

2023



Written and illustrated by Lydia Laga

With his scythe as his only companion, the Grim Reaper roams the world, endlessly navigating the shadows of mortality. His presence is a somber reminder of the inevitable end that awaits all living beings. Despite his duty to guide souls to the afterlife, he is eternally shunned by those he visits, a poignant testament to the biting cold of loneliness and the sting of rejection.



Where is everyone?
are they trying to
break me?

Eubank, of the...style

It was a dark and ominous night on Friday, the 13th of 2023, when the Grim Reaper emerged from the realm of the dead. His presence was felt throughout the land, sending shivers down the spines of all who sensed his approach. He was on a mission, and his destination was the forsaken township of Salem's End, a remote and forgotten place hidden in the heart of an almost impenetrable forest. As he moved through the shadows, whispers of fear and trepidation followed in his wake, marking this as a night of frightful portent that would never be forgotten.

The small town was nestled away from the hustle and bustle of the city, surrounded by dense forests and rolling hills. It was well-known for its Halloween celebrations, which were unlike any other. The locals were deeply



fascinated with all things spooky and eerie, and the annual event provided the perfect opportunity for them to indulge in their interests.

The Reaper, whose somber responsibilities weighed heavily on him, was inexplicably drawn to this town every year. It provided a fitting backdrop for his grim persona, with its misty lanes and dark alleys mirroring his perpetual gloom.



This can't
be right

But an unsettling silence enveloped him as he entered the town that fateful night. It was a malignant quiet, a morose stillness that seemed to drain the festive spirit of Halloween from the town. The once-bustling streets lay deserted, and the houses were shrouded in an eerie silence. The Reaper couldn't shake off the feeling that something was amiss.

A sense of eerie desolation pervaded the sight of Salem's End. The abandoned settlement presented a chilling tableau of lost vibrancy and decay. Once a bustling hub of activity, with echoes of life and laughter resounding through its streets, the town now lay in eerie silence. As if haunted by its past, the empty shell of Salem's End echoed with ghostly whispers, a mournful reminder of what once was. The



desolation of Salem's End was a haunting sight, a chilling tableau of abandonment and lost vibrancy. Once a bustling settlement echoing with life and laughter, now stood eerily silent, an empty shell resonating with its past's ghostly whispers.

The dirt roads, once filled with footsteps and children's laughter, were now silent and untouched. Each step kicked up a dust cloud, adding to the feeling of solitude. It was as if the passage of time had frozen, waiting for the return of the people who used to fill these roads with life.



The houses, once homes filled with warmth and life, stood deserted and hushed. Their closed doors and shuttered windows spoke volumes of the abrupt departure of their inhabitants. A layer of dust had begun to settle on the furniture inside, a tangible testament to the absence of human touch. Halloween decorations, once vibrant and lively, are nowhere to be found. Even the town hall, a symbol of unity and community, stood forlorn and empty, its doors closed and its halls echoing with the silence of abandonment.

As the days passed, the forest encircling the town seemed to tighten its grip, its shadows growing longer and darker. The once clear boundary between the town and the wilderness blurred, as if nature was slowly smudging the

line between civilization and the untamed. Like a voracious beast, the overgrown flora was devouring the remnants of human presence, leaving only traces of what once was. The encroaching wilderness was a reminder of the power and resilience of nature and a warning of the fragility of human dominance over the natural world.

Despite all the desolation, Salem's end landscape's most chilling part was the wind blowing through the empty streets. It carried a mournful whistle, a sigh of the town mourning its deserted state. It would rustle the leaves, rattle the windowpanes, and add a haunting melody to the symphony of silence.

The Reaper stood still, his hooded figure shrouded in mystery. A palpable sense of confusion emanated from him as he gazed upon the revelers before him. The familiar weight of his scythe felt heavy in his bony grip, and yet, a strange, alien sorrow began to gnaw at him. He was the Grim Reaper, the embodiment of death, feared by all who lived. Yet, on this mystical night, he longed to be a part of the macabre celebration of Halloween. He wanted to feel the pulse of life and revel in the eerie festivities. But alas, he stood there in isolation, his presence unrecognized and unwelcome.



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Upