to have second thoughts of today. He knew that it was time they head back home and get his grandchild back to the castle before sunrise.

"C'mon, sweetbat, let's go. Say bye to your friends." Marian looked to Mike and thought she didn't want to, but knowing her grandfather promised her parents to bring her back home, seeing that the day was nearly over with. She waved farewell and went past the crowd who turning back to the remaining monster as he adjusted his cap, seeing Marian take leave.

Before Mrs. Graves could say something, probably lay in how much trouble he was in, Mike took off, startling the other as he push the other kids who were still stunned by what he done but didn't even stop him as he went after those two.

"Marian, Marian, MINA wait!" He found them heading down the corridor and managed to reach the two vampires as Marian turn to see Mike.

"Oh, right, I almost forgot," She let go of her grandfather and reached to pull out the nickel she was holding onto. "Here you go."

But Mike shook his head as he touch the brim of his new cap. "You keep it. I got something better, and I want you to hold onto that because that way, you won't forget me."

He knew this was so sudden and on short notice, but Mike found that he didn't know anyone like Marian; she was an amazing monster, and seeing that he never had friends, who would've gone and done such a dangerous thing but after today? He was proud to been partnered with her and wish they could do it again if there was a chance to.

Marian thought the same herself before she had an idea, "Wait here, I'll be right back." She transform and flew off down the corridor, returning in a minute flat with a paper and two pencils clutch in her talon. She tore it in two and hand one to Mike before taking the other for herself. Mike seem to get the gist as he quickly wrote his home address on it and went to give it to as soon as he finished writing. Marian was going to fill out hers but was worried how Mike would react once he knew where her home was. Would this change things between them or not?

Her grandfather must've notice and decided to help the two out. "Here honeybat allow me." He took the slip and wrote the Mon-hume post office that delivered in between the two worlds, then adding the forwarding address to the Lubov castle via bat express. He would handle the expense as he still get his daily Scarers subscriptions every now and then plus like to keep in touch with some of his other bosom buddies every now and them.

"And voilà, problem solved." He finished scribbling his son's address and passing it to the other monster who held the piece in his claws and seeing the kid grinning and realize he was like his Marian. A sweet kid but didn't have anyone else who understood him. He admit he didn't know what to make of him yet but as long as he made his little Mina happy then he was all right in his book.

Drac though was a whole other story, he was sure his son would not be thrilled by the outcome of
the trip once he got told, but seeing his grandchild smiling and making friends with a fellow monster, it did warm him some. Mike's address was safely pocket in her dress, right next to that coin which she was going to keep and always remember as a token of their friendship despite how others might think how ludicrous she was getting sentimental over such things.

Mike was busy looking to the address in his hand nearly had his eye popping out of his socket. A castle, she lived in a castle, so awesome! The cyclop lift his head and saw the older vampire give him a wink in his direction.

"Keep that with ya, kid, and don't lose it." Mike nodded as he place the slip under his cap for safekeeping, swearing he wouldn't let it out of his claw fingers as if his life depended on it. Then right as Marian was ready to go, she decide to give her own farewell by rushing over and throwing her arms around him, startling him before he return the gesture. Then once they let go, there was one more thing the two had to say.

"I'm gonna study real hard and make sure I ace my test; you'll do the same, of course."

Marian nodded as she agree with him. "Then we'll go to the same Scare School and become top scarers!"

"We'll go to Monster University, only the best for us!"

"Promise!" Mike then heard the teacher calling and knew he better go. "See ya around, future Scarer!"

"Right back at ya, Mister Scarer!" Both monsters were smiling as they went in opposite direction, finding they now had someone who would be by their side, vowing to be together through thick and thin. The university would have no idea what would hit them once these two got through those doors in the near future.
The first Step to A new Beginning

Chapter Summary

Marian is getting ready for when she heads out, how does Drac react to all this.

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone I decided to post the next chapter of this story and hope you all come to enjoy it. I know a few reviews were thrown in and while I couldn't make out what they said but I take that you are enjoying what you read. Please enjoy this piece and review.

Disclaimer: Kyukitsune does not own Pixar or Sony Animation, but the character that are show Marian and others are my own, and this story, please enjoy

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1958, Transylvania

It was a dark and dreary October with not a soul in sight on this very night and was close to that time of year when creatures were known to prowl and lurk about on that same eve, bringing fear and terror to those within the area of this particular location. For many a generation, while the world has continued to move on its axis and to see new and wondrous revolutionary ideas brought forward, seeking to bring humanity out of the stone age to the very present at hand. So many aspiring changes that have shocked many over the following years yet one thing was for sure as to this day, especially in the old country of Europe: the fear of the dark ones that reigned the territory, knowing that they were around and about.

Those who had been living in the area were some of those who still carried the superstition of the old ways since the age from their great-great-grandparents who told such vivid and terrifying tales of things that go bump in the night or had seen such beings over the years and have lived to tell the tale.

Normally, outsiders who had not been in their home country for as long as they had or understood the very nature of things that went about in their way of life. They would either find it rather amusing or merely scoffed at them, thinking those who told such were just the whimsical ramblings of people who didn't seem to get the gist. That these were all nonsense and fairy tales told to spook young children. Honestly, what kind of people still go about rambling of monsters or those that sucked blood - or were said to be undead?

They would make cracks at these and then continue on their way, heading for the mountainous area to pass through. While most would ignore their warnings, especially after the elusive rumors that seemed to surround the Carpathian Mountains for almost as long as anyone could remember, or even the handing of crosses or a ring of garlic to ward off evil spirits yet deflect them, believing there was no need for such. The people thought the locals were all fools to be putting much belief in such nonsense, that these stories held any grain of proof after the scientific improvements that had been coming about, disproving the old myths and legends that spoke of these things.
But those same locals went and tried to persuade the youths not to go and make their way through the spooky terrains, especially with a fog so thick, not even the brightest lamp could light the way. The villagers who all remained within the safety of their walls didn't wait as long before a bloodcurdling scream rendered the air, and then the sound of running footsteps approached. They would find those who have returned to their midst, face chalk-white and have looked like they'd seen a ghost while speaking in tongues, but then no one could understand what he was trying to say.

The only thing they knew was 'another poor fool had to dare try to get by the Devil's path...' but that was how it was in Romania.

But little did the villagers realize that beyond the smog and the overbearing clouds was a passable road led up that slippery slope which had an entrance being hollow through one of the mounts to give access to another route that was in the works of being laid out. Leading, further along, one could almost make out a looming structure that was being constructed by dozens of able-bodied people based on the blueprints and the count who was overseeing that everything go according to plan.

There was to be nothing amidst as he wanted every last detail, from the underground caverns to the secret tunnels leading directly to the hotel without any mishaps. Dracula knew that this was going to be an ongoing project to get underway as even the workers couldn't pick up the slacks thanks to their gangly undead limbs that tended to fall right into the mixture or have body parts flying which slowed production even more.

"It's looking quite promising now, don't you think so, sir?" The construction foreman whose name was Clyde and was a cousin of Mr. Hyde on his father's side but twice removed on the family line. The count had made the personal request for his assistance and Clyde taking the opportunity to draw out the plans, going over the exact dimension and structure as well as overlooking the territory which the count was insistent upon having plenty of acres of land.

Dracula had it all figured out, right down to the very last catacomb since the idea came to him so many moons ago while discussing with his fellow monsters who all wanted a haven for themselves from those disgusting humans. He had put them aside for some time, but now having thought now was good a time as ever to bring these about and see that it became a reality once he realized how the world was changing and humans were growing more and more a problem to their way of life. Clyde made to assure the count with how progress was over the years, knowing a lot was riding on this project. It was indeed an honor to be working on such a commission for the Prince of Darkness, knowing it would be no doubt an exquisite masterpiece once completed which was hopefully by this era no less. He was used to the count's nightly visits to the worksite, checking to see how the ongoing construction was and also finding out any news that needed his attention.

So far the spiraling towers and formidable high walls were already set in place; the vast landscape gave them lots of grounds for when there were to be future activities along the way, but still having enough space for the shuffling workers to go about and continue piling mortar and cement onto the lot. It was indeed a good thing no mortals dare to come up here as they made sure to leave traps or anything that would force them to turn back before going further in the territory. The count spared no expense on seeing nothing happen to this pet project, and Clyde wanted to please his client by fulfilling his every obligation to the max.

According to the blueprints, there were to be almost a thousand or more rooms, both above and within the mountain, knowing some monsters preferred the bleak and damp underneath and saw the hotel provide them with only the best. The Count had already finished making the necessary negotiations with the witches who would all be taking part and working here while zombies...well, they could also be put to use. The leader of the horsemen clan was also coming around, but still
having them on board would help a long way to bring weary monsters from traveling all across the globe to here.

Dracula nodded as he listens to what he said while checking the site himself and seeing it was looking promising as ever. "Indeed; I'm sure my girls will also be delighted once they get a good look for themselves. No doubt Mavis will be over the moon when she sees the room I have picked out for her. Same with Marian, I'm sure."

Dracula knew his girls would feel right at home once they saw this; it would be like castle Lubov, but bigger and much grander - and this time away from the humans which mattered the most in his mind. He would not make that same mistake again; no, he swore to himself that he'd never do so and would rather stand out in the sun than let any harm befall his daughters.

If only Martha were here to see this; she would have loved it here as well-he then heard a loud bang go off and then a bunch of groans along with a few moans thrown in and realizing the zombies had managed to get stuck in the cement mixer, again!

Clyde saw Dracula scowl in frustration. The count was displeased by this, seeing there was going to be some further delays now because of that. Oh, this was the second time this week and come on, they should know better by now not to get their hand inside the drum when it was turning on. He had to resist the urge of smacking his head as he wondered why did they even hire these people if they were going to keep on doing this?!

"Oi, you there, someone get the shovel and dig those guys out now, undela! Chop, chop!" He saw some staggering over, a few with the tools to pry them out, but knew it would be a while before they could be pulled out and by them; the mix would now ruin and would have to start from scratch.

Yep, they certainly had their hands full while checking on the dark count's eventual establishment and seeing that things were going and dealing with the few bumps and thumps, mostly moans from the workers who were shambling themselves back together.

Dracula sighed to himself while rubbing his throbbing temple, thinking it was going to be one of those nights. Sometimes it was hard to find good help these days, especially for the minimum wages they were under oi vey.

The dark prince did not enjoy dealing with these small mishaps and was struggling not to unleash his wrath on them for the incompetence they were but reigning it in, knowing it wouldn't help his blood pressure. He turns his gaze away, looking out ahead from this very location and towards the broadacre of wooded terrain that kept his family saved for so many decades now.

The direction that Dracula was staring out at, sitting many miles away from the construction site and hidden within a sinister looking dark forest with snarling roots and whomping willows that liked to snag and tear at people that dared to trek too close to the territory. The path leading to it well hidden by the dense fog and travelers who dared not go near the place, there were rumors of strange beasts that lurked and the horrifying howls that gave way when one got so close.

If one were to continue to trek further in, they would come across a large manor that seems slightly spooky in the moonlight, though was currently occupied by beings that would likely scare the living daylights out of them. It was the temporary home for the Dracula family until the castle was up and running, yet none of them seemed at all bothered by this when they came to live there decades ago.

Inside one of the many rooms, on the second floor and was busy staring outside was a young woman who had a passive look on her face. She was very lovely with long, dark, wavy hair and bejeweled green eyes that would have made many men stare at her and could attract a few suitors if possible.
For someone who was almost a hundred and eighteen, she looks not a day over twenty in human years, yet Marian's patience had not changed in all that time. She was tapping her fingers against her forearms while trying not to snarl in frustration before she just gave in.

_Ugh, just what was taking them so long? They should've been here by now..._ Marian Dracula had to practically tear herself away once she realized that glaring out there wouldn't make the postal service come any faster.

"It's just got to show up sometime. I mean, it's gotta..." She was trying to remain positive but couldn't help feeling the anxiety and had every right to be so. She was trying to keep it together, but inside she was a bundle of nerves and ready to tear her hair out because of it.

There was a lot at stake for this, and all this suspense was driving her up the walls. Marian knew a lot had changed; not just here, but since she first stepped into that wondrous place where her best friend was and wondering how Mike was faring over there. It had been almost a full century since Marian had met her friend and made that fateful promise to him.

Time can certainly be a funny thing when one looks at it from a unique perspective and see things like no one else could. Day after day, year after year, the seasons changing while the world kept spinning with no end. Everything seemed to go by in a flurry, depending on the nature of Father Time's mood, whether quick like a hummingbird or at a snail's dragging pace. Everything was flowing like a timeless river or a grain of sand through an hourglass, seeing the changes coming about through some periodical inspiration or finding of some sort.

Take for example Monstropolis, the world in which only monsters resided, was more up and running than that of the mortals yet was slowly catching up, but creatures that thrived in the night or were of legend didn't seem to have a care of it. Their longevity as long as they weren't caught or put into a critical condition was one of the most important, avoiding human contact, they could go on living their lives without worries as such. Some managed well with the passing, but others preferred to hide from unsightly eyes just like her family and their comrades had over the last couple generations thus far.

She thought of what Uncle Murray once said, how time was like the Egyptian Nile: an endless river that always kept the past and presents flowing, never stopping for anything or anyone as it went for all eternity even in the afterlife and beyond. That and he said that nothing seemed to get time to go without some little bumps here and there, that much was true given certain circumstances.

She knew her dad, and his friends got together every now to talk of what was happening outside their hometowns, and while he didn't want her to listen in on such morbid conversation, she always managed to find the chance to sneak in and hear the stuff they were talking about behind closed doors. They all had heard or at least seen glimpses of what had been going down since after their time and having concern over what these changes had brought about, especially with the humans who were bringing them as such. Monsters knew the immediate dangers that came if a mortal were to learn of their existences and in all likelihood hunt them down and try to destroy as many of their kind as possible.

Monstropolis didn't have to worry as much, though had their standard procedures that kept everyone safe, given how Scarers had to risk themselves and their world to get screams by going back and forth through a child's door. It was a dangerous occupational hazard, yet Marian found since that moment with Mike and was hoping to take part in when that time comes. While on some smaller note, she did want to explore more of Mike's world as it seemed more upbeat and much more lively than this one; plus, the things he told her in the letters and what some of those things were seemed so bizarre and yet existed.
She reached inside her pocket and plucked out a slightly worn metal coin that felt warm inside her palm. She practically memorized the scratches and groove when she first laid hands on it. While in Mike's homeworld, it was only worth five cents, yet to her, it was a priceless treasure that she kept with her at all times. It was a precious memento of their ongoing friendship which had her looking back on that time at the factory which was short but ever so amazing. It truly opened her eyes and made her realize how much she wanted to be a part of it, to explore and see the sights and sounds that place had to offer with Mike there holding her hand.

Oh what an experience it was, and she couldn't wait to tell her folks of what happened once she and her grandfather returned to the castle after leaving Monster Inc. that fateful day.

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She saw her parents were waiting for them by the entry as soon as they got home, and Marian rushed straight towards the two with a broad grin on her face. They could tell she had enjoyed herself over on the other side and wanted to hear what went on over there. So Marian told them about everything she saw at the factory, of meeting Grandpa's friend Mr. Waternoose - the CEO, whatever that meant - and then how she made friends with another monster name Mike who was the sweetest guy she ever did meet...

Her mother had smiled and thought it adorable while Dad had a good chuckle, feeling the same himself. She couldn't stop chattering on and on about her whole experience there and somehow forgot about how much trouble they got into on the Scare floor. She let it slip that they went into a kid's room to watch a Scarer in action, which now she thought back to was not the best idea on telling them that, after witnessing the look on her father's face, realizing that she made an oopsie.

To say they were shocked would be an understatement, but saw it was her father who took it the worst. Hearing Dracula shout 'WHAT?!' so loud that the walls echo and then the way he was glowering over at his father told her this wasn't good. He was too busy yelling at Vlad while Martha took their daughter and led her out of the foyer, not wanting the child to be seeing the explosive argument that was about to go down between those two.

The Countess knew what Vlad did was inexcusable and her husband had just as every right to be upset by this as she was. However, the two male Tepes were known to have a heated temper, especially the given history of Vlad's past and her Dracula was no pushover either, so when it came to the male vampires, Martha was sure those two would come to blows and didn't want Marian anywhere near them to traumatize her. She only prays that they would take it outside and work their problems instead of in the room and cause a mess should it get heated. It was so hard to find furniture that was over two centuries old after the last carpenter created his final masterpiece.

But thankfully nothing happened, and nobody was hurt much to Martha's relief; nothing was destroyed and were using their inside voices, so all seemed good so far. Only Martha saw that Dracula was not letting Vlad off the hook so easily and tore into him for his reckless endangerment, and worst hadn't been planning on telling them about it. Martha had to side with her husband even when Vlad's excuse was that everything was under control and that Marian didn't get hurt.

"Marian is like you and me. She can very well handle herself. You can't seem to get the bigger picture, son!" But Dracula wasn't listening to him, only thinking of how so many things could've
gone down, but that was the worst in his mind: his daughter sneaking into another kid's room - what if she hadn't gotten out or got caught by the humans? What if she got trapped and they weren't able to bring her back! There were so many protocols at that factory, yet even if the chances were slim. He didn't like the odds that might've occurred.

Dracula was so furious with Vlad that he banned him from ever coming back to the castle or seeing his granddaughter ever again. When Marian came out of her room and learned of what her father did once Vlad left without saying goodbye to her and then more bad news came her way. She realized she wouldn't get the chance to go back to that other realm and worst: couldn't contact Mike with Gramps now banished from the grounds.

She couldn't believe why her father did this. How could Daddy be so cruel?! Marian had thought the whole thing unfair, although didn't have any say as dad decided she was to be "grounded" until otherwise and told she couldn't see this "Wazoski" kid again. Now that was the stake to the heart as she flew away screaming "I hate you, Daddy" while heading straight for her room. She made to fly up to the rafter and spend the whole night as a bat crying herself to sleep, wallowing in despair over the unfairness of it all.

Daddy knew absolutely nothing, and it wasn't all Mike's fault; she was much to blame for it, given she didn't stop Mike and was curious to see what was behind those doors like everyone else. Now she might never get the chance to hear from her friend. It was so unfair, why did papa have to be so heartless!

She had refused to come down from the ceiling even after the sun had set and only when her mother came to check on her, bringing her some breakfast and wanted to find why her baby bat was moping around. Marian, seeing the dish in her mom's hand was scramble eggs with spider legs and fried scorpion tails, one of her many favorites and having not eaten in a while, decided to come down and join her mother.

Martha knew Marian was a very precocious child who tended to let her emotions get the best of her soon found the reason why she was so angry; she was depressed over how she wasn't going to be able to make contact with her new friend thanks to Dad who kicked Grandpa out. She had made a promise to Mike, and now she was breaking it! She was on the verge of crying again, and Martha reached out to pull her daughter to her chest, rubbing her back and soothing her tears away, telling her everything would be all right.

Martha had been quiet the whole time, allowing her daughter to get it off her tiny chest before giving comfort when she needed it. She knew that her husband didn't mean to hurt Marian the way he did; he was merely concern for her wellbeing. Their Mina had no idea of the impending danger she could've been in, though seeing that she was more distraught because of the only friend she made belong in another world opposite theirs.

It was understandable, given their kind tended to live in seclusion from others, and Marian didn't have anyone her age around these parts. Martha had lived a similar existence and found it to be a lonely one with only the bats and other creatures of the night for company, but it was never enough.

She had vowed to make sure their Mina would never have to deal with such and would always support her in any way possible. Her daughter was as innocent as they come, and as much as she
wished she could allow her to visit that realm, the place that coexisted with other monsters with no fear of persecution or rejection by those that lived in this one. The way Marian had described it, it sounded like such a beautiful place, and sure would have loved to see it for herself just as their Mina had. Her husband Dracula had been there before once so long ago, and she never questioned his reasons for leaving yet knew he had them and chose not to go back there.

But sometimes his good intentions did more damage than what others perceived. It was a good thing Vlad had passed the small slip of parchment to her before he left, knowing that she would help her daughter in communicating with this Mike even though she had no idea where Monstropolis was other than her father-in-law. There was more information scrawled on the back: the address for a monster mailing station that wasn’t too far for them to travel or have someone get the post without being noticed by the suspicious villagers within the town.

Martha hated seeing her family fighting among themselves, knowing that to make amends, she would have to speak with her husband and have him fix this now.

Don’t get her wrong, she loved her Dracula, for all his flaws and such, but sometimes he could be just as pigheaded as his father could be, yet knew he never meant to do things to harm their daughter intentionally. But by talking to him, explaining how she had made a friend over there - a monster who was in a way like their little Mina and only looking for a companion - would it be so bad for them to have a connection on the other side?

Dracula had been on the fence as one half; he didn’t think it was a good idea while the other reminded him that it was his Marian, and Marian only wanted to contact that other little monster she met early today. Martha was sure she could make her husband come around even if the vampire could be as stubborn as any Tepes could be, but by reminding him what better than having a scare pal, she could talk to make her happy.

She understood how he was still a bit wary; they both were, but in the end, he came around which was a good thing and did give him back some father points once he talked to Marian about this. The little vampire beamed with a big fang smile and immediately hugged him, thanking her daddy over and over again before going to work on her first letter to her bestest best friend. Marian was hunched over the desk, scribbling down in her hand, though it wasn’t as cursive or as elegant like mother’s, was still readable and knew Mike was going to be thrilled once she sent it to him.

Once Marian finished the letter, she and her father went flying towards the location where the posting station was, seeing the monster carrier be given Mike’s address as well as theirs, so it was delivered straight to their home without fail. Then it was a waiting game, knowing Marian wanted to get a response soon though Dracula had to remind her of the time difference between both worlds, yet it did nothing to curb her excitement over wanting to hear from Mike ASAP. It took almost a week before the bat mail arrived, delivering the regular correspondences and such from their friends and distant family, but then Martha saw one written in crude handwriting and a unique stamp that she never saw before, but knew it was for Marian. She called her daughter over and passed the letter to her; it didn’t take long for their little Mina to answer who it was from when she squealed in joyous glee. "It's from Mike!!"

Marian couldn’t help herself as she rips it open and began reading its contents, the grin on her face speaking volumes with every word she saw on the paper and knew that it was contagious as they listened to her talking out loud to what her friend wrote back.
Marian was smiling as she remembered them all too well, thinking of every letter that was by Mike and her own in return with every passing moment that came before and after with each passing year. She had them all kept in a box but had to expand it once the component started taking too much room and having them all tied together by that same red ribbon she wore when she was a little girl. All those words composed on one parchment, every detail given by the one monster who practically knew her inside and out. She liked to reread some because she knew Mike loved to exaggerate but always made her smile nonetheless, imagining her friend as he did those sorts of things and how he wanted her to know them as well.

She almost wished she could've been there, envision going to school together and attending classes while hanging out as normal kids did over there. Mike said he kept busy by studying but also tried to make time by staying in contact with her, letting her know what had been going on in Monstropolis.

Other trinkets were in there: mostly birthday cards or something that seemed odd like a keychain, a watch with a strange face in it and some other silly stuff. But the one thing Mike seem to get her into was the SCARER trading cards and owning her own set thanks to him sending some with notes on the stats and details on each Scarer that he collected over the years. The last she checked, she only had like five hundred while Mike kept a lot more than she did with extras because he liked to keep them and went as far to design theirs and sending Marian hers which made her laugh at seeing a crude version of a vampire with fangs dripping blood and red eyes.

She memorized every single monster in her hand, even the Scarer they met as kids: Frank Mccay who gave them that encouragement to chase their dream. Marian though how much it would mean to Mike to get his autograph and was able to contact Mr. Watermouse, via through her grandfather when she did manage to get his address out of her father's office and send a letter to ask for his help. She knew the monster was a busy person, yet it never hurt to see if he could get him to sign it for her friend as a favor for her. The next week, she got the response but was surprised to find more than one signature for more than just Frank's card. Somehow, Gramps had taken the liberty to ask a few of his old scaring buddies to lend out a hand, those that retired yet their cards still worth a lot as many had worked hard to break the scare records in the past.

She and Mike were probably the only monsters to have such a variety in their decks, and when Marian read the long written "thank you" letter he sent after she delivered his birthday present along with two dolls, both made to look like herself and Mike with her mother's help sewing and making the toys look just like them.

Marian was glad that she had someone to talk with growing up, someone who could relate on a personal level and went to stare at the small frame sitting next to her family portrait. Seeing it wasn't a painting but was called a photograph when it came in the mail, regarding Mike's smiling face and holding up his diploma for her to see, knowing he graduated with honors. Having those two pictures side by side and thinking how Mom would have loved meeting Mike if she was still here, yet knowing that it would be impossible now after all this time.

Marian bowed her head, and a stray lock of silver fell over her brow. She reaches to push it back, feeling her heart clench while moving to touch the locket around her neck, finding herself lost in those memories of that horrific night when castle Lubov fell.
She could still remember the crackling of the burning blaze, the smell of the fabric and wood being on fire, the smoke choking her tiny lungs even as her mother told her to go and run, to take Mavis and find their father. Marian heard the shouting of the villagers out there and could imagine the anger and rage on their faces while holding pitchforks and burning torches in hand. She had no idea how they managed to escape, but she did, standing alone on the empty clearing, holding onto her crying baby sister while Dad went back inside to get Mother, but by the time he did, it was far too late…

A single fat tear was rolling down her cheek, followed by another as she recounted that moment in her head. Seeing her mother's lifeless body in Dad's arms, the distraught on his face, the way she was staring at her and knew their life was no longer to be the same after that.

It would be months after the sudden loss of both her mother and their family home that she fell into a state of depression. She couldn't eat nor sleep as she felt no need; even if she did, it wouldn't stop the gnawing pain that seemed to have settled itself inside her chest. She felt like someone had ripped her heart to pieces and wasn't able to be put it back together. The pain was so unbearable, knowing that she didn't know what else to do then, and neither did Dad as he tried his best, but he was also the same as her. When Vlad heard the news about it and realized how his son's family was, especially Marian, knowing the only way to help was through the one other monster to do so to bring her from that brink.

She had no idea how he managed to get him through, but knowing that the vampire had his ways and even when his son look surprised by his unexpected visit but saw the small green horned cyclops standing beside him. He put two and two together, and fortunately the count accepted as he allowed them inside, showing Mike where Marian's room was.

When Marian didn't respond to the knock, assuming it was her dad again trying to convince her to come and eat, but then was startled when she heard a different voice speaking. "Mina? Mina, it's me - Mike. Mike Wazowski." At first, there was no response, but then the door opened, and before Mike knew it, Marian pulled him in before throwing her arms around the tiny monster, crying while he stood and held her as he did.

Mike was just as shocked when Vlad, Marian's grandfather, had flown to Monstropolis in search of him before explaining his reason for coming. To say he was surprised by the news and worst how Marian must be, even though his mom was concerned yet gave consent as long as he promised to stay safe. Using that door that had allowed Marian and Vlad to go through all those years ago had taken him straight to the manor where his son was residing.

Mike had seen the swollen, bloodshot eyes and the way she looked so pale - well more pale than usual, knowing she needed his company more than ever. The smaller monster told her how he was sorry for her loss and that he wished that things hadn't gone down as they did, but reminding her that he was there for her, no matter what and just giving her the comfort she needed by his presence alone. Knowing he was here and that he was allowed to stay for only one night thanks to both her father and his folks, having his company bring her around after that.

Marian was able to dry her tears and show Mike around the house, even if it wasn't as lavish or held as much history as the castle did from previous letters, but Mike didn't seem to mind at all. He was just in awe, knowing that his friend Marian had been living in the human world and so far didn't seem to have much trouble though with that small exception of going from one home to another. The green cyclops was enjoying being in Marian's company and even got to meet her sister for the first time, who took one look at him and started crying. Mavis was a lot like her as a baby when it came to strangers, but Mike tried something by making a scary face, only it made the vampire giggle and laugh at the silly looks he gave her. Mike, seeing this work, continued to do such and hearing the infant making more noise gained the attention of Dracula who saw both daughters in the presence of
the little green monster who was causing the ruckus for them.

Marian found she also couldn't help smiling then when he stuck around for dinner, having him sleep in one of the guestrooms that were right across from hers. She would always be grateful for both her grandfather and Mike who came to help her, and even when he left, she thought of their promise and knew what she wanted to do then.

She was more than determined to get in and knew that she had her hands full what with helping Dad raise Mavis while practicing her scaring techniques when possible. She saw her father's friends who came by to see how they were and found Marian coming out of her shell and returning to herself again.

While the castle and all their prize possession were long gone, Dad thankfully managed to find them a place to stay and didn't have to worry so much. The manor and grounds became their solemn sanctuary from the outsiders that would dare to do more harm to them, and Dracula wanted to keep his daughters safe. Mavis had only been an infant when it happened, but Marian made a vow to tell her sister all about their wonderful mother even if she wasn't able to comprehend it, but she sang the lullabies and made food only Mother made that she was able to remember best. But still, when she had her own free time to spare, she poured over the remaining books or working hard to master her vampire power as they began to show once she reached maturity.

Dracula never did reconcile with Gramps or allowed him to see his second granddaughter, but Marian still made correspondence with him when she had the opportunity. She used the same post office to deliver mail and Vlad send some of his previous subscriptions 'Scarer's Life' forward her way. They each had insight information on past and present Scarers and what they or how scaring was with helpful tips and such. Even her aunt Lydia who, while she rarely came to see her brother but heard of Marian's plans to attend the same school that the family had, mainly her desire to become a Scarer which was another bonus was nothing that pleased her more to hear her niece was planning on frightening children as a career goal.

She decided to lend her assistance on the matter knowing Marian was going to need it to get in. She kept some of her old scare texts from high school as well as past notes she wrote down to pass the M-SAT.

Sure, they might have been outdated, centuries even beyond that but the material seems to somewhat match up with the one from Mike's own and knowing it was informative and taking every bit of grain of knowledge in hand. She worked hard to fill out the prerequisite papers, quizzing herself on all she needed if she wanted to get into the university of her dreams. She knew Mike was working hard to get in, and sure he'd pass and promise to get in herself as well, even if dad probably wouldn't like her to go, but it was too late.

With Aunt Lydia's help, Marian managed to take the prerequisite M-SATs with an examiner visiting from Monstropolis to test her at her aunt's estate. Aunt Lydia made the rational excuse to her father saying it was to help Marian with practicing her proper ladies etiquette, being the eldest of the two daughters and see that she learn them to fulfill her later role in life.

Course dad had no idea she already did those and going to her place to take a seat in the empty living room and when the examiner looked at his watch and told her to start. Marian nearly tore the pamphlet in her enthusiasm to get it open, but she began to look over the questions, bubbling in and answering them to the best of her knowledge. It would seem like ages before the examiner indicates that time was up and hand him her papers. Marian knew it would be a while until the results were in and that she'd be notified afterward, whether to inform her she passed or not.

That had been a few weeks back, and now all the suspense was killing her. She was hoping that she
did good on them, Marian had studied long and hard for that exam, and sure she got a passing grade which should be able to let her in. Gramp's last letter said that if she was concern about enrolling at MU, he could talk with the dean and see if she can't consider her into the program as a favor to him yet she didn't want to go down that road. Though more than half the Lubov-Dracula family wealth advanced into the making of this hotel and the rest for other essentials and that it would take many years to replenish itself back to the vast fortune. Marian didn't want to get in by such means. No, she would get in by her merit and knowing Mike having done the same as she and wanted to be alongside him when they got to the school.

She knew dad would not be overly thrilled by this, but his friends, on the other hand, weren't against it, in fact, they actively encourage her, saying that she had what it takes and knowing they would be proud of her whether she pass or fail the exams. She was grateful for them, especially Eunice and Wanda, Frank's and Wayne's significant others and finding they help fill the role for Marian when she needed assistance in raising Mavis while she was busy studying. She loved that everyone was supportive of her decision and it was at the end of October and was waiting with bated breath and wondering whether she got in or not.

"Okay, I'm sure it's on the way, no need to be worrying about it. Just got to be calm about this..." High above in the rafter sitting in a makeshift perch, three bats were watching as Marian was pacing up and down, seeing her move from one spot of the ceiling to the other. The three were seeing their mistress in a tizzy and understood the reason why to her making a hole in the rug with all her pacing.

Bach who was the largest of the trio with massive wings, bright golden fur downward that had a bit of red tint to his pelt and had a passing resemblance to a certain canine species and saw to be 'flying foxes.' He could make out some of the words Marian said and sending a look to Grieg and Chai who also seem to pick it up.

Grieg while not as big as Bach but nowhere as tiny as Chai in the size and wingspan category. He had light brown fur with much darker color wings, substantially pointed ears, and a long dog-like muzzle. Grieg was good at tracking stuff and wanted to make mistress happy as the words 'mail' was repeated often and knew what they look like from previous ones they seen over time. He flew straight for the open window and went in search of those who were supposedly carrying these.

Now the last of the bunch was the smallest and look more like a puffball than a bat itself, being about the size of a tiny mouse with white-grayish fur, big yellow ears and a nose in a shape of a leaf. The little bat's name was Tchaikovsky, but Marian call him Chai which he didn't mind as he got the most cuddle out of the lot and made their mistress feel better when she was upset or stressed out.

Chai went to do just that, fluttering down from the ceiling and making himself perch on her shoulder. He proceeds to rub his tiny body against her cheek, making his cute little squeaks to get her attention. That did the trick and Marian immediately reach out to stroke him, finding his presence soothing while she went to sit on the vanity.

"Sorry you guys I'm just a bit nervous about whether I got in or not, you know how much I want to go and see Mike again after all this time." She knew he got in, no doubt given how well he did with his previous tests and sure that he got his in the mail while hers would take longer to get through customs and such.

Her familiar chirp and seeing Bach also flapping over and set himself to sit in her lap and allowing his mistress to stroke his back while he got comfortable. Grieg return, having seen no sight of the 'mailman' and saw where his brothers were and went to join as he took the remaining vacant shoulder available. The vampire was turning to give her full on attention to them, finding herself being distracted by these guys.
It was nice to have a fleeting moment without thinking of the situation as she stroke all three of her familiars. She admits it was a bit frustrating, the whole waiting around when she could zip straight to the post office and back, but dad left to check the ongoing construction and someone had to watch Mavis. She didn't trust the zombie nannies as they sometimes didn't have the limbs or energy to watch over someone as spirited like her little sister.

Then her thoughts turn to what will happen when she does leaves, will Mavis be okay without her around? Dad would be able to keep tabs on her but still...Maybe but then Marian wonders if a small part of her wasn't hoping that she didn't pass at all even though she assume she did well enough on the practical…

Suddenly there was the sound of something galloping and heading in this very direction. Marian and her bats rush towards the window and saw the horseman but with a jack-o-lantern for a head and riding on a black steed straight for the manor. She notices there was a bulging satchel on his saddle and knowing that he was one of those who delivered the mail around these parts. Marian didn't have to think twice as she jumps out and landing like a cat on her feet before running to the rider who slow his horse, seeing her approaching.

"Hello madam, I have a letter here for a Miss Marian Dracul-" The pumpkin was saying this as he was held in one hand while the other was holding a long slim manila envelope which Grieg immediately swoop in and grab before he could finish asking. The startled rider almost drops his head but thankfully hadn't while the bat hand it to her as she said, "Yeah that's me, I'm Marian Dracul." She then reaches inside her pocket and pulled out three silver coins to pay him for his service.

"Thanks, you are the best!" The horseman adjust his head back on and smile at the vampire, "Anytime ma'am now I'm must be off, MWHAHAAAAHAAAAH!"

Marian watched the rider pull the reins hard, making the horse cry out before the two took leave, probably off to deliver more mail as well to scare some other poor soul along the way. But then turning to the item in hand and decided to go up to her room to see what it contained. She looks to her three bats sitting on her shoulders, and looking to the envelope in her hand, "Okay the moment of truth you guys…"

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Dracula was talking to Clyde after seeing how the underground passageway was and that he was about to mention that the tunnels lead to different locations for easier access for monsters needed expansion when he heard a banshee-like shriek that could wake the dead if they weren't already up and slugging about the worksite.

"What the-oh no Mavis! Marian!" Dracula transforms and immediately flew off towards the manor, "Don't worry girls I'm a-coming!" He took off like a lightning bolt, the bat flying with much speed and velocity back to the house, wondering what has happened.

Did a human manage to find their way there, no impossible but then why did Mina scream-

But as soon as he got to the manor, he began to search for his girls before finding them in Marian's room, Mavis also there who seem to be enjoying the action of her sister.

"I got in I got in!" Marian was semi-transforming while doing somersaults and twists while hollering loud with pure joy. Mavis was only sixty-three and didn't seem to understand why her sister was doing this yet was laughing and clapping her hands together, watching Marian and her crazy antics with her bat trio also joining in on the fun.
Dracula, however, was confused, wondering what was going on before gaining everyone's attention onto him as he spoke out loud, "What's going on here, I heard you scream Mina, just what happened!" He saw his eldest settling herself down but kept on grinning that fanged smile before she manages to blurt out, "I did it, daddy, I got my letter!"

"Ohhh that's nice, what did Mike say to you this time, wanted to talk to you about those new-fangled 'Scarephones' or whatever it is they call them nowadays, I mean I do not get what all the fuss is about?"

He never seems to get that while things move differently here, Monstropolis kept on pushing ahead and he had a hard time keeping up with their newfound stuff coming out of the wazoo.

"No dad that's not from Mike it's my…" Marian suddenly realizes that she was about to tell him what she did and though she had considered the many ways to break it to him but knowing it was already too late to come up with an alternative plan now he was here. Maybe it was best to get it done and over with, like ripping a fresh scab off, should be no sweat.

She took a deep breath and said while looking at him, "Dad this is my acceptance letter, I got into Monster University."

"What-" He wasn't sure if he heard right but seeing the letter in her hand and reaching to pluck it out of her grasp and taking a look for himself. He saw the logo of that school but then reading down, seeing it said that Marian had a high S-GPA and finding his daughter had enrolled in the Scaring program. After he read this, his first reaction had been to tear that letter, but suddenly Bach swoops to take it before he could do just that and hand it back to his mistress.

"Mina how could you, just what are you thinking?! The Scaring Program why would you, of all things, why would you want to go and do such! It's because of that Mike isn't it, you shouldn't be doing this over some monster, you're throwing it all away if that's where you're heading!"

Marian took the letter from Bach but then hearing what her father said and turn to him, her eyes glowing and snarl back, "I'm not throwing my life away, and Mike's my friend, he and I are both in the program, and nothing you can say can change that. Fact is I'm a hundred and eighteen, and that means I can make my own decisions on what I want and what I do and that's this! You can't keep me here for the rest of my unholy life like some prisoner!"

Dracula was ready to argue that he was her father and she had to do as he said but then someone else had to interrupt the conversation and announced their presence to the group.

"Yes, you really can't keep your daughter lock away forever behind these flimsy walls unless you know how to bolt doors and windows that would withstand against a vampire and honestly brother you are such a worrywart. Mina isn't a child anymore; she is a full-fledged adult, so really you shouldn't be babying the poor girl."

The two vampires turn and saw standing by the open window was a slender middle-aged woman that looks to be around the same as Dracula but much older than him by a few centuries no less. It was Lydia, Dracula's older sister and Marian's and Mavis's aunt who usually came by to visit them on certain holidays and such.

She was in her standard attire of a Victorian violet ebony gown with a matching cape thrown over her shoulders and a pair of dangling earrings on her pointy lobes. Her hair was in an odd updo that looks like something Mike once show in one of his photos, an ice cream swirl but instead of the chocolate, there was violet mix in with the white and held in place by a pair of horns to keep its style. Like the rest of them, her skin was pale but wore heavy makeup over her eyes and lips and had her
nails done all in black. However, the only difference for her and their family was she had an overbite where her fangs stuck out at the bottom instead of the top. It was a rare defect when she had been in the womb, but she was a Tepes and a former Scarer from Monster Inc, so none dare to make fun of her otherwise they'd come to regret it later on for the rest of their eternal lives.

Dracula was scowling as he saw her and demand to know why she was here, "Lydia what are you doing here..." Oh, this was just what he needed, he nearly snarls as he saw the sight of his older sister strolling in without so much as taking the time to wipe her feet before she waltzes in like she owns the place.

He wasn't expecting her to visit, so he had no idea why she was here in the first place. Marian, however, had a feeling she knew why and wouldn't be long before more fireworks went underway for her dad.

Lydia said nothing as she came in, holding her staff in her right hand and everyone saw sitting on top of it was her familiar Diana who of all things was a chicken. No one dares to question it even though Marian thought it odd for a vampire to have something that's usually served as food to be her aunt's pet. Though then again her grandfather had many bat-like minions and from what she found out were not something to be around as they tend to be quite vicious and only listen to Vlad and no one else.

Lydia just buff her hand against her blouse and staring at her nails, not in any hurry to answer her brother before finally speaking in a bored tone, "Well I was just in the neighborhood and thought I drop by for a spell, you know to catch up with the usual and found out how the family is and all? I mean really can't your big sister come and see the wellbeing of her nieces while you take your sweet time managing that pet project of yours? Honestly, you wound me on such matters, is that any way to pay respect to your own family."

That wasn't the real reason she was here, but it was somewhat true, yet Dracula didn't have to know the whole truth. She saw the letter in Marian's hand and looking to her niece with a hand stretch out, waiting for her to pass it to her. Marian knew that this was going to give away the whole thing but seeing how Aunt Lydia had helped her get this far and hand it to her.

Lydia took her time looking it over, Diana clucking in the background as she too read what it said before finally, the vampire spoke with a wide grin on her face, "Oh my, my dear Marian, this is wonderful news I'm so very proud of you." She went to go give her niece a show of affection by putting her hands on her shoulders, "Why I knew you had it in you when you ask for my help and seeing you taken it upon yourself to uphold the Tepes family legacy. There was no doubt in my mind that you would get in and now are on your first step towards becoming a Scarer. I must say when I got to see the grades and also having read what your tutors said, you dear Mina have the gift of scaring, it was always in your blood."

"You-you had a hand in all this!" Dracula finding it had been her doing and knew that had to be how his eldest manage to get accepted as he wouldn't have so she turn to someone else to do so.

Lydia didn't say, but she wasn't going to deny her involvement on the matter. "Oh, brother surely you didn't think I would let you go and squander our little Mina's talent. Honestly, her scare scores were all straight A's and even the examiner was well impressed by how well-versed she was in answering the 'best-scaring methods of the 13th century' and got a better grade than most would on the exams. You have to understand she shouldn't be hovel up behind four walls, why she should be using that to terrify those little-wretched heathens!"

She dislikes humans with a sheer passion and knowing that he felt the same himself after what they did to his wife but still wasn't wholly convince, and Lydia knew she was going to have to hardball it.
to get him to come around. "You have to understand that it's in her very nature to scare and if you want my honest opinion, she'd be a lot safer there than it is here for her."

"Yeah dad I mean if you take a look at this, you'll see." She had the pamphlets that Mike sent earlier and pass them to her father who took them off her hands and looking at them. He hates to admit, but it seems that it looked much different now and given that there would be a lot of monsters but- "No I can't I refuse to allow this!"

"Well too bad brother dear, she's already signed up for this year's semester, and there's nothing you can do to stop it. Her admission was well taken care of, and even if you don't want to, I'm seeing my niece is given the best education money can provide so unless you want to try and chain your daughter up like some animal-"

Marian could see this was not going as well as she'd hope, the two Tepes snarling and arguing with her being here as well as her sister. She hates having this happen but given that dad was not seeing the big picture and Aunt Lydia seem to be the only one being supportive to her cause.

She sighs inwardly, knowing this was going to take a while and decide she best leave, taking Mavis with her as she was still too young to understand what's going on. But knowing if she was ever going to have any chance of attending MU, she would have to let Aunt Lydia do the talking and get her dad around. While they continue to converse, or in more her dad's case bicker, Marian picked up her baby sister and carried her to the living room. She made sure the door was sealed closed, and neither could hear the shouting through the mahogany frame before taking a seat on the floor with Mavis and her familiars.

"Big sis, what's going on, why is daddy mad?" Marian turn her focus on her and trying to think of what to say for her to understand.

"He's not mad, he's just...upset at me, for what I'm planning on doing." She didn't know how Mavis will react to this news, knowing Dad it was as simple given his worrisome attitude over letting her leave to another world. But Mavis, she was young, and yet Marian wanted to make her happy, but she also wanted to be with Mike and see more of the world.

"You remember what I told you about my friend, the one you met as a baby. Well, Mike and I had made a promise about going to this exceptional school that he's planning on attending after high school." Mavis nodded although she had little understanding why a school had to be high when there was no low for it, and even Marian thought it strange too until Mike took the opportunity to explain it better later on the definition of it.

"Well, that letter was my getting accepted into that very same school. I'm going to be attending classes with Mike, and once we graduated, we're going to be working at this company together, but first, we have to learn how to be scary."

"Does this mean you'll be gone forever then?" Marian stare into her sister's big blue eyes that were starting to water and lower lip quivering at the thought of never seeing her again. She quickly shook her head, "Oh no Mavy, you're stuck with me for life, but I'll be back when the school lets out during semesters, also we have what are called holiday breaks that allow us time off so I can come home and see you guys. Course I wouldn't mind having you swing by campus now and then and showing off who's the cutest monster there is!"

"I'm not cute; I'm scary RAWH!" Marian smiled as she tweaked her sister on the nose, making the small vampire giggle. "Yes you are scary, but I know even the scariest monsters have a weak spot and it's right here!" She reaches to tickle her tummy, making Mavis laugh out loud and then as she hurried to escape her wiggling clutches with Marian giving chase.
"You can run but can't hide forever!" Marian yelled as she went after her, promising to tickle her to death once she gets her hands on her again.

Her bats also join the frenzy and seeing that the two sisters were enjoying the moment before Dracula found them. He watches them from the sideline and realizing how much his Marian wasn't so little anymore. His sister wasn't one to beat about the bush as she let him know it won't matter what he does or say, Marian had her heart set on going and would do so, with or without his consent if necessary. He hates that she was right even though she had her reason for allowing Marian to go through but there was one he trust their judgment above all else.

He sighed to himself thinking how if Martha were here, she'd tell him to let her go, let her enjoy it and while he was reluctant, he remembered how much this meant to Marian and sigh to himself. I hope I don't come to regret this.

"Mina sweetie," Marian turn away from her game and saw their father coming over to them, "I have thought long and hard, and finally I decided that yes you may go but only if you promise to be safe and-." He didn't get to finish as he found himself being plummeted by his daughter who had changed back and now her full weight was sitting on top of him. Normally he would not have let himself like this but having Marian who was hugging and thanking him for doing this, "Dad I swear you won't come to regret it I promise. Besides I have Bach, Grieg and Chai and Mike will be there too and won't cause any problems while I'm there."

"I know, but sometimes we dad's have a right to worry, but you are right as you are now all grown and deserve a chance to spread her wings. I will support you in any way but know we love you oh so much."

"Yes and I will come back on every holiday break and when school is over, oh dad you are the best!" This cause a titter as Mavis decided to join in as she jumps on them and Dracula laughing as he hugs both his girls and thinking that this would be fine.

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With Dracula coming around but found out that her admission wasn't for another week which he decides to hold a party for both her and the near completion of the hotel itself. The count had sent word to his friends who immediately came straight over to the manor and were showing their enthusiasm and given their congratulation to Marian. Not only did they show up but they decided to invite a few others to join in and hearing that it was to celebrating her entry into Monster University and knowing a few had heard about it as well.

"Oh, that's great honey! Whoa, congrats girl knew you had it in you! Yeah, you were sure to ace those exams. Man, I bet that you got into the top ten with your scores..." Everyone was enjoying themselves as the party was light yet festive, seeing this occasion was for Marian and Dracula wanted this to be a grand bon voyage for her before the big day. He saw them all gather around Marian, talking her and saying how proud they were and knowing she was bound to do great things on campus. He saw Frank's wife as well as Wayne's over there discussing something but Griffin was asking him a question and turning his focus onto him. If he had paid more attention to what those girls were saying, he might have changed his mind about Marian attending MU.

"So remember that just because you're supposed to be in class and such, it doesn't mean you shouldn't go and have some fun sweetie, especially for one your age who should look into finding herself a nice slice of beefcake for yourself. I mean there's bound to be plenty of handsome young monsters over there, all ripe for the picking."

Eunice waved her long fingernails while she and Wanda were talking to Marian who was listening
when the two came to offer her some friendly advice. Now Marian wish she had to reconsider Eunice's offer, telling her about how to scope for the best catch over there.

"'Sides it never hurts to go for the ones that got the whole package deal, but if you find someone that is emm...somewhat close, you make sure you grab it by the horns before they get snatched up. Trust me, honey, you don't want to go with the short handouts while the good ones are all taken. I have a checklist in here somewhere that should help you, now, where did I put that thing?"

She was rummaging around inside her purse, scattering a few items here and there and Marian decide to say something as she didn't want to see what Eunice had deducted on what she should consider a possible candidate for Mina herself.

If dad were to see it, he might freak and reconsider letting her go. Finally, Eunice found what she was looking for which surprising was three pages long, and Marian hurried to put it away, making a mental note to put it somewhere, probably say in the bottomless pit perhaps but giving it to Bach to place in her room for safekeeping.

"Ah thanks, Aunt Eunice I'll keep that in mind and be sure to look that over, but we'll see what happens and maybe see if we zing or not." She hadn't put much consideration into that department, knowing that was at the low totem of her checklist. Also, she secretly wanted what mom and dad had and if she did came across that monster who'd be her zing but for now she'll focus on her other priorities.

Wanda must have sensed her ongoing discomfort and decide a change of subject was in order. The motherly werewolf and her husband were going through their lunar cycle and planning on having themselves a litter, but it didn't mean lack of trying as they've been going at it all night and hope to get lucky before they leave. In a way, she saw Marian and Mavis as their pups and knew that if she ever met the one who was the zing but she thought Marian should at least live her life and not by anyone else's recommendations.

"You know there's no need to go rushing into those things; you should also try and make the most while keeping up with your studies and also make friends too. It's important to stay on top of your work; nothing venture nothing gain but try not to stress yourself as you don't want to burn out too fast."

"Yeah trust me even I get worn out way before the moon is even full while I was in school back in my days, I was always gone dog tired if I never catch enough zzzs and had to rough it out." Wayne had joined the conversation as he heard what they were talking about and had to add his own two cents to it, Frank and Murray also joining the pair. "Yeah, it can be a real drag sometimes, and school can make you feel like you lost your marbles, trust me I've been there and had a difficult time finding my brain."

"Yeah usually it was either in someone's lunch or the biology lab, you did seem to do that a lot although your grades were way worse than mine which I find ironic considering what you are."

Marian was relief that everyone was being so understanding and feeling less nervous as she listens to them talk about their past school times to her. It was great of them to be really doing this and thank them for all their help, "Yeah I'll try not to stress out and don't worry I plan to do my best there and I know Mike will also be helping me out in that department, I doubt we'll run into any problems there."

They all knew about her friend and the close bond they shared as kids and through their letters. While they may not have met the little guy in person but knew that the monster had made a special place in her heart and hoped he would make sure that Marian was well taken care of while over
there.

"He sounds like a very interesting fella, the way you seem to go on about him, course I imagine that you two get along like two eyeballs in a skull."

"True it would be nice to meet your little buddy, gotta ask where he got those cool shades that make the sun not so blinding, they're really out of sight!" Murray was talking about the pair that Marian purchase after she asks Mike to order her a set and given there was a special discount to buy more than one at a reasonable price and got some for each of her dad's friends.

"Yes I wish he could come and visit more but maybe once the hotel is up and running, we can see if we can't have him come here for a spell, I'm sure you guys would love him. Mavis here only met him once, but sure she'd like to see him again."

Speaking of her sister, she saw her running straight over, wearing a black dress with stripe stocking on her tiny feet but had a big smile on her small face. She looks to be in a rush as she came over to the group and everyone saw she was holding something behind her back before holding it out in front of Marian.

"This is for you big sis! I wrapped it up all by myself" Indeed she had as Marian noted it was all wadded and repeatedly tied up to keep whatever it was from showing her gift to her. Marian knew it was her first attempt at this, but it was the thought that count and went to undo the crude wrapping and saw what was in there.

Oh...Fresh tears sprang to her eyes as she looks to the item that was before her but refuses to let them fall, given that would make Mavis think she upset her. She looked into those sparkling big blue eyes and smiled at her, "Oh Mavy this is wonderful."

It was a small ornate portrait of all three of them; dad with Marian and Mavis as a baby and seeing the small painting was done weeks before the castle had gone up in flames. Mom had wanted this commission for Drac and his two special little ladies in his life. The other portrait had been in the works but never got around to being finished. She figured that the other had been placed somewhere safe, probably inside storage but Mavis had found it and decided to give it to her.

"I want you to keep so you'll always remember us..."

"Oh honeybat how could I ever forget about you, I'd go batty not to think of you, you're my Mavy-wavy always!" She embraces her and then seeing Dracula coming over, a smile on his face and watching them before he decides it was time for an extraordinary announcement.

He clinks his flute glass, grasping everyone's attention to their host. "Now as you know today is very special as tonight we are celebrating because our little Marian has now decided to be a college student. She who I have heard from a few reliable sources has made quite the quota in the and sure that she will be making waves when she's over at MU." Marian felt everyone's eyes on her and had the good decency to blush, "Ah it was nothing I only wanted to make sure I did my best, and I did have a lot of good teachers, and also dad did show off a roar or some before."

"Yes yes well a father can't help but fret over his children, especially their daughters. I mean it feels like only yesterday I was holding you in my arms and hearing you call me 'dada,' but now here I am seeing one you go off to college and sure will be the best monster of them all while at MU. Your mother would be so proud of you my little mouse and knowing she is watching you from above is very much smiling now as we speak."

"Dad!" She hates when he got all sentimental and felt like she was about to start crying. She was
able to hold it in though thought the gesture was sweet and beautiful nonetheless. Dracula wasn't faring any better because he was staring at his Mina who was now no longer a small baby bat but now had grew and was ready to spread her wings and fly away.

Dracula then turns to one of the zombie waiters who came over, carrying a silver platter but on it a small jewelry box. "Here we had this made especially for you." He lifts the lid up, and Marian saw it was a charm bracelet, it had a piece that represents each monster in her life. From the two gold bats, dad and Mavis to the two howling wolves, a pair of glasses, a scarab beetle then Frank's and Eunice's neck bolts dip in gold.

"Oh, you guys I love it!" She allowed her father to slip it on and fastened securely on her wrist. She went to hug her dad, hearing the 'aww' in everyone and then bending down to pick up Mavis and holding her as well, knowing she was going to miss her family very much. "I love you guys so much."

"We do too, just know if you ever are in trouble, I'll be there to come and get you, crosses and stakes to my heart." Then he strode over to the makeshift stage where a group of skeleton mariachis stood who had been playing but became silent as Dracula took to join them. With a flick of his hand, his ukulele came over and then looking at her, "This song I had written and wanted you to always think of us even while away." He strums the string and getting it to sound just right before he and the band began to play.

"Remember me

Though I have to say goodbye

Remember me

Don't let it make you cry

For even if I'm far away

I hold you in my heart

I sing a secret song to you

Each night we are apart

Remember me

Though I have to travel far

Remember me

Each time you hear a sad guitar

Know that I'm with you

The only way that I can be

Until you're in my arms again
This time Marian couldn't hold it in and neither could everyone else around her. She saw Griffin by Murray and saw the mummy pass a piece of his bandage to the invisible man who blew into it loudly. Wanda and Eunice also had given a handkerchief to anyone in need, Frank who had to blow but accidentally blew his head off and landing in a punch bowl, crying and drinking the stuff in all at once. There was not a dry eye in the house and even saw a couple of zombies lose theirs as the water made it difficult to keep it inside the sockets.

With Dracula finish his song and turning to the band to play something more lively before he went to join his daughter and looking to Marian with tears in his eyes. "Mina that song was so you always remember, and I want you to take this with you. Your mother gave this to me right before we married but now I want you to hold onto this."

She was surprised yet touch by him giving her his prize instrument. She thought of all the songs he plays with this tiny guitar and then seeing as she turned it in her hands and written on the back, 'Follow your heart.' Cursive words etch in with two tiny bats making a heart and knew that was of her parents when they zing and recognize her mother's hand and knew this was very sentimental not to Drac but her as well.

She lifted her head and smiled at her father, "Thanks dad, I promise to cherish this always."

The party continued and wasn't until it was near sunrise that they all called it a day. There were a few that stay in the manor while the rest had left to head for home much earlier. Marian return to her room while dad put a tuckered out Mavis to bed, finding that Mavis had tried to stay awake like all the other grown-ups but was half asleep by a quarter to six. Marian was shutting the door and then making her way to her own, not ready for sleep yet but seeing that her things were still half out and knowing she better get that all packed up before the big day after tomorrow.

Bach lending his assistance with Grieg supervising and Chai sitting on Marian's head. She was stashing her clothes and other stuff in and seeing that the more essential items, like the portrait and guitar, were the last stuff in her suitcase. She didn't want them to be damaged and saw to them being wrapped securely and then place in with the rest. The last one to join was the photo of Mike and smiling at his face in the picture.

Marian was thinking of how exciting it will be to see Mike and the stuff they would be doing once on campus. Once everything was settled and went to lay down, the last thought going through her head and putting a smile onto her face was this: Look out MU, cause here I come!
Welcome to MU and Meeting Roomies

Chapter Summary

Marian has arrive on campus and meeting her roommate which is a shocker to be.

Chapter Notes

Hey gang I'm still alive and kicking but trying to stay up and running, I know that there's been some readers but want to know what you guys think but not to put any pressure on any of you but hope you are all enjoying this piece as much as I have working on it. Please read and review.

Disclaimer: Kyukitsune does not own Pixar or Sony Animation, just the OCs and well you get the drift :D

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When Marian rose that evening after the sun finally went down, she knew today was the big day. The day when she would be making her dreams a reality. Time to get a move on then! She tossed the duvet covers to the side and went to use the bathroom while her bats who also were stirring went to lend their assistance by getting her things set out which would be easier to get once she finished getting clean up. Marian allowed the heated water to fill the tub to the brim before grabbing the shampoo and bar of soap to wash herself, wanting to look her best when she head over.

Today was going to be her very first step into a whole new life for her. She had been preparing for this big moment since, but it was hard to keep from bursting out in giggles thinking of how exciting yet overall nerve-wracking at the same time. She had done extensive research on what it would be like on campus, learning some of the lingo and what were the norms so she didn't go acting like an idiot around company and not know what such and such was. It would be so embarrassing not to mention feeling like such a total idiot if she somehow said something offensive or worse.

Plus it would be an absolute nightmare if I come to the school looking like I just came from my great-great-great grandmother's funeral. She had learned that between the two timelines and this century's fashion were considered somewhat outdated to the more modern and chic in the other realm. Marian knew if she went there in her drab attire, it would have made her stuck out like a sore thumb and probably be looked on as a weirdo or something. Thankfully Mike was able to lend her his assistance, getting her a few fashion catalogs mailed along with their usual corresponding letters, using the mail order service and filling in all the details about her size, measurement, cup and bust as well as what style to go for before sending it out through the same mailing system as before.

It had been a very expensive purchase, with all the shipping and care that was charged, but Marian had some money saved up from previous birthdays and holidays that Grandpa Vlad and Aunt Lydia contributed and then Dracula giving her and Mavis an annual allowance that over the past few decades had made up a tidy fortune for herself, using that to make the necessary purchases.
Of course, she did make plans to find and locate the nearest currency exchange station as mentioned by her aunt; the importance of it as the money used was much different compared to here and knowing some places couldn't just make exact change with a lump of gold if you wanted to buy a cup of coffee or whatever caught her eye there as she did find herself keenly interest in some of those "electronics" Mike mentioned in his past letters and thought getting a phone in case she wanted to contact her family would be great, especially if it was one of those handheld and could take with her everywhere. Marian knew she was going to be having a lot to deal with, but at the moment, she thought about how she wanted to look presentable to the rest of her future classmate, and wanted to fit in by looking like she was like the rest of them.

Classmates - she was going to be surrounded by other monsters her age; this was so exciting! It left her absolutely giddy as she finally finished her bath, waving her hand to have it drain while drying herself off but left her hair damp and in a loose bun at the moment. She went to go grab the green bottle containing the potion which was supposed to be helpful in keeping her skin from burning, and was strongly recommended she put it on every morning before go out.

"Just because the sunlight there is not as extremely harmful as the one over here, doesn't mean you can't keep from letting your skin become ghastly by looking like some leathery carpetbag and ruin your fair complexion." Aunt Lydia's words while telling her she had one of her former colleagues, a witch in the business of brewing potions and poisons, place a order under her name and would be delivered on a weekly bases to her campus. Her dad was also on that same page, thinking how he didn't want her to come home looking like she was boiled alive after being gone, but Marian made sure to promise him that she would wear the stuff even on days when she didn't go out in the daytime.

The young vampire would keep her word to those two, but her thoughts on the matter left a sense of euphoria as she realized that she, Marian, would be spending all her time out in the open, basking in the bright morning light, watching the actual rise of the sun for the first time in her entire life. Mike talked about how kids their age liked to go to the "beaches" where people got to run about and play in the water and sand with the sun shining down. Hence why she also placed a few swimsuits in case of that and couldn't wait to do such once she got over there. It was all too surreal to imagine that would've been entirely impossible for her kind. But now she was being given this wonderful opportunity and would make absolutely sure not to go and waste it.

Marian took a quick glance at the small clock on the wall, seeing there was still a few hours to spare, but she wanted to get everything done before she left. She exited the bathroom and went to go change into the clothes she set aside, slipping on a red top that was off-the-shoulder with long sleeves that were left wide at the end, gave space to her wrists and left a bit of skin around her stomach. She also pulled on a pair of dark trouser that clung to her calves and hips, and had rips at the knees. From what she was told, it was a very fashionable statement to be torn or had the seams fraying instead of fixing or chucking them when they couldn't be patched.

Such an unusual look, but then fashion seemed to be always changing given the past decades that came and went but one thing she was grateful was there was no need for corsets; those were the worst, and good thing she wasn't living, otherwise she wouldn't be able to breathe in that thing.

It was all so confusing; wonder how monsters could like that, though still had a hard time trying to understand the "trends" or "latest fads" that Mike had mentioned over in his letters in the past, but thought it was best to go along with. Plus, she really did want to fit in and had to look the part to be sure. She put on the black-and-blood red converse that Mike had sent a couple years ago as a practical joke, yet like the style of them she loved, especially the tiny bats on the side.

"Never hurts to keep proper footwear around when we are going to be doing so much walking all
over the place."

She let her hair fall past her shoulders in loose cascading waves while tying some behind her head and having it secure in place by the ebony comb, bejeweled with tiny rubies and diamonds in the shape of lilies. Those had been her mother's favorite flowers as she remember the castle grounds being cover in those lovely blood red foliage before they had been burn to ash and left nothing but black soot and hard dirt in their place. The comb was one of the few remaining family heirlooms that dad salvage from the wreckage and handing it to her on her hundred and thirteenth birthday when she became of age.

It was a Lubov sacred tradition that it be pass from mother to first born daughter, Martha getting it from hers and so on and so forth over the last few centuries. Marian thought how mom would've wanted her to wear this for this special occasion and wished she was here to see her off just like everyone else had. The vampire like to imagine she would've been proud as well as sad to see her go but not without saying some kind endearing words and tell her to enjoy every moment over there.

Marian reach to touch her pendant and feeling the stone warm under her fingers, thinking to herself as she thought of what she would've said if her mother was right there, *Don't worry mom I will be fine and sure to do my very best over at MU*. Feeling everything was near complete before grabbing the trenchcoat and wide brim hat, knowing her dad would be insistent upon her wearing them and buttoning it halfway down so Dracula didn't notice every "little" she had on, given the way her shirt was and how low her pants hung - otherwise she'd never hear the end of it.

She had secured the last button in place before hearing someone knocking on her door and then Dracula peeking his head. "Mina, sweetie you awake, my little bat? It's almost time for you to - oh, I see you're up, and what in the world are you wearing?"

He was eyeballing her odd ensemble, taking in how the pants clung to her form and the rips right around her knees which he thought unusual. He knew that there had been talk of women now getting the chance to wear men's clothing yet never had he seen either of his daughters ever deciding to give them a try. He wondered if she understood those pants were ruined and why she hadn't gone with another pair instead.

"Mina, don't get me wrong, but why are you wearing those instead of one of the many dresses you have? I mean, I suppose this is a nice look for you, but I really don't see the deal with those." He was mostly stalling as he knew that his sister would be here any moment now and wanted to have a few minutes to talk in private with her, as he did want to say some things before his daughter left. It was true what they said that they grow so fast and having one of his little bats ready to fly the nest, but internally he wasn't ready to let her go just yet. He still had his worries, knowing she'd be in another world and gone for months until such time she'd be back home.

Marian knew he was only making simple excuses, reading the look in his eyes and could easily tell why he was here. She was touched by him and his lingering concern, but really he should know better by now that she was capable of handling herself just fine. But just to appease her father and make sure to reassure him before she left, she would try to at least satisfy his curiosity on her state of attire.

"Dad, it's alright, really. They're supposed to be like this with them torn and such. Yes, I know they look tight, but honestly they're pretty comfortable and really do make it look more flattering the way they're supposed to. Also, from what I heard going on around here for the last ten-twenty years, it's not just the menfolk who can go around in leggings and thought I should give it a try myself."

She saw he wasn't really buying it, so try another method she had come up with. "Beside, I rather be smart and practical, given how if something were to happen while I was in a dress, like say a real
strong draft should come up from behind me and me being in such a public place with everyone all around with my skirt up in the air..."

That did the trick real quick as Dracula's face gave way to horror at the thought of it, finding it unexceptionable as no one should be allowed to look under his daughter's skirt. Nope, no way, no how!

"Ah, that is clever thinking there, my little mouse; yes, you're absolutely hundred percent right: a dress would have not been suitable over there, so stick to the trousers for the most part. You did the wise thing, and I'm so proud that you thought this through."

"Thanks. I kinda figured you would understand that, Dad." Marian saw Bach and Grieg fly by and dropping off a few remaining items inside the wicker carrier sitting on top the steamline luggage that they would soon be traveling in. The three familiars understood that was to be their temporary accommodation once they left for the other side. She had packed what she could and set some of their favorite treats aside for them so they could nibble on and wouldn't stress along the way. She had pretty much all her stuff, raring to go but saw Dracula was wanting to have some last words with her.

"Marian, my little Mina, if your mother were here, she would be seeing how much you've grown and knowing she would have missed you as well." Marian turn to look up at him, her face bearing so much of Martha in there, but saw some of his features within yet could see their daughter was now her own person and this was her choice she had made.

"I know, Daddy. She would've understood, but I promise I would make the both of you proud."

"You always have, my dear; just never forget that we loved you from the day you were born and will forever until the end." He kissed her forehead, finding that was all he could really say before pulling her into a tight hug, feeling he just wanted to hold her a while longer. But he let go, and soon the two headed downstairs, Dracula using his powers to lift her trunks and such to join the others downstairs.

He saw his sister already there, standing next to Mavis who woke up and rushed towards Marian, wrapping her tiny arms around her legs. "I don't want you to go! Take me with you!"

"Mavy...I know this is hard, but your sister has made up her mind, but you know she'll be back real soon." Lydia had seen her niece wavering for just a moment, but Marian bent down and wrapped her arms around the little vampire. "I promise to be back when I finish, but when I do, I expect you to be putting a brave face while I'm gone. Someone has to watch Papa and with me gone, that means you're in charge, okay?"

"...Okay." Marian smiled. "Now who's the cutest little monster in all of Romania? You are."

"No, I'm not; me scary RAWR!" This seemed to perk Mavis's spirits, and Marian reached to ruffle her head, messing her hair up a bit. "Yes, yes, you are, so remember that, Mavy Wavy."

Marian knew this would be the hardest thing she'd ever done, saying goodbye to her family before Lydia reminded everyone it was time for them to leave. "We mustn't dilly-dally as you do want to make sure you arrive for orientation and see that your boardings are as requested, so let's be off then." The vampire knew her aunt was right and reluctantly pulled away from her sister. One more kiss on the forehead and "Love you, Mavy" another tight hug for Dad and exiting the house all together. Dracula had a hearse/taxi waiting outside as he ordered one to pick up his daughter and take her to the drop-off spot. He knew they could've just flown there, but it would've been extremely difficult carrying all her things without being noticed by any villagers along the way. This was a better and much safer method for everyone.
The zombie help came shuffling over to lend their assistance, lugging her trunk to the back of the vehicle while the headless cabbi held the door open for them to step inside. He waited until both female vampires were seated before shutting it close and rushing to get behind the driver's side. The roar of the horse powered engine as it came sputtering to life and Marian could feel the ongoing vibration under her seat as she held onto carrier so her bats didn't get shaken up on the way. She spared one last glance outside, seeing Dracula and Mavis standing by the steps, watching her sister move to flail her arms around and yelling for only her to hear.

"BYE BIG SIS, PLEASE COME BACK SOON!" Marian smiled and waved back, keeping her eyes on the two even as the car pulled out of the driveway and heading out of the forest, onto a road that Clyde had the zombies finish constructing earlier a few months back. It was one of the many ways through the area and taking them directly to their destination without any delay or having humans see them. Once she saw the last of the woods fading from sight, Marian turned and leaned back in her seat. Lydia was inspecting her nails while Diana sat in her lap and clucking every now and then before the vampire turned to see the forlorn look on her niece's face.

"It will be alright, my dear; your father will take good care of your sister in your absence, and with the hotel near complete, everything will be just fine. Now all you have to remember is to focus on your studies. Everything else is second to last. You want to be the best, then you must make a few sacrifices in order to get what you want. Is that clear?"

"Yes, of course." She thought that while she would never put Mike on the sideline but just to appease her aunt who was just giving her a friendly reminder on the importance of being a top scarer.

"Good, I'm glad that you realize this, and I know your father took his sweet time coming around, but this is for the best for everyone. You are a Tepe by blood and as vampires, we are to strike fear wherever we may go and never let anything stop us from getting what we want. That has been our way for many centuries, so bear in mind of it."

Marian wasn't going to argue even if the last bit seemed a bit much, but could somewhat understand its importance. She was grateful for her aunt putting the time and effort helping her out, but thought that this would be difficult for her dad and little sister, and felt like she was abandoning them even if it wasn't entirely true. She made a vow to Mike that a Dracula always kept their promise, so that was what she was doing, but also it was a chance for her to be free and look at a new surrounding without feeling trapped inside her father's clutches. She loved her dad, more than anyone other than Mavis and her family, but she felt his overprotective nature smothering. She was technically locked up inside the home, so to speak, but her father rarely allowed her outside those grounds unless he was there with her, and even then she felt a bit claustrophobic. The more she thought about it, the more she realized that had she stayed and her father's hotel being almost done within a matter of time, then it'd be like trading one prison for another.

Somehow that was a terrifying image to look upon every time she thought that, but never spoke it out loud. That disturbed her finding herself being caged up when all she wanted was her freedom; she wanted to live a life where she could make choices, be around other people and make mistakes only she could without having Dad hovering and breathing down her neck. She couldn't do that if she was behind lock and key and living inside the grandiose castle that would almost be considered a fortress for all monsters to be away from the humans.

In some way, her leaving was an escape from the bonds that were chaining her down and now could breathe freely without fear.

"- Marian are you even listening to a word I'm saying?!" Marian blinked and returned her attention to her aunt who was scowling at her, seeing she wasn't and had the good decency to flush under her
"Yes, sorry, Aunt Lydia, but I was just thinking how much I really appreciate you doing this for me. I am again humbly grateful you took in the consideration to letting me go through with this." She knew she was lying through her teeth, but then the carriage stopped, and the driver moved to open the door and let the two out. She was glad for that small distraction as they exited the vehicle while the driver went to get her belongings. Marian saw they were in a different location unlike the last one her grandfather took her, but it was definitely another abandoned hovel, but recognized a door with the familiar glass orb sitting above its frame.

She watched her aunt also pulling out that same skull key from the inside of her dress, knowing this was it. This would be the point of no return until she had her own made if she ever got around to it, but once she stepped through, there would be no going back for her unless she had some outside assistance.

*You can still turn back, say you changed your mind and head on home, be with Mavis again...*

Yet even with that small bit of fear gnawing inside her gullet, it was overpowered by the roaring excitement that she knew was waiting for her on the other side of that door. Her friend Mike would be there, so she wouldn't be absolutely alone, knowing she could also make friends with others, but couldn't let herself back down when she was this close...

"Marian?" The vampire turned, green eyes staring at the pale blue orbs that, while like her father but seeing she was watching her, were waiting for her to make the final decision.

"Sorry, Aunt Lydia, I'm ready." The uptight vampire gave a nod, pleased by her niece's decision as she slid her key into the door, waiting for the light to come on and let her through.

"Now, you remember how to get to where the bus stop is? It's right between AAAHHH St and Tombstone Central, right before Grave's Alley but on Oozing Ave. Can't be hard to miss. Remember three AAAs not two."

Marian had grabbed her thing, seeing everything was secured and nothing out of place, but vaguely heard what Aunt Lydia said. But Mina would figure it out; she told herself this before she took the knob in one hand and shared one final glance at her surrounding.

Well it's time to get a start on my new life then. She gave the handle a quick twist before making her first step inside. She found herself standing in the familiar room like before which seemed so long ago, the many doors coming and going, and yet knowing that they were all heading for a certain purpose here.

Someday, I will go through them myself and be doing just like the rest on this floor. But she first had to get her education underway and started making her way toward the front of the factory. So much had changed the last time she was here, seeing there were more monsters, taking in that a lot were glancing in her direction as she passed them by.

Would she ever get used to this? Hopefully, she knew that she stood out like a fox in a henhouse, but trying to show she wasn't a threat was going to be a challenge. Marian would remind herself that things would get better along the way, just had to stay focus was all.

"Now what was it that Aunt Lydia said the stop was again? Between Tombstone Central and...Oozing Ave? No, she said it was three AAA's, not two, so that not it. AAAack maybe? Ugh, what was it..." In all the commotion, she had barely been paying any attention to what she was telling her. Perhaps she could ask someone if they could draw up a map or give her some useful...
directions. She grabbed the handle of her trunk and dragged it behind her while heading for the entrance, thinking maybe someone could lend her some much needed assistance through that department.

Marian made her way towards the front desk, seeing the receptionist over there speaking into the headset and handling the multiple calls, redirecting them with a push of a button. She was a young, slender-looking monster with a magenta complexion, wearing a sequined green dress with a furry collar. She took notice that instead of hair, she had snakes and was a vibrant purple color that went well with her skin tone. There was five in total with two coral pink rattlers that hung like dangling earrings, but the one thing that got her was that she was a cyclops like Mike, yet her eye were aquamarine, not green like her friend's.

She cleared her throat, grabbing the other monster's attention onto hers as well as her snake-hair, too. "Excuse me, ma'am, sorry to bother you, but I'm new here and need some directions to the bus stop that's by Tombstone Central and well, you don't have a map by chance, do you?"

Marian saw the other monster had said nothing as she was too busy ogling her as were her snakes when they first saw her. The vampire knew this was going to not be a one-time thing, but tried to remain composed as she reached into her coat pocket to pull a folder that Aunt Lydia had given her before she left. "This is my citizenship form that I had recently filled out months back to show that I'm supposed to be here. Here, see for yourself."

They were her copies of the original documents that had been a necessary requirement of her in order to fulfill her admissions to the school. Everything was signed and approved by the mayor and government board of Monstropolis, showing she was given permission to be in this world; also, her monster nationality and breed was also on the bottom of the file.

The monster took it from her and went to scan them herself, her violet serpents also taking the liberty to read over her shoulder as peruse the files before they were given back and saw the eye lose its worry concern on her being here.

"Ah, I see. Well, then, welcome to Monstropolis, Miss Lubov. I can certainly help you in locating the station you're asking for, but there's another that comes in about twenty minutes and will get you quicker to your destination. The one on AAAHHH St and Tombstone Central has a track record of being a bit behind on time, and so it might do you better to head for this one instead. All you have to do is head down EEEEkkk Ave; that's three E's and K's each. It's just a couple blocks from the factory, and you make a right down there. Then you will find it next to Shriekbuck and Arrrghs and Ooozble, can't miss those two on the way. Let me take a wild guess: you're a new transfer student for Monster University, am I right?" Marian nodded and saw the monster smile. "And you're in the scaring program, which means we'll likely see you here at the factory after graduation then."

"Yeah, that's the plan, I really appreciate your help, Mrs. Tilly." She saw the monster chuckle before shaking her head.

"Anytime, and just to be clear, I'm not a Tilly or a missus. I'm as single as they come and haven't found the right monster just yet."

Well, that did explain some as the receptionist didn't give any distinction she was married or had that vibe that most had if they were newly wed. But the small plaque on her desk said otherwise before seeing she went to explain her reason why. "See, Jenny usually the one to do the greeting and such, but her kids came down with the sweedle pox, so someone had to man the fort while she's away. I'm usually on one of the other floors handling paperwork, but seeing that every other receptionist is unavailable, I'm filling the role until she gets back." The monster reach out to hold out her hand. "The name's Celia Mae, but just call me Celia."
Marian reached to grasp her hand and return the gesture with a fanged grin. "Marian. It's very nice to
meet you, and again, thanks for your help. Maybe we'll see each other around in the near future."

"That sounds fair and good luck in the scaring biz!" Marian exited the building and headed in the
direction Celia had said, taking her fifteen minutes with five to spare and found she was right at the
stop close by. She didn't have to wait long for a huge steel gray-blue bus to show up and coming to a
halt by the curb to let passengers off or climb aboard. Marian was the last to get on because she didn't
want to stop the flow of traffic if they were all busy gawking; plus, she couldn't help marveling at the
sight of this thing before her eyes. These had to be the biggest automobile for transportation she ever
did see.

"Excuse me, is this bus heading for MU - the Monster University?" Marian saw the driver gave a
nonplussed nod who didn't even so much as look at her, as he had better things to do than stare at
people who were dumb enough to ask stupid questions when the answer seemed rather obvious.

She was relieved to hear and made to get on, given she didn't want to push matters and hold up the
line as every monster had other places to be at the moment.

Marian brought her trunk and other belongings on board and went to ignore the ongoing staring that
were being sent her way. She could hear them quietly muttering to one another as she pass their seat,
hers ears picking up every word that was being spoken in hush tones yet could make out as clear as
day. One monster with three eyes, a pair of tentacles for arms, and obviously a female was telling a
smaller version of herself to stop gawking even though the kid had to ask why she look so different
from them. "...But mummy she looks so weird, why is that?"

Marian didn't listen to what the mother would have to say, given she thought it would've made no
differences in how they saw her as she was. Even when she had tried to reassure them by giving
them a large grin, showing off her sharpen fangs in hopes that they would stop rubbernecking at least
and let it be. Course, while it did appeal to some, there were still those who were keeping tabs even
when the bus started moving again.

The vampire put her things up in the overhead compartment before grabbing one of the empty seats
in back that didn't have many and at least had space to set the carrier down beside herself.

*Well you can't really win everyone over Mina...* Marian knew she should expect this, given how that
if she was in their shoes, she'd feel the same herself. Being a vampire did seem to have a slight
disadvantage when it came to their human-like appearances. She admitted that over the years as she
thought how different she and Mike were, and the monsters that resided in either worlds. She had
been looking into the reason why and found the information that was both shocking and life-
changing. From as far as monsterly scholar had proclaimed, and did look back onto the history when
humans came to being, the truth was astonishing yet filled some gaps that she never really knew
about until she did her research.

According to the lores and notes passed down from their ancestors, they hadn't always been monsters
to begin with; they had been mortal once, but something happen - a trigger of some kind that
devolved or maybe the correct term would be forced them to metamorphose into what they were
through the means that changed their structural humanity into the supernatural entities that gave way
to the legends told by the mortals.

She had never knew any of this given the Lubov castle library was destroyed, and Father specifically
forbade her from going to look at some of the older dusty tomes that he said were forbidden to read
in the manor. Yet Aunt Lydia had her own and gave her the liberty to look through them while
Marian wondered if she knew what they told. Would she have kept them around or maybe burn
them for speaking such vile things? But as the vampire looked into countless notes written down by
many, taking to comparing that their existence somehow came about either by being born with a
disturbing deformity that was very abnormal or were bitten by a bloodthirsty bats, scratched by a
wolf on a full moon, made out of spare parts from recently deceased corpses before a bolt of
lightning brought them back to life, unholy curses of ancient times, even those who died but able to
rise up with a hunger for brains and rotting flesh.

The list was pretty endless and put a lot into perspective, and she wondered if that was why some
here looked to her as something unnatural even if she proved that she wasn't a human at all?

Fear could be a potent drug and used to stir the cauldron when best needed was what Aunt Lydia
used to tell her when she was studying her scaring. That terror could strike even the most sturdy
monsters, so that was why to always take caution with what they did. One human was not
considered a threat, but if said human brought his friends and they all wielded weapons of mass
destruction and threatened to destroy their entire existence...

Maybe I'm looking too deeply into this, Marian thought as she unhooked the carrier, allowing her
boys to come out and stretch their wings for the time being. Chai went to settle himself on her head,
giving him an ample view of everything else while Grieg chose to take a nap in her lap and finally
Bach hanging upside down on the cable above their heads. Marian was busy staring outside at the
scene, seeing more and more of the city and finding herself drawn by the sheer beauty she saw
passing by. It was nothing like she seen before: watching rolling landscapes with different structural
monuments, monsters of all shapes and size going about their normal business and seemed to be
going through the motion that was their daily lives.

"Monster University! Anybody getting off!" That was her stop! She went to go grab her things and
making sure she got it all while her familiars chose to fly ahead and wait for her outside. She
managed with no trouble getting off the bus, but finding she was unable to move any further as she
stood right by the gates and stared at what was waiting for her beyond that.

Wow, if this were a
dream, I so never want to wake up from…

Marian was taking her time staring at the spacious campus, seeing so many strange and bizarre
looking monsters rooting about in the area and going about their routines. This place was absolutely
huge! She was amazed by how it looked so grand and well structured with it finely polished building
and air of fine class that even the brochure couldn't hold a candle to this imagery alone. This was so
much more than what Gramps had mentioned, she thought as she recalled some of the stories he told
about this university, and was truly blown away by the sheer awe and beauty of these grounds.

Oh, how her sister would be amazed if she were here with her now. Mavis would have loved it,
that's for sure. Marian wished she had one of those camera to at least take pictures and send them
back home to show her family, but she would do that later when she got the chance. The first thing
to do was try and locate Mike as she was sure he should be here, given tomorrow was the start of
class, and doubting the cyclops wanted to miss the first day of scaring.

"Now if I was Mike, where would I be right now...?" Trying to get inside the green monster's head
would have probably left her feeling slightly dizzy, seeing how she imagined like her, Mike would
be starry-eyed and probably be wandering all over the place as he went to check every inch of this
well-lavished institute with a fine tooth comb.

Be as it may, Marian had the strong feeling he'd turn up eventually, and they would find each other
here with no worries, so she didn't need to fret. But if that failed, then there was the side plan where
she thought that given this semester's scheduling, they should at least be sharing the same classes, so
that would be something to fall back on just in case.

"I guess it doesn't hurt to do a bit of exploring myself to get a better idea of where everything is." Her
bats were also thinking the same thing, knowing this had so much ground for them to uncover for when they went on their nightly flights, sure their mistress would tag along just for their sake and wanted to find the best places that she'd enjoy and have it all memorized before then.

There were all kinds of monsters lingering about the sidewalk, seeing some riding bikes or those skating boards, a couple teens playing with a small bag full of beans which look like fun from the way they were doing it. Marian saw a few handing flyers to passerbys or were hanging them onto the lamppost, covering the older ones but seeing that they all had different memos or information plastered on these. She would have loved to read what they all said but thought she could get around to it much later after she finished checking the rest out for herself.

She was walking over the stone bridge hovering above a small creek, taking the opportunity to stare down at the water below and watching the students that were swimming towards an aquatic building. So many monsters here, but still, she would've liked her small green friend to be with her...she was lost in her own thoughts and wasn't aware her wish was about to be grant as someone snuck up close, nearly startling her if not for that familiar voice crying out, "MINA! HEY!"

Marian and the batly trio spun as one, her familiars wondering who was calling their mistress but the vampire immediately had it figured out and was grinning from ear to ear when she saw them coming this way.

"Well aren't you a sight for sore eyes Mike, c'mere you!" She immediately rush to the cyclops's side and ignoring those who watched the two as they embrace each other before Marian pulled away and took a good gander at her best friend.

"Wow, look at you: did you do some work on yourself, I swear I can tell something different about you Mike?" Marian thought there wasn't any big changes to her friend, although maybe him add another few inches and gain some weight but that was about as much as she could tell. He was carrying two large suitcases and a oversize backpack, but recognized that ratty MU cap no doubt he took everywhere with him.

Mike laughed before he moved to bend his arms, trying to show off the very small but barely noticeable bump on his bicep. "Oh, just a few flex and curls here and there, no biggie, but thanks for noticing, didn't want to get these bad boys too big though I thought 'Herrreee's Mike bringing the big guns so watch out!' But hey you aren't too shabby looking yourself there Mina. You must've had a hard time trying to get your old man to let you walk out the door, probably had to take a crowbar to get him off."

Marian giggled as she thought it funny given she had assume the same herself before with her father's over-the-top protective nature and how she probably would've to pry loose Dracula's vice grasp. "You have no idea Mike, but yeah, it took a lot of arm twisting, but my dad managed to see reason thanks to everyone and Aunt Lydia. But it's good to be here, it's just so much more than I've ever imagine it would be." She gazed back at the river, though seeing only Mike's reflection as he stood alongside her.

"Yeah I know that feeling, but I can't believe we actually did it. Course, I wasn't too worried about getting in through those M-Sat. Man, I swear I felt it took a few years off me though I knew they were to be a breeze."

"Yeah, I thought the same too as I might have blanked out on a couple, but I managed to get a sixty-six-six, so that's passable."

"Oh, nice, I got a sixty-seventy-five, but not to brag, but seeing we both got top scores just goes to show how we deserve to be here." He turn around and throwing his arms out to where they saw the
whole campus behind them, "This place is our very oyster, and we are about to enjoy the finer things in - whoa!"

Mike had been so lost in his illusive montage that he didn't notice Grieg flying over and landing right on top the cap before bending forward and startling the green cyclops. This caused the monster to fall backwards and having his backpack keeping him from getting on his feet again. Chai also peeked out from his hiding place and popping out to flutter towards Mike's face before landing right on top his mouth, making the cyclops appear as if he had a fuzzy white growth on his upper lip. Bach remained where he was, seeming not interest in joining the frenzy while letting his two brothers have their fun at their mistress's companion. Mike must've not been paying much attention as he didn't notice the three until Grieg decide to catch him off his guard.

Marian thought it amusing, but seeing him struggling to lift himself up and flailing like an overturned turtle, she decided to lend him a hand. The vampire flicked her wrist out, having the backpack levitate with Mike attached and setting him back on his feet again. Chai flew off him but then found another spot as he landed on the rim of Mike's cap, getting comfy sitting right on top of it.

"Sorry about that, Mike. I guess I forgot to introduce you to these guys. That's Bach, the one who startled you was Grieg, and the last one who seems to like your hat very much is Tchaikovsky - or as I like to call him, Chai." Mike, while not one to say he got scared easily, knew he should've been more aware, feeling a bit embarrassed for it. Grieg fluttered close to him and while Mike try not to jump, he saw the bat twitter something before flying back to Marian and sitting on her shoulder. "He says he's sorry for startling you, but he couldn't help himself, given he never seen anyone like you before."

"Ah, that's okay. I've never seen anything like him either, though then again, I don't go wandering around with bats hanging all over me, but then I suppose that's why you guys call them 'Children of the night' bleh bleh bleh." He was trying to mimicked the vampire and Marian having a hard time not to go and burst out laughing as she watch him do this.

She was ready to return the witty retort when Marian noticed something on the ground and bending down to pick it off the floor and saw what it was. "Is that a checklist?" She saw Mike had written one and seeing there was a good decent number that show he had put a lot of thought into making this thing.

The cyclops took it off her hands before nodding, "Yep, you got to be prepared for these as you want to make sure you do your best here. MU is the elite institute, the 'creme de la creme', the school that takes monsters like us and turn them into the ultimate Scarers." She listened to Mike as they walk down the path, both managing to not get knocked or bump into any other monsters on the way. "Uh huh, that sounds about right."

Mike had went to grab a pen and went to check the 'Meet Mina on campus', which she thought was rather sweet of him to put down there and saw there were still a lot of boxes left unchecked on his list. "So are you ready for this; I know that I'm gonna be the best Scarer and of course so are you given how it's like in your guy's blood and what with your grandda and all."

The vampire bit her lip slightly but knew she was going to have to tell him and thankfully no one around to listen as she said, "Yeah, about that Mike: I rather not have it going around campus, so if anyone asks, my name is Marian Lubov not...you know understand?"

Marian saw he seem rather perplex by her odd request but she hoped he understood the reason why as she had at the beginning. She had learned how many monsters were on the campus that were somewhat related to more than just one scarers, be it past or present yet still the numbers did not lie and seeing them as basis fact to how the scaring program manage itself. Of course, there were
monsters like her and Mike who manage to get in into the school by hard work and merit that show they deserve to be on the list while the other half that were enroll by having the family helping them out and seeing they follow the family business. She had figured that while some went to go on to do their very best, there was that small five percent that were more in the belief they could get away with anything thanks to that familial name and all that jazz.

It had given her a lot to process but making the decision she had as she had no intention of letting that happen. It had been easy to swing this by both Aunt Lydia and Gramps, though the elderly vampire seem a bit uncertain why she would go and do this yet was able to consent to her given terms. They allowed Marian to use her mother's maiden name while the citizenship had her true name on file should anything occur and needed the family historical information.

"And I'm sure Mom wouldn't mind that at the very least, she'd probably understand why I'm doing this anyways." Mike notice that Marian had unconsciously reached to touch the blood red stone on her throat, knowing that when she did that was when she thought of her dearly departed mother. The cyclops had given it some thought and decided as a friend to do as she ask and would not spill her secret.

"Right, okay gotcha, Mina wouldn't want the whole paparazzi to be swooping all over you and probably won't get any privacy for it! So mum's the word, these lips won't let anything go by them, they're are lock tighter than a vault and only I know the code to them." Mike was trying to cheer her up and seeing it work as the vampire was now smiling at him, thankful he would be helping her out in this. It was good to hear that he would keep her identity hush-hush and thank the smaller monster for his consideration on it.

The two were wondering where to register as they continue down the quad area when they encountered a pink monster wearing a yellow shirt with a smiley face and a more up-to-date MU cap. He was also holding a clipboard like Mike and seeming very chipper when he came across them. "Hey, there, freshman! I'm Jay the RA, and I'm here to say that registration is that-a-way!"

"Okay, Jay!" Mike said while Marian gave the monster a sheepish grin, finding it surprising how that guy seem so chippy, but guessed he must like his job. *Either that or he had way too much caffeine in his system,* she giggle inwardly at the thought but hearing the RA Jay yell out, "Have a great first day!"

"Here Mike, let me give you a hand there." She waved her fingers, and then his suitcases were lifted onto her trunk and having it floating behind the two monsters as they headed to where registration was.

"Thanks! Man, you vamps really are something with all that flick of the wrist and whatnot. What I wouldn't give to have some of that. I'd be zip-zoom!" One of the things he had secretly thought of was having the ability to fly knowing he could zip around and scare the pants off anyone he saw. He'd be the Super Monster of all monster! Marian who was thinking of other things that her powers prove useful for and knew would be handy down the road in the upcoming classes.

"Yeah they are pretty useful but it also is something you can't just master in a day. Took me years to get them under control but like my dad told me, I'm still young and as we get older, the more powerful we get over time. But where I am now, I think it will be useful for when it comes to scaring though I think I don't want to rely on them too much in the process. Don't forget that if you want to stay in the Scare Program, you have to show you at least deserve to be in it."

"Yeah, no kidding, heard it was a 'make or break' but knowing you and I are really going to beat the rest once we become top Scarers in the field. We'll give it a hundred and ten percent!"
Marian smiled at him. It was good to see how very optimistic he was and was glad that hadn't changed. *Yes Mike, you and I will definitely go far in this, together always.*

They went in the direction Jay pointed out, and getting in line to wait to get their packages. The three-eyed monster fluttered her eyes and introduced herself as she passed Mike and Marian their folders. "Hey, I'm Kay! Here's your orientation packet!"

Marian was surprised finding that a monster whose name rhyme with the last monster they met, but Mike didn't seem to notice as he accept the file and smile at her, "Thanks, Kay!"

"You can drop your bags off here and get your picture taken with Trey!" Marian shot a side glance at her familiars and saw they seemed to also find it a bit unusual, but Mike doing as Kay said and went to go get his picture taken did not seem to care one bit about the oddities at all.

She did the same with her things, knowing they would be taken up to the dorms while they got their student ids. Marian waited outside the room for Mike, seeing the cyclops come out holding his scare card in hand. "Well what do you think?" Marian stared at it and while tried not to say anything, seeing only a bit of him show in the picture and wondered why they didn't offer him a pillow or adjust the camera to his height. *Well I guess even here one, expects to get bad pictures for school ID.*

The monster in the room called out for the next student to come in. "Okay, Mina, your turn and remember to smile!" Mike told her right as she went in and took a seat, her back straight and arms in her lap as she sat in the proper pose require of her. The last time she had been like this was when she was only a teen and didn't like sitting in such a tiring position though finding that it might not take too long was a good sign for the vampire.

She was trying not to roll her eyes as the monster, Trey saw her, gawk for what was a couple seconds before glancing at her name and realizing what it said about her. The student photographer went to go open a black box sitting to the side and went to set the odd dark lens onto his camera. Turning to her once more, he said in a more perk up tone, "OK, say hooray!"

"Um, hooray?" She tried to smile but finding herself not sure as she was nervous how the picture would turn out. She got her result when he hand her the ID. Her grin was half crooked and had that questionable look on her face once it was taken.

Marian was staring at her image with Mike also curious on how it turn out for her, "Well, it's not too shabby, though you could've tried to be a bit more cheery since we are now in the best scare school in all the universe; the least you could do is show it more."

"Yeah, I suppose, but I wasn't really expecting it to come out as it did. You know, given my 'condition' and all." She guessed they had lens for certain photosentive monsters like herself that didn't show in images. Huh now she learn something new and finding might be useful if she could find one of these camera and use it to take photos of her and the family.

Mike didn't have a chance to answer before they saw an entourage of students led by a female blue-skinned monster holding a flag and seeing like the others before she was wearing a smiling squad shirt.

"Okay everyone, I'm Fay, and I'll be giving you your orientation tour on this perfect day!"

"Oi vey, what is up with all the 'ay? I feel like we're now missing a May and Gray to join this lineup!" She heard Mike snicker as she made that small joke even if it did sound a bit lame, but oh look, she made it rhyme.
"C'mon, best we keep up with them. Don't want to miss out on anything." Thankfully the tour guide had been too focused on showing them around the school grounds, going to the tech lab and saw how the doors came to be processed, going from plain old wood slabs to doors that were of bright colors and strange markings. The gang then got to see one being tested to see if they actually worked. Marian and Mike watched a monster in a hazmat suit take a blank keycard and using it to turn it on. They got a glimpse of a child's room before it was quietly shut and then the vampire turned her eyes to him.

"Bring back memories doesn't it?" The cyclops nod as he recounted that moment but kept up with the rest of the group, finding themselves at the cafeteria and seeing what their selections were. "The MU cafeteria serves a full buffet three meals a day. I personally believe we have some of the best chefs in the world."

Marian didn't want to counter that statement as she took a glance behind and saw one of the lunch ladies grab the trashcan and spilling the contents onto one of the bar and all the students digging into the pile with renewed vigor. Her familiar also seemed rather grossed out by it, but thankfully she saw there was more than one buffet and didn't serve that sort all the time.

At least that was a good thing to know; plus, she saw there were a few ice cold jugs labeled with 'O neg', 'AB positive' and a few other delectable selections. Well, at least I don't have to worry about getting my normal supplements. Though she wouldn't dare ask where they got their source as she knew human blood was a bit on the fatty side, but wasn't certain what type those came from. She wasn't going to ask, just pretend it didn't matter.

The tour continued after the cafeteria, Fay taking them back outside and across the grounds before finally leading them to see what was the big finish for them. "...The campus offers a wide variety of majors, but the crown jewel of MU is the scaring school."

A lot of monsters were staring at the wide building, but Mike and Marian stuck around a bit longer, taking their time gazing upon the structural architect, knowing that they would be going in there soon. Marian, seeing the tour was over, grabbed Mike's arm as well as his attention.

"Well, that went rather well, although I have to say that at least we got a good idea where everything is. C'mon Mike, that building isn't going anywhere, so let's go find the dorms. I think from what Fay said, the dorms should be that-a-way. Oh, geez when is that to end..." The bats and Mike snigger when she made that line, but Marian shot a look that had them hush up, knowing it was a bad idea to aggravate the vampire.

The two continued walking down the quad and found that a lot of tables were set about the way: each manned by students to interest the freshman coming by and trying to get them to join their clubs. Marian saw a dual-headed monster trying to convince someone to join the debate team, but her twin seemed to scare them off pretty quick with her sharp tongue. Marian didn't think she'd feel comfortable, but looking to some others, the vampire took notices of a few that got her eye.

Passing the improv monster who should've remembered something he was to say, she saw across from them was a tall monster who was quoting lines while holding a prop skull and noticed they seemed to be giving off the theatrical flair to convince students to join them.

"Hmm, I always wanted to try my hand at the theater; might be lots of fun." Couldn't hurt to give it a shot, so she took the pamphlet from the monster before going to find Mike at another panel, listening to a bulky monster that look somewhat like a griffin with purple feathers, an orange beak and long ridge horns pointing upward who was shouting at the top of his lung while his partner; a female monster with gray skin, purple fin-like hair, two large front teeth with three eyes while one obscured by her 'fringes, seemed a bit bored out of her grogin.
Though if I was her I probably feel the same listening to him all the time and get a migraine from that...but Marian curious to find what it was they were talking about and couldn't help listening in to what they were telling Mike.

"The Scare Games: a super-intense scaring competition!"

"They're crazy-dangerous, so anything could happen..." The vampire could tell she was dead serious while her comrade couldn't resist adding in and could tell that he thought it a bit amusing when he told the cyclops, "A bunch of guys went to the hospital last year!"

Marian saw her familiars looking concerned, and then the real kicker was when the female Greek council made her mind up as she mentioned: "You could totally die."

Okay that's it, got to get Mike out of the danger zone, like right...now! This time she couldn't stay quiet and walk towards them, "Wow, dying in a grand spectator sport all for bloody glory in front of a captivated audience, sounds very gladiatorial if you ask me. Though I wonder what else you dare to throw in just to wow the crowd for an encore: lions, bears, fire breathing dragons?"

Marian saw the female's triple eyes zoom towards her, seeming not bother by what she just said and was busy looking her way with an apathetic stare. Her fellow Greek Council was quiet though it might be because he was openly gawking when he saw the vampire that was right in front of their stall, course the female of the two said in that impassive tone that seem delude of all emotions, "Meh, been there done that. Sorry we couldn't keep the dragons as they sorta cause too much of a liability issue after the last game six years ago. Had to replace some of the buildings, and well, you get the idea. But we do try our best when it comes to these events and see everyone has a good time enjoying them, we also have another special lineup that keeps the crowd well appeased for sure."

"Uh, huh, so your moot point is..." Finally the avian monster couldn't help himself and Marian imagine he could even give her aunt Eunice a run for her money, shouting out in a super hyped voice, "Because it's totally worth it! You get a chance to prove that you are the best!"

Mike who had been listening since the very beginning and was definitely on board for this, but Marian thought otherwise on the matter and thinking she wouldn't dare to throw her life away and neither should he, just to make a point across.

"Um, yeah, thanks for the heads up. We'll keep an open mind on that but we'll wait and see what happens." She pulled Mike from the stall, feeling it was better to get him as far away from those two. The fact that these games were legal didn't matter if someone got injured in the process or worst: wound up dying all for the sake of short-lived glory on campus.

She tried to think if Gramps ever made mention of them - oh wait, he did, actually, but then Mom hadn't been comfortable to leave her alone with him after she asked what 'dismemberment' was or the fact he brought up how it went during the second event.

Mike was busy ogling that flyer in his hands and seemed to really be considering signing up for them while Marian hoped to all that was unholy he wouldn't be daring to go through with it.

"Memo to me, don't let Mike get any funny ideas about those games." She whispered to Bach as he fluttered close to her head and listened to what she said. He nodded his head before turning to his brothers and saw they all were in agreement with their mistress' wishes.

Marian wanted to say she believed in Mike, that he could do anything when he put his mind to it. Yet being realistic and finding there might be life and death challenges that could put him at risk. The last thing she wanted was to have his body laid inside a three and a half foot casket buried before
Nope not going to happen! If he so much as considered going through with this, she would find a pair of unbreakable handcuffs and chain him to her until he otherwise changed his mind or waited until the games were long over. Mike might come to resent this but she would rather he'd be angry and alive than dead.

"So, anything else that caught your eye? I mean, there were a couple I thought looked promising, and we should at least give a try, don't you think?"

She saw him slip the flyer under his cap before he turned to her and shrugged his shoulder. "Huh? Oh um...nothing really like this comes to mine but I mean, c'mon Mina, who wouldn't want to give this a shot? You heard what they said: you can prove to the entire school you can be the scariest, so what's the harm in signing up for them?"

"Um, beside the whole dying and getting put into a hospital perhaps? Don't you think you should take that into consideration? No one is invulnerable, you know."

"Yeah, well look who's talking. You got the whole vampire gig, so those games would be a total breeze for you and would win them hands down."

Marian wanted to smack her face but chose to keep her hand from doing that, "Uh, huh, but I think the brochure did say you have to be in a 'sorority' or 'fraternity' to be a part of it, so you can't do all these alone. You need a team to participate."

Mike waved his hand, not seeming to pay any attention to that last bit. "Eh, that's just small potatoes, but c'mon, you never know! What about you? Saw anything that caught your interest?"

Finding that a change of subject was a good thing, she told him about thinking of joining the art or drama club, leaning more to the latter as she gave it much thought to it. "I thought how much it would really mean to do this, especially for my mother. I remember how she use to tell me these stories, of sneaking into the mortal village and going to this particular playhouse in London, the Globe Theatre and see these shows that I admit sound very fascinating when she told them to me. I would have loved to seen it in person but heard it got burned down a few decades back yet I think it wouldn't hurt for me to give this a try and see what happens. They said there's to be auditions sometime in a few weeks so I was thinking maybe you and I could-"

Yet she found Mike wasn't even listening and wondering if he was all right before she saw what caught his eye. The lamppost had tons of flyers, but this one was covered head to toe of the same kind. All the papers were a blood red and in dark bold letters which as Marian grabbed one and held it in her hand to see what they proclaim to the world.

Want to prove yourself worthy of your peers?

Become this year's Scream King and Queen!

From the Freshest Meat to the Awesome Senior of MU,

sign up and try to earn the crown!

IF YOU DARE!

She read further down and then asked Mike for the flyer he got from the Greek Council stall. The vampire held them side by side and noticed something. "Huh, apparently they seem to be also
holding that around the same time as the Scare Games; looks like they really are doing more for
show if they are putting this up on the block." So that's what the other monster from the stall mention
earlier and though it wasn't anything like the Scare Games but didn't have as much information as
she would've like, only that sign ups would be going on through this semester so anyone could put
their name down for it.

Neither her gramps nor Aunt Lydia made any mention of this so it must be very recent for this to be
happening after they had graduated MU. Mike swiped one of the red flyers off and looked it over
himself with a quick glance. He was drinking in every word with his one eye, not wanting to miss a
thing after he read it for himself.

"Yeah, no kidding, but man, wouldn't that be something: to win both the scare games and be a
Scream King all in one!"

Mike was already envisioning it in his mind, seeing him on a grand throne with a golden crown and
holding a nice big shiny trophy engraved with his name while the entire campus was bowing to him
and saying, 'We are unworthy, we are unworthy…' Everyone hailing his greatness and claiming him,
the king of all Scarers!

"Oh man, we should definitely go for this!" Mike didn't seem to notice Marian's reaction as he was
thinking of where to sign up but the vampire chose to intervene.

"Whoooa, Mike, let's not get too carried away here. I mean, yes, it does sound like a good thing, but
wouldn't you rather wait a while to get a better look at your future competition? I mean we should at
least take the time to think this more thoroughly?" She knew it seem underhanded trying to convince
him to reconsider it, knowing chances were that what candidates were to be the Scream King but
didn't want his feelings to get hurt in the process.

In a sense, it was a glorified popularity contest and while she thought Mike was a great guy to be
around, she doubt everyone would chose him over someone more well-known and one the crowd
like best above all others. Mike's chances were on a very small scale and those guys would probably
eat the cyclops alive in whatever competition they had set up for these events.

"I mean, let's not try to get ahead of ourselves before we think things through. My Uncle Wayne use
to say, 'don't count your cockatrices before they hatch.' So let's try to bear that in mind okay." She
knew his excitement was contagious, but given that she wanted to make sure that he didn't get swept
by the undercurrent that would likely drag him if he tried to take them all head on without having
time for a second look. She saw Mike was thinking it over before slipping the red leaflet inside the
folder.

"I guess that's true, one step at a time: first being a top Scarer in class then maybe after, future Scream
King."

"Yes, baby gorgira step, so why don't we find the dorms then? I think they should be near here." She
was relieved she managed to get through to him while thinking how she wasn't going to be trying
something like that. But little did Marian realize that she should also consider how things were bound
to go down for her on the long road…

~0~0~0~

Marian and Mike managed to find the dormitory further along the way, seeing it was a large
borderstone that was co-ed for both genders within the building; one side for the girls and the other
for guys. Unless they got into a sorority or frat, then this would be their temporary home for the next
few months.
They went inside and headed for the front desk that was handling where each student was rooming where. Mike went first as the RA behind the desk, Ray (oh great another "ay") saw to hand him his key and told him his roommate was in the same program as them. The vampire saw the cyclops was thrilled by this and knowing that he would be thinking of many ways to introduce himself to his fellow scarer in the process.

Marian was next and showing the monster her ID, and waiting for him to find her name on the list. "Ah here we are, Lubov, I guess there's no need to worry about who you're rooming with, and seeing you share the same major, that makes it all the more easier for you two to get along."

Marian thought that was a very odd thing to say, and so did Mike, yet the two shrugged, given that they would find out when they got to their rooms and see who they were bunking with. She found that boys were on the right side of the building and hers the opposite end. Mike was on the third floor while hers was a bit higher up and would take the elevator to get there.

"Okay, Mike, I'll see you later, and maybe we can go and grab a quick bite to eat!"

"Huh, sure, but no offense, I need my blood where it is, so you'll have to make due with someone else's then." She couldn't help chuckling while giving him a quick pat on the head.

"Oh, Mike, sorry but I have much better taste than that, but you're still my favorite monster out of everyone here."

The two waved goodbye to each other before Marian looking at the key and seeing what number she had. "Room 613. Okay, shouldn't be that hard to find around here." It was on the sixth floor and about a few doors down the hall, making a left before finding the room with that same number on her keychain. She looked to her bats, seeing them gazing to her and knowing she was a bit nervous as she had little to no clue how the other monster would react upon noticing her.

"Alright, here we go. Just take a deep breath and..." She twisted the knob and pushed it open and saw someone else was already in there: her new roommate, but seeing them just as equally shocked like herself when they glanced at one another. To say it was quite a startling surprise to who she saw and almost had to blink to make sure she was seeing right, same with them knowing they mirrored the same shocked expression as the vampire looking at her.

By first glance they looked almost human - well, partial with dark hair and olive-colored skin yet from the waist down, they had a long serpentine tail with golden-green scales that had a hint of teal and a streak of black down the side, and even saw going up and make like a tattoo design over her skin, giving it that exotic appeal. There were green-bluish scales on both arms as well her throat, face, mostly on her cheeks, eyelids and near her lobes with tiny flecks of gold that made her look so alluring and match the color of those bright yellow orbs staring back at her.

If Marian had to take a wild guess, she'd said her roommate was either a Lamia or Gorgon as that was what she appeared to be, though given what she knew about them: they were a very confusing subspecies that left a lot of researchers scratching their heads in wonder when they tried to understand these two. The monsters were sometimes thought to be somewhat related, given they originally came from the same regional area, their obvious gender being female only and had serpent/snake-like trait with the exception that Gorgons could also have wings, but that was beside the point. They were so alike, while a few, mostly within their own family circle, would argue otherwise and deny such a thing to be true. But from all accounts in every monster historical notebook, most would think them to be sort of cousins between them, not very likable but very distant between their kind; it was understandable where such a confusion came from and how many problems came to be because of it.
The reptilian-like woman had a shapely hourglass figure and wore a pink tank top that had the words "Am I Scary? Very!" while had a bracelet on each bicep with a pair of golden earrings that resembled snakes hanging off her earlobes. The monster had hair which meant she wasn't a Gorgon; it was coiffed and fell perfectly down her back like a midnight waterfall. There also seemed to be bright green, tightly braided highlights in the mix only to realize those were her snakes as they surfaced out to see who was there, nearly the same length as her tendrils but had the same yellow reflective eyes like the monster before her. They were posed with their bodies arched and a couple hissing loudly, even heard the woman muttering something to them in Greek before they came down but saw that her guard was still up.

So, back to square one then, Marian thought knowing that she best try to say something given the other monster looked rather wary and knew she would be if in the given position.

"Um, hi there, I'm Marian Lubov, your new roommate." She immediately sensed the other monster starting to relax, seeing her slither over as she came to greet her.

"Lettitia Zuthema, but call me Leda. I prefer that to being called by my actually name really." She reached to push a stray curl and had one of her snakes taking it to slip it behind her ear. "I know, I shouldn't mind, but it's just well, I didn't have a good hands-on experience in high school 'cause a lot of kids in my class thought it would be amusing to call me 'Titty' because of it."

The vampire could hear the melancholy tone in her voice, knowing she must've been teased a lot for it, and even her snakes seemed also upset by that as one moved to rub its face against her cheek and console her about it. Marian couldn't believe how someone could take such a beautiful meaningful name and twist it into something horrid just for crude fun.

"You shouldn't think like that; they're total morons." She thought of her and Mike's experience during that one field trip even though she wasn't made fun of, but imagining how Mike and Leda must've endured it because of what they went through and decided that she would offer her hand to the other monster before her.

"You can call me Mina if you like, it only seems fair, and honestly, I think your name is really gorgeous and think someone should have hit those idiot on the head with a frying pan to knock some sense into them."

Leda grinned, showing her extended fangs to the vampire, but it was in a friendly way much to her relief. "Thanks; my mom said something like that to me; she told me and my sisters that they're just dumb hormonal driven boys and not worth the aggravation for it."

The vampire was pleased to see that she wouldn't be giving her any hassle and noticed that her things were sitting on the unmade bed while one side had already been decorated, and seeing Leda looked a tad sheepish when Marian took in her surroundings.

"Sorry, if I already chose which bed to go for since I didn't know who I was rooming with, and I'm not the type to be patient, so I went for the one closest to the window. Though I suppose that's a good thing judging from your pale pallor and those bats hanging around you. You're not much into waking up with the sun in your face."

"Yeah, you would be right on that mark. You actually saved me the trouble, so I guess in a way, I owe you for saving me that trouble!" She laughed finding it was a relief that the other monster hadn't been too concerned because of what she was. "So, I guess I better unpack my stuff then."

"That's fine. Here, I can lend a hand as I pretty much got my side taken care of, and never hurts to give my fellow roomie some help." The two grabbed Marian's trunk and set it down before she
reached in to pull her sheets and pillowcases: all red and made of satin with a black cover to go over it. She went to set it up while Leda and her bats saw to put her clothes into the closet and drawers as well as seeing that the bathroom had room for her toiletry and other necessities in their rightful place. Marian had finished and went to place her family portrait by the nightstand next to her after adjusting the curtains to go around her bed so she didn't have to worry about catching any unnecessary rays in her sleep.

Leda came over and noticed the picture, and couldn't help commenting out loud, "That must be your family, huh? I can see the you got a bit of your dad, though your sister has his eyes. You two must get that a lot."

Marian nodded. "We do, although our father says I look a lot like Mom and mentions that we could've passed as twins given how she was at my age." Leda was looking back at the image, curious as to why it was just the three of them, but said nothing for the time being.

"Yeah, I hear ya. Dad says the same thing to us, but in all honesty, only two of my sisters resemble my mom, while my older sister is said to look like our grandma on Mom's side, and then there's my other sister who everyone says could look like Dad's. I'm sorta the only one who shares the same distinct features of my father and grandpa in the scale and color department if you look see."

Leda had hers hung right by her bed that Marian saw. Well, more than one family photo was on her side as there were a lot of snake-like family members and monsters spread out, as the vampire did take notice of the one closest and saw Leda was right as she did look a bit like her father in some aspect.

But Marian's focus then turned to the rest of her side, finding it very "unique" as her wall, and the ceiling above were plastered with loud colorful posters, Marian seeing that she seemed to be a fan of the *Cobra Brothers* and *Scream Sync*; also seeing a few other oddities, like the monster couple, a large bulky rhinoceros with huge horns, bat wings and six eyes leaning up against a snake-like reptilian, and under their feet was large words declaring them, "Mr. and Mrs. Ssssmith".

They were also decked in stylish black clothes; they seemed rather classy in that pose. Marian would later learn that was a movie poster for a spy-romance movie and that her roommate was a big film buff who loved seeing them either on the big screen or on tv and brought her portable DVD player and a few of her favorites from home that she couldn't bring herself to go without. She also had her laptop and an account on Terflix that hosted all kinds of movies and TV shows that she also found to watch in her spare time. Marian would later get hooked on herself and join her to binge watch some when they finished their class and needed to let off some steam.

Yet Marian was looking at Leda's and wanted to know a bit about her family. "Yeah, I can tell you got more of your dad than the others do but he looks kinda different than what I expected from a…"

"Yeah, well you're not the only one to think that. Trust me, we've all been there." Leda then went to explain what she was to the vampire. Marian was half-right on what Leda was as the other teen told her that she came from a long line of Gorgons, supposedly descended from one of the three sisters of the legendary Medusa herself. They moved to the state a few decades back, and then there had been a bit of a scandal when her grandmother had a ONS (one night stand as it was called) with another monster who no one knew much about with the exception that he was probably a sea/water based monster judging from the gills and extensive thin membrane between his fingers which Leda inherited and also could hold her breath underwater longer than any other monsters in the family.

But as Leda was pointing out, that was when Grandma got pregnant and later bore a son which to Gorgons was a huge shocker given that only daughters were born in the clan for the last five hundred years. So while they tolerated him to the barest minimum but didn't really consider him as one of
their own which Marian thought was absolutely ridiculous and so did Leda who agree.

"Yeah it was tough for both him and Grandma, being look upon like outsiders among them but they manage just fine. Gran was a tough monster who found the means to support herself and also helping my dad out so he could attend school and stuff."

After he graduated, he decided to go to MU to get his Ph.D and that's also where he met a Lamia-Naga who came to study at the same school herself. She had been a transfer student from a school outside the state and though they were in different years and majors - him a third year criminal-psychologist and she a English-journalism starting her first semester, but they met through a group of mutual friends who sought to introduce the two snake-like monsters - they realized what they had in common and not because of their serpentine forms.

They had immediately hit it almost immediately and after they had a few dates and then some time later, they got married once Nagini (Leda's mom) finished her schooling and the two settled down, having five kids which were all girls. Leda was the youngest of the lot, yet didn't mind as her parents made to give each one their full-on attention, even after the rest of the siblings moved out and had families of their own. She still kept in touch with them through the correspondence email and 'facetime' and then the occasion holidays that brings everyone together and making the house seem more crowded than before.

"...And that's the way it's been. Dad still works with the crime division helping out on cases or dealing with criminals that need psychoanalysing, but he's close to retiring sometime next year or so. My mom, right after she graduate and manage to get enough to make an investment, had started her own publishing company called 'The Serpent Tails' which is where my oldest sister, Sahara, is and plans to take over when Mom steps down. I admit it can be a bit much, especially when everyone gets together, and my nieces and nephews can be a pain in the tail at times, but I wouldn't have it any other way."

"Sounds like a real fantastic time for the whole family there." Marian joked but saw Leda didn't seem to be laughing but look a bit despondent over what she said.

"Well not really the whole...you know how I told you my dad's is kinda distant. Well they're real sticklers and hear they're not the most friendly bunch to be around at time. They're the ones who like to spout 'always stick to those you can trust, don't date if you can't mate'. From what I was told, they didn't even like my mom when he introduce her to them after announcing their engagement and they call her something very nasty to her face, telling her she doesn't belong in the family. You know there's been a lot of bad blood between those two and given she's a Lamia and they're Gorgon even if we do share some similarities yet it doesn't stop the hate that's been around since like forever."

Leda sat on Marian's bed and lean backwards, letting her head touch the wall before saying with a heavy groan, "They never even showed up to the wedding or met us when we were born. In other words, we're outcast and don't belong to the clan. My dad sorta figured that would happen yet he didn't care. He loved my mom way too much to give her up and knowing they had never once given him any sign of accepting him. To them, we're consider the low bred mongrels of their kind, we mean little to nothing to them."

She then turn slightly, avoiding to squish her hair as she stare at the vampire, "When I was kid, I always wanted to be a scarer like my grandpa Hagi who while never broke any scare records but really love what he did when he was alive. I really wanted to make my family proud and was kinda hoping that when I got accept in the Scare program, things would be different. Yet...seeing everyone's reaction once they notice me and despite my scales and tail, they only see the human-like parts and I just..."
She didn't finish and Marian could honestly relate in that category and seeing that it was hard the gorgo-
lamia monster but knowing how rough it must be for her, from having such a discord in the family to
this was a heavy burden on her. The vampire reach out and place her hand and forcing the other
monster to look her way.

"Not everyone gets along with their family, heck my dad and gramps haven't spoke to one another in
almost over a century now. But from what you just told me, those gorgons don't deserve you. Sure
being different is hard but that's what makes us stand out, honestly I think we all should feel like we
are who we are and shouldn't matter what the other thinks. A monster is a monster, no matter what
species they may be. Let me ask you this, has anyone on their side become a scarer?" Leda thought
about it before shaking her head, "Well you who's got gorgon blood as well as lamia are probably
the first ever to possible be. You got in the program on your own which shows you got great
potential and that means a lot to being a scarer in this line of work."

"You really think so?" Marian nodded, "Yes, yes I do, you got a wonderful family that is backing
you up and all rooting for you the whole way. Those annoying gorgons are all a bunch of great big
sourpusses who wouldn't known Mida's gold from fool's gold if they can't see what's in front of them
that is pure and rarer than any ore in existence."

The snakes on Leda's head were all hissing in full on agreement and even the monster herself had to
say that she like what she heard from the vampire. "Yeah I think you're absolutely right. I guess since
I am the only gorgon here on school and I bet they would probably be ripping their own snakes out
once they realize I'm going to be a Scarer just like my granddad was!"

"Atta girl, that's the kind of attitude that will get you far here!" Marian plop backwards on the bed
before thinking now that Leda told her side, it was her turn then.

"Well, I suppose you already realize what I am by now. Both my parents are vampires through the
whole family line, and while I haven't seen my grandda in age, given something happened and I
don't want to talk about just yet. I know that he had been around longer than most and seems uptight,
though you should meet my dad and Aunt Lydia and put them all in one room together, then you can
see how they all are and swear they can drive anyone up the ceiling with their antics."

She heard her bats tittering in the background as she made that small crack. "So anyways, my dad
can be a bit over the top when worries about me and my sister but is quite serious with what he does.
He's been so busy what with this hotel undertery, and he's hoping to have it open pretty soon. I only
have one sibling and that's my sister Mavis; she'll be turning sixty-four in a few months right around
the first break here, but is so adorably sweet that she can give you cavities for it. Yet don't tell her I
said that, because she will go and deny it because she says and I quote, 'I'm not cute, me scary
RAWR!""

"Ah that adorable, and wow, a hotel! That's amazing, your family must be well off then so your
mom - what about her?" Marian's eyes lost their shine before glancing to the other side of the room.
Leda took in the sudden mood change before putting it together and knew she had made a goof up
by asking. "Oh, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to bring it up like that. I had no idea that-"

"It's okay you had no clue, but it's not your fault. My mom passed away in an accident a very long
time ago, but I know she's still with me everyday and always keeps her in my mind and in here, too."
She turned to reveal the choker around her neck, showing Leda the blood-red stone sitting on her
throat. Inside the ruby, there was a small lock of ebony hair and a couple drops of blood added when
it was made, a important traditional for their kind as blood was the source of all life and even in
death, it would always remain so. Sometimes she thought she felt her mother's presence, thinking that
it was when she wore this necklace and never took it off other than to bath or clean it up.
Marian missed her a whole lot and thought of how many times she wished things had gone down differently then, always thinking that her mother would still be alive if the humans hadn't attacked the castle and left them well enough alone.

Mother should have been here with them, to see little Mavis grow up or her finally achieving her lifelong dream of being a scarer. Yet she knew that there was no way to turn back the clock or rewrite what had happened, but Marian swore to live each moment not just for her, but for Mike, for all her family and friends back home. It was something that she could do and know her mother would think the same herself.

Leda shot a glance to the window, seeing how dark it was outside and then thought of when the last time they ate. "Hey, want to grab something from the cafeteria? It'd be my treat tonight." The vampire was startled, guessing this was Leda's attempt for bringing up a sore subject in front of her and thinking it wouldn't hurt to grab something to nibble on. Her stomach made the call as it grumble loudly and even her bats were surprised but knowing it had been a very long exhausting day and hadn't had anything the whole time.

"Well, I'll definitely take that as a yes. C'mon then, I know a quick shortcut across campus that will get us to the cafeteria without a moment to lose. Hopefully they'll still have some creepy crawlers tarts left; those are my favorites."

The two monsters exited the dorm and took Leda's directions, and found she was right as it got them fairly quick to the other building within five minutes of walking. There weren't as many monsters in the area but guessing since it was a bit late in the day, Marian saw that she was really starving for something edible.

They went to one of the buffets that served the less 'inedible' having something that Marian saw wasn't smothered in smelly garbage. She grabbed a plate with linguine and some domestic beetle balls, a small salad, a croak-a-cola soda and some blood pudding for dessert. Leda was waiting for her by the cashier with her order and the two paying the full purchase and went to grab an empty step.

Marian thought she should have at least stopped by Mike's and ask if he wanted to join, given that she had been too busy setting up her room and getting to know Leda in the process. Maybe Mike had done the same with his new roomie; she hoped that he wasn't making any trouble getting acquainted with the other monster otherwise might make things difficult down the road.

"You okay, Mina? I'm again sorry for bringing that up in front of you." The vampire shook her head. "No, it's not your fault, and that wasn't what I was thinking. I was wondering about my other friend, Mike Wazowski. We both came here today, and well, I'm just wondering how he is handling with bunking with another monster."

"Does he have any issues with that? I know that we are supposed to be rooming with another person during our first semester, but I heard some can request a single if they have a very good reason to." Leda took a bite of her gyro, savoring the meat and vegetables inside the pita.

Marian chuckled. "No, but he can tend to be a 'bit much', given he has this kind of hyper energetic attitude and can be a bit over enthusiastic when it comes right down to it. I think it's nice having such optimism for someone like him, but even I worry that it could get Mike into a situation that could get him in way too deep."

"Sounds like he's just a very open-minded monster. That or maybe he had one too many red Minotaurs, and needs to let it out before he implodes. Speaking of, did you see that guy at that one stall? You know, the bird monster with the purple fur mullet and seem to have a thing about
screaming at the top of his lungs about those scare games? Now that is overzealous, I tell you.”

Marian did, telling her what she thought of what they represent on the greek council and seeing that Leda thought it was the sort of crazy only people that had a lot of time on their hands planned such dangerous events. So Marian and Leda were enjoying their time in the cafeteria, talking and laughing over silly stuff and also making comments about the start of the semester.

By the time they left, the canteen was pretty empty and was time to head back to the dorms. They had finish changing into their nightwear and were just chatting as they were still pretty wired and not ready to call it a night yet.

"So, tomorrow we begin our first scare class. I'm kinda a bit nervous, to be perfectly honest, and sometimes I can't control myself when I get all stress or just overwhelmed. I..." To prove her point, her snake-like tail start to shift itself into a pair of human legs, though were scaly with the same coloring like before, but she didn't have a skirt or a pair of jean under them. Not even shoes to cover her bare webbed feet. Though she did have underwear on but that was the only article of clothing that manage to stay intact during the whole transformation.

Leda lift them up to her chest, her chin resting on her knees and moaning, "It's so humiliating when that happens, and it's a nightmare with pants that don't tear or won't fit when my body does this. My sisters have much better control than I do, and I try all the exercises they recommend, but no matter what I do, I'll still be the oddball with the malfunctioning wardrobe problem.."

"It's okay, I understand perfectly." Marian thought of the few mishaps when she first started learning how to change from a vampire into an animal and having her clothes either shrink or rip while changing back to her original form. It was a pain like Leda said, but in the end, she managed to get it right and sure she could help her find a way to overcome this challenge with no worries.

"Maybe you just haven't been doing them correctly. I know a couple methods my dad taught me and probably will work for you, plus, I can lend you a few of my skirts that's made of stretchable material so that if you have another issue, they should remain in place." Madam Charlotte was one of the few monsters back home who could make custom wear for any and all occasions, and would give Leda the mailing address so she could contact her and see about getting her own spider silk attire.

"Oh, that would be great Mina. I really do appreciate this." Marian shrugged, telling her, "Hey, what are friends for if not to lend a helping hand? You do the same if it was switch around." She would send a letter to her dad, asking if he could forward her catalog subscription but explain the reason why so he didn't go making wild assumptions because of it.

Marian was leaning on her back while staring at the ceiling above her head. "I can understand why you're nervous, I am too but I think in a good way because that shows you are taking into consideration of what may come. You just gotta trust your own instincts and if you try real hard, you can do anything you put your mind to."

It was what she had been telling herself every time; thinking of coming to MU was the goal and now that she was here, she knew phase one was complete and had a few more underway.

Leda was mulling her words over inside her head before nodding her way. "You know you're probably right. I mean, we all start off somewhere small, and while I admit my sisters were worry about my career choice and thought I should reconsider and switch majors, but like you said, it's my call and I feel I really want to go and prove it to everyone I can be a scarer no matter what it takes."

"Atta girl, you see, positive thinking is all you need and we'll make it far in this." Marian was glad to have been able to do more for her new friend, feeling that Leda needed the right budge and ongoing
encouragement from someone like her. She and Leda saw that it was getting late and with classes starting early in the morning, both monsters went to turn in and get some much needed shut eye before the big day.

As Marian listened to the soft snores coming from the opposite side of the room, hearing the steady hum of the AC in the background, she was the last to sleep thinking what tomorrow would bring, knowing that it was just one small step for her and her friends - and knowing by the end of the journey, they would all be Scarers.
The First Day of SCARING and Chatting with the Dean

Chapter Summary

Marian's first day of class and what's this has to see the Dean, Uh oh, what's a vamp to do!

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone I'm here to say happy October, especially all you horror-monster fans out there. This time I think of trying to amp my game by posting as much as possible but working hard for my reader. So as a pre-early Halloween treat, you get a two for one this weekend on chapter 4 and tomorrow Chapter 5. Hope you all enjoy and if you want to show some love please review, hope you all have a good time!

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It was barely even light outside when Marian heard the strangest noise that she ever did hear. A man's voice shrieking at the top of his lungs and with such a ruckus in the background with what sounded like someone strangling a cat. *What in all of Transylvania is that?!* The blaring noise seemed to grow louder and more annoying, even when she tried to squishing the pillow against her ears. It didn't dampen that horrifying shrieking, just barely muffled to some degree! The vampire thought her brain was ready to implode from the obnoxious racket if not for the timely intervention from her dorm buddy.

She could make out Leda getting up, groaning loudly before her scaly arm peeked out from under the seafoam cover and went to push down on the device, making that god-awful nuisance stop in a heartbeat's notice. When it became quiet again, much to everyone's relief in the room, Marian pulled her head out and saw Leda doing the same but seeing the Gor-Lamia's hair all over the place like some bird's nest, even her snakes peeking from the wild brush when they got up, coming around and looking just as sleepy as she did.

Leda cranked her neck from side to side, hearing the small bones shift under the pressure before the monster got up and headed for the bathroom by her side, muttering, "Nothing like some good ol' Oozie Oxbourne in the morning to get you to start your day!" She was humming the song to herself while the vampire said nothing, though shook her head in the process. It seem clear now who set the alarm but still, a little heads up would have been nice especially with her sensitive ears still ringing from earlier. Marian was rubbing the sleep out of her eyes yet thinking how today was the start of their first semester and all thoughts of going back to lala land flew right out the window.

*But really, she grouse inside her own head, did Leda have to set it to six in the morning? Class didn't*
start until eight, so why did put it two hours ahead? The answer to this came out about half an hour later: Leda's wild unruly mane now tamed back to its normal straight-laced locks, seeing that she also had taken the liberty to shower before walking towards the dresser where she kept her things. She chose to go with a neon green tank top and a pair of shorts before she shifted her legs to the other form, taking Marian's advice to try to keep the transformation in one without letting herself get worked up.

Leda quickly apologized to the vampire for not realizing it would disturb her roommate when she set the alarm. She was an early riser and figure could use the facility to freshen up, and with another hour to spare, allow Marian to sleep but then also do the same herself. The vampire consider this thinking that was a smart idea but had one thing to say on it.

"Just give me a heads up next time, or at least maybe put it on a different station. I mean, I could've sworn I heard my Uncle Frank singing right there. Believe me, it is enough to even wake the zombies from their dead-like state." She was busy checking on her familiars as Bach and Grieg had fallen off their post and been flying around in a panic, both of them having bopped against the wall and each other before the room was silent. Leda could understand the reason given their super sensitive hearing, knowing while the noise wasn't as loud as one expected, to a vampire/bat, it probably sounded like an aerial bomb going off with them so close to the vicinity. She shot another sheepish look at them, seeing the vampire and her familiars were not too happy by that early wake up call.

"Oh right, sorry, you guys. I'll lower the volume so you don't have to go through that again." She saw two of the three bats glaring daggers at her while Chai whose first reaction was to zip underneath the covers and huddle close to Marian; the tiny bat had refused to budge until the vampire herself took him in her hands, stroking his quivering body until he stop shaking. Marian knew her intentions weren't mean and wasn't going to hold it over the Gor-Lamia, for now.

"Let's just get moving. I guess. I suppose it would be smart to get ready and have something to eat before we attend our first class together for the semester." Marian went to go get ready, taking a quick shower before adding the sunscreen onto her face and rest of her body. She exited the bathroom with a towel around her chest and ready to look for what clothes to wear, but found her bats did in her absence and set it on top the dresser for her to find.

Leda was rather impressed by how well coordinated they were when they went through the drawers and had selected different pieces of clothing out for the vampire to wear. "Your bats decided to take the courtesy to find you a suitable attire, and I got to say they did a good job on their given selection." Marian turned her attention to her familiars and went to give them each a stroke behind the ears to thank them for their assistance.

"You guys will be getting an extra special treat after dinner tonight." Chai fluttered up to her and rubbed his face against her chin, purring in pure delight. Marian would allow her pets to do what they wanted, seeing as Bach and Grieg still wanted to sleep some more while Chai decided to stick around and sit on Marian's shoulder as they left the room to head for the cafeteria.

They got in line behind other monsters who were up and about, with Marian selecting a bagel with a slab of scream cheese over it, a couple pieces of bacon and one assorted fruit cup for her familiars to nibble on when she returned to the room, finding the freshest among the others and suitable for her pets to savor on while she was out. She sought to grab herself a large pint of warmed up B-neg as she liked it to be room temp instead of cold, and added a bit of sugar to help get her buzz going.

As they went to eat, they talked about what classes they had scheduled, finding they shared most of the same classes. Leda heard her plans about going for the drama club and hadn't had anything to
keep her occupied in her spare time, and thought to help if she needed it. Marian wondered if Mike was just as excited as she was. Knowing him, he had probably been up way before them, but she'll have to wait and see.

The sun was sitting high up above campus after they exited the dorm and headed straight for the scaring building, both ready and eager to get started on this wonderful opportunity of theirs.

"So, you psyched about it?" Leda had thought of what Marian said, thinking that as long as she was there, she would do fine.

"Does the Wolfman howl when there's a full moon? Course I am! Why wouldn't I be?!"

Leda chuckled at the answer coming from the vampire. "Well, I had to be extra sure, 'cause I wanted to make certain we both are in this together; don't think I couldn't handle it if I went by myself."

"Don't worry; I'll be there with you every step of the way, you'll see. 'Sides, I promise to introduce you to my friend, and I'm sure he'll like you, too." Marian saw Leda was happy to hear as the two were walking towards the domed structure, seeing they weren't the only ones to arrive there. They saw a lot of monsters were reaching out to place their hand on the statue that stood before the entrance of the building itself. It was an ancient sort of campus tradition that one touched it for luck if they wished to pass and become true Scarers. Marian didn't want to disregard such superstitions even she found that it wasn't all about luck, but true skill and ability that got you anywhere in this line of work. She had a strong hunch that she, Mike and Leda were going to one of the few to make it out, diploma in hand and having the dream job of the lifetime.

Marian was looking for where Mike before she recognized his small green stature and saw he was struggling to touch the statue's paw. Now we can't have that can we? Marian flicked her hand, using her powers to give him a slight boost up so he touched it. Now she probably could've had him touch the statue's head, but then she was sure everyone would be wondering how Mike did that and wouldn't have any explanation to that matter. She set the cyclops back down, seeing he realized it was her doing, but then had to go inside as other monsters started pushing him forward. Leda had noticed right before she and Marian placed their hands onto it and went to join the rest of their year in the enormous rotunda-style classroom.

"That was a real nice thing of you to do. Was that your friend, Mike, the one you told me so much about?" Marian nodded as they were heading down the steps, trying to locate two empty seats for them.

"Yep, you'll like him too. He's a real sweet guy, and funny to boot." Some monsters went by them, ignoring the two for the most part, and seeing the room being filled up fast, not many open seats were left available. They saw the busts of distinguished scare professors and alumni sit on pedestals near the windows with a scream can in front of each one. This was where the magic happened, and knew that everyone was going to be trying to become just like those fellow monsters of the past, hopefully someday break their own sort of records.

Marian was starting to think they would have to go and split up to find seat until the vampire's eyes finally land on Mike who was sitting up front. He must've also been looking for her as well before his large pupil saw her standing next to the snake-like woman and started waving his hand rapidly for the two to come join them. They hurried to do so, having to push some of the other larger monsters to get by them and managed to grab the last remaining seat before anyone else could in the process. Marian set her bag down, taking her books and binder to set on the small desk attached to their chairs.

"Thanks for that, Mike. I'm glad you were able to save these for us." She noticed he was sitting next
to a violet-scaled reptilian monster that had three fronds sticking on top his head, four arms and legs each, and a long spine of a tail that had a bit of blue on the tip just like Leda's.

She couldn't help noticing the monster seemed a tad nervous as soon as he saw who Mike was ushering over, and his large green eyes looked ready to budge out of their sockets before the cyclops took the liberty to introduce them to one another.

"Yeah, you know I almost had to take a club and whack a few skulls to keep these bad boys from being snatched up; didn't know you brought company, but as I say, the more the merrier. Oh, before I forget, Mina, meet Randall Boggs, my fellow roommate and yes you guess it, a scaring major."

"Hi, you must be Marian. Mike's been telling me all about you. He didn't mention that you um..." Randall gave them a sheepish grin before Marian returned the gesture.

"Hi, Randall, it's nice to meet you. Oh, and whatever Mike told you, it's not all true." She saw him blink confusedly before she giggled. "I'm kidding, sorry. Just trying to break the ice here, as I'm just as much new to this as you are. You can call me Mina or Marian, whichever works best for you, and this here's Leda; she's also my roomie. Don't worry, she doesn't bite; she hisses."

The Gor-Lamia hybrid gave the two other monsters a shy smile while her snakes also decided to come out, also saying hello in their own manner, making a lot of hissing noise before backing down into the dark nest of hair. That seemed to work like a charm now that both parties met, seeing that they were all on the same page. But Marian's ear picked up something even if it was subtle as the monster sitting on Mike's left made a rude comment about him, and thought how dare they say something about her friend!

Well, let see how they like this then...

Marian twitched her pinky out in the direction of the two, watching as the thin soda can in the furry red monster's hand was shaken up before he went to open it, only to find himself and the fuchsia one-eyed monster being sprayed together at the same time, and then the pen in the other's hand broke and squirt ink into the red monster's gaping mouth.

Everyone, hearing the sudden commotion, watched as the two were being drenched in sticky black liquid until the female got up and went to give chase after the other monster for what he did, threatening to bash him over when she got her hands on him. Mike and the other saw what happened, but the cyclops turned to send a quick glance at Marian who had a slight smirk on her face; he knew it was her doing. Leda and Randall had found the whole thing hilarious as did everyone else. Mike, seeing that with no one listening to them, moved to speak to the vampire in a soft quiet tone only she could pick up on.

"Kudos on the soda-ink trick, but you shouldn't have gone and done that. You could get into hot water if the teach was here."

Marian couldn't resist, pretending to be offended while pulling off the "But I'm innocent!" look, like she didn't know what he was talking about. "Why, Mike, I'd never do such a thing, and even if that were true, I couldn't go making such promises. I mean, it's not my fault if jerks don't learn not to go dissing people within hearing range of the vampire!"

Mike, thinking how she did this before as kid defending him from others, didn't want her to get into trouble on the first day. "Well, maybe just this once, though try not to let it happen again." She shrugged as she said she'd think about it. Now that the side entertainment was over with and everyone in their seat, they were all waiting for the professor to start his lecture when he came through the office door and stood near his desk and the chalkboard behind him.
She read her schedule from front to back; the teacher was a former Scarer from Fear Co. before he
up and retired but decided to go for a teaching career to help mold young minds into professional
scarers. He was a semi-large monster that could pass off as orange dinosaur with a light yellow
underbelly and an array of small white spikes on top his head, and some on the tip of his tail. The
teacher had on a crisp white shirt and black tie with a clipboard in his hand, and a pair of specs sitting
on his face.

"Okay, everyone, settle down now! Let's get a move on today so we can begin!" He walked to the
board and wrote his name for everyone to see before turning around and addressing them in a drill
sergeant tone. "Good morning, students. Welcome to Scaring 101; I am Professor Knight!" He was
looking to the entire body, walking with his clipboard behind his back before continuing his spiel.
"Now, I'm sure all of you were the scariest monster in your town. Well, bad news, kids: you're in my
town now, and I do not scare easily-"

He didn't get to finish the rest of his speech as a beam of light fell over him, then hearing something
flapping loudly and forcing the curtains to close and making all the lights in the room dim till only
that one beam where the professor was standing was left.

Marian could sense the ongoing tension, but the vampire had her eyes following the being who was
causing the commotion, recognizing immediately who it was before they landed a few feet from the
professor. The monster was almost dragon-like in appearance but had a centipede lower half, her
scales the color of crimson and large wings that folded behind her as she stood before the class. She
was dressed in an immaculate red dress suit with a white blouse underneath but had the collar flare
up, making her seem more intimidating in the process. The professor, seeing who it was, was taken
aback by her abrupt appearance just like that. "Dean Hardscrabble, this is a pleasant surprise."

Marian noted that everyone was whispering even if it might seem rude while she was present, yet the
dean didn't seem to take any notice of it. She heard Mike talking to Randall while the dean walked
about the room, her face blank and didn't give herself away in front of them.

"She's a legend; she broke the all-time scare record with the scream in that very can."

Mike was indicating to the canister next to the replicate bust and saw the monster had went to turn it
slightly to make sure it was positioned correctly, nothing out of place. Once that was done, she
looked back towards the student body, speaking in a crisp but firm tone that delegated they all listen
when she spoke. "I don't mean to interrupt. Thought I'd drop by to see 'terrifying' faces joining
program."

Marian tried not to pout; seeing the way she said that made it sound like an insult than a compliment,
but knew there was more to be said and was waiting to hear why.

They all were rather curious about her unexpected visit, then heard the professor asking for her to
give a few words of encouragement to the students.

"Inspiration? Very well." She turned her focus on the entire lot, her millipede legs making clicking
sounds. "Scariness is the true measure of a monster. If you're not scary, what kind of monster are
you? It's my job to make great students greater, not make mediocre students LESS mediocre."

The vampire sent a side glance to Mike, but noted that the dean still had one final thing which could
have easily caused them all to drop dead at the next set of words she spoke.

"That is why at the end of the semester, there will be a final exam. Fail that exam, and you are out of
the scaring program."
Marian heard the students whispering/murmuring to one another, the fear so strong and thick it could choke a pachyderm with all this ongoing tension here. Yet her focus was on the Dean herself who had walked close to the professor, seeing her place something in his hand: a folded note that he took and placed in his shirt pocket. Then having everyone's attention on her again, liquid amber-colored orb staring right into their very souls, she said to them, "So, I should hope you're all properly 'inspired'."

With that said, the dean spread her wings and went flying towards the open window she came in through. Marian knew one thing that the dean had definitely inspired in class today: a good heavy dose of fear and anxiety as they were all in a right tizzy. Randall and Leda were both looking like they were ready to pass out after the Dean's encouraging words while Mike had been quiet and listened to every word spoken but hadn't said anything. Was he going to be okay? She was sure he was; Mike wasn't one to back down, but worried that he might take the dean's word too literally and hope that it wasn't going to cause any adverse effect on him.

The scaring professor then cleared his throat, grabbing everyone's attention onto him. Now that the Dean was gone, didn't mean they couldn't get started on today's session. "Alright, alright, who can tell me the properties of an effective roar?" No one said anything as they were still reeling from earlier. "Anyone?"

Marian knew the answer but saw Mike had his hand up, knowing he wanted to make a good impression on the teach and everyone else in the room. The professor notice and beckon him to proceed. Mike cleared his throat before saying now that he got their focus onto him, "T-there are actually five. Those include the roar's resonance, the duration of the roar, and the s-"

Yet before he got the chance to finish, there was an unexpected loud bang as the doors were thrown open followed by the ear shattering lion-like roar that surprised the whole class and hearing it echo in the room while the shadowy figure stood by the doors. Marian whirled in her seat and was shocked like everyone else by the unexpected intrusion that had came barging into class, pulling off such a stunt. She heard Mike muttering to himself and knew what he said, "Just who the-"

She wasn't the only one wondering that as they saw the figure step forward and showed himself for all to see just now. With her eyesight well adjusted to her surrounding, she could make out every detail of him even in the dim darkness of the room.

So, while at first glance she thought he could pass off looking like a fully grown grizzly bear with him standing at least seven, maybe seven and a half with a stretched out, cone-like nose that sorta resembled that of dog, bushy eyebrows and broad facial features that, when in scaring mode, could pull off a frightful sight. His body was covered from head to toe in light teal shaggy fur with an array of purple polka dots that seemed somewhat comical to her mind, but she dare not laugh as every monster did come off looking clownish, and would be considered rude to do just now.

The fur around his stomach was a lighter shade and note had a pair of tiny whitish beige, devilish horns on each side of his head sticking out. He had a slight lean but not overly muscular physique, given he either worked out or because of his shaggy appeal to give it off as such. His arms were significantly longer than his two legs and had four fingers on each hand, and three toes on each foot, with thick and sharp brown claws being present on all of his digits.

She also took notice of the large reptilian tail with brownish spikes lining up his back and likely down his spine, as well. The monster moved to stand down after his little demonstration, running a paw over the small tuft-cowlick he had sticking up on his head.

"Whoops, sorry. I heard someone say roar, so I just kinda went for it." He was giving off a sheepish grin with everyone busy staring at him, though Marian knew that he wasn't the least bit sorry as she
saw the twinkle in his eyes. He did that on purpose just to get the drop on them! Marian was not one who liked getting the jump on, pressing on her inner vamp instinct to strike back at the other monster.

Hearing him say this made everyone with the exception of a few - namely Mike, Marian, Randall and Leda - chuckle at his witty retort. Having that said and feeling some of the former tension now diminish after that demonstration to the class. Marian could sense Mike wasn't too happy by this untimely interruption, seeing he was also watching the monster making his way to an empty seat in the back.

"Whoops, excuse me, sorry... didn't mean to scare you there...hey, how you doing?"

The vampire was watching him while thinking to herself, Just who does this guy think he is to barge in like that? Marian couldn't believe the sheer audacity of this monster without even looking the least bit sorry for coming in when class was in session. Not only was he late on the first day and missed out on what was a very important announcement, but he didn't have a backpack or any stuff to take notes with for the class. So how was he going to manage passing if he didn't have the proper tools at his disposal or have the text to do his studying?

Maybe he had been in a rush and forgot to bring it with him. She tried to think that was a possibility, yet watching this monster just strut into class like some peacock and had startled everyone just rubbed her the wrong way. She glanced to the Gor-Lamia monster, seeing Leda had been close to shifting as she noticed the faint ripple on her scales, but thankfully she was able to keep it together and not change. Marian even saw Randall had went transparent for just a few second before resuming his natural form. They were her friends, and she didn't like her friends being scared by some jerk that thought it be a barrel of laugh to scare his classmates half to death. If he had tried that with her, he would've been in a world of hurt.

While the focus was on the blue furry monster who was heading for the only available seat, the professor finally decided to ask this tardy student. "Very impressive, Mr…"

"Sullivan. Jimmy Sullivan, but everyone calls me Sulley." This seemed to cause a stir among the other students who were now speaking in hushed animated tones; she could make out the excited buzz in their voices circulating around the room.

"No way, whoa!...He's a Sullivan."

Even the teacher was not above to showing his astonishment when he said, "Sullivan? Like Bill Sullivan, the Scarer?"

They saw the monster nodded and seemed to not mind that others were staring at him more closely. "Yeah he's my dad."

He made it sound like it was no big deal, but Marian could hear the smug undertone in his voice. Even their professor seemed now more interested and sent a smirk at his new student, all thoughts of writing him up for being late flowing out the side window. He would let it go just this once for now.

"I should've known. I expect big things from you." The monster now known as Sulley finally made it to his seat, looking to the front with sheer confidence on his cocky, smug face.

"Well, you won't be disappointed, teach." Marian could practically hear the heavy sighs coming off the females in the room and had to resist rolling her eyes as she inwardly groaned.

Oh great, just what they all need: love-struck girls swooning over this monster? How could they get so worked up over a guy and all because a name? Marian then had a thought occur to her. Come to
think of it, she didn't know who this Bill Sullivan was, but from the way everyone was reacting, he was a Scarer - someone renowned supposedly. None of their past letters mentioned anything about him, though they had been mostly focused on studying and letting the other know how they were in their two different realms. She would consider asking Mike about it later and see if he knew anything about these "Sullivan".

She shot a quick glance over to Mike and saw the look on his face...*Um on second thought, maybe it would be a bad idea to bring it up*, judging from the cyclops’ expression while he was looking put out and didn't think asking would help ease the anger in her small friend.

Mike decide to get the professor attention again as he asked, "Uh, I'm sorry, should I keep going?"

The professor shook his head and dismissed him without even glancing in his direction. "No, no, Mr. Sullivan's covered it."

The professor, and so was almost the entire class, was too busy staring over at Sulley who shot two fingers at the professor and made the gun-clicking sound in his pointed direction.

Marian had to keep from scoffing in sheer disgust while looking to her friends who also shared that mutual feeling by that display. "Everyone take out your scaring textbooks and open them to chapter one..."

Finally some normality was coming back as everyone started to grab their books, opening it to the chapter the professor referred them to. Marian was torn between watching Mike and reading the segment on what Scaring was and how to work it. Marian was finishing the second paragraph, discussing certain fear techniques and jotting down notes when her sharp hearing picked up on Sulley talking to someone.

"Hey, bub. Could I borrow a pencil? I forgot all my stuff." Marian thought it weird he asked for a pencil but no paper but then heard the scraping of lead against enamel, realizing he was using the writing instrument as a toothpick. Ugh that was gross even by her standards?! "Yeah, there we go...that'll get it."

Marian was disgusted and shot a quick glance at Mike only to see he was also annoyed by this obvious distraction. One thing was for certain: Sulley was so not going to last long in the program with that attitude.

Class continued through that hour until the bell rang, telling them it was over for now. Professor Knight finished giving them a light assignment to start off which he wanted due back in three days time before he dismissed the whole lot. However he stopped and called for Marian to stay behind a moment. "Miss Lubov, a moment if you don't mind."

Her friends all looked to her, but she told them it was okay and to go ahead without her as she would catch up to them later. She saw them go before walking to the teacher where he handed her a slip in hand. "The dean wishes to speak to you and wanted me to give you this. Also: nice work with that little spray trick. Underhanded but sleight. Use it to your advantage and you'll definitely go far. But next time, I will deduct points so let that be your first warning, missy."

Marian, though surprised he knew yet seeing he wasn't going to berate her for it, but understood that she wouldn't be let off the hook so easily if he caught her again, and there would be consequences for sure.

"Thank you, professor, and I will make sure to not do so again." The slip she was given was written by a scratchy hand, but it was for her to see her straight after the class, and where the room number
Marian had gotten a basic idea of the grounds thanks to that small tour given, and figured the best way to the admission/dean's office would be to fly straight over with not a minute to spare. It would be the quickest way to get to her without any delay, and if there was one thing she knew about the dean, Hardscrabble did not like to be kept waiting. The vampire transformed herself into a bat, grabbed her stuff and flew towards the window that was still propped open and went east across campus.

The administration office was like every structure architect here: a large formidable building that overlooked the grounds but had a small walkway with a luscious looking garden full of deadly belladonnas, bloodroots and hemlocks that were in season and being tend to by the maintenance gardener. She flew by the few there and made her way inside after she transformed back to her normal self. The interior of the room was a rich burgundy with carpet floors that were a bit lighter than the walls. The place had an air of refined history with the portraits of previous headmasters and headmistresses; she entered the lobby where the secretary was busy typing away on her computer with two tentacles while jotting and filing away papers with her other set of hands.

She didn't even hear her as she approached the desk before Marian spoke, showing her the slip that had the dean's handwriting on it. The monster's one eye blinked before looking up at her and nodded. "Oh right, please go right in, Miss Dracula. She's expecting you."

Marian inwardly winced. Ohh, that's right, she forgot: only the professors and some faculty members were in on who she really was, but thankfully there were no students around to hear what she said and made her way straight to the rosewood door with A. Hardscrabble etched on the gold plate.

She gave three quick sharp taps before hearing the Dean call out to her to enter. The vampire pushed the door slightly ajar, moving to step inside the large but elegant room that belonged to the dean. "You wanted to see me, ma'am." Marian did her best to stay calm while she stood before the draconian centipede monster who summoned her here after the first class she had. That must've been the real reason why she appeared as she had, but also nothing like to stoke the fire to force students to really get their act together just by a little "scare" and "tell".

The dean was behind her desk, looking over a few documented papers before turning her attention to the vampire and indicated for her to sit down. Marian did, making sure she had her body in a proper but not too stiff pose, considering she was before the dean of this entire campus, but that wasn't her only reason for being as nervous as she was.

She was waiting for her to say something and got right to the catch, but Marian thought she wasn't in a hurry to do so until finally she said, "It's good to see you after all this time, Mina. You have certainly grown since I last saw you, which was what, fifty? Fifty-five?"

"Actually, I think it was close to sixty years, but I understood you were a very busy person and probably had a lot on your plate, and can't make it to come see us whenever."

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Marian saw the dean put her clawed talons to her forehead and rub the spot between her ridged brow. "Sixty...which means Mavis is now close to sixty-four, seemed almost a lifetime ago. I imagine your father has had his hands full to raise the both of you, but now that you're here, one less burden for him to worry, though that pet project of his is probably another story altogether."

She understood the dean wasn't criticizing them, but Marian knew she had a sharp tongue and couldn't help giving it off the way she had, especially when her concerns laid on her scaredaughter's well being in the mortal world.
"A lot had changed over the few decades: humans seem to be picking up the pace some, slow but sorta noticeable when you hear the rumors going about, hence why Dad was insistent upon seeing the hotel be built so that there's no worry for any of the monsters in our realm. It's been some time since we last saw you, given that I also should thank you for what you did and not showing any nepotism when I chose to attend school, yet under a different name."

"Of course, but as your scaremother, I did have to be a bit...concerned given you know there hasn't been many like you that cross worlds to join this school." Marian knew what she was referring to, given that she saw the odd looks and the whispers when people saw her, so it wasn't any surprise why the Dean would request her to show and find out if she was fitting in all right.

"I know today was just the first day of class, but I was rather impressed by Professor Knight's lecture and found that this program is how I imagined it would be, but I know there are bound to be a few challenges that we all must surpass, and like you said, 'Scariness is the true measure of a monster', and everyone has a certain potent if they give it their all and know there will be those who make the cut." She thought of her three friends, and though she didn't know Leda or Randall as well, she imagined the two could be just as good as anyone, and sure they would be passing the course just like she and Mike.

The strict dean was pleased to hear her speak this with a fiery determination and knew that it would go a long way in the process. "Well, then I welcome you aboard the scare program; remember at the end of semester, you must pass to stay on it, so be vigilant and remember the following bases."

"Of course: a scarer is only the scariest when he or she will bring out the fear and never let it discourage them otherwise. Scarers must abstain to never showing fear in the face of the enemy."

"And the last one?"

Marian closed her eyes, thinking to all the past notes she had memorized before saying, "Be prepared for anything; as monsters, we are the true meaning of terror."

"Good, I'm glad you had those memorized. Learn to live and breathe with it, and you shall go very far in this field." The dean moved to stand by the window, her insect-like appendages making the loud clicking sound while she had her hands behind her back and indicated for Marian to stand beside her.

She saw her scaremother's reflection, but not of hers, yet she had some idea why she was having them stand side by side. They also looked outside and saw the people milling about the area, going to class or taking it easy. "A true monster can be a terrifying being in existence if they learn to harness it, so never think you are otherwise because of your outward appearance."

Marian didn't flinch when the sharp nails came to rest on her shoulder, not hard to dig through her clothes, but enough to get her to focus on what she had to say next. The vampire turned to look at the monstrous Dean whose eyes burned with such fire and determination. The same could be said reflection from her own green orbs as she thought of her vow and knowing she would not surrender or give in until she made it through the program and got her scaring degree.

"I will not lie and say you will have it easy here. You will go through some difficulties with those that you will come across, others will look down upon you as they see what you are reflected on the outside, and think you are inferior to them. You must think of this as a mere shell of your true form, so do not let it disregard you, and have you folly on your way to utter greatness."

"I understand, and thank you for your kind words Aunt Abb - I mean Dean Hardscrabble."
"It's all right; you can still refer to me as only behind close doors, and remember I expect you to prove your full on potential here at this school." Then she went back to her desk, scrawling a quick note and handing it to the vampire for her to take to her next teacher. "Now then, I have taken up too much of your time, and your education is very important if you wish to pursue a career in scaring, so I suggest you best hurry along. Just remember, my office is always available if you have any concern on any matter."

Marian didn't reply, thinking that she would keep that in mind as she was dismissed and flew off to head for her next class at the other building: The History of Pure Fear and Utter Terror.

Thankfully, the vampire hadn't missed much when she entered the room right in the midst of it. The professor was a tall gangling monster with thin spiny arms, huge slate-like nose, gray curved horns resting on his salt-pepper hair and pointing behind his head and eerie yellow eyes that looked directly at her when she came in. He wore a blue turtleneck sweater with a tan brown tweed jacket and a pair of dark trousers, seeing his large bat-like wings resting against his back when there were no need to have them out or take up space in the classroom. The vampire, not wanting to make things even more awkward in interrupting as he was in the middle of something, handed the slip to the teacher, which explained her tardiness before the professor gave her a look saying it was a good thing she had it otherwise he would have marked her down and affected her grade. She saw Leda had saved her a spot in the back, seeing the boys sitting adjacent to them on the other side.

Once she was seated, the teacher resumed his lecture and looked like he hadn't missed a beat, Marian being able to play catch up on what was going on. "Alright, now as I was saying, we will be going over what makes the past important to the very present. Here in class, I shall go over infamous monsters, some that I'm sure have heard of like AAAAAHHHHTila the Horrible or George Stinkington know for his horrifying BO which helped him overcome such odds. I expect everyone to at least report back to me how and why they were as a part of your final grade by the end of this semester. Now I will go over what we shall be going over this week and then…"

Marian saw that Mike was working fast to jot everything down, Randall doing the same and Leda had her notebook out while waiting for the vampire to get hers out, working side by side to get the teacher's word on paper. But then after getting hers finished, Leda wrote a side note and showed it to the vampire.

So was everything okay back there? We were all worried that something must've happened, and you took longer than we expected.

Marian saw the professor had his back to the students, knowing her friend was curious to find out what went down while she was away. Marian wrote her reply quickly and let the Gor-Lamia see what she wrote.

It was nothing major, just had to go over a couple missed signatures and see the admissions were all set, but it's all good, so no worries. She hated lying to her new friend, but had her reasons for doing this. Her grandfather was an impressive figure with a scare record that remained unbroken for many years, yet knew monsters wanted to surpass him but still in awe of this being who was a legend in both their worlds for his terrifying feats. Marian knew it was a small price to pay as she rather pretended to be a vampire with no special family trait than be surrounded by people who would either try to befriend or use for their own gain in the process.

Mike swore to keep her identity a secret and trust him to the full degree he would not to let it slip to anyone. And as much as she would like to tell Leda, she had to be a hundred percent certain if she could be trusted. Marian just wanted people to be with her not because of how famous her grandfather was or having the Dean as her scaremother, and was sure she would never hear the end of that if word got out.
Right now, all she wanted was to enjoy herself and be just like any normal student. If only she knew how the word "normal" didn't fit into her particular vocabulary.

Leda seemed to accept this, and Marian was just about ready to finish when she heard a sharp thud and a sudden scream, having everyone looking to see what that was about. They saw at the other table in front of Mike and Randall, two male monsters who were big and bulky in MU jersey, one with red fur and ram horns while the other a putrid yellow with snail-like eyes sticking out and been talking with his partner during the lecture.

But the two jumped when something came into close contact of their table and they shrieked like little girls when they saw a dagger embedded in the surface and the professor was now glaring at them. The teacher gave the two a moment before he went to address the whole class while he was busy fiddling with another knife in his claws, letting them know where the flying projectile came from. Marian knew teachers had certain methods to be used, but nothing drastic or life-threatening, and while yes him having a weapon would be considered hazardous, but he hadn't done anything other than jump those monsters who weren't focusing in his classroom.

"Now that I have your undivided attention, there is one thing I failed to mention before, but thought it would have been self-explanatory given you are in college, not kindergarten and shouldn't have to be holding your hand and reminding you the simple basics. The one golden rule I have and expect from everyone is no talking other than the subject matter at hand! Anything else, especially how Mr. Slurg here wants to get into this 'Tanya's pants' is not a part of our lesson plan, so is that clear?"

He glared at the two with glowing eyes, seeing that everyone got it as they said all at once, "Yes, Professor Stricklander!"

"Good, that is what I wanted to hear." The teacher promptly turned after pulling the second knife from the table and taking his rightful place back at his desk, finding everyone now quiet as a grave after that small but very helpful demonstration that showed he was not one to tolerate such disrespect in his room.

Leda and Marian shot a quick glance at one another, thinking that his warning might have also been reflected at them, but seeing those two idiots who had everyone gawking at the snail-like monster now slithering under the table to avoid looking to where a blue skinned monster with tentacles also look quite embarrassed by the attention given.

That explained the odd indentations in the wood, but Marian had to give props to the teacher for finding a way to get his students to fall into line by such means, especially with that nice accuracy throw and seeing that it had been close to cutting one of those moron's fingertips.

He must've been waiting for that golden opportunity to happen, nothing like a good scare tactic to make those see he expected them to shut up and pay close attention - not bad at all. She heard the teacher was strict yet having the highest passing class in scaring history, and Aunt Abby said the monster knew his subjects like the back of his hand, hence why she signed up for the class in the first place. Marian thought this was going to be one interesting semester for her and her friends.

Now that was taken care of, the professor cleared his throat and said before turning to the board, chalk in hand and ready to start today's lecture, "Alright, please open your texts, and we may begin our opening discussion on the beginning of the monster era…”

Everyone proceed to do as he said, quickly opening their books and hurried to copy down his note while all thinking the same thing: no one wanted to get on their professor's bad side or anywhere close to his array of knives that he kept out on his desk and within reach of him.
Yep this was going to be one semester none of them would forget for sure.
Chapter Summary

Marian is about to find out she has a zing and is the last monster she wants it to be. Also introducing a new OC to the mix so get ready to either love/hate her so enjoy.

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone as promise here's the next installment to MU with a zing, please enjoy and hope you all like this story and please feel free to write a review if any.

Disclaimer: Kyukitsune does not own Pixar or Sony Animation but the ocs for this is definitely mine so enjoy!

~0~0~0~

The day finally came to an end with all their classes over for now, while students headed off to enjoy the free time they had before the next day. Most of the majority were out lounging on the campus grounds, enjoying what little sunlight they had left before nightfall and then the real fun could come barreling in.

"So, I did some research on a few of the sororities here, and from what everyone has told me so far is that Eta Eerie Chi - or as it's called HEX - is suppose to be the best house on campus, right next to ROR, but it's like only the top elite get in, and then there's the fact that the presidents are usually the ones that are or were Scream Queens, so it's like they're royalty there."

Leda was telling all this to Marian on their way back to their dorms after they dropped the boys on their floor and headed for theirs. The vampire had noticed the odd buzz around the ground, hearing a few students talking out loud about this RUSH thing happening, reminding everyone about where it was located for freshmen to find it at and what time it all started. Marian went to ask Leda who immediately went to explain it in great details about the whole "pledge but really more like a party scene" that happened during the first semester and that it was located where all the frat-sorority houses were in one spot so it was easy to find your way around. She obviously had been doing her homework on them, given how she knew almost everything there was to know on the sororities/frats of Monster University.

But Leda was far from finished as she explain how while the ROR and HEX were the top dogs on the campus, they had different ways of letting anyone in. The ROR, while consistent of rich blue-blood high collar monsters, also wanted elite Scarers, the best of the best, to prove they were better than everyone else, while HEX would only allow those in after they performed certain "tasks" only if they managed to get all of them done before they were "in", no matter how degrading or humiliating they were. Then Leda did more digging to find that each member, mostly the head, were
the likable candidates for the Scream King and Queen which made them even more notable and considered almost god-like in everyone's eyes especially when they got the crown.

Marian thought how she described both houses and couldn't help commenting, "Wow, the way you put it, it's like they are both vain and egotistical, and only take pleasure in seeing others who are beneath them make fools of themselves. That and the fact no one else stands to gain it if those are the only ones being selected among the hundred here. I think it's a bit unfair. I feel that it leaves everyone at a disadvantage if no one else even bothers to give it theirs instead of just handing it to those two."

The way Marian saw it, the crown was just a shoddy representation of how they used the crowd to make themselves look more superior than the rest, not really deserving the fame or privilege from the way they put others down to feel good over their own.

Leda had to agree with that statement. "True, plus I don't think I could stand being in that particular house. Like I said, I heard they do lots of hazing and that it's always a ten percent you get in."

Marian raised a brow and wonder why no one on campus had put a stop to it. As if reading her mind, Leda explained, "Because HEX has had a long standing history than the other sororities here and can pretty much get away with anything they want - well, except murder, of course, so there's that. I heard the current president's grandmother is one of those head honchos in the industry and makes a plentiful donation to the school, like a lot, to keep it up and running. Yet, I think the Dean has had time and again try to see that house remember that they're not allowed to do anything that could bring harm to the students and the school as a whole, yet don't know if all those rumors are true or not."

Leda was unsure, and her snakes also like her but made themselves look like question marks as they tried to guess the answer before she shook her head, making her serpentine tendrils disappear back into her hair again. "But anyways, like I said, I'm thinking I'll either try and go for the Slugma Slugma Kappa or Chi Phi Argma,; those two seem less intense, and if I'm brutally honest, I don't think I could pull off the whole Goth look at Eta Hiss Hiss. You may, but me not so much."

Marian thought that Leda was not giving herself enough credit on some things, but if that's what she wanted, then she would be there. "Well, I appreciate that, but I'm not really so sure if I'll be doing that anytime soon. Maybe once I get to know them more in person, but who knows? I mean, it's not like they're going anywhere, and we got plenty of time to choose a house to make such a pledge to."

She admitted the idea sounded excited yet terrifying in the process. The fact that both her scaremother and aunt had been in the same sorority together as freshmen, but didn't think she could be like those in HSS, considering what she just learned about the other house. HEX really didn't sound like her cup of tea, either. The others she would need to look more into in case she did make the ultimate decision on such. When she remembered the stories from Gramps about his former frat, she wondered if there were any mentions over there and would love to hear about it if she got the chance. She imagined all the wild mischief those guys did, but turning back to her roommate who was discussing being a part of one of those, it would be sad because they couldn't stay in the dorm together unless Marian pledged alongside her friend, yet wanted to see what else there was before making such a life-changing decision.

Leda shot a concerned look at the vampire and couldn't help asking, "Mina, are you really okay with this? I mean I know we just barely began the semester and only share a dorm now, but I just hate the idea of leaving you behind while I do this."

Marian nodded. "Leda, seriously, I'll be happy to support you in whatever sorority you get into and be by your side through thick and thin, so yeah, it will be fine. Just do what your heart wants, and don't deny it."
With that said, the two decided to turn their attention onto more important issues: like what to go in. They realize the Rush was to start around eight, but sure there would be some early crashers either to help set up for the parties or enjoy some of the free booze in the process. But given that they wanted to look presentable out of their normal garbs, they went to get changed, talking about some other stuff while trying on different clothes for tonight. Leda said it was important to look the part and while Marian's choice of fashion was more sophisticated with an air of darkness and mystery for her persona. She didn't have any that were overly cheery but at least were in good taste.

Marian decided to go with a red v-neck halter that was bare in the back and a black silk jacket with a wide collar over it that was lined in crimson satin within the material, and tied by a sash around her waist. This was special in a sense as it had been the very first cape that her mother bestowed to her on her birthday - which was her last gift to her. The material had managed to survive the arson, but despite it having outgrown by the time she reached a hundred, she couldn't bear to throw it away in the bin or placed in storage collecting dust. Her only other option had been to modify it and having Aunt Lydia's friend, Charlotte, help with the necessary adjustments after she measured the vampire when she finished growing and taking the opportunity to look at the designs Mike sent from the fashion magazine she asked for, seeing which the young woman liked before having the final design all set and seeing it come out as stylish and one of a kind.

She pulled up a black skirt with spiderweb lace at the bottom, long fishnet stockings and a pair of knee-high boots to finish it off - one of Aunt Eunice's gifts to her as they were custom-made and rather snazzy with their cross-stitching on the leather and faux fur on the top.

Marian was about ready to leave but Leda stopped her. "Hey, aren't you forgetting something? You need makeup!"

Marian was surprised that her roommate pulled out a small suitcase out from under her bed, but then seeing it set open, she saw there was more inside it than she thought. One side had an array of lip glosses, the other rouge and the rest carrying whatever else was in it that immediately she grabbed and passed to her serpentine fiend to hold on while she went to work her magic.

Leda had her sitting on the chair while being told to hold still, otherwise she might poke an eye out. She trusted Leda, but she knew that it would be impossible to see her reflection as vampires couldn't because they were-

"There: tada, I really outdid myself here. Here, take a look see." Marian had wanted to say that it wouldn't be possible, but as soon as the mirror was passed to her, she gasped when she looked to the reflection.

She saw her mother's face - no, hers as she had the green eyes only from grandfather's side of the family. The eyeshadow had given them a smoky appeal, her lips a dark ruby red as if she had already sup on someone that evening, cheeks flush like roses that made her complexion not so ashen, but the more she stared, the more she couldn't help wondering how it was possible. No mirror or glass back home had such power, yet here in her hand had done the impossible for her!

Leda went to explain how some centuries ago in the mortal world, near the former temple of the almighty wise goddess, Athena herself gave Perseus his shield - one of his many weapons to defeat and "murder" one of the legendary Gorgons then. As the story went, it was some farmer, or sheepherder, or whatever local at the time was shifting around the rubble of the ruin and came across an underground passage under the building, seeing the cavern had walls of this stuff lining the very surface. That this was of the same viable material that made up the Aegis shield, or so the myth went, but nonetheless was not of any of the known ore in the human's periodic element chart which was still being processed back then. Although the mortals had no real understanding of the historical, rare
value they were standing on when they found it; the monsters, however, within the area had, thinking how it would be dangerous leaving it in the hands of their worst enemy and the terrifying weapons they could procure if left in their clutches; they immediately sent contact to their distant "brothers-in-arms" on the other side for their assistance in removing it before it could be mined and used against them in such future endeavors. It took a lot of monster power to remove every bit of the mineral down to the last nugget before the humans had time to go and dig it up, seeing it transferred over to Monstropolis for safekeeping.

Course, then was who had the legal rights over it which brought the Gorgons into play when they learned about this discovery and headed straight in with a legal documentation, demanding it be handed over to them.

"My dad said that it made quite the story and was a media frenzy at the courthouse when it first happened, and made such an immediate impact since learning how invaluable the metal was, and could become useful in the right hands though who got the ownership to this was the big question on everyone's mind. On one was the city as they were the ones to go and dig it up and see to it being brought here while the other was the Gorgons who were demanding retribution over the death of one of their own by which the mortal used said material that lead to her unjustly murder. Each side was making such claims with the lawyers working it to show that their clients deserved this, took weeks before it got settled and the jury reached a final decision. Although some would say we won it unfairly given that there were a few monsters that felt a bit worried about how they didn't want to cross a room full of angry snake women all hissy and demanding justice, and I doubt the people wanted to wind up turned to stone if they didn't give them what they wanted."

Marian could understand, as no one in their right mind would want to tick off a Gorgon or wind up being a lawn ornament if you chose to cross them in the process. "So, I'm assuming that was it: case closed, but what did they do with all that metal? I don't think they were planning on letting it sit in a vault collecting dust, did they?"

"You're right, because it would've been a total waste of resource, considering how many usage that can be used when grinded into a fine powder. The biggest back then was the scream canisters especially as they were more durable than the other stuff they had been using before this came around. I think they sold at least seventy-five percent to the Ahhhhh Canning company and made a fine mint at the price they sold it for."

"Sounds like you all had it made."

Leda shrugged her shoulder. "Well, most of us, but I think the biggest reason they did it was to have one over that oh so 'Goddess of Everlasting Wisdom' if you know what I mean. I bet if this person were real like the legend said, she'd be pretty PO'd about it; oh, the sheer irony, I imagine." She snickered, her snakes doing the same, hissing out loud as well.

Marian had to admit that did seem rather hilarious as she said it like that, while fiddling with the small mirror and had to ask how she had this in her possession.

"It was my grandmother's actually, one of the few things she willed to us before she died. While she might have been cut off from the rest, she did have her own 'nest' egg and kept some of the ore for herself and used to make ends meet to see that her son was well when she was gone. She left this to me along with these earrings I wear, and even though I don't have any of the Gorgon's capability to turn people to stone, I try not to stare at it too long in case something does trigger it. Better safe than sorry, you know. I know that vampire can't cast or see their own reflection, and I think you can borrow it since I got a spare, though not as good as that one, but you get what I mean."

Marian was touched, yet it didn't feel right to be using something that she considered priceless and
was of family importance. "Leda, I appreciate this but I can't, this is - this belongs to you and I can't just-" Yet Leda held up her hand.

"Hey, if my grandma were around, she'll tell you you can; sides, since you are likely planning to be in the drama club, you might want to learn how to do your face in case I'm not around. Last thing you need is to go in looking like some clown on stage."

Marian couldn't help it; she laughed, thinking that would likely be the outcome. Her and her sister had seen their Aunt Eunice with stuff on her stitched up face, both trying to wonder how that would work if they had the chance. Now Leda had given them this wonderful opportunity and couldn't help throwing her arms around the Gorgon hybrid. "Thanks so much; I promise I won't let anything happen to it."

As Leda went to do her own, she slipped a light fur jacket over as she didn't want to get cold out there. The nights were much cooler for the cold-blooded monsters who tended to layer up to make sure they didn't catch a chill from a stray wind. The two entered the elevator, but Leda looked to Marian, confused when she saw her press the button for the third floor after pushing the one for the lobby beneath.

"I'm just gonna check on Mike and see if he wants to come join us. I'd hate to leave him by himself while we're out having fun." Leda seemed to understand and told her it would be all right.

"Sure, that's fine; I'll meet you over by the Howl Omega House that's right near the gates. Can't be hard to miss it though if you get confused by the loud obnoxious partying you hear from the one across; that's the Jaws Theta Chi, and heard the president isn't hard to miss because he's called Big Red, so remember JOX Big Red, Me at HO."

"Right, gotcha. Thanks for the heads up on it. Watch out for Big Red." Marian would keep that in mind as soon as she reached the floor and went to go find Mike, remembering him mentioning what room he and Randall were and where it should be located. She passed a few freshman along the way, finding they were also either getting ready to go out to the Rush or had other plans for the evening. She didn't pay any attention to them as she was focus on finding room 319, thinking if Mike would say yes or decline the offer.

Of course she had a feeling he would likely say no, but if by promising him her share of Uncle Murray's world famous scarab fudge brownies, that might be able to sway him to come join them. Her friend was addicted to those delightful delicacies, thinking she probably should have brought the batch with her to make it all the more easier to convince him.

But she would try and see. Her friend was rather ambitious and self-determined, two fine qualities that any Scarer should have in their given field; Mike could be ten times the kind of monsters with that kind of zealous going for him. But she worried that he might burn out too soon, so she knew he needed to take time and enjoy the fine qualities that this campus had to offer them.

She was walking down the hall and finally found the door to Mike's room. She was standing there, ready to knock, but there sounded like a bit of a commotion going on. Was that Mike moving furniture? It pretty much sounded like it, and why was there squealing? The vampire gave a quick tap on the wood and waiting for Mike to respond. "Mike, Mike, you in there?"

Then something heavy fell, Marian worried that Mike was hurt. The vampire was ready to use her powers to force the door to open itself; when it did so without her doing, there was Mike's back to her as he talked to someone else. "...Listen, it was quite delightful meeting you and whatever that is, but if you don't mind I have to - oh hey, Mina, didn't expect to see you."
He had turned and was shock to see the vampire standing in the entryway, yet that wasn't the only
ting to catch him off guard this evening. Mina was looking much different than the last time he saw
her around after this afternoon. She looked like she was planning to go out somewhere, seeing she
was dressed nice and donned a bit of makeup on, yet couldn't help gaping at the sight of her. Marian
was trying not to fidget under Mike's unblinking gaze, finding she wanted him to say something
though being speechless didn't count as a compliment in her mind.

Hoping to snap him out of it and curious if Randall had also decided to stay in as well, which might
explain all that noise just now, she said, "Um, I hope I'm not interrupting something, but just what
are you guys doing, trying to play hurricane in here?" She took a quick look at the room, seeing it
had definitely been turned upside down before she looked to whoever Mike was talking to - and
couldn't believe it when she saw them.

It was that Sullivan guy from their scaring class this morning! What was he doing in here?! She
didn't know what to think; did Mike invite him to hang out? Somehow she very much doubted it,
especially when she saw the room was a total disaster and knew Mike would never leave his place a
mess as he preferred to keep his space well-organized and books alphabetized. The room was
completely trashed it, and knew who to point the finger at. She noticed that the blue furred monster
had turned his attention from Mike and focused onto her, seeing him lift his head to look at her, she
having done the same right then when something happened.

It was faint, but there was a pulse and a bright shimmer of violet that danced around those periwinkle
pupils when he locked eyes with hers at the very moment. Marian saw it yet didn't feel that alluring
connection that was supposedly a sign that it was to be. The vampire, however, was having a bit of a

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de pictures of Mike and Marian, seeing the room was a total disaster and knew Mike would never leave his place a

Marian blinked and turned her focus onto Mike who was staring with such concern in his one green
eye. She felt her mouth gone dry, but managed to swallow the hard lump down and said, "Um, yeah,
I'm fine. I just I wanted to see if you wanted to take a study break and come with me and Leda to the
Rush?"

Maybe get some fresh air while they were at it. She felt a little lightheaded and needed to lie down,
but also wanted to get as far away as possible as she didn't want to stand being in the same room as Sulley.

Mike took in the odd reaction she was giving off, thinking that they should go see the Nurse or have
her lie down as she looked like she was struggling to not lose it. Whatever it was, he never saw her
react the way she did before, thinking it probably had something to do with Mister "Big-Blue-and-
Overly-Obnoxious" being in the same room as them.

But he wasn't given any time to say this as Sulley took the opportunity to brush by him and move to
place himself in between the two monsters. He was leaning his forearm against the door frame, busy
staring at Marian while his eyes moved up and down her supple figure before he finally said, "Well,
what a coi-wink-e-dink, I'm going there myself, actually. See, I'm planning on pledging for the ROR.
You know best frat house on campus, and I thought that maybe you and I could grab a couple slime
shakes and get to know one another better.”

Marian managed to regain some of her senses as her brain rebooted itself after that near meltdown she was having just moments ago. But when she heard him speak and seeing him eyeballing her just now, she couldn’t believe the nerve of him and was ready to give him one-four and tell him where he could take those shakes of his.

Mike was on the same wavelength as Marian, given his impression before on the big blue behemoth was right on the mark, seeing he kept adding to the list of things he disliked about him: first by bringing his disgusting pig in here, then trying to make him catch that thing and having it bite him all over the arm and face then making a mess of everything which was cutting into his study time.

Now this jerk had the gall to try and make moves on his best friend while he was here; well, he would not stand for it, no sir!

Mike stepped in to get himself squarely between the two and was trying to push the larger monster away from Marian, keyword "trying" because it was hard for him to make the big lummox move, given his three-foot-four and hundred and ten pounds compared to his humongous stature. But Mike was not one to back down so easily and decided to let this Sullivan know what he thought on the whole thing.

"Sorry, Sulky, but I'm afraid Mina here has other plans for this evening, namely not with you, so that shake will have to take a raincheck along with any others you might try and plan on. Unfortunately our schedule is pretty booked this whole semester, so you're going to have to find someone else to fill that time slot in the meantime. But I have one idea: why don't you and Mr. Piggy just get yourself to that rush thing and-"

But Mike didn't get to finish, because that was when an six-legged red-orange pig decided to come out of hiding and hop on the desk where it made to grab Mike's prized possession and ran for the opened window. Marian was shocked, but then it was the other monsters that reacted almost instantly crying, "MY HAT! MY PIG!" The two monsters immediately turned and rushed out of the room, both giving chase to get the mascot that was making a break for it. Marian had to step out of the way to avoid getting trampled by the bigger monster, but knew it would take more than just running after it to get it back. No, the best way to catch that thing was by air, and lucky for them, she happened to be very aerial dynamic in that department.

Marian didn't waste another second as she moved towards the still-opened window and lunged out with her arms spread, willing the change to come. Her body started to shift and grow smaller, her arms seemed to be stretching and feeling the leathery go to connect to her legs before it was complete and managed to pull out of the dive and in the air before she even dare hit the ground, flying in the direction where she saw the swine was heading.

She also saw that Mike and Sulley were right behind it, surprising with Mike's skinny legs, but then this was his hat, and he wanted to get it back before the thing did something to it and would be beyond repair if anything. The two were chasing the pig around the grounds with Sulley looking like he was having a blast over this whole ordeal. Mina scowled in her bat form and wanted to fly down and smack him one in the head.

Oh, wait, until she changed back and see who's laughing! Marian flew till she was about a few feet from the ground and moved to get closer in position. She was thinking she could maybe head straight in and knock out the pig, holding it down until the others could get it, but Mike had to force her hand when he made to lunge, thinking he could pin it down himself, but Archie the Fear Mascot wasn't one to give up its one night of freedom all too soon.
"Whhooooaaa!" It kept on going but had one more passenger coming along for the joyride. Marian watch in growing horror as Archie kept running, now with Mike on top of him and the cyclops desperately trying to keep a steady grip and steer the thing at the same time. Sulley hollered loud, and Marian this time couldn't help rolling her eyes when he shouted, "Yeah! Ride it to Frat Row!"

Oh, for the love of rabies, do I have to do everything around here? Apparently that might be the case as she had to follow Mike when he passed a gaggle of girls listening to a monster singing a song about tentacles and serpents before Sulley came and broke the small concert - and the guy's guitar, no less. She kept on pushing herself to keep up with them, finding the galloping mascot with her friend and Mike holding on like his life depended on it.

Hang on, Mike, I'm coming! Marian saw it enter into one of the frat houses, Sulley right behind him and Marian having to avoid hitting some of the monsters that got in the way, trying to avoid being hit by one or two flying projectiles when she got way too close. No, she needed to find another alternative, and that was when she had a most brilliant idea. It could definitely work for sure, but just had to time it right!

Marian moved towards the center of the street, finding it wasn't overly crowded as she changed back, getting into position while waiting for her quarry to get into line up. Her eyes went to scan the house she last saw Mike and saw them exiting it through the front yard when one of the guys catching a football knocked the cyclops off, but the mascot kept on going.

Mike managed to pull himself up, seeing the pig still on foot with Sulley in hot pursuit of it. The cyclops then noticed the bikes and the trash can, thinking it could work if he hit it at the right angle. "C'mon, little pig. Here, piggie, piggie. Don't let me down, you little porkchop..." She was seeing it heading down this way with the furry monster still on its tail. She also noticed that Mike had picked up a football and threw it with all his strength, hitting the bike rack and like a set of dominoes, it fell in rapid collision. Unfortunately, Mike's timing was off by just a second as the trashcan did turn over, but the pig narrowly missed getting caught by it. Mike cursed and realized he was all out of ideas, but then heard the loud shriek and looked to where that came from.

Marian had notice what Mike try to do, and while the plan could have easily worked, she saw the pig had dodged the overturned can. Now it was her move. She went to stand in its path as soon as it came rushing towards her before letting it have it. The vampire opened her mouth and did what her father would do when he was extremely mad, giving off the loudest roar her lungs could muster within that very moment. Her pupils were slit and kept her mouth wide open to show off her long sharp fangs, letting it see the bit of drool dripping from her canines. She was really giving it all she got that even the background around her seemed to take on a sinister red and gave her such a demonic aura.

But the results were just as she hoped for, seeing the pig freeze before turning and zipping straight for the can to hide from the likes of her. Well, that worked out well. Marian saw Mike rushing to it while everyone else was frozen in place, still gawking at her when they heard her let it out. Marian was wondering if she should say at least something, but heard the hooting and hollering and finally everyone yelling at how awesome that was.

"Whoa, man, did you see that! That's got to be a banshee there! No way, that was definitely a demonic roar class five; she did the whole red thing, duh! Man, just who is that chick?" She tried hard not to blush under all the unexpected attention coming her way, but then saw a few monsters had already decided to give their congrats to her personally as they circled her, telling her that had been an amazing move she did.

But she wasn't the only one being noticed as Mike had managed to grab both the pig and hat before
he was being lifted in the air by none other than Sulley as he hoisted them like a trophy shouting, "Fear Tech’s mascot! MU rules!"

It seemed that the rush turned out to be a better outcome than anyone dared to imagine while the two different parties were being cheered on by the rest, especially those that saw the pig-riding earlier. Marian heard someone calling her name and saw Leda pushing through the crowd just to get to her as soon as she noticed who that was and had to personally congratulate her.

"Whoa, Mina that was like totally whoa! You have so got to teach me that!" Leda saw a lot of monsters were eyeballing the two, mostly the leaders of the frats and sororities, seeing who was likely to get them to pledge to their house.

"Yeah, thanks, much appreciate it...it was no biggie. I just was trying to help a friend out...and oh, yes, your welcome..." Marian was trying her best to get through this crowd, feeling she was being squashed in, though wanting to find Mike among the sea of people was harder than it looked. She managed to get by another monster who couldn't help but stop her and say that was the coolest thing he ever did see. Marian thanked him and continued on moving forward, but wasn't watching where she was going, and found herself face to chest as soon as she bumped into them, looking to the monster standing before her. "Oh, sorry, my bad."

"Not at all. In fact, I just wanted to come and offer my congrats to you on such an outstanding performance. Not many monsters could pull off a demonic roar class six, yet you did with no problem; you got quite the set of lungs on you."

"Um, thanks. it just took lots of practice, you know, to get it patent down." She saw the monster was huge, but had a broad and muscular form underneath the red cashmere sweater, seeing the words ROR emblem etched in gold on his chest. His fur was a rich dark purple as were his eyes; large thick horns looked to have been kept in good conditions from the gleam of the bone-white shine to them. When he smiled at her, Marian saw he had a nice set of razor sharp teeth with two larger ones jutting from his lower jaw.

Man, those are some impressive chompers he got. If Aunt Lydia saw him, she'd be well impressed for sure.

"So dare, I ask the name of the one with such an entrancing screech from one such as yourself?" His voice was like smooth warm velvet, and she swore she could hear some of the females around them tittering as he talked to her. Marian didn't have any clue as to why, finding he probably wouldn't let her go until she gave him her name.

"It's Marian Lubov." She felt him reach out to grab her hand, feeling his claw stroking the top of her skin.

"Marian - that's a rather befitting name. It suits you; I hope to see you around sometime. The name's Johnny Worthington, president of Roar Omega Roar, but I'm sure you've already heard of me."

Marian said nothing, but seeing that once he said that, the monster sent her a wink which she was sure worked on many of the girls on campus, but the vampire was more concerned on Mike and wanted to get as far from these guys and find her friend.

"Um, yeah, thanks. Well, it's nice to also meet you, Johnny, and again, appreciate the compliment, but I gotta go, so I guess I'll see you around." She flit away, zipping past the others until she found Leda who she grab without a backward glance and then managed to get them far from the crowds so she didn't have to be mobbed again. Leda, while surprised by her snatch and grab, realized it was the vampire but looked like she was close to hyperventilating. She hoped she wasn't having some asthma.
"Breathe, Leda, just breathe; um, should I get a paper bag or something?"

But the snake woman finally calmed down before she looked to her and cried out in a gushing tone, "Mina, you were talking to him - the Johnny Worthington the Third! He's one of the most popular guys on campus, voted best Scarer and nominated Scream King, and won it three years in a row. I couldn't believe, but he was totally checking you out!"

"Um, yeah, so I've noticed, but that whole 'I'm sure you've heard of me…', I guess that's what you're saying is he's got it all?" She glanced from out of the alleyway, her eyes zooming in and saw the monster with his frat brothers heading to where she last saw Mike, thinking it looked like he was now getting some attention and wondered if he was going to join that house.

"In layman's term, yeah, but that's because he's one of those from an infamous line of Scarers that goes back to the Dark Ages, and well, you can get the idea there. The Worthingtons are like the top elite here and sorta considered royalty to these people. Everyone of them have all went to MU, all pledged at ROR and all became top Scarers at FEAR CO. Jonathan the First invested in certain stocks which he made a killing back eighty years ago, and when he passed the reign to his son who did the same, they earned a nice gross income last year so they are living the good life, so to speak. There's no doubt that this Johnny will follow family tradition when he graduates here."

"Geez, the way you make it sound, it's like they really make a name for themselves just like that." She then thought of something else and had to ask, "Speaking of names, you know there's one that's been bugging me, and I know this might seem odd to be asking, but do you know anything about this Bill Sullivan guy? Judging from everyone's reaction back in class, I'm assuming he's a Scarer, but they all act like he's a superficial icon or something."

It was only half true to why she was inquiring this as she was also trying not to think back on the moment back in Mike's room before that whole pig chase scenario.

Leda rubbed her chin and thought hard on that one; even her snakes looked thoughtful as they pondered it out before she answered, "Well, I'm guessing you are kinda new, but I do know that while the Sullivans aren't high socialite like Worthington, but they're very good in the scaring business and have been for three generations. I think William 'Bill' Sullivan is close to breaking the Scare record for a fourth time and then want to go fifth before trying to bypass six. He's quite tenacious and driven, but then so is everyone when it comes to trying to get multiple records broken in their lifetime. Only one monster holds five in total, and that's Vladimir Tepes who is a legend, both here and the human world. I'm sure you heard the stories of what he done and terrorized so many, and why no one, not his enemies or rivals, dare to cross him. It was like the stuff of nightmares, but nonetheless he is still a renown Scarer just like some of the previous ones. His daughter Lydia was also a part of this school, but she's retired from the scaring. I think there was mention of a son, but there's not much to tell other than he is likely in the human world, and went into some sort of isolation after."

"Wow, you really did your homework on them, huh?" She had to say she was rather impressed with how Leda seem to know just as much about her grandfather and how she'd react if she knew she was actually related to the Impaler himself.

Leda shrugged as did her snakes. "I told you my mom had a knack for scooping out a story as a journalist and did a bang up job when she worked for the campus paper. She keeps a lot of the old files back home, but there should be a few in archives, so you might be able to see to learn more on them if you like."

"Yeah, I'll keep that in mind; c'mon let's go, and find Mike then." That was easier said than done as they saw a lot of monsters already emptying the street and heading back to their own frat parties to
enjoy the rest of the RUSH. Marian and Leda only took a couple steps until the path was once again blocked, but this time was by a group of girls all wearing skimpy red-black tops that showed their cleavage and mini miniskirts which had a few of the guys within the vicinity ogling them and maybe a couple that drooled when they saw them pass by and saw a flash of skin under their skirt.

The vampire knew that the fashion was big on wearing shorter and shorter clothing, but that just took it to a whole 'nother level right there. Marian saw that stitch in bright red across their chest was the house's symbol HEX, seeing that was the sorority that Leda mentioned before. The leader who was leading this pack was tall, though not tall like Sulley or some of the monsters, yet enough to have to crane her neck a bit especially as she was standing on the tips of her talons. She wasn't a large monster, but had a curvy form with ample bosom and a shapely backside when her tail lifted itself to show it off.

She looked almost human, having well defined features: a straight Roman nose, high cheekbones and slanted eyes with thick lashes to boot. Though that was pretty much it as her limbs were a different story as she had wings instead of arms and bird-like talons for feet. Marian saw her silvery-black hair had feathers mixed in those long, glossy tresses and had such piercing eyes that were the color of blood. The plumage of her feathers were slate black that faded at the tips to a dark gray.

The vampire took one look at her and figured out what kind she was the moment she laid eyes on her, sensing the haughty air around this monster. She could already tell there was going to be some serious tension here. Marian made to wait until the bird-woman was close enough, ignoring how she was slightly taller than her by a few inches but refused to be intimidated by the likes.

A Dracula never backed down from anything, and she would not do so especially with this monster.

The woman, seeing she wasn't cowering like her friend, said in a high tone, "Why, hello there, freshie; that was quite the stunt you pull back there. I have to admit not many pledges dare to go to such lengths to get my attention, but seeing as you did, I have to admit you got some guts."

Marian didn't try to deny it, but crossed her arms as she kept to her stance and not get lowbrowed by the harpy. "Thanks, but really it was just something I felt was necessary to help my friend out, he-

But the harpy wasn't paying any attention, finding she didn't seemed all that interested in hearing what she said before flicking her hair behind her and said, "Uh, huh, sure, whatever you say there, but listen, if you want to be in my house, you got to follow the rules: one is do not cross me, and two is don't get any funny ideas if you think of trying to sink your teeth into one of my guys."

"Um, pardon?" She spared a glance over to Leda who looked just as confused, but then saw the harpy move towards her, her face mere inches from her and her pointy nose close to hers.

"You heard me, freshman: Johnny Worthington is mine and off-limits to the likes of you. I'm Scarlett Sevun, head kappa of the HEX house and reigning Scream Queen three years running, so best remember that if you don't want to tick me off, leech."

Okay, now she seemed to get what was going on here. "Look, there's been a big misunderstanding. I mean, I'm not at all interested in taking anyone's 'boyfriends', and as much as your offer is flattering to say the least, I'm afraid I'll have to decline."

Marian had two reasons for it, and one of them was the way that Scarlelt had eyeballed them like they were nothing, but something scraped at the bottom of her shoe. But as the harpy had been glaring at Leda the most and knew she didn't like what she saw, Marian decided to tell her off.

"And for your other concern, I'm not going to go and start marking territory like some mutt would, so
there's no need for me to piss on your parade. By the way, don't ever call me leech." She then hissed, fangs out and eyes glowing which had the girls behind Scarlet yelp as they weren't expecting that all of a sudden, but Marian ignored them as she took Leda's hand and went past them.

Honestly, and they say that monsters in HEX were supposed to be elite; they looked like they nearly wet their panties just then.

Leda had been mostly quiet on the way, and just as the vampire was ready to ask if she was all right, she spoke and Marian could heard the sheer awe in her voice, "Wow, I can't believe you went and did that. I mean really no offense, but you know that she's the HEX president of that house, so I don’t think she's going to let this go and…”

Marian understood why she was being worried, given harpies were the ones who really were not one to let go of grudges and do anything to get back at the ones that do.

"Yeah, well, I don't care if she was the queen of Scarba; the fact is I'm not to stand being bullied by someone who thinks her thing don't stink and seeing how she looked at you the way she did didn't settle well for me. The fact she was like 'oh, look at me and worship the ground I walk on'. Please, I don't really think I could stand being around her for another second, and honestly, I don't go ditching my friends just to be in some wannabe clique with that preening peacock."

"Thanks, Mina, that means a lot."

The vampire smiled and put her hand on the snake woman's shoulder. "Anytime, c'mon, let's go find Mike before someone else decides to come and bother us. I swear, they're this close to eating my knuckles."

Leda thought she was kidding, but after witnessing how everyone crowded her without warning and seeing how close the vampire was getting pretty agitated by it. Marian wasn't used to such attention, though admitted it had been nice, but didn't find it comforting when they all seemed to crowd around her all at once.

Hopefully Mike was faring better than she had given that she saw him being surrounded by all the other monsters, but the cyclops was probably lapping it up and enjoying that kind of thing. It wasn't that hard to find him as they saw him standing by the stone steps leading to the largest lavish house that had the ROR logo hanging on it. Talk about a bit of overkill, Marian thought to herself, but then noticed that the members of said house were around Sulley, seeing him being welcomed into the group while leaving Mike to the side.

Mike tried to show he was like them, but saw the ROR look down at him and Johnny telling him to try the other frat that was right across from them: a small group that were trying to get others to pledge by having a cake and balloons out. It looked so pathetic, and Mike knew that house was not even top dog material.

"Is that a joke?" Mike was sure it had to be, thinking there was no way he was like those guys at the other end. They didn't even have true scare potential like he did! He turned back to the others, hoping to convince them he was a Scarer like them before Johnny was getting a bit ticked by this guy and turned to Sulley, wanting him to deal with the "small" problem before them.

"Well, he's not really my friend, but sure...you heard him, this is a party for scare students." Mike couldn't help but argue he was one and the furry monster just had to retort in order to get him to see the bigger picture. "I mean, for scare students who actually, you know, have a chance."

Mike was getting frustrated especially when he heard that crabby monster, Chet said, "Ah snap!" and
couldn't help yelling, "My chances are just as good as yours!"

Sulley didn't believe him. "You're not even in the same league as me." Mike had been ready to counter back, but a new voice enter the conversation, having all eyes on her.

"Oh, and how exactly do you believe that to not be possible?" The RORs and Mike turned to see Marian coming over with Leda beside her. "From my understanding, there are three rules a monsters knows on what it takes to be a Scarer: a Scarer is only the scariest when he or she will bring out the fear and never let it discourage them otherwise. Scarer must abstain to never showing fear in the face of the enemy." She was halfway marching towards Sulley and glaring up at him. "I bet you don't even know what the last one is or why those are there in the first place. A monster, whether big or small, born of feathers, fur, scales or leather, is a monster and if they have what it takes to scare, then so be it."

She couldn't help but have her index finger poking him in the chest and had one last remark to him, letting him know what she really thought of him and see it sink in through that thick skull of his. "A true Scarer doesn't rely on just a name or family background; it takes guts and skill to pull them off, so unless you got them, then you're all bark with no bite." She snapped, clicking her teeth together and heard a few "oohs" from the one still outside the area who were listening to every word she said. The RORs said nothing, though a few glanced at the leader who was watching the scene while Sulley who was the center of attention thanks to her and did not back down.

The blue monster who didn't want to come off looking pathetic turned everyone's focus to Mike as he snorted and said, "Please, I know what it takes to be terrifying, him I highly doubt could scare a itty bitty baby even if they were three months old." That did it as all the other monsters agreed with him and were now laughing at Mike who had enough and left, Leda choosing to go follow him as she sent a glare at them before heading off. The vampire didn't think this night could go as horrible, but seemed Sulley proved it and turned her emerald gaze onto him and said some last cutting words to his face.

"Then you're more of a fool than anyone I've met, Sullivan, and I would never want to be with someone like that, ever in this life or the next." She didn't even give him the chance to respond as Marian whirled and went in the direction where her two friends left, knowing she had cause quite a stir together and by tomorrow it would be all over campus for sure.

Marian caught up to the two as they hadn't got that far towards the gates and went to rest her hand on Mike's shoulder. "I'm sorry Mike, I didn't mean for that to happen. Hearing what they were saying, I just couldn't stand by and let you take it."

Mike nodded as he held the ratty MU cap in his hand, relieved to see that it was all right: a bit chewed on but still in one piece. "It's okay, Mina; I know you were doing it to tell that jerk, and don't worry; I'm gonna scare circles around those guys, no sweat. Sullivan won't know what hit him when I'm the one surpassing him during the exams and leaving him to eat my dust."

"Glad to hear that, Mike, and I know you will for sure."

Marian was relieved to see he was no longer upset, and Leda went to join the conversation. "Yeah, I mean so what if he's a bigger monster and that roar of his almost made me jump outta my skin? I mean, really, there's nothing wrong with you, and you do have a certain 'uniqueness' which makes you stand out for certain."

"Um, thanks, I think?" Marian had to keep from shaking her head before deciding they should call it a night, finding she just had enough excitement for one night. She would have to apologize to Leda, because she had been hoping to go talk to the other sorority and must've been waiting for her to
"Well, I don't know about you, but I think I just want to head back up to the dorms and rest my feet for a bit. Mike, you can come join us if you like. I know it's kinda late to be studying, but there's a batch of my Uncle Murray's scarab fudge brownies sitting in the fridge just waiting to be nibbled on."

She saw it worked like a charm as Mike had sampled a few of her foreign cuisine during his first visit to her world and had a sweet tooth that loved the kind her dad's friends brought over from around the globe. Seeing the two monsters who looked to be drooling at the words "beetles" and "brownies" and knowing they were going to be eating the whole box before the night was finish.

They were just halfway across campus when they found Randall by the fountain, splashing his face and muttering to himself. Judging from the white icing sticking to his scales and seeing how he seemed rather upset when they saw him, Marian assumed he hadn't had a good experience either.

Leda was the one to walk towards him, removing her scarf around her neck and moved close to him. "Randall, you miss a spot. Here, I'll get it." Randall turned and saw the other reptilian monster at his side, having dabbed the cloth in the water and used it to remove the frosting that was on his cheek. He hadn't moved, given that he was still upset by the turnout that happened. So far, no one had wanted his cupcakes, and then he found himself being splattered when something rushed by and knocked them on his face. He heard a few people laughing after he went to remove them and heard them say, 'Yeah, what a total dork! You mean Lame, that's what he is!'

He couldn't take it and ran out of there, wanting to get as far even with his obscured sight. Randall had gotten to the fountain and tried to remove the stuff without stinging his eyes with the treated water. Then hearing Leda and saw the other two monsters beside her. "Hey, want to come join us in our dorm? Mina has some brownies, and I was thinking we can pop in a DVD or something, figure something light for what a bust this night turned out to be."

The reptilian monster had to agree, finding that it was a bust but having the three offer to let him join them for a movie and some sweets did seem to perk his spirit a bit. He nodded his head and followed the other back to the dormitory.

"Oh, um, Randall, before we head in, I should let you know someone dorm crashed us while you were gone. I think they might have also broken your glasses, too." Marian remembered the boys' room was a right mess, thinking they were probably going to have to fix things up before coming to theirs. Though while not everything was ruined and books could be replaced, when Sulley had rushed out with Mike to go after Archie, she had heard the sound of glass breaking and saw a pair of red-rimmed glasses on the ground that had been squished under the big blue monster's foot.

Randall, hearing this and then having his fronds sticking up, shouted, "Wait, what?! But those were my only good pair!" He knew Mike said he should switch to contacts, but those tiny lens made his eyes all itchy, and then with the frosting splattering his face made it ten times worst. He had been hoping to take them out and use his old ones to rest them for a while. It would take forever to get a new pair with his prescription; how was he supposed to read the material if everything came off squinty and all a blur?!

"Yeah, Sulley really did a number in there with that pig of his, and he for one didn't even have the decent courtesy to say he was sorry," Mike muttered, now with a scowl as he thought of the jerk and would've liked to give him another piece of his mind.

Marian could see that Randall also shared that same look with his four hands gripping tight and growling, "Sullivan…"
"Guys, it will be okay. Randall, if you need a pair, I think you can use mine if your sight is just as bad as I am. I only recently got into contacts the summer before, but I kept my old glasses just in case." Judging from his squinting, she was thinking he must be as near-sighted like herself and Leda figured she could let him borrow hers until he got a new one ready.

Randall was touched by the gesture and looked to her with a small smile. "Thanks, Leda, I appreciate that."

The snake-woman smiled at him. "You're welcome, Randall. It's what friends do: they help each other." Even if tonight hadn't gone as planned for the four, it hadn't been a total loss as the boys joined the girls in their dorm to enjoy Mina's brownies and had a good laugh at the movie Leda had popped into the laptop. They all huddled together, making small talk through the film before they called it a night. Marian saw her bats returning from their flight outside, reaching to stroke Chai as he made himself at home on her stomach as she lied down.

"Well, guys looks like we really got a lot of grounds to cover, but I think we'll manage just fine, won't we?"

She heard them chirp in agreement with her, and the vampire went to go and turn in, knowing tomorrow there would be a lot to do and Mike was determined to show off that blowhard, and would see to it she help him every chance she got.

She tried not to think too much on it, but the thing that bothered her and was running through her head was: of all the monsters to have be her soulmate, it had to be a jerk like Sullivan!
"All right, then, let's see how scary you monsters can be! Ready position: Common crouch!" The students all but jump into their stances, bending their bodies halfway and looking forward as they followed Professor Knight's instruction to the letter. Today was their second day of class and the lesson for this week was going over the basics and how to pull off the right scare. This was to see how well they knew their frightening techniques for this course, having the teacher examine their maneuvers and gauging what was their strengths and weakness, what need to be target and how they can do it without screwing it up after they got it right, if they did without fail.

"In order to scare, one has to be in the proper posture that will make the kid scream in sheer terror. You don't want to come off as amateurs do you? No then get down here and show me what you got!" The teacher said after he finished roll call and the monsters all doing as they were told and standing in two separate formations but left enough space for Professor Knight to walk to and forth between them as he came to cross check each one before him.

Marian was glancing over at Mike who was standing on the other side and a bit to the right from where she was her while Leda and Randall were about three students on her left. She could see he was in the correct posture though indicate with her pinky with the pointy nail to flex his claws out just a bit so he would look super imposing while in this pose. He saw it and immediately did, sneaking a grin her way to say thanks for that.

She was glad to be of help as Marian knew this was just a small stepping stone in their class's progress in between both the standard and practical work they had to go about before the finals. Her aunt Lydia had lecture her over what scare methods that the professor would likely go over during the semester, having her practice until she was satisfied that she had gotten them patent down and her niece would be better prepare for the school year. She even mention a few other exercises that may or may not make the current curriculum if they were according to her aunt class 'outdated' after centuries yet old school scares did help score bonus points on the exams, especially if they can be pulled off correctly without any trouble. Marian admit that she could perhaps if she try real hard and thinking of letting the others know in case as it could be be most resourceful in their studies. The first few steps were always the easiest but would get harder further down the road as soon as everyone got it done properly and were move onto the next scaring stage depending on fast they all pick up without any slackers in the process.
"Okay people work with me here, you are in this program to do what now? Scare a child or be a clown, if your answer to the first is yes, show me what you got: Midnight Crawler!" The professor strolled over, clipboard behind his back and surveying each student while making the necessary adjustments before he kept moving onto the next monster and doing the same for them. He kept at it like a drill sergeant, barking out commands and watching them jump to it with no hesitation on their part. Some did better than others but had a long ways to go if they wanted to become a Scarer and work with the big boys.

Every monster wanted to be the best they could be and failure was not an option in his book, no sir.

"Keep at it, remember lay out the groundwork then strike, you want them kids to be screaming for their mommies! I wanna see matted fur, people, and yellowed jagged teeth; the grosser, the better! Moving onto the next pose: Basic snarl, go!"

Professor Knight watch the entire lot fall into position, extending their arms above their heads with mouths wide open, showing off their teeth and growl while he marched his way to where Mike was. The teacher gave the cyclops a quick once-over seeing it wasn't too shabby but it could be better in his book, "You call that a snarl? Show me some slobber! Drool is a tool, kids! Use it!"

Then he headed over to the next monster, who much to Marian's vex frustration was Sulley standing adjacent to her on the other side. She hadn't been expecting him to move so quickly after she got into place with Mike just opposite her until the bigger monster made to scoot over - well more like forcefully push the cyclops out of the way and into the other monster next to him. When Mike got back to his feet, rubbing his sore head and found Sulley had taken his spot. He barely had time to make any comment as everyone was already lined up and the teacher started issuing orders. Mike had hurried to join with the rest of his fellow peers but not before giving the cyan polka dotted jerk the stink eye.

Marian could relate to how upset her friend was as she wasn't overly thrilled by his presence either and would've love to give Sullivan a good smackdown but probably have to wait until class was over and without the teacher watching her actions closely.

Throughout the lesson, she thought she could ignore him but seeing the other monster was doing everything he could to gain her attention with the oddest of gestures: either flexing his bicep or sending her a look that she had no clue why the other two female monsters on each side of her were silently giggling or feel the sudden rise in temperature closing in from either of the two.

Geez at this rate I might have to find an excuse to get out of here, the quickening heart rates of them, the sound of it pumping that sweet life nectar, how it's been nearly an hour and a half since she had her one cup of Neg B before class but finding had to bite down on her control.

She was thinking of other things to make the thought of drinking blood less enticing, imagining Uncle Frank in his moldy underwear, Aunt Wanda during the shedding period and finding hair in the tub, having a cup of Uncle Griff's special brew that taste like smelly sock and three week old vomit that was made with a bit of - yeah okay that did the trick. She was relief to also see the two other monsters had also got back to themselves though noticing were giving her a wide girth and seeing a couple schoolmates also looking her way. Normally they would not let themselves be push by something that look so humanly yet when the vampire turn and seeing her eyes were dilated but seeing the area around the pupils were now blood red, sharp fangs hanging over her dark lips and a deadly snarl that look ready to bite their heads off if they said anything and was daring them just for the heck of it.

The two monsters had lost some color, looking almost ashen when they realize how dangerous she
could be if they push too far and immediately clap their traps and even push to stand a couple feet away from her until Marian manage to compose herself once more. The dinosaur-like teacher had glance once to the side, sensing the strong tension but said nothing.

Though did put Miss Lubov down for extra credit on that remarkable display of the 'Silent yet Scary' method that only the advance could pull off and seeing a few other students also had the willies when they felt the ominous aura coming from over her way. Mike and her two friends shot worried glances until they sense their friend was calm again and relief to find she was okay.

Marian manage to pull herself together until she could say her hunger was dissipate and send a heated glare at Sulley, saying it was his entire fault she got work up because of those two horny females so close within her vicinity. Yet instead of what she had hope would get the clear message for him to back off, he just gave her a wry smirk and whisper 'That was totally hot…' and while she kept a passive expression was utterly dumbfounded by this overgrown buffoon and wondering if he had any screw loose in that big head of his.

The vampire mentally smack herself, realizing what might be her problem as it started with a capital Z and end with an 'ing. Of course, that's what it was, she knew the zing happen upon first eye contact though finding it was a one-way street and Marian would rather see to have it unzing as she didn't like the idea of being stuck with Sulley for the rest of her unnatural life. It had to be an honest mistake, there's no way he was her soulmate, yet it was mind-boggling how she saw the sign yet didn't feel it, it was an oddity she couldn't understand.

Marian would have to look into this later though trying to deal with Sulley and his ongoing arrogance for the rest of the school year was starting to look highly unpleasant for the vampire. She could tell that Mike wasn't as happy as she was and knowing she seen Randall and Leda were very concern when they saw what was happening before their eyes and could do nothing to stop it. Marian just hope class would be finished soon so they could leave and be onto their next class, which thank rabies was Sulley-free.

The vampire was trying to turn her focus back onto the present with their scaring exercises and resume her posture. Now that the teacher was standing right in between them and seeing Professor Knight took his sweet time surveying Sulley's technique, gauging his arms that were outstretched and his mouth slightly ajar and emitting a low growl when Professor Knight stop in front of him. It made Marian think of an angry grizzly when ready to attack, either that or he was just trying to make it look like it as he stared directly across her way. She wasn't all that impressed, same with Mike yet the professor, on the other hand, thought different. "Now here is a monster who looks like a real Scarer!"

Wait what? She could almost hear that coming off Mike though she was also thinking the same herself as she couldn't believe her ears. Him, seriously, the vampire had to bite back the scathing remark on her tongue as she resent that statement. But the one she was more concern on was Mike as she noticed the cyclops bitterly glancing at Sulley and saw the heavy scowl on his face when the professor's back was to him.

As soon as the professor move onto the next student, Sulley couldn't resist gloating all about it before the shocked Mike. He threw the double finger pistol to the cyclops as if to say, 'Ha told you!' followed by giving Marian a wink in her direction that was to show that was all for her.

The vampire resisted the urge to roll her eyes while thinking what a jerk when the teacher called out again and everyone falling into position. Marian try her best to ignore the blue behemoth and hoped that the rest of the week would not be like this with him. But unfortunately remember that there were four months left before the finals and was literally stuck with him until then.

Ugh, well that sucks for sure...oh well, at least she had Mike and the others to fall back on and that...
made up some of the more positive outlook to this somewhat bleak predicament. Even though it had barely been forty-eight hours since they all met, she and Leda were becoming fast friends, and Randall was also entering their knit-tight group after that RUSH debacle and simply hung out together in the girl's dorm.

It was nice having the boys join them to watch a couple movies to ease the tense mood everyone was in. Leda had gone and choose two classic that the guys already knew about yet Mina hadn't even heard about them before. This put a big smile on the Gor-lamia's face and even her snake seem to be anticipating with excitement as Leda set it up and had them all gather together while she set up the secondary monitor and connect her laptop to get it to play on the bigger screen.

The first was 'When Hairy met Seelie' followed by 'Yes, Monster', both were interesting and Marian had a very fun experience from each of them in turn. The first one being an old school romantic-comedy between two monsters at odd though through certain mutual friends that everyone but the two main character saw had a connection. When this was explained to the vampire who hadn't the first clue of theater films other than what she heard in her world as mostly consisted of black and white and were silent until later on in the decades. She was surprised to find these were in full-on color with actual dialogue and that this movie was twenty-four years old since it came in theaters before being remade into VHS then DVD like the slim silver disc that she saw Leda put inside her laptop.

The movie plot and the interaction between the main characters were interesting and had some funny moments that everyone enjoyed, especially Mike who took the liberty to recite Hairy's words out loud, making them all crack up during the process. The second, 'Yes Monster' was more up to speed and had a lot of hilarious hijinks about a down on his luck monster that had his life change around by answering yes to everything and even found a romance with another. Marian was between laughing and smiling at how both films had her in total awe over how it was like a play in itself and was giving her some helpful insight on acting.

She looked to her fellow monsters and seeing how content they were sitting together and enjoying those funny moments with happy grins on their faces and forgetting about earlier that night. Marian thought this was how it should be, having people who could relate and be friends. This was what she dream of since that moment when she and Mike as kids made their promise and now seeing it come true before her very eyes. She didn't have just him but two more added to their small number and it didn't matter if they might seem like the odd bunch, they were all together and that's what really count in Marian's book.

They each got to share some things in between the movies and finding out a little more about each other in the process. Marian already knew about Leda's family but that she like to sketch in her free time and enjoy gardening as she could define the flower by their color and breed. Mike beside his big dream of being a top Scarer, once hope to join his favorite baseball team, the Screechers, the best of Monstropolis and remark how he could get to the bases faster than other kids by pulling himself into a ball and rolling straight to the bases before they could get him.

"Hey maybe after I finish the Scaring gig once I break the all-time scare record, I could consider sponsoring them and who knows maybe they'll let me out on the field. I mean how could they resist having moi up on the mound tossing a couple fast ones out there, though might need to practice on my throws then!"

Mina told as much to the two as she could while only Mike knew the full-on truth and would see how things go later down the road while saying her family still lived in the 'old country' and had wanted to attend since she met Mike as kids. Then it was Randall's turn and explain he had a small middle-class family, his dad was the breadwinner as he work as the leading engineer down at one of
the major factories while his mom was the stay-at-home housewife who like to make every Sunday special even though his older sister, Regina lived far away but tries to come visit on the holidays with her husband. The last time he saw her, she told him how they were planning on having kids and Randall was a bit excited and nervous to be an uncle.

"I know that I want to make my folks proud by being the first monster in the family to be a Scarer and hope that I pass the classes with flying colors." But then he explain with such warm enthusiasm that one of his favorite hobbies was that he liked to cook, baking sweets being one of his special knacks as he admitted he did it on his spare time when he wasn't studying or helping his mom with stuff she needed when his dad was stuck at work. He had been hoping to impress the others down at the party with his culinary skills. Marian had thought the gesture was very sweet on his part, but after seeing what the frat and sorority people were like over there before finding Randall covered in frosting and realizing what happen to him. It took all of Marian's sheer will not to go flying back there and giving them a piece of her mind yet thought otherwise given that the reptile didn't look all too bother and had decide to let it slide, for now.

I guess it was a good thing he hadn't been near those ROR jerks after the way they had with Mike, probably would have done the same with him, maybe moreso.

But while the first batch had been unfortunately ruined, Randall had a couple leftovers and brought them to share with the others, letting them taste his delicacies for themselves. Marian had thought it delicious after a few nibbles as did Leda who also commented she tasted something else to it. Randall admitted he added a dash of cinnamon with a little vanilla extract to give it that extra kick for flavor. "I sometimes like to get creative and try different thing, trial and error but I think that it helps me and I do love a good challenge every now and then."

"Wow, I never would've thought of that, but these are really amazing! If you were to ever consider opening your own bakery, I probably be the first in line to get a taste of these delightful beauties." The reptilian monster's cheek flushed a dark plum color as his friends all agreed, finding he was glad someone else enjoyed his sweets and making a mental note to make some more in the near future. It was easy to forget the whole mess with RUSH while they took to making small talk in the process and enjoying the snacks they had.

Randall's comment to Marian how he liked her uncle's brownies, especially the crunchiness the scarabs gave when he bit into them. Leda thought the same thing yet said nothing beat her dad's homemade Baklava and wished she had some to share with the group. Though she did promise she would whip some up as soon as possible, Randall actual offering his assistance as he always wanted to try his hands on different desserts from foreign places. "Beside six hands are better than two and bet we can make them within a short time frame without much worries."

Those two had spent the entire evening chatting about what sort of delectable treats to make for their upcoming study sessions, the vampire guessing they'd be baking up a storm with all the ideas they had, Randy writing them all down to remember what they discuss and scheduling when to do so for the two to meet up after classes.

Marian notice the interaction between them even now and had a strong hunch there was bound to be more than just a simple friendship for those two like her and Mike yet would have to wait and see how it goes later on.

"All right that's enough for today, now remember what we learn: to be a Scarer, bring on the Terror! So I expect to see you all bring it first thing tomorrow, especially since some of you were still lacking in that department."

The vampire felt herself being drawn back to the obvious present when the professor's voice
penetrate through her thoughts and realize that class was over now. She knew it had not been a good
time to be relieving the past though relieved she hadn't missed much other than a quick reminder for
them to practicing and bring in their books to continue reading the assigned passages as a quiz was
schedule by the beginning of next week on those chapters. Marian hurried with Leda to grab their
stuff and Randall doing the same but also getting Mike's as he was taking his sweet time up the stairs
and following the others out of the building. Though as much as the vampire would rather Mike pick
up the pace even though they still got time to get to their next class, she didn't want to take any
chance for Mister 'Big, Blue and Obnoxious' to try and make small chat with her as she saw him
heading their way. Fortunately the cyclops caught up to them and they immediately took off, Marian
seeing that Sulley had been close but then someone else call him out and he turning to them instead.

Good at least she wouldn't have to worry about him for a while. She shot a quick glance over at
Mike and took notice of his ongoing frustration and knowing the cause of it was standing right
behind them as he glare at the back of his head. If looks could kill, The oh so great James P. Sullivan
would be six feet under.

Oh, rabies, the vampire sighed and hoped Mike would not let it get to him throughout the entire
semester, but that was wishful thinking on her end. The teacher called out again, and immediately the
students hurried to get into position without fail.

Mike tried not to let it show, yet inside had been put out by both what the teacher said and Sulley
who had to go and rub it in his face. How can the professor think that was any good, seriously?!! It
was just him standing and giving off a growl, not putting any real effort into it from what he saw in
the last few poses he done. It just goes to show that Sulley was just one of those monsters who
thought they could do no wrong and get away with it! Mike had seen guys like him his whole life, all
thinking they could do whatever they wanted because they got everything handed to them on a silver
platter while he had to work hard just to get into the scare program! But what really irked the cyclops
the most was that Sulley trying to still work his way onto Mina and doing it right in front of him
without a care that he told him she was off-limits.

Mike had been there as she made it abundantly clear she wasn't interested, yet it didn't seem to stop
this moron from sending her not so subtle glances during the whole lecture and then had the audacity
to wink at her just like that.

Though then again, figure his fat skull was probably too thick for it to penetrate to that pea-sized
brain of his to know the meaning of the word 'no'. He probably thinks it means 'yes' and that 'get lost'
is 'take me I'm yours...' Just the thought of his best friends swapping spit with that other monster
made him ill and even his friends took notice he seem a bit more green than normal but dare not ask
as they didn't know just what was going on in his mind just then. Yelch, now I'm sure that will give
me nightmares for some time, great thanks a lot Sulkey for making me think that you big jerk!

He was glad Mina was not one of those silly airheads to fall for such antics as he saw dozens of girls
swooning over those dumb buffoons with their big muscles and sauve matter to make them go all
gaga over. Sulley was no different, seeing the females all drooling when he looked in their direction,
but his eyes were on Mina solely, why he had no clue. It made no sense! He knew that there was no
way in all of Monstropolis she would ever dare go for a dumb oaf like Sulley, and if he so much as
tried, Mike would think of something to make it clear he meant business not to mess with him or his
friends.

Hmm, maybe he should go and get a large club, and give it to Marian, though then again, she could
simply use her powers to take him out, yet if the guy got too close, she could easily practice her
swings on him. He smirked, thinking that would be something to see: a vampire taking a bat and
using it against Sullivan. Oh, he'd pay big money to see that for sure! Maybe even record it and put
that on Ahhtube! He was sure he get a million hits for that as people love watching stuff like that.

Mike glanced again at Sulley, watching him as he continued to try to impress the vampire by flexing his bicep in an arrogant-like manner. That big lug better keep his grubby paws away, or else he'll have to deal with Mike himself! But there were other things to be concerned for, like being the best Scarer in class and graduating with high honors. Mike was not one to give up so easily and thrived on working to the top of the pedestal even if he had to crawl on a bed of nails to get there.

He remember what the teacher had said, given them one more piece of advice before they were dismiss and took them to heart. "You want any hope of passing this class, then you better eat, breathe and sleep scaring." Mike was thinking that's what he planned on doing, but also more. He would work harder than ever before and give every blood, sweat and tears till every pore had scaring oozing from his body alone. Mike would see to make it happen so that overgrown bear rug would understand that the kid gloves were off, and he planned to wipe the smug smirk on his face.

Sulley won't know what hit him, or his name wasn't Michael Wazowski!

~0~0~0~

The weeks of September were moving along rather quickly as everyone was going about their normal business, whether working hard in their classes or goofing off as some felt that without being harassed by parents meant being allowed to do what they want, when they wanted with the freedom they now had at hand.

But given that Mike was ever determined to become the best Scarer in class and see that he graduate with high honors when they finished school yet had a lot of groundwork to cover. Even though the final exam were a few months away, it didn't stop the cyclops from making a new checklist, jotting down study session, what subject to go over, scheduling what days were good to do this and so on and so forth. Of course he made three extra copies to later pass onto Mina and their roommates, knowing they would appreciate it as he took liberty of outlining the best time and place for them to get together for their study dates. They had so much to work on but one had to stay on their toes to catch the kid off guard. He knew his friends especially Marian, would be there every step of the way and would see they come out beating everyone in the process. The four were going to have the rest of their classmates eating their dust by the time they got to the finish line.

They switched in between dorms to do their studying session; Mike and Randall became regular visitors on the girl's side as they kept their area well organized and wasn't as cramped as theirs was with all their junk lying about. Though they tried to keep it clean, but after the Sulley-Archie incident, it was hard to fix a broken shelf or two until they located another for Mike's stuff which took up some space on Randall's.

Marian didn't mind them coming over as it was nice having their company and even noticed how her roommate got along so well with Mike's. She seen how cozy those two look together, Leda and Randall chatting about conspicuous things but could tell that the two reptilian-like monsters found they didn't mind and got to know one another more with each passing moment. Marian glance over to where Leda and Randall were both working on their Ahhgebra assignment while her and Mike were going over the the screaming periodic table from Booahlogy. She admit that some of these were a bit hard to understand but Mike show her some helpful tips on how to remember them while she in turn help Mike with his posture and pointing out what he might've overlook in the process.

Things were looking rather good for them and were well settle by the third week of school. They were at the library to gather research material with Mike already way ahead of them as he went about the room with a large stack in hand. He was busy grabbing as many scaring fundamental textbooks and putting them along with the others he came across. There must have been at least twenty he had,
planning to check out once he got all he needed for the moment until he could get more later. Marian had watched him going about in every direction, hopping from one bookcase to another, then plucking books from students not using them and adding to the huge pile that looked like it was ready to come tumbling over if not for her grabbing the lot and setting them on the table before they could crash down on him in the process. She would have to make sure he didn't overwhelm himself with all this as she understood his need to learn everything about scaring, but he shouldn't burn himself too quickly in the long run.

The vampire could tell he had really gone all out with his finding, seeing it was a miniature mountain piled high compared to everyone else's. But Mike didn't seem to notice as he was cracking one open to read up on the snarling/drooling chapter, wanting to memorize each one while mentally trying to envision in his mind how it was done.

Leda and Randall had their small lot out, but were both reading from the same text together with Randall's extra hand writing notes down and would let the other monster copy it later when he finished. Leda also offered her assistance as she pointed out something he overlooked, and Randall hurried to jot that down in the process.

The vampire also had her own textbook out, reading with both Chai and Grieg looking down from their usual spot on her head/shoulder while Bach was hanging from the arm of a lamp that was beside them; a book laid propped under him and only by flapping his wing could he turn the page. Marian had her familiars with her because they had looked rather bored when she got back to the dorm to drop her things and decided to bring them along since the library didn't have any policy long as they behaved and didn't cause a ruckus. They had been flitting about taking a look at the new location, seeing what Mike was doing and decided to lend a claw in their service to him. They made it into a game to see who could find the most Scaring referrals, locating them at the highest shelf from the upper floors and bringing it back down to set among the others.

Grieg won hands down as he found at least ten compared to Bach's eight, and poor Chai managed to recover one of said terrifying material, but was a large tome than the others were and nearly fell unconscious because of its heavy weight. Though she thought that was very considerate on their part, Mike thought he was going to have to use her bats in the near future since they managed to find texts that he had overlooked and realized had some notable stuff he thought could help in his quest on being a Scarer.

Leda and Randall's pile were nowhere as big, but Mike didn't mind sharing with his friends. They also took the liberty of going over their notes and making comparisons between them to fill in the missing gaps they might have left out in their previous lectures. Soon it was close to five and the others thought to go and head to the dorm to drop off their load before grabbing a quick bite at the canteen and return to Mike and Randall's for some last minute studying. Marian was behind Leda while the boys handled Mike's load at checkout when she realized she was one book short and told the others she'd catch up with them later.

Marian was walking down the aisle, thinking of this particular book that was necessary on her scare thesis for Professor Stricklander's class. He had assign them to do a piece on a particular Scarer and were allow to choice which as long as he gave approval and allow them to proceed with their research.

Mike had went with Earl the Terror, Leda's was Vira Ekkgads, a Scarer from the late fifties to early sixties, and Randall had Bruce the Bruiser, same timeframe as Leda's and who once lost his claw during a scare but still went on terrorizing for another thirty years or so.

Now, Marian could have gone with her grandfather, given she knew everything of his past deeds,
but decided on Furiosa the Fearless who was renowned back in the roaring twenties with three scare
records that helped during the Great Scaring Depression. She knew the teacher was serious about
having their work authenticated and would not tolerate them not documenting where they got their
information from to show they at least did their homework on the matter. The paper was due by the
end of the month, yet she wanted to make sure she could back up her claims before handing it in.

She went down to where the historical scaring texts were kept and located the shelf that held 'A
History of Scaring', volumes one through sixty-six-dash six. It was just where Mike said it would
be, but the one she needed wasn't among them when she looked between twelve and fourteen while
also trying to see if maybe someone had set it in a different spot instead of back in their proper place.

"Okay, where are you? C'mon, just where could you be..." She frowned, seeing it wasn't the case,
but didn't let that divert her as she decided to head for the front desk and ask the librarian for her
assistance. The vampire heard the rumors about her general dislike of loud noises as Marian only
imagined any librarian would, but also warned not to make any sound, literally, not even a peep as
she would get real cranky about it and had a tendency to throw people right through the skylight that
was left ajar above their heads.

"Good thing I know how to fly then, but still, don't want to risk it so..."Marian saw the elderly woman
holding a pair of horn-rimmed glasses to read the book in hand before noticing her approach. The
monster turned to stare at her with a pensive look on her face and squinted her eyes at the figure
before her.

"Yes can I help you?" She spoke in a raspy voice, and Marian thought to respond in the same
manner as she said in a soft whisper, "Hello, Miss Gesner, I'm looking for 'A History of Scaring:
Volume 13', and was wondering if anyone checked it out recently?"

The monster narrowed her eyes, but Marian saw as the old librarian went to go look it up on the
ancient-looking computer before writing it down and passing it to the vampire who accepted it from
her.

"Thank you, ma'am." She mouthed before walking away and reading the name of the person who
had it last, and was scowling deeply as she couldn't believe it herself.

You gotta be kidding me...of all the people to have it, why would he - ugh, just great! She really
didn't want to, but that was the only other book that had the necessary information for her assignment
to pass the class.

The vampire sighed to herself while thinking out loud, "The things I do for a grade..." Marian sent
her bats with Chai carrying the note to let the others know she would be a bit late, but told them that
everything would be all right. She didn't want to let them worry, especially Mike as she flew in the
direction towards the fraternity-sorority row, seeing a party was happening over at the ROR's manor
when she shifted back and landed across the street from them.

It looked like it was going wild; she was hoping he was in there at least so Marian could get this
ordeal over with. Well, hopefully she could make this quick: just in and out and then be back with
the others in time for dinner. She saw a few girls walking up towards the front without knocking as
she stepped on in, Marian guessing this was open invite to all the students on campus.

Yeah with the exception of the few, but I'm only here to get the book and get out, no distractions
whatsoever. She made her way into the foyer and towards the large den that seemed to be where the
party was happening as she heard the loud music coming from over there. Marian saw a few of the
other sorority and frats mingling about, some who saw her said hi and she returned the gesture,
wondering if it was because they remembered her from the RUSH or they must be too drunk to
notice the difference. She was leaning towards the latter as she could smell the strong booze coming from the lot, seeing they were being handed out by the dozen whether in bottles or in plastic cups mix with some other flavored drink to give it taste or make it less boozzy.

Marian had to deflect a few that had tried to offer her some, saying she wasn’t all that thirsty while inside was unsure how it might affect her as she never touched the stuff in her lifetime. Sure the vampire had sample some of the blood wine her aunt allowed her to, but this was pure one hundred percent alcohol and didn’t think she could handle the stuff in one go.

*Just stay focused, Mina, you are on a mission here!* She kept her eyes peeled for the blue purple-polka furred monster among the others crowding the room before finding her quarry chugging big time while watching a group of people tossing a white plastic ball and hearing everyone making some noise whether they hit the target or miss. She recognized the other monster Sulley was standing beside, Johnny, and seeing him with also another that look like a an insect-lobster with four pinkish-black eyes, four arms, a bulky exoskeleton and long antennae. She had noticed the frat member board hanging near the entrance and their names written under their picture and finding his was Javier Rios. He look like the silent kind of guy, who preferred to observe from the sideline than get involved unless it was necessary to do so. He also seem to be the right hand monster to the leader of the house as he was nodding to whatever Johnny said before walking away.

But then her eyes narrowed when she also recognize another familiar face standing over there and knowing just who that was. Chet, that annoying crab-like monster was laughing at whatever Johnny said but didn't see how that was funny yet saw the others cracking up too and figure it must be a guy thing to do, especially around people like Johnny Worthington supposedly. Either that or he just wants to show what a good lap dog he is, she thought before turning her attention away from them and back onto the important matter at hand.

But it was like looking for a needle in a haystack given it was hard to find that one monster among all the others here. She sigh thinking this might be a while. Marian walk about the room, watching people dancing or talking and even saw a couple frat boys over by a ping-pong table all aiming for a sleeping monster's naked torso. She recognized this game to be tic-tac-toe but when one missed, they had to take a swig of the liquor while the other person took the next shot and getting the gist of what's happening.

Ah, so it was one of those drinking parlor games Uncle Wayne mentioned in passing to uncle Frank. She had heard her dad's friends talking about it a couple times, saying what fun they had, especially when they were all drunk and did all kinds of things when they were under the influence. But Marian's purpose was not to socialize; she was trying to figure out the best way to get to Sulley and get the damn book. Yet her unexpected arrival didn't go as unnoticed as she had hoped, because people had indeed recognized her and having the word spread from one person to another, seeing it reach the leader of the RORs who immediately turned to stare in her given direction and saw her straight away with her back to him.

The vampire sense their approach before they had the chance to tap her, whirling around and saw a pair of violet orbs boring into hers when they made eye contact. Oh, no, great, just what she needed now.

She saw the long horned monster standing there with a pleasant grin on his broad face, "Ah, Marian, I see you managed to make time to come join us tonight. Had I known you'd be here, I would have taken the liberty to see you given a proper welcome as the host of this event. Though I'm glad you receive my invitation otherwise I might've gone to get you myself if you hadn't." She thought he was trying to be witty though some of the things he said made her look at him oddly.
Invitation, what...oh that, now that she thought about it, when she went to get her boys, there had been a red envelope with her name etched in gold attached to the door - the two symbolic colors that belonged to one frat house alone. She hadn't thought much about it, thinking she would look at it later after she finish up at the library with her friends. So that was his invite to her then. Marian hated to be the bearer of bad news, given that Johnny was indeed the host to this little soiree, but didn't want to give the wrong interception on her account.

"Yes, well, thanks for taking such consideration in inviting me here, but I'm kinda here on official business actually. I do apologize in advance as I was hoping to speak to Mr. Sullivan about something, and then I'll be on my way."

She saw the grin drop a smidge, but keeping his tone level with that charming air as he clearly was not put off by her. "I see. Huh, well, that's a darn shame, because you have no idea what you're missing out on, but if you change your mind, please don't hesitate to ask for me."

"Chet get over here now!" Marian would have said that he was already within hearing distance seeing he had been standing close, waiting to be ask and now was being order to go find Sulley. "Don't worry he'll have him here within a few minutes, meanwhile would you care for something to drink? We have a wide variety here to select from for everyone's delight." Marian would have like to say no but considering that she might push her luck and decided to ask for one non-alcoholic beverage, "I like to keep my mind clear for tomorrow given that I don't want to wake up with a terrible hangover before class tomorrow."

"Good idea, though then again some monsters don't do well to hold their liquor like some I know." He smile and then taking her over to the table where the beverages were chilling in ice and pluck one of the red bottles which was seventy-five percent O neg with a bit of carbohydrate to give it that bubbly goodness. Marian thank him and taking a few sips of her drink while they both wait on Chet to return with their quarry. It didn't take him long to do so as it was easy to find that particular monster among the others and bringing him towards them.

Sulley had been over by the bar, flirting with some of the girls and taking another swig from his drink after he finished annihilating Big Red at beer pong. He was enjoying the moment, lavishing the attention being given to him until Chet came over and told him Johnny wanted to see him right away. He wasn't sure what was up but followed the crab-like monster to wherever the Frat leader was waiting for them. He saw Johnny over by the snack table talking to someone and realizing it was Marian who was chatting with him. He'd admit it came as no surprise to see her here of all places yet not one to deny this golden opportunity being present as he swagger on over and couldn't resist throwing giving the vampire a wide grin when he mozey on next to her.

"Oh, hey there, didn't expect to see you here at this shindig but wow is it me or did someone turn up the heat in this place because you are smoking hot tonight." Marian said nothing as she had to bite her tongue to keep her from making any comment after hearing him say that out loud. She could tell he had a few drinks tonight before she showed up though knowing that even in this delirium state he was still trying to flirt with her was just making her feel awkward and frustrated all the same.

Geez, why me, Marian thought before she told herself to just do what she came here to do and get it over with. "Yes, quite a surprise for me too no less, but my reasons here are valid as I'm looking for 'A History of Scaring: Volume 13', and you were the last one to check it out."

She saw him blink a couple times as he didn't seem to get what she meant by that before the realization hit him home as he exclaim, "Ohhh that book! Yeah, I know what you're talking about. Yes, it works great actually, was hard to find one that was just the right size to help adjust the table over there; couldn't believe my luck when I found it, too." Marian saw him pointing over to the ping
pong table and seeing it was being used to steady it while they played their game.

Marian could not bring herself to say anything, seriously she really shouldn't have been all that surprised. The vampire should've figured as to the god given question onto why he check it out in the first place. Sulley given his lowbrow manner and disregard to even paying to class, so it should have been obvious that the reason he would have a book that holds valuable knowledge be used for anything other than leverage for some dumb game.

"You simply keep on astounding me Mr. Sullivan, quite literally you do…" She mutter sacracistally and seeing that the bigger monster didn't seem to catch on or realize it, smile as if thinking was a compliment coming from her. "Yes, yes I do but look you really should be having fun, living it out a little, honestly there's more to studying and you know the DJ is playing some great beats now-"

The monster was jabbering off in her ear and all Marian could do was tune him out while wondering what should she do now. On the one hand she wasn't to going to stick around all night having to deal with him and his unwanted attention but not without that damn book.

But how, just how do I ahha! Suddenly like a bolt of lightning, an idea hit her and thinking it might just work to her advantage. After all what else did she have to lose.

"Sullivan, um James. Jimmy!" This shut him up as hearing his first name spoken by the vampire and seeing she was looking at him with those bright cat green eyes before she turn to focus onto the game where the others were still playing. "You know, you're right, all that studying is really not good for little old me and you know something, I've always wanted to try my hand at these fun activities, like that game over there," She reach to grasp the silvery lock of hair and twirling it around her finger as she glance at him once more, putting a bit more charm to it as she look his way. "Just how exactly does it work, I mean it's not just throwing them in one box each or is there more to it?"

She now had his undivided attention and seeing Sulley giving her that big grin seeing now she was on board, "Oh, it's real easy I mean that, it's just like any old tic tac toe, but if you miss or the other player gets it all in one row, you got to take swig. Those are the rules."

"You don't say huh." The vampire slowly strolled over to the table, passing one of the JOX, a tall orange-yellow furry monster who stepped out of her way when she came over.

"But supposedly a hypothetical question: what if someone were to get all their ducks in one row - I mean, use all three balls and get them to line up accordingly?" She had picked up one and let it slide over her hand, doing what a magician did and letting it roll over her knuckles and over her palm. She could tell the others in the room were also listening in to this conversation and even sensing the strong curiosity piqued as she laid this out before them.

"Whoa, three in one; there's no way that can be done!" Chet exclaim as he scuttle over between Sulley and Johnny with the other RORs coming to join them. Javier made a soft clicking sound and even heard a few others whispering in the background, talking about how it was impossible yet seeing the vampire was making herself the sole focus of the room by bringing it all to their attention.

Sulley admit there was no way that it be possible though Johnny beat him by speaking up, "Three in one, quite ballsy there, but I dare say that would be quite the feat to pull such a stunt."

Marian couldn't resist throwing a smirk over at him, "Oh, who says it can't be done, how about a friendly wager then, I get the book if I get all three in one but just to make it more enticing, I stand at the end over to the other side of the room...blindfolded?" Now this caused an even bigger stir as they knew that while as a vampire with super heighten senses, she would need to focus, and her sight obscured would hinder it in such a way.
Johnny could tell she was being serious and knowing that she was really going all out for it. He gave her a large shark-like grin as he said, "Now I take it back: you are a quite the risk taker. But that I love to see for sure."

Marian again was calm as she whirled the tiny plastic ball on her fingertip and tossed it up and down in the air. Then to be sure that it would work in her favor: "Annd if I don't and somehow miss the target...well, Sulley, since this is asking a lot from you, I guess it's only fair for you to decide what you want from little old me." She could see that the blue-furred monster was now game as how could he resist such a tempting offer she was laying out for him, and everyone hearing this knew win-lose, it would be epic to still see for sure.

"Oh, snap, hey everyone, we got a challenge here; better come quick or you'll miss it big time!" Seeing the word being spread and soon the rest of the partygoers were coming into the spacious den as this was too good an opportunity to miss.

A lot of people had to make room for everyone to gather in while Marian went to go stand at the other side, letting one of Johnny's brothers tie a pitch black sash around her eyes, obscuring everything yet hearing the people in the room all at once. She felt them also pass the three plastic balls to her hand, taking one in the other and keeping the remaining two in her right. Now it was time to show these guys what she was made of.

"Ready?" She nodded before hearing Johnny give out a loud, "Go!" Marian crossed her arms behind her head before throwing with much strength and velocity, doing all the math in her head before allowing them to go flying out. Everyone saw the balls heading in different directions, some having to duck and avoid getting hit but nowhere close as they kept going about the room.

The Jox standing near the table had to jump back when he saw all three coming and then the still-sleeping monster who didn't know what was happening eventually woke when the balls came straight at him, knocking the wind and couch he was on and falling backwards.

As soon as that was done, Chip and Reggie went to help him, and everyone immediately saw the balls lined up like a 'i' on his chest. The monsters were all speechless before turning to see the vampire removing her blind and handing it to Javier before walking towards a slack jawed Sulley.

"Like I said, I'm pretty good when it comes to throwing things around." It was fortunate she had been practicing a lot as a teen, yet with knives instead of balls and found it helped with her accuracy and balance on hitting the targets especially when she focused her other senses, not to rely on her eyes all the time.

She bent to pick the book out and passing the rest of the gobsmacked house who gape after her; the ones staring the longest were Johnny and Sulley once she exited the room and went off with her main prize. She heard Chet breaking the utter silence, making everyone else snap out of their stupor state as they came around, "Oh snap! That was...awesome!"

As soon as she got outside, she transformed and flew straight to the dorm where the others were likely waiting and probably anxious to know what took her so long. The bat Mina was grinning a fang smirk as she glide through the air with the book clutch tightly in her claw feet thinking how she couldn't wait to tell Mike what she did; she'd bet he get a kick out of it especially when she told him the look on Sulley's face - absolutely priceless for sure.

She wouldn't know it, but years from now and with new students coming and going, there would be talk about her in the RoR house and how she pulled off such a crazy stunt, having no one else who could do what she did and still made to be an epic legend inside those walls.
Get Ready, Get Set, Get Crackalacking?!

Chapter Summary

Kyukitsune: Hey everyone happy Veteran's day and just to show the love I decide to post the next chapter and hope you all like and please don't hesitate to make any reviews or favs.

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Marian was right on Mike's reaction when he heard what she did once she got back to the dormitory that night. She found her friends were in their room studying and her bats being the first to sense her as she flap by the window and waiting for Leda to let her in. The boys had been wondering what took her so long while the Gor-lamia seeing she did get the book but the look on her face reveal she had something big to tell them. The vampire seeing they were dying to know what happen and went into full details on what went down over at the ROR house, her little 'tic-in-one-line-tac' trick and Mike couldn't help as he laugh out loud at the end of that tale.

"Oh, wow, I can't believe you managed to pull that; oh man, if you only had a camera and took pictures then we could've really put those in the scrapbook or maybe in the school paper." The cyclops could only imagine the look on that big dope's face and sure he'd think twice before underestimating someone like Marian. "Oh man, I bet Sulky didn't see that coming, not by a long shot!" The gang all agree with him and when morning came, the word seem to be circulating around campus and many were looking directly at their group, mostly at the vampire herself.

Marian had been surprised by how fast the word got out and seeing a lot of monsters were now focusing their attention onto her, given she was the hot topic for their ongoing conversations and hearing what they were saying even when they assume she was out of range.

The vampire had to admit that while it was nice to get notice by her peers she wouldn't let this get to her head, knowing that eventually it would die down as soon as the next major thing came to play and then they would turn their attention onto that instead. She had no qualms with that as she knew as long as she had Mike and her friends and focus on the more important things in their life like being top Scarers and making a name for themselves after graduation.

It was just another normal afternoon for them and with the last class finish, the gang decided to do their studying outside for a change. It was too good a day to pass up and the vampire didn't mind being in the sun as she still wore her jacket and the lotion to keep her skin from burning.

Marian had finish her fear essay and spare a glance over at her friends as Leda was busy jotting something in her notebook while Mike had Randall using his phobia cards to test him. The exercise was was simple enough as Mike had to guess what the proper terms were and so far hadn't gotten any wrong as of yet. He was doing pretty good for himself while tossing his ball at the same time and Marian couldn't help watching them go at it.

"Okay, gimme another one!" Mike was on a roll after answering the sixteenth question and Randall getting the next card out ready and asking, "Fear of spiders?"
"Arachnophobia!" That was obviously too easy that even her baby sister could've figure that out for sure but Randall flip the next card and asked another question, "Fear of thunder?"

"Keraunophobia!"

"Fear of chopsticks?" Now that raised Marian's eyebrows, wondering what kind of person had such fear over an eating utensil and looking to Leda who was also thinking the same herself.

"Consecotaleophobia. What is this, kindergarten? Give me a hard one."

Marian couldn't resist the wry smirk as she call out to them, gaining the cyclops' attention as she said, "Oh a hard one huh, well why don't you try this on for size then!"

She jump to her feet and quickly transformed, turning into a large snake, waiting for one of them to pipe, and hearing Leda immediately shouting, "Oh ophidiophobia!"

Marian changed again, this time into a wolf with green eyes. "Oh, I got this one: Cynophobia!"

"Sorry, Randall; it's a wolf which means is Luposlipaphobia."

"You're both right; I mean, it could be either or but still, good guess you two." The wolf-Marian barked before going through another transformation, this time shifting into a tiny mouse. Yet much to everyone's shock, including Marian's, they heard Randall's cry out as he jump to his feet, his cards flying everywhere and him disappearing within a heartbeat's notice.

Everyone was struck speechless before Mike finally said, "Whoa, Randall, I didn't know you had a case of musophobia."

Leda had manage to get pick up the fallen deck while Mina change back and went to approach the area where the invisible monster was, "It's okay Randall, just calm down, now deep breathes, in, out, in…"

They watch as he slowly reappear but saw the reptile's scales had turned a darker shade as he sat down and gave a heavy defeated sigh. "Yeah, it's a bit embarrassing seeing how I shouldn't given what I'm majoring in but every time I see one of those, I can't help how I react when they're in my presence."

He involuntarily shuddered and held his tail between his hands, wringing at it to show how badly it affected him. "I was just a kid when it happened. I was visiting my uncle for the summer while my folks had to go away on business and my sister was staying with her friends leaving me by myself. We were told he had this real bad infestation but said it was all under control and should be fine for me to stay there with him. He already had someone there to exterminate them but a few still managed to get around the traps and were inside the walls scurrying around at night. I once caught them burrowing inside the mattress I was lying on which hadn't been pleasant." Randall still had nightmares of the time when he felt them rummaging around while he was trying to sleep. He woke up to turn on the light and was screaming when he saw the rats all looking at him with that hungry glare in their tiny faces and crawling all over the bed like they own it.

"It pretty much traumatized me and my folks never let me stay at my uncle's since that awful day." He then lifted his head and looked to the three monsters there, "Please don't go mentioning this to anyone. I would never live this down if anybody else knew."

The vampire, feeling awful that she made him relive that, reached out and placed her hand on his shoulder. "Of course, Randall, and I'm terribly sorry for what you went through. I won't say a word of this to anything, right guys?"
Mike and Leda also agreed, seeing Randall was glad to hear that before they decided to change the subject, and Leda was grabbing her notes to quiz them on what scaring tactics to use and why. Marian decided to take a breather and gone to lie on her back, staring at the clouds above their heads. Leda had finished testing Randall and was looking behind them. Her eyes widen at what she saw before turning to the lying vampire on the ground. "Um, Mina, don't look now, but um, well..."

Ugh what now? Marian resisted the urge to groan, wondering what now as she turned to Mike who also was glaring in the direction, seeing the reflection from his pupil was indeed Sulley with some of his frat brothers along with the HEX sisters not too far from they were walking down the path, seeing that particular harpy flirting with him and seeing him lapping it up.

Looks like that whole 'Johnny's mine' speech was all for show and really liked to put names onto those she considered hers and mark her territory, no less. Whatever, it's not like I care anyways, let her have the annoying furball for herself. Marian would gladly see the last of him, heck she would gift-wrapped him herself if it would keep him from bothering her and her friends. Leda and Randall both seeing the look on their roommate's face and decided to do something.

"Hey, anyone else for a coffee break? Because I feel like I could really go for a latte right about now, and while we're at it, we can swing by the multiplex. I heard, there's this movie that's supposed to be about Zemons or something."

The vampire and cyclops turned their attention onto them, wondering just what they were talking about. "What the heck is a zemon?" Mike was asking the Gor-Lamia as he never heard of such a thing and even Marian was curious herself.

Randall catching onto what Leda's was doing and said, "Oh, it's a zombie that's turn by a demon, though the way they come about is really weird, but from the critics talking, it's got some hilarious hijinks but still a bit scary. We could all use a bit of a break, don't you think? A couple hours won't kill you, Mike. Plus Leda and I finished making that bloodberry velvet cake which has already been cool and frosted back in our room so we can have that afterwards while we finish the rest of the studying there."

"Okay, fine I suppose it wouldn't hurt, though I really don't see how a demon and zombie can be combined into one. It sounds like only someone with enough time on their hands to make up such ridiculous things." Marian saw the others picking up their stuff, seeing she didn't have to turn to guess Sulley looking in their direction and watching them leave.

If he thought she would be getting jealous over that stunt, he had another thing coming! There was no way he was her zing! Nope, zilch, nada! Marian had no idea that the more she try to push these thoughts, the more Sulley kept popping into her head like an annoying horsefly buzzing around much to her growing frustration.

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It wasn't that long before September was close to finishing its final chapter, but with it came the start of the annual homecoming season for their school. Marian had seen how excited everyone was during that timeframe: some looked like they were on a sugar high or just were really half-distracted from paying any attention during classes. She couldn't help but ask her roommate what the big deal was before the Gor-Lamia explained why, saying how it was a special occasion for students and faculty alike to enjoy themselves especially as the most popular past-time being football - well, right underneath the Scare Games as that took the top spot of the list, yet no one could resist watching their team going against their longtime rivals and nail one over on them.

It was surprising for her to find out how it was a very excitable time for every school to show their
team spirit and usually consist of football games which just so happened to be that very weekend. Every monster on campus was making their way towards the large, gracious stadium, some wearing blue-white face paint or had their body spray with an 'M' or 'U' on their bare stomach, and a few were holding large signs during the match.

Since they had no homework left to finish up as they got it done early and the Gor-Lamia was insisting they get their noses out of the book and show some school spirit.

Marian gave a playful pout and said, "Hey, I resent that remark though I do have to agree we could all use a break, especially Mike here as we don't want his contact to dry out again like last time." She admitted all the studying was making her head a bit sore, and sure the boys could do with some fun watching their team cream the other players. Leda was glad to see she was on board as she already got them matching jerseys to wear as well as a couple mini scarves to put on her familiars which was kinda nice; it did make her boys look fashionable when they put them on.

The vampire was pleased that the boys had agreed to join them, but Mike decided to bring one of his scarebooks as they made it to the stadium not far from school grounds. They found a spot for the four of them to sit, Mike with Marian on his left, Randall and Leda on the other side; Chai placed himself on top of Mike's head while Bach and Grieg each took to Marian's shoulder and watched the game. They saw the school band playing the beat with the cheerleaders shaking their pom-poms out to the crowd, shouting, "GO MONSTERS U! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!"

Within the first half, they saw MU was ranking up a lot of points on the scoreboard, twenty-seven to seven. She saw the game was pretty simple and could follow through even if she had some confusion over certain rules during playoffs, each team was more about trying to get to the other end of the goal, seeing Fear Tech was losing real bad against theirs. Marian saw the MU players had the upper advantage over the rest, knowing this would be an easy win in their book after seeing their larger than life player on the field winning the goals with half the rivals hanging onto his humongous form and barely slowing the big guy down. To say that kinda defeat the purpose of a good match, maybe but everyone was enjoying themselves and no complains were made in the process.

Then another touchdown and Monster University was in the clear to win! She heard the loud boisterous cheering in the stands, her ears now being plummeted with the echoing noise from many until she decided to excuse herself and go use the restroom. Hopefully when she got back, everyone would be a bit more mellow and less in the habit of screaming themselves hoarse. Bach flew towards Leda's lap while Grieg took to head to Randall's tail, using it to hang upside which the lizard didn't mind so long as he didn't add too much weight to it. Marian was glad to be away from all that commotion and took the moment to freshen up and then go to the soda machine to grab a cold drink as all that cheering was making her a bit parched. But as she stuck the dollar and two quarters in and pressed the tab for her selected beverage, nothing came out. She scowled and tried again.

"Oh c'mon, stupid vending machine, what is wrong with you?!" She was trying hard not to smash her finger harder as she jabbed it over and over until she heard a familiar voice speaking from behind. "Oh, hey there, Marian." _Not now, not now_, she chanted as she wished he'd leave and go bug someone else for a change. But as her aunt said, 'if wishes were like bats…'

Marian chose to be calm as she turned around, seeing the ROR leader standing right there and grinning her way. "You know, I think there's a law somewhere that says stalking someone is illegal."

"Oh, really? Because it's hard not to resist having you running through my mind all the time. Should that be considered illegal?" Marian had to bite her cheek, wondering what was up with jocks who make such comments. Was that what Johnny hopes: that she'd be putty in his arms with just some simpering words and waxing flowery poetry?
"Yeah, I don't run. I mostly fly, and even if I did, I don't think there'd be enough space to go through your head, and really, I got to go and see my friends."

"Oh, they're fine. I know that your buddies Mickey and Andy are keeping your friend company."

"Mike and Randall, and much as it's rather tempting to go and join you, I made plans with my pals, and I hate breaking promises."

"Promises, promises, yeah. But I know I can make some, too, especially for you if you let me." He hit his fist against the machine; the thing shook before something came out - her soda, to be precise.

"You know, I'm a patient monster and can wait as long as it takes for you to say yes." He handed her the can, her seeing him make his way back to the bleachers but not without throwing one last quip, "See ya around, beautiful." Marian just stood there, can in hand and wondered what it was that made these monsters so annoyingly persistent in pursuing her. She had no clue which got on her nerve more, Johnny or Sulley but thought with the both of them was enough to give her a migraine.

Hopefully they'll eventually give up once they saw how uninterested she was but she had high doubts it would be anytime soon. She decided to head back to her friends and put this whole thing behind her while watching the game yet knowing that MU was going to come home with the victory already in hand.

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The first few days of October had came to play, and Mike was working harder than ever through the Scaring lesson with him answering most of Professor Knight's questions, getting each one right.

"The answer is C. Fangs!" Mike answered after the teacher listed a few multiple choices on the board and was the first to have his hand up and respond to the question.

"Well, done, Mr. Wazowski." The teacher and even a few students were looking at the cyclops, more intrigued finding he was proving to be something when it came to knowing the best fears and chills of today's lecture.

"A bowl of spiders!" Again right; Marian smiled as she listened to him rapidly shoot off and seeing the teacher was pleased to see how well he was getting them right. "A clown running in the dark!"

"Right again!" Leda and Randall jotted this down, having another surprise question pop in, and like before, the cyclops being on a roll as he said, "Warts, boils and moles, in that order."

"Outstanding, very well done there!" Mike was grinning as he heard such praise, but Marian's sharp hearing picked up a certain scoff, and glancing from the corner of her eyes, there was Sulley in his ROR jacket glancing away to the other side while muttering 'Teacher's pet.' Marian couldn't help but mentally shake her head.

'Hmph, looks like the overgrown furball doesn't seem to get that Mike is practically in the top five right now in class; bet he doesn't check his own grade quota like some of us do…'

The vampire and her friends saw they were swimming right up there with Mike all the way in the lead, knowing that he wouldn't stop until he came out number one. She hadn't meant to look him up, but she found Sullivan's name which was showing his grades were in the barely passable part of the list, and knew his luck would need some sort of miracle in the coming exam around December.

'Looks like we'll just see how he faces up when it comes to that. It would be something to see the last of him once it comes out that he didn't make it pass this semester and likely kick out of the program.'
The autumn season was getting a bit cooler, the colorful changes in the leaves now a reddish-orange and few monsters taking the liberty to enjoy the crisp weather that was right at their doorstep. The gang were having one of their off-days from studying; Marian decided to go hit the gym and get a bit of exercise before catching a flick with Leda in the evening.

Mike said he would be by later after he returned some books to the library but didn't mind her getting a headstart on it. Leda and Randall had declined the offer, but the Gor-Lamia said she would come join her next time, but the two reptilian monsters were helping out for the Humanween weekend party for the dorms as they were the designated bakers and had a couple theme ideas for the snacks. Randall was also helping her out there.

She admitted it did sound rather exciting as this would be her first experience to one of these monster events but had plenty of time before then. Marian's familiars were also working to get into shapes as Bach went to pick up the small lightest dumbbell - a q-tip with some water balloons - Grieg using a rubber band to stretch his wings while Chai was doing jump rope with a shoelace improvised by her. Marian moved to go to the nearest bench and grabbed a hundred and fifty pound set each and adjusted them onto the steel bar. She went to go sit under and began lifting it up, feeling her lungs expand and then exhaling on the way up.

Marian did about twenty rep of these, feeling she was barely breaking a sweat before she heard a voice that made her good mood vanish in a second. "Damn, didn't think you could pull that off while looking as good as you do there. You mind spotting me, could use someone like you on the bar."

"Ugh, someone just stake me please!" Marian wondered why things couldn't ever go her way without having one of these guys bugging her for the love of all unholy. And she had a pretty good idea why Sulley was asking, and there was no way she would, not even for all the blood in the world! "Sorry, but I'm pretty much finished here. Perhaps you should find someone else to help you in that department." She made her way towards the treadmill, hoping that he would get the hint, but alas, she forgot this was a Sullivan who seemed very determined just to get into her face.

"So, Mina, you know the RORs are having their annual Humanween party and thought given that maybe if you want to come join the fun, it's going to be a total blast there and-" Marian tried her hardest to ignore the big lug as he chose the machine on her left, moving to keep up the same pace she was.

This was just as soon as Mike was finishing his stretching and seeing Marian was being bothered, so he went to go help her as he got onto the trend on her right. "Hey. Sulky for the last time, she's not interested in whatever you seem to think it is because unlike you, Mina here has standards and doesn't have time to be bothered by you and your ongoing harassment."

The bigger monster's brow furrowed down at him. "Well Mickey, I don't remember inviting you to this, and besides, I doubt your chicken legs can keep up with us." Sulley scowled while Mike was busy adjusting the setting on the machine to match tempo with the two. This was not going as he had planned, and this butterball better butt out of it if he knew what was good for him. "Hey, you ever heard of 'two's company, three's a crowd'? Frankly I don't recall asking you to come over and butt in here."

"Haha funny, but it looks to me like you're the one who's the extra wheel in this group, so why don't you be like a bee and buzz off?"

Marian was really starting to find herself getting a migraine from the two arguing and both running at
the same time with her right in the middle of it. "Thanks Mike, and as for you, Sullivan, I want to do my workouts with people who don't bother me twenty-four seven and know where personal space isn't invaded."

Either he didn't hear or he just pretended he hadn't. "Ah c'mon, surely you're not serious about wanting to listen to this beachball all day. 'Sides, what does he have that I don't?"

Um...a brain and a sense of manners! Marian wanted to smack him so bad but Mike decided, "How about let's see who can last the longest here, hotshot, unless you're too scared."

She could tell this would not end well, especially as they put the speed to "run from mob as fast as you can" mode, and only those who had been doing this for ages or had much greater agility could pull that off. She was right as Sulley was the first to stumble and get thrown backwards off the thing, colliding hard judging from the sound of the impact and his moan of pain. Mike got to savor his victory for just a few minutes before he, too, found himself being knocked off but not without having a few tumbles and having his sweatband tying him up in the process.

"Mike!" She jumped off the machine and rushed to his side, checking to see if he was all right. She removed the band from his legs, seeing his eye look like it was spinning wildly like some giant black marble before coming to rest again.

"C'mon, let's go get you checked at the nurse's." Marian whistled to her familiars; they stopped what they were doing to come join her as they followed her lead. She passed the other monster who was pulling himself from the dumbbell set, thinking it served him right but had to focus on helping Mike to get his head checked out and prayed he didn't get a concussion because of it.

"Oh, Mommy, where did all the pretty pink unicorns go…" Marian had to keep from rolling her eyes as she carried him out while the cyclops was grinning dopey and singing some weird song about pineapples and sponges to her all the way to the medical room.

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Thankfully Mike had recovered from that small incident and had no lasting brain damage which was a good sign to him as he felt if he lost any bit of knowledge, it would kill him quite literally, though Marian had to say he should have considered it the next time he tried to go all out on the trend again. Hearing that Sulley had also gotten out from the nurse's office but had recovered fast left him upset until Randall said his tail was in a splint and had to be with it for a few days. That perked the cyclops up, but Marian thought it was getting a bit ridiculous how these boys were acting. Somehow she was half-tempted to hypnotize Sulley and tell him to take a jump off a high cliff but remembered the legend of a zing that said no power could undo it which, given her situation, meant he would still be linked to her. Side she doubt she could get away with murder since everyone would figure it had to be her with how much he was constantly going after her. She curse over the fates and wish someone had answers to why this happen. Maybe she could ask Aunt Wanda or Eunice if they had any clue, long as they didn't tell Dad, then that should be fine.

Leda, who could see the obvious frustration on Mina's current predicament and tried to be the ongoing support for her to lean on during this time of crisis, "Well, it can't be helped. Boys will be boys, and mom said they do like to compete over anything and can be worse than us when it comes right down to it."

The vampire had to agree with her on that, seeing how Johnny and Sulley seem to fit perfectly in that category all too well. "Yeah, I hear ya on that, but really, I just think that Mike's taken the whole 'big brother' thing a bit much. I mean, I appreciate it, but I can very well handle it myself."
She and Leda decided to let it drop once they got to class, and as the teacher had given them a test yesterday, they were waiting to see what grade they got. Randall and Leda both had a ninety-eight with Marian being a ninety-nine with the extra credit, but seeing Mike got everything all on his test with a hundred and one in total.

"Nice work there, Mike." She smiled at him who returned the gesture.

"Thanks. I see you also answered the extra credit part, too. Gotta say that was too easy there." The vampire chuckled, seeing that only he would assume those were "simple" in his mind. So far, they had all done well and called for a celebration. "How about after school we go grab some pizza from Fearbino's. I could really go for a pepperoni and spider egg pizza."

"Same, but make mine with extra cheese, but let's make sure there's no garlic bread. Just the smell alone is enough to make me gag!" Leda and Randall who were listening in on the two were also being on board as pizza was right up their alley. As they were exiting the building, chatting away about their next class, the cyclops saw the big furry monster up ahead and couldn't help himself as he walked towards Sulley.

Sulley was in the midst of saying hey to his frat brothers while highfiving Johnny who were coming to greet him when something bumped into him and looked down to see it was that annoying green thorn in his side. "Whoopsie, my bad, Sulkey. Just passing on through!"

Mike went under Sulley's arm and turned to send a full on smirk as he went to show off his grade to the gathered ROR members. "Oh by the way, fellas: booya in your face, A++! How do you like them odds! Looks like this monster knows his scaring unlike some people! If I were you, I better brush up on my books, Sulky boy, if you want to make it through the program."

The RORs said nothing, though the blue-purple polka dotted monster frowned at the little green marble. But when the cyclops' friends, including Marian came over and saw Mike just to further aggravate him, moved to put his hand on the vampire's waist, making his scowl deepen. He was just about ready to go over, but felt Javier snatch the paper out of his hand, his four eyes scanning it before passing the test to Johnny to see for himself. The frat leader was not pleased by what he saw: the giant C- that stood out in red ink, but Sulley took it from him and tried to laugh it off by saying, "Ah no, worries. I'll do fine on the next one. It's no biggie, guys!" But he didn't see the look on the RORs' face as he chose to go off and do his own thing at the moment.

Sulley then chose to ball it up and toss it into the nearest garbage can as he didn't think it would matter in the long run, and would no doubt show that to the wannabe scarer the next time in class.

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Soon October had faded quietly into November, and with the scaring final being so close, it was time to up everyone's game and see how far they'd come in the long run. Mike was ready as he practiced day and night, working till he could snarl it in his sleep. Now was the time to own it when the teacher came upon Mike and saw him getting into position, seeing the result of all his hard work.

"Ogre slump!" He let his arms drop to the floor behind him, had his lower jaw propped forward with a half-open eye that made him look like he was between sleeping and bored.

"Zombie snarl!" He threw his arms ups, mouth wide with tongue sticking out and eye bulging out of socket. "Dominant silverback gorilla." That was easy as the cyclops got to imitate an ape with his knuckles on the ground, lip tucked in and making his chest stick up, giving off grunts that impressed the professor by his performance.
"That is some remarkable improvement, Michael. " Mike saw Marian and Leda were smiling from the other side while the professor walked towards Sulley, doing the same snarl he had done previously, but Professor Knight was not thoroughly impressed like last time.

"One frightening face does not make a Scarer, Mr. Sullivan." Sulley was taken aback by this, but then turned to find the cyclops giving him a smug grin followed by the pistol fingers before turning to Marian who was smiling in his direction. The blue monster had taken notice of this, feeling ticked off as he watched not only did the puny pipsqueak show him up today, but also getting a look from the female monster he had his eye on which made it even ten times worst.

Sulley was of one mind that he wasn't going to back down from this. That little monster had no idea that he made the biggest mistake, and Sulley planned to rectify it when the Scaring Final came around and showed him who was boss.

That beachball wouldn't know what hit him when he was through with him.
It was nearing the end of their very first semester at Monster U, and Marian was both dreading and anticipating the upcoming scaring exam. She admitted she wasn't the only one to have the pre-exam jitters after witnessing the reaction of their fellow classmates and seeing how they were dealing with the building pressure, some faring far better than others. The schoolground, which was once thriving with students all over the place, now seemed sparse with very few loitering the area as many chose to head for the library or other remote spots instead to do their studying in private without any unwanted distractions. The days leading up to the finals were tense as everyone spent countless hours pouring over their previous notes and cracking open their scarebooks once more to look up information that was likely to pop up on the test and wanted to brush up on them. Everybody was a bundle of nerves as they were scrambling to get everything together and make sure they were prepared, though some needed it more than others who generally didn't seem to take heed of Professor Knight’s explanation on the importance of knowing this beforehand.

There was so much heavy tension hovering around the area, Marian sensing the high level of stress that seemed to be pouring out of every monsters, and seeing a few were on the verge of mentally collapsing and most likely to be the first to be burnt during the test. Some won't be able to handle the heat given how serious the occupation of being a Scarer was and shouldn't be taken so lightly in the aspect when they had decided that as their field. It was a tough but challenging life experience that had monsters going from their own dimension into the human's and trying to get children to scream to provide a resourceful energy source to their realm. Unlike normal exams, there was a one in a hundred percent chance of passing unless by some miracle, they could really pull off and prove they had the guts and moxie to be scary. This would be the first of many and was a 'do or fail' kind that if you didn't make the quota in the beginning, there were no do-overs: you're gone, sorry kiddo, better luck never....in short, you were out of the program. Hence why everyone was a nervous wreck, but
Hopefully when it was said and done, many could breathe easier and try to wait until the results came through and they'd see whether they got to scare another day.

It wasn't that long until the day finally arrived, and Marian was trying to keep the unsettled spiders from spinning cobwebs in her stomach. Sure, it was normal to feel just a small bit of anxiety because of how important this was to her and her friends, though she was thinking that she really shouldn't fret, given they studied their tails off for weeks on end and knew the entire material like the back of their claw.

**You can do this, Mina; this will be a piece of blood velvet cake**, she reminded herself as she and Leda left their dorm and went to go join the boys who were waiting for them to show. The four of them were walking down the quad towards the Scare Hall where their other classmates were also heading for that fateful morning. She could sense the heavy apprehension pouring from them, the vampire having the instinct impression on who would pass and who wouldn't by the end of today.

She could tell Leda and Randall had also been feeling on edge yet trying to keep themselves focused by remaining optimistic, but Mike didn't seem all too bothered; in fact, he was practically bouncing on the balls of his feet while having his roommate give him a quick revisual and answering every question without second guessing them. The cyclops didn't need it, but the others could see that he was using this to help Randall stay focused and not lose his cool by distracting him otherwise. So far it worked much to everyone's relief. "...A Townson grimace with extra slobber."

"You got it! Boy, Mike, you're definitely going to ace this thing for sure."

They saw the cyclops nod before turning to the others and giving them a wide grin in their direction. "True, but they better make room up there because with the four of us, they'll be looking at the best in scaring biz! That's what I'm saying!"

Leda chuckled while Marian agreed yet had to say, "Yes, but you will be in the first slot, no doubt about it; after all, you were able to answer every question correctly and also did those extra credit assignments that was added to your grade!"

"Yeah, but let's not forget who managed to pull off the Sneak and Roar without too much trouble, and don’t think we forgot about you two and how you did on the scare project with showing the best terror tactic and shriek scheme.” Mike indicated to Leda and Randall who were standing beside them. “All I’m saying is that no matter what happens, we are going to make it to the top, and nothing is going to stand in our way!"

That was all that had to be said, and it did help push away some of their lingering doubts, feeling a
Little reassured as they realized the cyclops was right. They knew they had this in the bag thanks to all their studying, and Mike who had been there every step of the way driving them to do their best. He had seen to it that they were well prepared, giving off empowering speeches before and after each session which gave their self-esteem a boost every single time. The vampire knew Mike was a capable motivator and thought how after they finished being Scarer, perhaps he might consider looking into being a professor or a scaring coach and help others just like them to become better Scarers.

Anything was certainly possible, she mused, knowing today, they would be making their first inlay thanks to Mike’s tireless efforts and would be one of many celebrations in their up and coming future as Scarers.

They still had at least an hour or so before the finals were to begin and Randall had brought the gang some coffee along with his homemade mudslide muffin to snack on.

"Taking an exam on an empty stomach is not a good idea given you won’t be feeling very energetic and you’d definitely need the caffeine to stay focus since your brain will likely be a bit sluggish."

That much was true and Leda had decide to personally thank Randall with a quick peck on the cheek that immediately froze the other monster in his place, "That's for being so thoughtful and also for luck, not to say you don't need it, but I, um, well, I just thought that you know...."

Randall was unable to say anything though his skin had change to a bright magenta color while their roommates were watching and both thinking how obvious it was even someone blind could see it. Mike was close to shaking his head, seeing his buddy looking like a bright pink statue while Leda’s snakes were all in a frenzy as she tried to explain herself but failing profoundly.

The cyclops couldn't help saying in a whisper for the vampire to pick up on, "Geez, I don’t know about you but this is getting ridiculous. I mean you’d think by now, they would’ve gone and just say it yet these two, oh boy..." Mike knew about Randall’s crush on Mina's friend and vice-versa but the two seem to be going around it for quite some time and leaving their roommates shaking their heads in total frustration. Marian had hope that by dropping a few subtle hints to Leda on making the first move as boys tend to drag their feet and thought it might work yet finding it was having the opposite effect she was going for.

"You'd still think it would be wrong of us to find a broom closet and lock them in there and wait until they at least confess. I mean, after the exams of course and it might help rid some of the actual tension for them to at least..."
But the vampire shot him a look that clearly said ‘no’ as she didn’t like the idea of doing something that could likely either backfire or maybe be the pushing point but not in the way they would want it to happen. Marian knew Leda and Randall had issues with their self-esteem but thanks to the ongoing encouragement from them and making sure to give them a shoulder to talk to when one seem to start to doubt themselves in certain ways. Yet seeing them going around in circles was getting old and the vampire had been half tempted to follow through with Mike’s plan though thought against it. It wouldn’t be fair on either monster and a small part of her hope that they would eventually come around to terms on their own.

Plus when it happens, happens; I know Leda really does like Randall. He's such a sweet guy and would definitely say he'd be perfect boyfriend material for her... Marian thought but seeing that they were getting a bit sidetracked and decided to intervene and save them from further embarrassment.

"Okay you guys, listen up: I know this year was only the first stepping stone on our way to being Scarers and that yes, it was a bit tough, that there were a few challenges here and there, and of course, some of our own classmates assuming we don't have what it takes, but look at us now. We have done so much in such little time, our grades making us in the top five this year. We have studied and worked hard, and doing what is to be the biggest moment of our lives. We've done well with every test so far, learned every scare tactic and maneuvers given, and saw that we memorized every thesis that is known to monsters, so now it's time to put that knowledge to good use and show them what we're made of. So, remember whatever happens, we all give this a full on hundred percent, no hold backs."

She saw this definitely did the trick as Randall and Leda manage to turn their focus onto the more important matter and listening to her speak such encouraging words and giving them the assurance they needed most. Mike not one to be left out and decide to add his own two cents on it.

"Yes I agree but let's make those odds times four, for each of us. We don’t let anything try and halt all the good progress we’ve done, so all in!" Mike had extend his hand out and got the others to do the same. They were all thinking the same thing, how today would be the first obstacles towards their main goal yet as long as they each had each other’s back, then they could overcome the impossible and would achieve greatness. They would take no prisoners and see that they attain the dream of being the number one scarers on campus.

"Okay let's show these guys what we’re truly made of! On the count of three, one-two-three-Huzzah!" They threw their hand in the air and feeling much more confident as they head towards the building, the four feeling certain that they were to blow the competition out of the water. Marian was in between Leda and Mike, glad to see her little pep work for her friends, unaware of a pair of blue eyes watching them from afar.

Sulley was making his way from the frat house, his RoRs jacket hanging over one shoulder as he
passed his fellow classmates along the way. He could see they were all on the verge of spazzing out and looking like a bunch of scared pansies, but he strongly knew he got this in the bag. Though his reason for showing up much sooner happen to be walking up the steps, the vampire busy chatting to that Lale-something and the green tennis ball who had became a bigger pain in his side since day one.

He could see unlike the others the cyclops was full of confidence and was looking up at Mina and seeing her return the gesture with that beautiful fang smile of hers to Mike instead of yours truly. Sulley scowled as he wondered just what did she see in him, huh? Honestly he couldn't get how a girl that was so sophisticated and scary could be with someone like that midget! Wazowski was nothing like the Sullivan, they been top Scarers since his great-great grandfather James I and knew he was going to be scaring big when he signed up with one of the major scaring industries after graduation. He had it all figured once he got on campus that he go into the best frat on campus and have everything in no time before he finish his freshman year.

Popularity, a ton of hot babes and an absolute guarantee to the big leagues. The first and third were well taken care of, and he had to admit some of the girls were rather good-looking and not bad to have fun with, yet the one he wanted more than anything was walking up those steps with her friends, being so far out of reach, but he was not one to give up so easily. The only slight he saw was to figure out a way to get rid of that annoying little green blob during the Final.

Once Micky was gone, then Sulley would be there to lend his arm out to Mina after she came around and realize what a joke that puny beachball was.

He look back in their direction and seeing what the green marble said something to the vampire which made her chuckle and smile at him, making her look radiant as she walked alongside them. Sulley’s brow furrow but thinking it wouldn't matter, because today he was going to show that little guy where he stood on the chain of command and be in the spotlight for sure. "I'm gonna wipe the floor with that little know-it-all."

"Yes, you are, Big Blue." Johnny and the rest of the frats had been coming along to see one of their own head to class, all having had a late night meeting the other night to discuss about their "brother" and whether he should stay or be gone. Finally Johnny had come to a ultimate decision as he went to place his hand on Sulley's shoulder, and much to the cyan polka dot monster's surprise, he felt the jacket removed from his clutches. Sulley turned around, looking a bit confused as to why he would do that. "Hey, wait, what are you-?"

Johnny was holding the jacket in his arm while turning his focus onto him to explain his reason. "It's just a precaution. RORs are the best Scarers on campus, Sullivan. Can't have a member getting shown up by a beach ball."
The two monsters turned their focus to where the one who was the irk to Sulley was high-fiving the violet scaled reptilian monster while the two girls were chuckling and heading inside to join the rest of their classmates.

"I'm gonna destroy that guy!" He saw the RoRs all looking at him, Javier scowling but given that was his normal look. He turned to Johnny and hoped he would see that he was going to, but saw the leader dusting the imaginary lint off the jacket and looking him dead in the eyes. "Well, then, you'll get this back right away. It's time to start delivering on that Sullivan name. RoRs are the best, and we can't have you making us look inferior, now can we, boys?"

The frat brothers all nodded in agreement, Sulley realizing that they were serious about this. The writing on the wall was clear to him as they were telling him that if he screwed up this final, then he was no longer one of them. For the first time in a long while, he felt a bit of fear gnawing at him, yet pushed it down as he stormed inside, telling himself he got this, that he could show them all he could beat the others and still be a RoR. Everyone would know, and that little green marble would think twice standing in his way!

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The room was getting pretty pack when Marian and her friends got in yet found four available seats near the front and immediately headed towards them before they got snatched up by anyone else. The vampire was chatting with Leda, going over their scare notes one last time when she glanced over with the corner of her eyes, seeing Sulley join the rest of their class within ten minutes before the bell rang. She noticed the blue monster taking a seat in the same row as them, though thankfully not the one by her side as the only thing keeping him from occupying it was her and Leda’s bags for the moment.

Though was a bit unexpected to find he wasn’t waltzing over and start openly flirting with her as he usually did but guessing because of the exams had other priorities to be focusing on at the moment. Thank rabies for small miracles. Marian was relief to find that yet taking another look at his face and seeing he look a tad worried which was odd on the usual cocky monster's visage. She turned around, seeing Leda was also gauging this and lean to whisper quietly to her friends, "That’s weird, I was almost expecting him to come over just now and try to give you that old 'Sulley' charm?"

The vampire couldn't help shrugging, showing she didn't care at all while answering her question, "Who knows really? I’m just glad he’s not bugging us at the moment. I mean for all we know, maybe his fan club wasn’t here to wish him good luck or something?"

"Yeah or maybe the bonehead finally figured out he’s screwed and is going to get his butt kick out of
school. Maybe he should save himself the trouble and get out before he makes a fool of himself."

Randall snickered and fist bump the cyclops, “Yeah too true on that Mike.”

The two female monsters said nothing, though Marian thought that to be a bit much, especially coming from Mike though thinking how Sulley in the past did make make it hard to focus when he came to bother them, mostly Marian when she wasn’t interest in spending any time with him. Sulley was a annoying pain in their backsides and considering how low his grades were and doubt that unless he really did make an outstanding impression on the final, he wasn’t going to make it for the next scaring class.

It's not really my problem so why should it bother me at all-not that it does, no way! Marian grab her scarebook and turning to a random page to resume her studying, not like she really needed it but at least it gave her something to focus on in the meantime.

It wasn't that long before the professor showed up to address the class when everyone was here. "Today's final will judge your ability to assess a child's fear, and perform the appropriate scare...in the scare simulator."

He turned around to where the stage was, and everyone looked to see a makeshift bedroom complete with a robotic child lying in bed asleep. The professor marched up to the stage, lifting the sheet to where a control box was and made some minor adjustment to the setting.

"The child's sensitivity level will be raised from bedwetter to heavy sleeper. So give it everything you've got." He closed and locked it back up, making absolutely sure no one tried to tamper with it as most have tried in the past before, and not only did they flunk the program, they were expelled from the university. The school had a very strong policy on cheating as they did not tolerate it, especially in this exclusive program of theirs.

Marian could sense the strong apprehension in the air, looking to her friends who also looked like they were now a bit shaken up. The vampire leaned forward and whisper softly for them to hear, "Don't let this get to you guys. Remember we aced everything before and sure this will be no problem for us. No hold backs here, all the way in…"

That seemed to do the trick but the professor was far from finished with his announcement: "Dean Hardscrabble is with us this morning to see who will be moving on in the scaring program, and who will not." Everyone turned their heads and saw the draconian monster stepping from the shadow to stand near her bust and casually dusted the one speck off her canister as she moved to the front of the class.

"I like to thank you all for being here right on time, which shows how serious you are for today's
exam, and seeing that we wish to see who can be the best Scarers. I have also taken the liberty of inviting one of our former alumni of our prestige academy. Please give a warm welcome to the Countess Tepes."

_Oh, rabies..._ Marian felt the blood inside her freezing up when she saw her aunt make her grand entrance, appearing like a silent specter from the darkness and standing alongside the dean. She was looking at every single monster with her ice cold stare before they landed on her niece who felt like she was close to spazzing out just now. Even the chicken was doing the same thing and was glaring at some of the monsters who were now shivering under Diana's unwavering gaze.

Mina's positivity for today's exam disappeared, feeling now that she had more reason to be nervous, not only having her scaremother but her aunt who would be also judging her scare. Mike had noticed, seeing she hadn't been expecting her aunt to show and was making her look tense. The cyclops reached to place his hand on hers, giving it a quick squeeze to reassure her it would be okay.

"Relax, Mina. Just remember you are going to do fine here. A hundred and fifty percent, no hold backs." He watched as the vampire seemed to take those words in before turning to and gave him a warm smile. "Thanks, Mike, and you, too."

The cyclops returned the gesture; however this had not gone unnoticed by a particular monster. A low snarl was crawling in the back of his throat as Sulley's eyes narrowed in on the cyclops who was leaning close to the vampire and holding her hand like that. Seeing that tiny guy right there, having the audacity to make him, Sulley, second-guess his scaring ability! His previous thoughts of how he was going to wipe the floor on today's exam, now...now it was going to be ten times worst, and he was going to savor every minute when he watched that little green ball be squashed like a bug under his foot.

The professor, seeing that it was now time to get started, moved to his desk and called out the monster off his clipboard to get to the stage. He would give them a sample of what child and phobia they had, and they were asked to perform the designated scare they suggested.

"I am a 5-year-old girl afraid of spiders and Santa Claus. Which scare do you use?" The first victim-um student was a lime green monster with large spikes protruding from his head who looked a tad pale when he heard his name and found he was the first on the chopping block.

Everyone could see he was trying hard not to fidget, finding himself being watched by not just his peers, but the two imposing figures from the balcony above, waiting for his given response. Every single monster was thinking the same thing and how they hated to be in his position.

"Uh...that's a 'Seasonal Creep and Crawl'?" He didn't sound too sure, and Professor Knight didn't say anything other than to tell him to demonstrate the scare. The monster proceeded to do so, moving quickly but as quietly as he could towards the bed, giving off a roar that immediately got the "child" to scream when it woke. When that was done, the board next to the professor's desk lit up and saw he had six bulbs so far. The professor didn't make any comment other than say to him and everyone else that the results would be posted outside his office, and then went to call the next one up.

It seemed like time passed rather quick, and what had once been a full class started to empty out until there were but a few left in the room itself. Many had done well, but had a few who looked close on the verge of passing out when they left the room once it was over. What remained were still waiting to be called up, everyone taking the chance to do some last minute cramming like Mike, but he knew the answers like the back of his claw would be a piece of cake for him. Marian had put her notes away, feeling she already knew what she needed and was watching the others on stage, mentally
noting what some did wrong and thinking would've done differently in their place. Although she admitted that the whole waiting thing was like having a stake pointed to the chest until Professor Knight called out her name, knowing it was now or never.

"Miss Lubov please step up." The vampire made to stand and while inside her heart was racing like a overly frightened rabbit ready to run for it, she was doing everything in her power to keep her self calm. She took to walking down the stairs with her back straight and head high, knowing her friends were all rooting for her and could hear Leda whispering for her ears to pick up, "Good luck, Mina..." before she made it to the stage and waited for the professor to throw the question out for her. "I'm a seven year old boy with a fear of bats and werewolves; what Scare do you do?"

_Oh, that wasn't too bad. I know this one; there's more than one, but no hold backs, and this one I'm giving it my all._ "I'd pull the 'Night Flier' followed by a 'Full Moon Howl.'"

"Please demonstrate." Marian went behind the door and allowed herself to transform into a bat before she entered the room and made the sweeping gestures, gliding in close to almost touch the child in bed yet kept her distance. All the movement and fluttering noises were being picked up by the dummy who was starting to stir yet Marian quickly duck under the bed before it noticed her.

She changed back to herself and took the liberty to crawl to the other side, waiting until she was in front of her target before releasing a rip-howling roar in their face, the child dummy screaming in pure terror.

When Marian was finished, she watched as the simulator went through and saw all thirteen dots light up at once. She glanced at her Professor, seeing he gave her a nod of approval by pulling off such a scare, knowing that it wasn't to be covered until the next semester. "Excellent performance, Miss Lubov. I trust to see you back here for Scaring II after the break. NEXT!"

The vampire was glad to hear that she pass and hurried to sit back down with her friends. She shot a quick glance up to where the dean and countess were, both monsters staring right at her. She saw the corner of her scaremother's face had lifted just a smidge, a sign that she was impress as was her aunt who nod her her head in her niece’s direction.

The vampire sat back down next to Leda who couldn’t help commenting how impressive her scare was. "You really aren’t holding back any punches boy it’s going to be tough to beat that." It wasn't long until Leda's name was called and the Gor-Lamia getting up and shooting the gang a nervous smile, "Wish me luck, you guys."

"Knock 'em dead, Leda." They knew the other monster had it in her and watching her pull off the ‘Slimy Slither and Oozing Snarl’ that got her at least eleven on the dashboard. With that plus from all the other tests and projects done during that time, Leda was sure to be in the next semester like the rest of them. The Gor-Lamia return to sit back down and seeming to realize that the worst was over now. Now all they had to do was wait until their boys had their turn and then it would be done. _Not like there will be any problems for those two_ , Marian spared a glance in the cyclops’ direction and was absolutely sure nothing would go wron-

The vampire’s thought came to an abrupt halt as someone came over through the aisle, passing her and Leda, then hearing Mike's stuff being purposely shoved off his desk and onto the floor.

_Oh no, spoke too soon..._ Marian saw who did that and so did Mike who was glaring at the monster’s back as Sulley strolled to stand up front, obviously not the least bit sorry for what he did just now.
"Hey, do you mind?" The vampire watched the obnoxious behemoth barely even turn as he sent a smirk in their direction, "Don't mind at all." He then proceed to show off by practicing his moves, his roars in a much softer tone so as to not interrupt the exam still happening. Marian knew what he was up to by this boisterous display to rub it in Mike's face and couldn't help muttering, "Oi vey."

Their friends were thinking that as well while Randall and Leda went to grab their belonging and were in the process of relocating to another spot so they wouldn’t be bothered by this loathsome oaf. "C'mon, Mike, let's just move."

Marian watch their two friends take leave but notice the cyclops refused to budge, so the vampire went to grab his shoulder and saying in a clear concise tone that got his attention, "Mike don’t, he’s not worth it. Just be the bigger monster and walk away."

She understood that he might not be willing to let this drop yet didn’t want to take any risk or have Mike jeopardize his chances of passing, especially when the dean was presence. Sulley was trying to start something but wasn’t going to let that happen, not on her watch! Thankfully, her words had gotten through to the cyclops and seeing he wasn’t going to let the big guy get one over him now. Marian was glad that was dealt with and went to pick up her bag and hurried to join where Randall and Leda were waiting for them up the steps.

Mike was still a bit miffed and couldn't help retorting to the jerk before him while he gather his books off the floor, "Stay outta my way Sulky. Unlike you, I had to work hard to get into the scare program."

The cyclops thought that would be that but then Sulley had to open his mouth and make that one biting remark, the one that really gnawed at his gullet, "That's because you don't belong here."

You don’t belong here, you don’t belong... Okay, that's it; no more Mr. Nice Monster! Mike did a quick twist around and walk straight up to the other monster, a determine look on his face.

He gave his best snarl at him, only for Sulley to return one much deeper that startled him. "That's what I thought...." Sulley chuckled as he went back to practice after seeing the green marble looking close to peeing himself just now. But he should've realized that this was Mike, and he was not one to back down from a challenge when the gauntlet was thrown. He threw his books down and move to take position and show off his scaring skills to the other monsters.

Marian had been just a few feet away from her other friends when she heard the snarl/roars, and quickly turn to find out what was going on and groaning inwardly. Oh rabies, why now of all times?

She sometimes thought Mike was smart, but others clearly he didn't seem to get that if you don't want a confrontation, don't let yourself be drawn in by it. She saw the two giving a stand off by practicing their roars in the other's face: Mike working on showing his while Sulley kept giving off the same ones he’d done, but getting a bit louder than the last. As the two kept at it, Marian saw that some of the others were also taking notice. She then turn her head towards the balcony and saw the Dean and
her aunt also glancing in their direction, both with heavy scowls on their visages. *Oh rabies, I better go and put a stop to this.* Marian was ready to run down the steps to get to them when the unthinkable happen.

Sulley was moving to set himself as he was preparing to really give the big ‘Sullivan’ roar, but then something caught under his foot: one of the beachball's scaretext and found himself flailing backwards, hitting whatever was behind him, but then heard a clang as whatever it was on top fell to the floor.

A huge gasp went through the room, even Marian who was right behind Mike, the two staring at Hardscrabble's canister that had wobbled for a few seconds, then toppled over and hit the ground with a harsh thud. The people in the room grew silent, but then that silence was broken when the canister suddenly released the suppressed screams inside and was now flying wildly around, the energy from it overpowering the lights and near blinding half the people in the room.

"Watch out!" Someone yelled, and everyone was scrambling to avoid the incoming screaming canister. Many were lucky to get a few scraps and bruises as they had a couple close calls when it came flying by but Leda who had try to jump out of the way but accidentally hit the side of the desk and cried out.

"Leda!" The vampire saw what happen and rush up the flight of steps, finding Randall had already beaten her to it as he was bent down and checking the Gor-Lamia for her injury. They saw there was a slight bruising on her forehead, and her nose was bleeding after the sudden impact. Randall had gone to grab his bag while Marian was helping her up until he returned with said handkerchief. "Here, Leda, tilt your head and hold it there."

Leda tried, but then she and her snakes were hissing in pain, and the vampire noticed her wrist. It didn’t look broken but she was no doctor but it could have been fractured during the fall...She didn't realize the others were crowding until a familiar broad figure was right beside her.

"Hey, you alright?" Marian turned and saw the ROR leader standing so close, though remembered he did show up a little while ago, but now he took charge as he had his boys helped keep the rest at bay and went to check on them.

The vampire shook her head and indicated her roommate. "Leda needs to see the nurse. I don't know for sure, but it’s her arm, we think it might be sprain or something." Marian saw Randall was helping Leda into a sitting position and was cradling the Gor-lamia’s arm, trying to not move it as much, feeling there was definitely a jar impact on the bones. But Marian was also having a tad difficulty as the strong coppery tang was getting to her, and her fangs were itching to pop out and suck that delicious nectar out. Johnny must've noticed the dilemma as he glanced behind, then indicated Reggie and Chip to come forward and help Leda to her feet.

"Don't worry; they'll see she gets taken to the nurse's." The vampire, while not sure what Johnny's intention were towards her, but was thankful he was giving them a helping hand. But now she was torn between following after them or staying here. She and Randall watched the RoRs took Leda out of the room before the two realize the screams had stopped but the tension still remained.

The drama on them had been momentarily forgotten as everyone else looked to find what happened to the extractor and saw it came to a jarring halt before Mike and Sulley. Then in just a few seconds, the thing immediately broke and Marian heard the Dean fly down from her spot, right behind the two
monsters, her face obscured by the heavy shadow with her wings stretched out, and everyone sensing they had unleashed the beast's fury.

Many were on the verge of panicking, and the vampire for one could blame them as she felt the same herself. Uh-oh, this was bad, like really really bad! That’s what they all thought as everyone could read the signs and knew those two were good as dead. Marian shot a worry glance to where Randall was but saw he had already turned invisible and that others were wishing they could do the same themselves right about now.

But the vampire turn her focus onto the still frozen duo at the front and seeing Aunt Lydia joining the dean, her face unreadable yet Marian knew her well enough that she was also displease by this incident. Mike was the first to speak followed by Sulley who immediately went to apologize, "I'm so sorry."

"It's was an accident." Though the blue-violet monster knew he had really done it and heard someone got hurt in the process which now added to his guilt as he didn't expect this to happen. Sulley swore he saw two of his brothers leading another out of there, yet found his eyes were on the Dean who had picked up the now ruined canister off the ground and holding it in her claw as she walk about halfway the room before turning to them.

"What, this? My one souvenir from a lifetime of scaring? Accidents do happen and we all do learn from them."

"You're taking this remarkably well." But the vampire knew better than Mike as she could tell that her aunt wasn't, not by a long shot. If that had been her, she would have been ultimately angry, and knowing her scaremother was better at keeping her emotions from showing, not until she was ready to blow it out in her own special way.

The dean let the ruined object go and spoke to the group. "Now, let's continue the exams." She turned her focus onto the two, her crimson colored eyes landing on Mike as she walk towards him, "Mr. Wazowski, I'm a 5-year-old girl on a farm in Kansas afraid of lightning. Which scare do you use?"

The cyclops was surprised as to her asking this when it should've been the professor to call him on stage. "Shouldn't I go up on the."

But the headmistress did not let him finish as she leaned close to ask him again, this time in a more serious tone, "Which scare do you use?"

Mike realize this was his moment and knowing what she was asking for as he immediately answer the question without any hesitation, "That is a shadow approach with a crackle holler."

"Demonstrate." Marian saw Mike went to go and do so, going through the steps of the scare deliberately. He took a deep breath, preparing to scare when:
"Stop! Thank you." The dean held out her hand, causing Mike to look stunned by her verbal comment. "But I didn't get to sh--"

"I've seen enough." Those three words seemed to have put an end to it and likely his chance of passing the exam just like that. The dean didn't look to the distraught monster as she turn to the next one on her irk list. "I'm a 7-year-old boy--"

But Sulley didn't let her finish as he immediately gave off a ferocious roar to her face, not even noticing how her expression remain stoic or refused to show any other reactions to his attempt. "I wasn't finished." Marian was watching the interaction of those two as well as seeing her aunt making her way towards the pair. Judging from the look on her face, the countess wasn't all that thoroughly impressed by Sulley's demonstration. Or the attitude he gave when he shrugged it off and answered the dean, "I don't need to know any of that stuff to scare."

Marian mentally smack her face thinking that was a dumb thing to say to the headmistress and seeing she thought so as well. "That 'stuff' would have informed you that this particular child is afraid of snakes. So a roar wouldn't make him scream; it would make him cry, alerting his parents, exposing the monster world, destroying life as we know it, and of course, we can't have that, so I'm afraid I can not recommend that you continue in the scaring program. Good day."

Sulley at first thought she was kidding, but then realizing the seriousness of the situation, he looked to the headmistress and thought that he should say something to keep from being kicked out of the program. "...But I'm a Sullivan."

"Yes you are correct." The countess came forward and was circling the other monster, letting her eyes roam over him before winding up back in front of him. "A Sullivan that proves to not share the same intellectual understanding of the simple basic of a scare. If we had more monsters like yourself, our lives would be in total peril and likely be on the verge of annihilation, all because you think you can terrorize children with just one roar. One scary face does not make a Scarer; you should have realize that during your first lesson or did you think you can waltz through class not jotting notes like you're suppose to?"

"But-but my dad…" Sulley looked to the Dean once more, hoping she could change her mind; sadly, that wasn't the case. "Well, then, I'm sure your family will be very disappointed." Marian would admit that those two came out with claws ready and tore the other monster to ribbons. Their words might have been harsh but seeing the look on Sulley's face as he realize he wasn't going to be a scarer. And neither was Mike...

He couldn't believe this; he really didn't want it to be. He had nearly grinned hearing the Dean tell the smaller monster that he was being kicked out of the program, feeling a bit more hyped when she turned to give him his and went to show her his stuff. However instead of given the awe he had been expecting, she just simply told him it wouldn't work and that he, too, failed the exam and was no longer welcome in the Scaring class. He had immediately turned to see Johnny and the remaining RoRs exiting with the jacket that had been promised to be his once more, leave the room and then glancing to another standing there looking with those sad soulful green eyes. Marian stared at him for just a brief moment before turning towards the side and seeing what she focus on and immediately made his blood boil.

Mike, it was all Mike's fault! He was the one who should've been kicked out, not him! He glared at
the cyclops with nothing but anger and hate before marching up the steps and out of the building.

Mike had seen the scornful look being given from the bigger monster, knowing if looks could kill, he’d be six feet under, though thankfully he had up and left, marching under his own steam. Though he found himself turning back to the present when he heard his name and realized the headmistress was far from finished with him.

"And Mr. Wazowski, what you lack is something that cannot be taught: you're not scary. You will not be continuing in the scaring program."

No, no, this can't happen, not after all the hard work he put into and had to prove he was worth being here! "Please, let me try the simulator. I'll surprise you."

The draconian monster barely even gave him a second glance as she said, clearly doubtful of him pulling the impossible from the likes of him. "Surprise me? I doubt that very much."

"But-" Mike tried to get to the retreating headmistress, but his path was blocked and looked up to see the Countess staring down at him and giving him a frosty stare as did her familiar from her staff.

"I do not see how this isn't anymore clear to you; we know how to bring terror, but terror must have a certain finesse. A monster must have all the right scary qualities to pull off a scare...qualities that you are sorely lacking in that department, Mr. Wazowski." Diana baw-bawked out and the Countess nodded before looking once more at him, "Even Diana here agrees as she doesn't find you scary at all, and I find that to be very true, because you are not a Scarer."

Marian felt like someone had taken a knife and ram it into her chest, feeling those words having greater impact on him than anything as they cut him deep, forcing his entire world to come crashing down all around him. But before she had the chance to go over to his side, Mike took off running out of the building, barely even looking up at her as he ran by.

To say today was not how they plan it would be was a total understatement and now that the show was over and seeing everyone turning their focus once more unto important matters but the vampire who was still standing in the same spot she was like a statue. It was Randall who jot her back to the moment as he place his hand on her shoulder and having the vampire whirl to see his eyes on her, "Mina, I think you better go check on him and make sure he’s okay." He would’ve tag along as he also wanted to see how Leda was but still hadn’t got his turn yet and knowing their friends wouldn’t want him to just up and leave without partaking his final. Marian understood and place her hand on his, telling him she would see to that as she quickly exit the room while the scare finals continued without anymore unwanted interruptions.

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Where is he? You'd think she would have been able to catch up to him, given her speed and agility, but apparently the cyclops must've run out of there as soon as he passed those doors and was nowhere to be seen out on the quad. The vampire was now more worried as she had no clue what he might do in the state he was in, hoping to be able to talk with him and tell him that things would be alright.
But will it? A small niggling thought said as she flew up to try to look from a bat’s eyview, hoping to see if he might be somewhere wandering the grounds before deciding on checking their usual hangouts, thinking he might’ve ducked in there to avoid detection. She even talked to a few people that were loitering around the areas, asking if they’d seen anyone fitting Mike’s description. No one had seen a cyclops either at the library, the Screambuck café or any of the other hotspots when she thought to look there for a change. Marian was at the end of her ropes, feeling like she was missing something before mentally smacking herself while thinking: why not the dorms?

"Sometimes you gotta figure that be the one place to try before flying off on a wild bat chase…” She should have thought of that before going off in a tizzy, but now taking the chance to fly straight there, hoping that’s where Mike was; otherwise, she was all left out of other options.

The vampire was flying fast towards the building, fluttering up to where the third floor was, and heading to where the boys’ room were. She was looking through the window and could see a familiar lump on Mike's bed with his face buried in the pillow. Marian waved her claw, and the latch unlocked itself before she had it lifted up to allow her to slide in. The vampire transformed to her original self and made to stand near his bedside.

"Mike?” She stood there, waiting for him to say something, but he remained face down and barely acknowledged her even as Marian wondered if it was a good idea or not to bother him, but had to do something. Marian summoned Randall's chair and sat down before she thought of what to say, and hoped to turn him around even though today had been quite heart-shattering for the cyclops and hadn't expected it to turn out like this.

"Mike, I'm sorry about how this went, I really am. This wasn't supposed to be like this." She really wished she had the power to turn back the clock to prevent the outcome or at least change it where this never happen.

"It's not your fault; if it's anyone's, it’s Sullivans.” That overgrown furball who couldn't stop showboating if his life depended on it. “He didn't know squat when it comes to scaring like you do. Everybody knows you are the best in class, and maybe if we go and talk to the dean, perhaps plead your case and see if she can reevaluate it...” She got no response from him, feeling like she was close to despair as she reached out to lay her hand over his, even though he pulled it away and turned his body to the other side to stare at the wall. "Please, if there's anything I can do, just-" Just don’t shut me out, she silently pleaded, not wanting to say the actual words even though it was right on the tip of her tongue and took everything to not break down there.

"Go away….please…" The vampire blinked, hearing him say this, with his voice cracking and like her was upset by this turn of events. Marian while not happy being ask that yet would consent to do as he ask for the moment.
"If there's anything you need I'll be here, just know I'll always will be Mike - friends forever." She walked out of the room and leaned against the doorframe, thinking how could this happen to Mike. The only way to find her answers was to go straight to the source herself and damn anyone who got in the way!

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The day was near finish when the Scaring finals finally came to an end after a long grueling day and the dean seeing who would likely proceed onto the upcoming semester after the holidays. The headmistress was back at her office as she had some unfinished work to be handle before she could take leave herself. After what happen, I don’t think anyone would be too bother consider what occurred...Her friend had already left after the first one, knowing she only was here to witness Marian’s performance and both seeing that the vampire had indeed made it through with passing colors. There was no doubt that she would be at the top of her class seeing the notes from her scaring professors all commenting how well she had done during the semester.

She definitely will make a name for herself no doubt about it. The headmistress was just letting the ink dry off the document in her claw, the last one thankfully when the front door blew open and in walked her scaredaughter, green eyes ablaze and seeing her march past the startled secretary who was struck speechless when the vampire waltz by and just came in unannounced as she had.

The headmistress while keeping her face from letting it show was a tad surprise by this ‘visit’. But being able to read her scaredaughter’s expression and sense there was a reason for her to come to her office in such an abrupt matter? She turn her crimson gaze to Selma and gave her a look telling her to let them be, “It’s all right, I ask her to come, please give us a moment will you.” It was a white lie but really she wasn’t going to say anything and seeing that she had nothing else schedule for today. As the other monster moved to quickly shut the door, leaving the two alone for the meantime.

“Please have a seat.” Hardscrabble watch as she did, seeing that she really was upset over something but what she was unsure. She had her hands in front of her, claws link and being able to make eye contact with not just her scaredaughter, but a student of her school. "So what is it that you wish to talk about my dear?" Normally anyone who dared to do as she did would have gotten a firm reprieve, but she would give Marian the the floor to speak her mind and get whatever it was off her chest. Hopefully they could get to the bottom of this and have it dealt without too much hassle.

The vampire try to pull herself together, knowing she needed to make her case without blowing her top and feeling her anger start to subside after a few calming breathe and feeling the tension leaving her slowly until it was gone. She remind herself this was for Mike as she carefully chose her words and spoke in a refined manner, "I do apologize for coming in without first arranging with your secretary but I felt it was too urgent and had to see you because I felt there had been an injustice done at today’s scaring finals and wish to plea on behalf of a fellow student."
The dean was listening, seeing that the vampire trying to make her point across as she brought up why she was here. "Ah I see...Yes, well, while I commemorate you on beseeching on his behalf I’m afraid that it cannot be undone. I have been told that while he had such a fine esteem lineage, his grades however speak otherwise. He wasn't going to last long in the program and you know as well as I that not everyone can waltz in because of who he or she's father is--"

"I'm not talking about Sullivan; I’m here for Mike Wazowski who I felt you done a grave error on him!" She knew she was speaking out of turn but finding that she was unable to keep from letting it come out as she stood and slam her hands on the dean’s desk, nearly leaving indentation before she pull away. “Sorry, I mean, I think that I understand that today hadn’t gone accordingly but if you just give him the chance, Mike could show you how truly capable he is as a future Scarer.”

This raised a ridged brow before she thought of the name of the monster and their face coming to surface. "Ah, yes, I know who you are speaking of, but why is it of any concern that you are making such a fuss over him when we have already made the decision, and you know that as Scarers, we implore to have the very best in this class?"

"But he worked his whole life into getting in the program; he knows every scare tactic from front to back and could easily tell you the five laws of fear within a heartbeat's notice!" The vampire wanted her to realize she made a mistake in cutting Mike from the program but the Dean refuse to budge no matter what she said.

"Please aunt Abby it’s just that...it’s been Mike’s dream since we were kids to be a Scarer and denying him this opportunity is tearing him apart. Kicking him from the program is like officially banishing him to the human world!"

The dragon-like monster looked at her scarechild and sighed to herself. She had seen previous students doing what Marian was, all trying to make her reconsider, while some had made good points in the past, but there was something the vampire didn't understand, and it was time she set her straight on the matter.

The headmistress stood up and moved to stand in front of the vampire. "You remember what we spoke of months back, about doing what must be done even while others look to us because of our 'outside' appearance?"

The vampire did recall her words from before and wondering where she was going with this as her aunt spoke out loud, "Many years ago, previous headmasters and mistresses all thought that every monster had the capability to be a Scarer: everyone who entered the program were given such opportunity to prove their merits. Over the decades we saw how human child react through new
research, more trial bases to see how scary one is and allowed us to find what 'flaws' or incompetence that are likely to be a issue down the road. I believe you had the lecture from Professor Stricklanders on the pandemic of the sixties?"

Marian nodded her head. "Yes there had been an unknown outbreak that left many deadly ill, it took many months before a vaccine could be made but by then a lot of monsters had to be quarantined because of how contagious and life-threatening it was especially to the rest of the population." Almost a hundred or more had perished because of it while many were able to overcome it on their own but had very weak roars/screams and couldn't work at the factory afterwards. The times were rough and many had to work overtime and near the point of overexertion and had to limit the power supply within the city which cause great tension and near riots because of it.

"Yes, with the sudden scream shortage and most of our other neighboring town also having the same dilemmas with the population dropping like flies, the universities had to step in and send their own eligible students, most who were on the verge of graduating yet didn't make the quota so had to allow others just starting the program, and do you know what happened next?"

Marian said nothing, yet she didn't have to as she could already figure what the likely outcome was. "It was a complete and utter disaster: students who were capable enough to fill as many canisters for almost a few weeks, but the problem lied that nearly all the inexperience monsters didn’t have that same velocity or the affect to pull off a scare even when given the simplest of children for their substandard level yet even so, the child wasn’t terrified because they were not scary in their mind which had an effect on the monster’s psyche and soon the scream were pummeling because none of the children were afraid of them. Humiliated and embarrassed and worst of all, close on revealing the nature of our world, almost over a thousand doors had to be destroyed in the process."

This was something she had not known. Marian wasn't able to say anything though imagining such a outcome would have been an end to Monstropolis if the humans knew back then, remembering her own past experience in the village near Lubov castles, torches and pitchforks in hand, the look of anger and rage on their faces as they marched towards their home and then…

"They would have seen us annihilated…every last one of us." The vampire was so lost in this and the dean reached out to place her hand on Marian's shoulder, forcing her to look up into those hard but truthful eyes.

"Yes, an end to everything that we know and love because we later realized that some monsters do not have the ability to be terrifying because of how others perceive them as. But let's go back to your friend Michael, now. I admit he does have an impressive S-GPA and admitting he did well on the standard testing. So while he is scare smart, there's more to knowing the difference in a scare and also how to pull it off all the same. Yes, he can memorize everything, but the question is could he pull it off given his physical appearance?"
The dean dropped her hand and walked towards the window, hands behind her back. "The answer I'm afraid is no, he cannot and why you may ask? Because I have seen others like Wazowski who all believe they could, yet in the end were not even capable of scaring a five-year-old by their appearance alone. A Scarer has to look the part, and while I appreciate such touching gesture to stand alongside him, I'm afraid that it won't change my mind on what I said. What I did was spare him the utmost humiliation and considering what I just told you, you can understand my reasons why."

“Yes but Auntie--” She wanted to say that it couldn’t be but knowing there was no denying she was being given the cold hard truth. The headmistress decided to let her in on one more detail, one that she hope would be able to get through to her and let this matter go. “There is another thing I must tell you but you must absolutely keep this to yourself. What happened at the factory was far from pleasant and yes as I said, had damaged a lot of monsters’ mentality to the point where they didn’t feel they could ever come back from, one in particular found the experience so traumatizing that he couldn’t bear with it and he well I’m afraid couldn’t handle the pressure and decide to take an end to himself.”

The vampire was struck speechless not able to believe what she just heard. How what, why was no mention of this been said before! The Dean sigh, looking much older than she already was as she said, “The school as well as the factory felt it was best to keep it quiet, knowing that if word got out it would have made many monsters afraid to be a part of the program and even with the recovering numbers coming back out of the red, can you imagine what it would likely have done to the rest had this got out because we didn’t think that we should’ve thought it more through in letting just any potential scarer come out without the proper training. This is why I try to ingraine into your young minds the purpose and not wanting what happen before resurface or see anymore monsters go through what occurred.”

She walked back towards Marian who was still processing everything yet clearly understood her reason even if it was a bitter pill to swallow in the long run. Hardscrabble moved to help her up and lead her towards the door, still giving her a bit of insight on the matter. "Sometimes the truth hurts, but you must understand that we have obligations that must be carry out even if we might not like them. There are other programs for him to partake and can still be on campus, he will eventually get over it and move on which I suggest you do as well."

Marian was unable to say another words as she exited the room, feeling her head was spinning and needed to get some air. She wandered out of the administrations office and out to the quad, taking a seat on one of the empty park benches there.

Was her aunt right with what she said? She knew her history professor spoke of the rough eras during the early part of the semester, thinking if what the Dean said was true and then how they had to send monsters who had barely even passed the first stage of the program. Monsters who were probably as smart like Mike but couldn’t be terrifying because of their outward appearance or lack
Did that mean that Mike's chances to be scary were all for naught?

"No, she's wrong; she has to be..." But thinking of the monsters from the Scare room - a ratio of half of them that could pull it off while others didn't have the balls to even give off a decent roar...were Mike's chances on the side of that? She didn't want to think that, and thinking this would only make her lean towards that.

The vampire chose to try to push them to the side for now and go see how Leda was faring, and went to where the nurse's office should be. She didn't get to stay long, but her roommate was okay: her wrist wasn't totally shattered, just got bashed hard and was likely to be sprained for a few weeks. Leda had been sitting on the bed, a bit groggy thanks to the medicine the nurse gave her and also having an icepack to her forehead but relieved to see Mina.

"Hey so how did everything go? Did Mike and Randall finish already? I know that I'm not likely to go out right now, but perhaps tomorrow we could..." Yet the Gor-Lamia didn't get to finish as she saw the look on the vampire's face and immediately sensed something was wrong. "Mina, what happened? Did the guys fail the program?"

"Um, well, I don't know with Randall, but Mike...Mike got kicked out...he didn't even get to do his scare."

"What, but why? It wasn't because of that canister thing, was it? Surely they're not pinning that on him!"

Marian shook her head, "No, it wasn't that. It just, it's well..." She really couldn't bring herself to say it, and she didn't have to as someone else entered the room. Randall had finished his exam but went to go grab a couple things and brought a small array of flowers and a mini cake with 'B well' inscribe on it. The reptilian monster saw Leda wasn’t alone and seeing the vampire wasn’t able to explain decide to help as he told the Gor-Lamia what happen.

"He wasn't allowed to do his scare. The Dean - she just didn't give him the chance to." He set the flowers on the nightstand and took the extra chair right by Marian. The vampire saw how her friends look to her, seeing the pity and concern on their faces before she felt she had enough and excuse herself. She decide to give them a moment of privacy and as she exit the room could hear the two reptilian-like monsters talking quietly before she exit the building altogether.

She got back to the dorms and while she would've like to see if Mike felt any better but decide against it. It just wasn't fair. Today should have been them celebrating passing the first course of their lives; she and Leda were going to make reservations at that restaurant to rejoice, knowing that Mike wouldn't want to do anything considering how things went down. Leda getting hurt and Mike now out of the program - this wasn't what they wanted today to turn out.

She made it to their room and feeling the urge to sink under the covers and not get up ever again. She had been resting her head on the pillow when Chai flutter down from his perch and sitting near her and was cooing with worry when he sense her distress. Marian reached to stroke his head with her index finger, "Oh, Chai, sweetheart, why did this have to happen? Why couldn't today be one of joy instead of misery?"
Her familiars all crowded around her, but none could give her the answers, knowing that they didn't have any, but Marian wishing that someone like her mother would've held her and wiped her tears away and tell her that sometimes things took a while before it got better. But how could they, the vampire was left to wallow in her own lost thoughts over the events that came to be.
The Start of Scare Games and The Scream Nominees are...

Chapter Summary

So here it comes, nominating the teams for Scare games and oh right the SCREAM KING and QUEEN who will be selected for this special event and how will Mina handle Mike's plan.

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone I'm back sorry for the long delay there had been some situation but I manage to get things settle long enough to get back into the spirit of writing, I like to thank everyone for taking the time to read my stories and also wouldn't mind seeing a review here and there but nonetheless enjoy seeing you take a look for yourself. Anyways please enjoy!

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It wasn't that long before the last day of school finally arrived, and with all the exams already finished which meant the semester was over, now was the time to enjoy some well-deserved 'R and R'. Every monster on campus was already set with their things all packed and being more lively than ever now that they were no longer under the heavy pressure and could enjoy themselves however they liked. The students were hooting and hollering with pure glee as they exited the campus in large numbers with only a select few staying behind, but the university would be pretty empty with the exception of the groundskeepers and hired security to keep tabs and make sure no funny business happened while the rest were away on holiday.

Not like any of them put much thought into it as the students were focused on some of the more important majorities that popped into their noggins. No more dealing with long, boring lectures from teacher, no more tedious assignments, no more term papers to write until their hands cramped up or feeling tiny pointy pitchforks stabbing into their skulls. They were officially free until next term to get back to the grindstone, but no one seemed to mind as now it was time to just kick back and have some fun, to just relish in the moment and push everything else to the other side of the room. Many were heading home to be with their families while others made plans with friends to go somewhere fun and festive for their vacation time. Everyone was in much better spirits now that there were no more exams to take, but there were a few who weren't joining in their classmate's enthusiasm. Quite the opposite, really.

It had only been a couple days since their Scaring Finals, yet Mike was still wallowing in a depressed state instead of being his usual cheerful self. They noticed the cyclops had barely spoken or made
any effort to come out of his room, just lied on his bed and did nothing. This concerned them, especially Marian. The vampire knew Mike was taking this pretty hard and was greatly upset by this turn of event, but had try to do everything she could to help make him feel better, yet nothing worked to bring him out of his current funk.

She had dropped by to see if there were any changes, but Mike would be facing the wall with his back towards her and not uttering a single peep even when she was standing in the same space as him. There were a few snack wrappers and empty soda cans littering his side, indicating that the cyclops wasn't starving himself, yet she wished she could bring the old Mike Wazowski out and go back to the way things were. If only...

But after dropping off a plate of food she brought from the cafeteria, some of Mike's favorite there, and leaving it for him to munch on before exiting back to her dorm, she was feeling very much unhappy. Leda was on her bed, reading her Jane Acksten when she heard Mina coming in. She came back from the nurse's with a clean bill of health with the exception of having to wear a brace and told to take it easy and not do anything too strenuous to the healing bone.

She lifted her head, seeing the vampire coming in but noted the expression on her face, "That bad, huh?" Did she even have to ask? Marian made her way towards the other monster, Leda scooting to give the vampire space to lie down on and letting Mina lean against her.

"No, it doesn't look that way, and honestly, I don't know what else to do, Leda. I mean, I tried almost everything, and you know we're all leaving campus, but I don't think Mike is all up for it." She doubted he planned to go back to his folks' house as she imagined he didn't want to give them the terrible news he'd been kicked out of the program and not wanting to see the look on their faces when it came to that. She had tried to see if he would like to join her over with her family, feeling that maybe being away from school might clear the air a little, yet like all their other one sided conversations, he didn't say a word, neither a yay or nay.

Marian was half tempted to stay and keep him company, but she had promised her dad that she would be home for the holidays, and hadn't seen him or her baby sister in months. Besides, she had her stuff packed and had her scheduled door all arranged. Her letter from Mr. Waterhouse had arrived a few days ago, letting her know that the door leading back to her homeworld would be in place, and that she should get back right around sundown in the other realm. Leda's folks were coming in the morning to pick her up, but Randall was staying because his folks were at a business conference and wouldn't be back until much later, but he would see his sister and her husband and would spend some quality time together until then. Marian was able to ask Randall to keep a close eye on Mike, knowing it might seem to be a bit much on her end; she was worried that Mike in his state might go over the edge, but at least she would have the other monster around to make sure that didn't happen while she wasn't around.

"Don't worry, Mina. I'll make sure he'll be okay; cross all three hearts and hope to die," Randall said, reassuring the vampire, knowing she could count on him to keep his word. Marian just hoped that Mike would come out of his shell after the break and could resume to the way things were.

Except that wouldn't be possible because you'd both be no longer sharing the same classes anymore... That painful reminder had to rear its ugly head in her brain, hating having to think that everything they had worked so hard for - especially Mike who had been putting everything into this program only to not be allowed the chance to pursue his dream of being a Scarer. It was not fair, and so far, she didn't think this would be a very jolly season for any of them.

Marian knew that she had a short window as the bus would be here in fifteen minutes, but she wanted to make sure to give each of her friends their present before taking off. She already gave
Randall's and Leda's before the Gor-Lamia had left with her folks early that morning, and the only gift left was Mike's, and Randall said he would give them a moment as he headed towards the cafeteria to grab some late lunch. She thought how this was probably going to turn out like the last few tries, but she couldn't let herself not give in without seeing if maybe this time might be different. She was standing right outside the door, her present for Mike clutched firmly to her chest, and feeling unsure whether to go and slip it under the door, or just knock and hope he answered. But a part of her was getting tired of this silent treatment as none of them had done anything to deserve it - least of all her. Mustering a little courage, she tentatively knocked and called out, "Mike, it's Mina. I'm heading off soon, but I came to say goodbye and also give you this."

She waited for a few minutes, sensing his presence behind the door but getting no sign of him opening for her. Sighing to herself, Marian slipped the parcel under as it was thin enough to go through with another letter attached to it. She hoped Mike liked it, as she and Leda had gone shopping for the boys a couple weeks ago, and saw it sitting on display which made her think of him. Marian knew it seemed pointless talking to him when all he was going to do was listen and not respond, but she did have something to say before she left, hoping it might get through to him in the process.

"Mike, I know things didn't turn out the way we had hoped, and I understand that you're upset by this - I would, too, if I was in your place. I know it's unfair, but I don't think that will change any of this, nor will it make any difference if you continue to just sit in the dark and do nothing. The Mike Wazowski I know would never let himself be wallowing in self-pity; he would pick himself right back up and strive onward without hesitation. I'm not asking for much, but what I want is the old you back: my best friend who doesn't ignore his friends when all we're doing is worrying about you!"

There was no other response from the other side, and feeling she did all she could even though she didn't think it was enough, Marian was ready to go when she heard the knob turning, and then the door coming ajar before something slide out and was right by her feet. It was a lumpy package wrap in green-silver wrapping, bearing her name written in the cyclops' hand.

She picked it up, holding it in her hands before hearing the door quickly shut, yet Marian found this to be a sign - miniscule, but still better than nothing. She smiled softly and said while cradling the object as if it was a fragile egg in her palms, "Thanks, Mike." The gesture was enough to give her a small bit of hope and thought that maybe things could get back to the way they were before-

Suddenly she heard a squeak and turned her head to see her bats flying towards her, Chai chittering in her ear, and Marian realized that it was almost time for their departure. Taking immediately leave, she hurried to grab her things and went to wait outside for the bus near the entrance of the school, her familiars right behind her. There were not too many people on board, and taking one of the vacant seats in the back, her gaze lingered on the university as she watched it fade from view until she reached the factory and walked inside. Perhaps a few days in her homeworld would help the vampire take her mind off things, albeit temporarily.

It was around nightfall when she came through the portal, seeing her father on the other side and waiting for her near the entryway. Dracula was thrilled to see his eldest and went to give Marian a hug and a peck on the head. "Welcome home, my little black crow! Oh, how we all missed you - especially Mavy Wavy. Oh, she has so much to tell you!"

Marian returned the gesture, glad to be back and finding that her father seemed to be doing well in her absence. There was a hearse parked out for them and getting inside to make their way back to the manor, driving through the familiar countryside and those having the chance to listen to him talk about how the hotel was coming along with its near completion and should be ready within another few months or so if there weren't any delays. They made it back to the manor, Marian finding her
little sister rush right at her, throwing the vampire almost off the steps but managed to keep her balance. "Me miss you, big sister!"

"And I you, little one, though it looks to me someone is starting to get big now." She lifted Mavis up, carrying her sister in her arms while entering the foyer to find that Dad had gotten the place all decked for the festivities, and hearing the commotion coming their way, seeing she wasn't the only one there. "Hey, hey, it's Mina! She's home!" Frankenstein stomped over and went to give the vampire his vice-like hugs, one that could easily crush the bones of normal mortals, but Mina was used to them and smiling at her uncle. The rest of the gang came over and were all greeting her, happy to see she was home and in one piece.

"Hi, everyone, glad to be back." She saw they were all here, feeling right in her element. Yes, it was good to be home once more. The next few days, Marian was enjoying the time to decompress and let her trouble be momentarily set aside while hanging with her family once more. The vampire was able to catch up on some of the things that had been going on since she went to school, letting them know what was happening in Monstropolis in return. Of course, they asked how she was doing in the Scare Program and were pleased to hear she had done well in her finals.

With everyone having a good time and enjoying themselves, Marian let herself be a part of it, but only later when she was alone in her room did she let herself think of her best friend and wonder how he was faring. She didn't receive any messages, but no news was good news supposedly…

Then while Marian got to watch her sister tear into the wrapping with glee, her father chatting with his friends, and see Aunt Wanda and Eunice gushing over the presents their hubbies got for them and sipping spider eggnog. Everyone smiling and laughing; Marian manage to excuse herself and made her way back to the sanctity of her room - where Mike's gift was on her bed, waiting to be opened. She took her time opening it and felt a pang inside her chest when she saw what it was inside. "Oh, Mike…"

Dracula had noticed his daughter taking leave early, and while he didn't think of it at the time, he decided to go check on her after putting Mavis to bed and the rest of the guests still winding downstairs. "Mina, is everything all right? You didn't stay to finish your fruit fly cake? Yes, I know that it's difficult to finish; your uncle Frank thought he knew how to pack it all in. Why I remember one time where we all dared him to eat the whole chalupa and took him hours to get that out. Whoo, man, it was like…"

But Marian didn't seem to pay any attention to his words, seeming to be miles away which got him concerned as he came over and laid his hand on her shoulder. "Mina, what is bothering you, my little fireant? What's the matter?"

Marian finally turned, her eyes looking close to tearing up but managed to hold the waterworks in. She had been staring outside her window, gazing out at the scenery with Mike's gift sitting in her lap. It was a small box, but the content inside spoke loudly of how much he thought of her: it was a necklace that had an infinity, where etched within was a mountain that almost resembled the Carpathian ones, and then the other half inside a wave with a sapphire. It was such a beautiful piece that she found herself thinking it must have cost Mike to get this for her, but the sentiment was there for her to see. She had been thinking of her best friend when her dad came in; feeling she was in need of a bit of advice, she thought her father might have the answers she needed.

"Actually, Daddy, I'm sorta in a dilemma. It's about Mike you see…" She started at the beginning and told him about the incident during the exam and what happened afterwards that left her so conflicted while her father listened to her speak her mind out loud. "...and I feel pretty awful that he's no longer in the program, but Aunt Abby says she won't change her mind, and well, you know how
hard Mike worked to get in; how is it that he can't be a part of it? I mean, I don't know what else to do!"

Dracula was quiet but listening, seeing how upset she was by this turn of event, and inwardly sighed. He had a feeling something like this would happen, even though he never really said it since Mike was very important to his daughter. But not one to beat around the bush, he knew it was inevitable in seeing how the cyclops didn't exactly have the same terrifying potential like his Marian, yet didn't want to say anything at the time until this moment. He could tell that his daughter was taking this hard, but she had to learn about it one way or another.

Dracula moved to join her and grabbed her hand in his, doing his best to console her on the matter. "Mina, love, I know that you and Mike had put a lot of heart and soul into this, but being scary isn't as simple as one would think. I mean, yes, appearance wise it helps to scare the pants of children, but I'm afraid there's more to it than meets the eye. I know that this is difficult to accept, and yes, I admit that while Mike may be scare smart, he's um…"

"Not scary." She saw him nod which made her sigh as she realized that even her dad thought the same thing like the headmistress. The vampire stood up, arms crossed and moving about in a haze as she spoke while letting her emotions get the best of her. "That's what Aunt Abby said as well, yet why then are we told that a monster can be anything if all it's going to do is crush someone's dream when they say, 'Gee sorry, but you're not scary enough to be a Scarer!' How is any of that fair?!

She had managed to walk up the wall towards the ceiling, hanging upside down while her father remained where he was before he moved to join her, floating in midair as he spoke to her upside-down face.

"Mina, honeybat, you have to understand that we all have our knacks, and Mike didn't make the quota on that bar. Every monster has been there, and believe me, we all stand out in ways that make us unique. Take us, for instant: without our fangs, abilities to transform or ensnare our prey, we be like those humans! But we're not, which is good, 'cause you know that being human is so boring, and you are better than that; same with Mike, on a much smaller scale. But let's get back to what we were talking about. Yes, sometimes it's a tough gig being a Scarer, and it sucks he can't go be a part of it, but you have to know where you stand. All I'm saying is that I'm sure he will come around and see that this is for the best, and everything will be hunky-dory in no time."

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Marian wasn't sure what to say after that particular discussion with her father, though she had plenty of time to think before the break came to an end and made her way back to the university. She met up with her friends who were happy to see her and letting her know how they fared during the holiday. Classes were to resume the day after tomorrow, and the three decided to hang out at the Screech Buck cafe for a bit. They found themselves an empty booth and placed an order with the barista when they took a seat. Marian and Leda sat opposite Randall, the vampire seeing the two were chatting animatedly and the Gor-Lamia laughed at something the other monster said. It felt strangely odd without Mike being with them even though Randall assured Marian he was okay the last he checked up on him.

"Although I don't think he was overly thrilled with the classes he had to pick, but given that there weren't many left available by the time we got there, and didn't want him to sit around and grow daisies in our absences..." Randall had seen to it that Mike headed to admissions when registration opened up, having to help the cyclops pick classes though, but Mike hadn't been very helpful in showing any remote interest in the ones Randall thought he might like to try his hands on. He, like Marian, had tried to do what he thought was best to help Mike pull himself together after that debacle at finals with hope that they could go back to the way things were and put this all behind them.
"Yep, in a few weeks, Mike will be so amped about taking this course and won't stop bragging about being a Canning Designer Extraordinaire." They didn't want to admit it, but out of all the electives chosen, that had to be the one that Mike would never have considered, though given all the others were booked by the time they got there, this was one of the few electives with not as many students taking it, knowing why as no one in their right mind would, but maybe Mike would like it... eventually.

The vampire wished she could accept this, but hadn't seen hide or eye of her best friend since she got here, and knew this was hitting her the hardest of the others. Leda reached to place her hand over hers, making the other monster turn to her.

"It's going to be fine, Mina. I mean, I heard that Canister Making is quite a fascinating study; right, Randall?" The Gor-Lamia turned to the other reptile who nodded his head rapidly. "Yeah, heard lots of great things about it, you know. I'm certainly green with envy, and he'll have a blast with this bad boy for sure."

"Thanks, guys. I appreciate it, but..." Marian lowered her gaze to the table, finding the wood more interesting than looking at them. Yet they understood her feelings and knew how it was, as they felt the same themselves. "It's all right; we know, but just because we aren't in the same program, doesn't mean we won't stop being friends with him. I'm sure Mike knows that, too."

"Yeah, Mina, but hey, at least you don't have to worry about Sulky bothering us anymore. Heard he had to switch courses. Kinda feel bad for whoever has to deal with that big dope," Randall said, trying to cheer the vampire up, knowing at least one good thing came out of it, though he wished the outcome hadn't included their friend in the process. "Yeah, I guess when you put it that way..."

There had been so much gossip circulating around the quad after the finals, and when she got back, the rumor mill was going beyond the pale with some of the more outrageous stuff floating about: some thinking how he shamed his family name and even believed that his dad must've really blown the top when he got the news over his son's disgrace out of the Scaring Program.

She admitted having to imagine how upset and disappointed the family was over Sulley's actions; perhaps he realized that he couldn't get away with everything like he first assumed in the process. Of course, like Randall said, it would be one less headache for her to deal with and be someone else's problem.

**He deserved what he got**, she thought bitterly, and couldn't forget it was partly his fault that Mike got in trouble in the first place. If he hadn't been egging Mike on, none of this would have happened, and maybe the dean would've seen what a great Scarer he was. Now he would never have that chance...

"If I ever see that no good blueberry Măgar, it will be all too soon!" she growled, having her nail dig into the wood, making a deep gash as she pressed down hard, the two monsters taking notice that the vampire's fangs were sticking out over her lips and eyes turning red.

"Ah, you know, I should go check and see if our orders ready. Be right back." Randall excused himself, leaving Leda to try and pacify the agitated vampire. The Gor-Lamia was trying to think of the best way to ease her friend's tension, knowing that Marian had every right to be upset over the situation.

"Mina, I know this is especially hard on you, and we all feel the same way. Mike's our friend, and if there were some way to help him, I would be there alongside you in a heartbeat; I'm sure Randall would, too. " "Yeah, I suppose you're right, Leda. It's just I wish that there was some way to fix things and have Mike once more in the program." She didn't bring up what her aunt or father said, because even if they may be right, she felt that Mike could've proven himself if they only gave him
the chance.

"So, I was looking in today's 'horrorscope', and according to yours, it said 'Big change are about to come in the most unexpected matter', so that could be a sign of something that could be good."

"Yeah, perhaps..." She wasn't one to put much stack into believing such things, but she wasn't going to put down Leda for trying to make her feel better about the given situation. Randall returned with their drinks, and they resumed chatting for a bit while sipping their beverages. "So, they're going to announce the games pretty soon; any ideas who's likely to get the cup?"

"Isn't it usually the ROR house that wins these competition? I mean, they do seem like the best on the block, though I know that HEX or HSS could give it a run for their money, or maybe even JOX or EEK, so there's a possibility there perhaps. What do you think, Mina?"

The vampire shrugged her shoulder before taking another swig of the blood-orange strawberry smoothie. "Hmm, not sure, to be honest, though we'll see what happens, won't we?" They talked for a good while before Randall had to go use the restroom, leaving the girls by themselves to have some private chatting of their own.

"Soo...anything you want to tell me that's been going on between you two just now?" She had sensed something was there, though she didn't want to pry, but she definitely saw that Randall and Leda seemed more comfortable around one another and noted the underlined glance between them. Leda had the good decency to blush, but seeing that the vampire must've figured it out, she went to explain while her snakes were all hissing/giggling out loud.

"Oh, um, you see, I came back a couple days before you, and Randall - he sorta asked me to go hang out with him. I mean, that's pretty normal for us when it's the four of us, but since you weren't here, and Mike was...so, anyways, we went and had dinner at this small restaurant that served good Thai and then to the movies where we saw the HUMAN; it was a remake of the old one, but I was pretty terrified during the scary parts, and Randall made sure I held onto him, and I didn't mind when I was clinging to his arm real tightly. Then after that, we took a walk around the quad and sat by the fountain together; that's when he told me how much he really like-liked me and asked if I would be his girlfriend...and I said yes!"

"Ohhh, well, congrats!" She knew this was big, given how she and Mike had figured this out ages ago, but hearing that those two were finally together-together was something to be excited for. "Yeah, we're taking it slow, and I mean it's nice to have him as a boyfriend, and don't worry; this won't have any effect on us."

"Hey, I'm just happy you two are happy." She really was and thought this moment would have been more epic if Mike were here, but couldn't help showing her support to her roommate.

"Thanks, but oh, there's one other thing: Randall said he was going to let you know later, but he got pledged to a fraternity while we were away. Apparently one of the frats was impressed by the finals and decided he made the cut to join them. He didn't tell me what it was, said it would be a big surprise."

"Wow, that's really something." Marian hadn't expected that, but she had to wonder which houses he got in, and was sure he would tell them soon as they didn't keep secrets from one another.

"Yeah, but anyways: you know the Scream King and Queen are happening around the same time as the Scare Games? I heard they already picked their nominees for who based on everyone's vote and are going to announce the candidates for them; do you think any one of us will be picked for it?"
But before Marian had a chance to say what she thought on it, someone had butted in, and a voice that the vampire recognized to be the most annoying thing to her ears was saying in her high and mighty attitude, "Oh, pllllease, like you two could stand a chance on winning this thing as they only choose the best, and I highly doubt they would pick you freshies over the likes of moi - especially you, leech."

The two monsters turned, and the vampire saw that harpy who seemed to make it her business to strut over and bother them when they least expected it. "Funny, I don't recall inviting you to this particular conversation, Sevun. I mean, don't you have better things to do like...oh, I don't know, preening your plumes and asking yourself who's a pretty birdie while waiting for someone to give you a cracker?"

She heard the clique behind Scarlet snickering before the harpy turned, and they immediately shut up before the monster turned her focus back on them again. "Oh, that's real hilarious. I forget how witty a bat can be, especially with their bites. Tell me, have you made sure to take a rabies test and make sure you don't go spreading your vile germs around school? I mean, one can't be too careful with your kind around and tend to be put down, 'cause no one likes filthy vermin in their midst."

Now that was a line too far, and before she had the chance, Leda stood and also her snakes also rising to hiss in the harpy's direction, the Gor-Lamia's eyes turn to slit and hiss like an angry viper, "Oh that's rich coming from you. I mean it does make one wonder how it is you manage to survive that incident with the football team last year where many of our players were put out of commission due to strep throat and yet you're still around. There's lots of talk about how you likes to get your claws onto any monster that doesn't realize what's been up in that nest of yours or how you like to go and try to suck someone's tonsil out, so really whose the leech here because I'm looking right at her and it certainly isn't Mina."

To say they were in total shock would be the understatement of the century, in which case Marian had found that Leda was standing up to the HEX leader and showing who's got the brass melons this time. DAMNNNNN! The vampire was smiling at her friend while some of the others were also shocked by the Gor-Lamia, but before she could lunge at her, Marian went in for the kill, standing right alongside her friend. "Don't even think about it Scar but let's be clear of one thing. We all know that Johnny Worthington has lost all interest in you, and you're trying to make up for it by sinking your claws onto anyone that you think would make him look back to you. You already went through the JOX and OH, but who's next on the list, huh? Better go and give the memo to watch out as no want wants to catch the bird flu from you."

The harpy's cheek turned red as her own name, but she turned her glare to the vampire, and Marian imagined her trying to laser her with them, yet refused to look away as she glowered back with her own stare.

The two locked in a stare off before the harpy huffed and threw her nose in the air sneering, "You best watch yourself, freshie; you have no idea of who you are talking to. I've been Scream Queen for three years, and I intend to see this one as well, so don't even think about trying to steal my crown, or I'll make you both regret it." She quickly spun around, hair flying and having her and her sorority exit the cafe while Marian couldn't believe the nerve of that bird.

"Honestly, why anyone would dare to choose her as Scream Queen, I'll never know."

"That's because no one has ever dared to go up against her while others who try wind up not passing the trials. She is downright vicious and in these competitions, she will go for the jugulars and not rest till she got the crown in hand. The Scream competition is kinda like the Scare Games for the minority party: They will test you for sure, and whether you are in a sorority or not, it's all about which
monster makes it. Also, from the stories told, she managed to knock out all her competitors using whatever means necessary, and none dare to sign up again in fear of incurring her wrath, and let me tell you: she will make them either wind up at the hospital or transferring schools after that."

"Wow...that's awful. Someone really oughta put her in her place. She could use it to be knocked down a couple pegs, that's for sure."

"Yeah, it would be nice for someone to dethrone that annoying birdie and have someone more suitable as Scream Queen on campus." The vampire had to agree and hoped that someone did decide to do just that. Randall came back from the restroom, having just been shoved out of the way by Scarlett and her crew, the monster leaving in a huff with feathers all ruffled and putting two and two together.

So, what just happen, it looks like I missed out on a good show?" Leda went to explain to Randall what occurred before Marian decided to take her leave, making a random excuse saying she had some errands to run, but really wanted to take time to reflect by herself. She said goodbye to them and exited the café, heading for the school grounds where it was somewhat less occupied and the weather was just a smidge cooler now than before.

But the vampire didn't mind walking the open quad as it helped clear her mind some, but she kept thinking of Mike, hoping that things would get back on track even if they had a slight detour, trying to be optimistic on the matter.

Mike would be back on his feet, ready and able; she was sure that he would be able to look at things in a whole new perspective. A change of direction did build character in a person, and Mike was sure to take this as a golden opportunity for oneself. Who knows, maybe he'll come to like this, the vampire thought, thinking that maybe it would do the cyclops some good to forget the Scaring Program and move on with his life.

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This was turning out to be the worst experience of his life - nay, his whole existence of being a monster. That was Mike's assumption as soon as he plopped in one of the available spots and was looking at his new surroundings with a bored expression, feeling that this was the very opposite to how he planned his life goal since setting foot on these grounds. He chose a desk that allowed him to stare out the window, giving him an ample view of the quad, seeing the trees still a bit bare of leaves, but the Scare Hall that was adjacent to this building...

It was there - so near, yet so far. Just openly mocking him as it were, and yet he couldn't care as he felt that everything felt pointless now even as the other students came in and took their seats while having the professor give his open lecture to them. Professor Brandywine had to be the most dull teacher he ever laid his eye on even right before he opened his mouth.

"Welcome back…I hope everyone had a pleasant break. Some say that a career as a scream can designer is boring, unchallenging, a waste of a monster's potential..." Even the way he spoke seemed to show how uninspiring he felt yet kept going in that same painstaking droll, making Mike's earlier assumption right on the mark that this was not how he imagined college life to be.

"Open your textbooks to chapter three. We will now plunge into the rich history of scream can design…"

But the rest of it fell short as all Mike heard was "blah blah blah..." He knew this was going to be a real snooze fest and would rather run through a field of posies with raining gumdrops than be here. Anywhere would've been better than this. Of course, this could be enduring if there wasn't the slight
fact that Sulley was glowering at him from across the room just now. He had been doing that since he got in, and the bigger monster’s hand had wrapped around the canister, squeezing it tight while keeping his eye on the cyclops, knowing he must be imagining that to be Mike right there in his paw. Mike didn’t think this could get anymore worst, but he was wrong because Sulky was here with him of all people.

He turned away and kept glancing outside, the longing written as plain as day for anyone to see. He imagined that Mina and the others were learning new techniques, one step closer to being Scarers while he was now stuck doing can design, a mediocre job that no self-respecting monster would ever go looking to do. He wished there was some way to convince everyone that he did have the potential to scare, but nothing seemed to come forth as the day passed, before class finally came to an end.

He walked out with a dejected slump in his step, ignoring everyone around him that were exiting the building, all seeming to be in more leveled spirits than he was. Though Sulley had decided to keep pace with him, his blue eyes boring holes right down at his tiny form and a heavy scowl written all over his face. Mike tried not to let this bother him as he figured he would have to get use to this, having to deal with that big lug in class who was most likely plotting his untimely demise; Mike wouldn’t mind, given he rather it be quick as he’d rather not have to deal with this whole semester until graduation and have his diploma depict him as Mike Wazowski, ”Design Canister”.

This was not what he had in mind for his future endeavor. The cyclops sighed inwardly and made his way back to the dorm, feeling like his whole world had been spun off its axis, and nothing could shake him from what he thought, even though his friends were trying to help him get over it, but it just wasn’t the same; how was he supposed to sit there and pretend everything was all right when inside, he was roaring in pure agony over how things turned out for him? Mike had made his way towards his side of the room, seeing his MU cap lying on the bed - an open reminder of how he once aspired to be a Scarer like all the other monsters plastered on his wall, all in their awesome glory and how he once thought of how his would've been...but now those dreams were dashed to pieces and crushed underfoot.

He turned to stare out the window, seeing the Scaring Hall, his heart breaking more and more, and then looked away, finding his gaze landing on the Scream Can Tech book in his claw. In his frustration, he threw it against the wall, watching it knock the calendar aside and revealing what had been behind it that whole time. Mike had all but forgotten that he had it hanging there, yet when he saw the pamphlet announcing in big letters the event...maybe not all hope was lost, after all.

Maybe this was his chance! Mike quickly teared the paper from its spot and went to hurry as he knew time was of the essence; he needed to get things underway. He threw the door open, ignoring the big behemoth that was standing there with his angry glare, but Mike could care less or let it remove the big smile on his face.

"Outta my way! One side, coming through-Oops, sorry! Haha!" Sulley had just a moment to take in the sudden unexpected change, but watching him zip out of there, pushing others out of the way - what had gotten into him? But even as he watched the smaller monster taking off, he was too curious to let this sit out as he went to tag along to find what was going on in that cyclops' head to make a complete turnaround so quickly.

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There was a heavy sort of excitement hovering all over the quad as today was the upcoming announcement for this year's Scare Games as well as the pre-selection of their future Scare King and Queen, and what challenges they would face alongside the games. Classes were let out a bit early to give everyone a chance to head straight for the Fraternity/Sorority sector where the main stage was
set up, wanting to see which houses were competing, although a few had some idea and were no doubt going to be rooting for them all the way till the end.

Marian had to admit it was becoming quite the turnout as it looked like the whole student body had showed up; it was packed with monsters all over the place. The streets were getting overly crowded, and some had managed to sequester a few rooftops and branches to get a better look at the stage. Then, of course, there were the frat/sorority groups that were standing nearby, chatting away with their brothers/sisters while they waited with the rest of them. The vampire already had some idea on who was partaking in these games, but only one team could bring home the ultimate glory to their house and be given bragging rights until the next time.

She and Leda had managed to find an available spot that gave them a clear view of the podium, seeing the Pres and VP, Claire and Brock, on stage and ready to get things underway. "Wow, can you believe this, Leda? Holy rabies, look at the way everyone is really hyped to the max."

Her friend nodded but wasn't really paying her any attention; she was busy looking in different directions, as were her snakes as they, too, were in search of something as well. "I know, right? Though, I do wish Randall would hurry; he doesn't want to miss any of this." They had finished class like the rest of their peers, and the two were about to head on this way when the reptile monster realized he forgot something back at the dorm and went to go get it, telling them to go on ahead and would catch up with them later. That had been almost a while now, knowing that the announcement was about to start - and still no sign of him.

"What do you suppose is keeping him...?" The vampire could tell she was getting a little anxious over her boyfriend's whereabouts, reaching out to place her hand on Leda's shoulder and speaking in a calm matter to alleviate her worries. "Hey, don't worry. I'm sure Randall's on his way now. He'll be here soon." That seemed to do the trick as Leda's snakes were now coiling down to hide back in her hair while the Gor-Lamia was looking less worried, now thanks to her.

"Yeah, I guess so. I just know he doesn't want to miss out on this." Yeah, I know that feeling all too well… Marian had thought the same to herself while staring at the gathered monsters, hoping to locate that small green cyclops about, but alas, it was for naught. It was a shame, honestly; he might've enjoyed this a great deal if he only came out to be with the gang like before.

"You're thinking about him, too, huh?" The vampire turned to the Gor-Lamia who seemed to have read her mind and guessed what was bothering her. She wasn't going to deny it, feeling that Mike should be here, enjoying the festivities with them and having a good time like everyone else around them.

"Yeah, you know I keep thinking that he's going to show up any minute now and do something unexpected but still gain everyone's attention all the same."

"Yeah, but Mina, try to remember: we're not giving up, and if you like, we can swing by the dorms and see if he wants to go grab some lunch over at that restaurant that serves those Sloppy Joes he likes so much."

Marian thought that was a good idea to consider; anything would be worth a shot in her book. It wasn't that long before they saw the Greek Council President and Vice President coming towards the front and were getting ready to start the announcement. About time, too, as the crowd was starting to get a bit antsy as they wanted to get this show on the road.

She could tell that the VP, Brock, was super excited while Claire had that same bored expression but was still taking the lead on getting things underway and addressing the crowd before them, "Welcome to this year's Scare Games kickoff!"
That really got the crowd going and cheering/roaring along with the Griffin-like monster who was crowing at the top of his lungs. The noise being generated was of a level that made the vampire's eardrums throb by the loud capacity given. Just when it seemed like Marian was on the verge of ripping her own ears off to make it stop, she felt someone tap her shoulder. She turned and saw Leda holding her modified earbuds that she left back at the dorm, but the Gor-Lamia must've figured something like this would happen when it came to these events.

It was a good thing, too, when Leda noticed the pained look on the vampire's face; even she could understand how it must be deafening with all that screaming and shouting all around them. Marian was glad she had and mentally decided that lunch was on her as her way of paying her back for this small favor.

As soon as she popped them in, the noise started to diminish, ears no longer ringing as it muffled the sound out while the crowd was still at it but less intense than before. Yet Marian would keep them in for now as it was better to be safe than sorry, and she liked her hearing just fine. Being a vampire with super heightened senses did have its downsides, and this just happened to be one of those moments where having modified earplugs helped.

The president waited until some of them cooled down before continuing with her speech, "Okay, relax, you animals. Before we get things rolling, we have a special guest who would like to say a few words: one of the founders of the Games - Dean Hardscrabble!" This time, a round of applause was given, and Marian was taking part as she clapped when she saw the headmistress make her way over to the podium.

"Good afternoon, everyone. As a student of this fine majestic academy, I and my fellow monsters created these games as a friendly competition. But be prepared: to take home the trophy, you must be the most fearsome monsters on campus."

The whole lot turned to look at the teams that were participating, seeing most solely focus on the RORs who immediately struck a pose when one of the photographers came to take a quick shot of them for the school paper. Marian could tell they were enjoying the given attention and watched as their leader, Johnny, took it up a notch by turning around and giving a dashing smile with a subtle wink to where a few females were, who started squealing at being noticed by the likes of him. Course, they might not be aware that the real reason he did this was that he was able to see Leda standing some ways in the crowd earlier this afternoon, and where the Gor-Lamia was, the vampire would be right alongside her, and seeing her, he couldn't resist throwing it out there for her to take notice of.

Marian had and didn't know whether to groan or roll her eyes, or maybe do both, but turned her gaze once more to the stage, hearing her aunt finish her speech with a flourish. "So, good luck, and may the best monsters win!" With that said, she went to take her leave, allowing Claire, the Greek Council President, to end the announcements and get everyone back to what they were doing before.

"Alright, everybody, we're closing down sign-ups, so if nobody else is participating, then we'll see you all—"

"WAIT!" This caused the entire student body to turn around in sudden confusion, wondering who said that and finding them coming over to make themselves known. Marian, who even with her ears plugged, knew who that was as she whirled with the rest and saw Mike hopping up on one of the cars, a big grin plaster on his face and this time leaving the crowd even more in shocked by his unprecedented appearance.

"I'm signing up!" This got an immediate reaction as everyone except Marian, Leda and a few others were laughing out loud as they stared at the cyclops like he told a funny joke just now. But the
vampire knew he was dead serious, seeing that the dean had turned her focus on him with her mouth
set in a firm scowl, probably wondering the same thing as Marian.

"Uhhh, you have to be in a fraternity to compete, doy!" Someone piped out, but Mike didn't seem
bothered and looked like he had something in his sleeve, turning to the gathered crowd before him.

"Behold, the next winning fraternity of the Scare Games... the brothers, my brothers, of...Oozma
Kappa!" Mike directed everyone's gaze to the misfit group that were standing awkwardly and
finding themselves to be the center of attention. The vampire could easily tell they were not used to
having so many eyes on them, knowing that they hadn't certainly expected themselves to be out of
the blue while listening to the announcements.

Those monsters weren't what she'd call qualified Scarer, seeing the small pink squishy-like monster
wave his hand and try to give a friendly smile, "Um hi?" The balloon in his hand deflated and fell
flat on his head, making the crowd snicker as they look at that pathetic lot. No one took any notice of
the Dean making her way off the stage and towards Mike as she could not help wondering why he
dare to interrupt such an important event with this nonsense.

"Mr. Wazowski, what are you doing?" Mike turned, seeing her and everyone now focusing on him,
but he wasn't going to back down, not when he had something to fight for that meant the world to
him. "You just said the winners are the most fearsome monsters on campus. If I win, it means you
kicked out the best Scarer in the whole school."

A few monsters had the audacity to scoff within Marian's range, one or two muttering "Yeah right;
he's too wimpy to be scary..." The vampire would have to remember who said that to deal with them
later as she had her eyes turned to her scaremother and best friend who gave the other monster a look
that didn't believe him.

"That won't happen." But even as she turned to leave, Mike had to throw in one last shot. "How
about a little wager?" This got a few gasps and while Hardscrabble didn't let it show on her face; she
would allow him to speak just to humor him. "If I win, you let me back in the Scaring Program."
While everyone was still watching, the headmistress gave the other monster that skeptic expression to
show she didn't believe that would be happening even by a long shot. "And what would that prove?"

"That you were wrong." Marian could read the undeniable determination set in his one eye as he said
those words out loud, knowing he believed that himself and had to say it before the director of the
university who likely could have him kicked out of school if she wanted to, but she seemed to be
considering it, depending on how one saw it could very well end in a way that no one would foresee.
The vampire imagined that Damocles' blade was right above Mike and worried that with just one
word, her friend's entire future would be cut short without any hesitation, either in a good or bad
way, whichever the outcome might be. Marian saw the slight corner of her scaremother's lips pull
back, hearing her speak what sealed Mike's fate in that very second.

"Very well. If you win, I will let your entire team into the Scare Program...but if you lose, you will
leave Monsters University."

The vampire felt her undead heart plummet, hearing those terms, and while a part of her wanted him
to rejoin the program, the chances of him losing were astronomical; she glanced to the Gor-Lamia
who also seemed to think the same and turned to look back at the cyclops, silently begging him not
to accept it.

Please, don't do this. Think of what you're doing, Mike; is it really worth it at the cost of your own
life...? But as much as she wished it, Mike was his own monster and had his mind already set up as
he nodded and said the one word in which she knew there was no going back now. "Deal." The
dean looked to the cyclops before turning her amber gaze on his housemates who looked like they'd rather be anywhere but here at the moment.

"Now, all you need to do is find enough members to compete." Mike felt a small sense of victory before it turned to one of confusion as he turned to his new house and the team he had unwillingly signed up for the Scare Games.

"We need six guys, right?" He was sure that was the number for the given team, seeing that he made up the last member which should be enough to qualify them - however, the VP had to point out the obvious.

"Sorry, chief; we count bodies, not heads." He was referring to the conjoined twin monster who each turned to look at the other. "That dude counts as one." Well, this was not looking too good. Marian now saw that Mike was starting to panic as he realized this and moved to glance at the crowd, shouting to anyone who was interested in being a part of their group.

"Anyone else wanna join our team?! Anyone at all?" Mike was seeing nobody was piping up, but then saw a familiar frond which was Randall coming through the crowd.

"Excuse me, sorry, I'm late. Can I just squeeze by—" The cyclops was beaming widely as he shouted for the reptilian monster and getting his immediate attention. "Randy! Randy, thank goodness; I need you on my team!"

Marian and Leda saw Randall had stopped and turned to glance at the other monster, and the vampire noted the expression on his face; he seemed a bit conflicted but couldn't help shaking his head. "Oh, sorry, Mike, but I'm already on a team." He stepped forward and revealed the sweater he had on, showing his fraternity affiliation, and Marian was to say dumbstruck and hear the sharp gasps/hisses from Leda as she saw which house Randall had joined.

"Boggs, get over here now!" Randall turned to where Johnny was beckoning him over with a slightly annoyed look on his face, and turned once more to Mike, seeing the stunned cyclops looking at his roommate as if he couldn't even begin to comprehend that he had pledged in the one house that he never would've expected the other monster to.

"I'm finally in with the cool kids, Mike. DON'T blow this for me!" Randall muttered before he hurried to where the others were waiting.

Johnny, seeing all the other monsters were turning their eyes on them, wanted to show off their new team member's ability. "Hey, do the thing," Randall then disappeared, but seeing his sweater showing, he went completely invisible.

"Oh, where did he go?" This caused the ROR brothers to laugh, and Marian to turn to her friend, seeing she was as perplexed as she was. Randall a ROR; seriously, why of all the frats would he…?

But Marian heard Mike again begging for someone to join their team. "Please, anybody! I need one more monster. Just one more!"

The vampire could tell that no one was going to, and even the president thought the same as she said, "Yeah, sorry, doesn't look good. We have to move on. Your team doesn't qualify so..."

"Oh, yes, it does!" This time, Marian as well as Mike who spun around to see Sulley climbing aboard the same vehicle as the cyclops and was standing there with his chest puffed up and yelling loudly with obvious pride to the skeptic crowd, "The star player has just arrived!"

The vampire saw Mike wasn't expecting him to show and immediately react upon noticing him
shouting, "Uh, huh, no way!" He turned to the crowd, looking for someone else to join his team. "Someone else; please, anyone else!" His eye flew to where Marian and Leda were standing by, taking in all this drama. "Mina, hey c'mon!"

"Um, dude, she's a chick, and no frat can let a girl into their house just as no sorority can let a dude into theirs. Sorry those are the rules man." Marian, seeing that Mike was not happy to hear that, knew that his choice had been limited greatly especially as Claire said, "We're shutting down sign-ups, okay? Is he on your team or not?"

Mike was in a terrible bind, one he knew was not one that would go well unless he made the ultimate decision. Having not thought this plan through, even he had to admit he was desperate and with one more player added to the mix, he would stand a better chance - but really, him of all people?! The cyclops turned to where he saw Mina was before whirling around and looking up at Sulley with his arms crossed and a smug grin written all over that broad face of his knowing he had no other choice. *The things I got to do to win…*

In a huff, he turned, muttering fast under his breath as he hated saying this as it left a sugary taste in his mouth, "Fine! Yes, he's on my team." He saw the dean stare at him before nodding her head, pleased by his words.

"Well, then, good luck." She proceeded to take her leave, letting the rest of the student body resume with the announcements while Mike had to wonder if he was going to regret his choice in all this.

"Well, that was certainly not what I was expecting…” Leda said once the headmistress had left, seeing that everything was sorta taken care of right then. Marian wasn't able to bring herself to say anything, to be honest, as she was still trying to wrap her head around it until coming back to the present when the announcements continued as it was far from over, and the last topic to be discussed was coming to play which definitely would be a game changer.

Brock grabbed the mike and held it in his hand while holding a slim index card in his other as he took over. "All right, now that we got that out of the way, it's time to reveal who are lucky candidates for your future Royalty based on everyone's vote, but don't think it will be that simple to be. They will be judged based on style and skill, then be tested beyond the limit to see if they're worthy of the crown. And here are this year's nominees: for your Scream King are Roy O'Growlahan, Sam Duncan, Johnny Worthington III…"

There had been some loud cheers at each given name, and Marian was admittedly surprised to find that Sulley's had been nominated, guessing this was way before finals when he had been still considered hot stuff back then, and their votes still counted in the polls. She admitted that while turning to where Mike was finally coming off the car and Sulley also doing the same, the two taking leave, probably to grab their stuff for when they moved in with their new 'fraternity'. She was surprised and shocked Mike went and done this, but then she hadn't guessed the next up and upcoming shock until Claire went down the list for Scream Queen nominees: "…Carla Delgado, Scarlet Sevun and Marian Lubov!"

"Wait, what?" Marian was sure she was hearing wrong in catching her name among the others before Leda who was cheering and same with a few other monsters, whether it was because of the names called or the excitement of the games/pageant bound to come up before turning to her friend and saying, "But how I…I don't-?"

Yet even as she try to wrap her head around it, it seem her friend on the other hand saw things a bit different than she did. "Mina this is fantastic, think about it, you are totally acing the course and definitely are capable of being a Scream Queen for sure. This is totally a good opportunity for you, plus you can show Scarlet whose she's messing with!" Leda glanced behind them and Marian also
doing the same as she saw the harpy standing with her clique who obviously had been happy being chosen - that was, until Marian's name popped in and was now looking their way.

The vampire could tell she was trying to laser her with those steel gray eyes of hers, but Marian wasn't one to back down and send a glare back at her. While she might not have wanted to partake in this, and even with Mike also having done the most stupidest thing that she'd ever known him to do...she found the idea of wiping the floor with that pompous monster and showing she can beat her without resorting to such cheating method.

"You know you might be onto something there." She didn't expect for someone to bump her, not enough to shove but able to find it was Sevun and hearing her nasally voice for her ears alone.

"I know right, so ridiculous to see the Dean letting some wannabe losers think they stand a chance of signing up, let alone winning the games. They got another thing coming, especially that dumb beachball and his lame brothers." Scarlet then turn her head and saw them before giving them a nasty smirk as she looked at them, especially Marian as she heard everything she said, "Oh sorry didn't see you there freshies, my bad but you got to admit they aren't going to last long and only someone with a small brain think they can beat the elite, just like you Leech. I almost feel sorry for the other girls that think they can win the Scream Queen title. They stand no chance as I intend to take that crown, and if you know what's good for you, you quit now and save yourself the embarrassment."

Marian had to keep herself from lashing out at the way she just insulted her friend but then watched as the harpy and her clique were strolling off, yet the vampire wasn't going to let this go down without giving off her own quip back at her.

"Gee thanks Scar but while I appreciate your advice I simply think that you're just saying that because you realize I might stand a better chance to win than you do and your scared a freshman like me will sweep the rug from under you."

Her words did have some effect as she saw the girls behind Scarlet turning from her to their ringleader whose face began to color like her namesake. Oh this was too perfect. The vampire could see this getting under her skin and thinking that there was no way she wasn't going to try and beat her at her own game but fairly without resorting to such drastic means. Marian couldn't resist baring her fangs and letting her know how serious she was as she thought of seeing Scarlet falling on her rump while someone else took the reins for a change.

"You know now that I think about it, this will be a lot of fun for the both of us and in the spirit of good sportsmanship: may the best monster win." She and Leda then decide to go back to their dorms, leaving behind a flustered Hex leader and her posse all in total shock that someone dare to say that to her face and live another day.

Yes things were bound to get interesting but nonetheless Marian intended to see that not only she see Scarlet lose her high and mighty title and into more worthy hands, but also make sure Mike doesn't wind up getting in over his head even if it seem he already had.

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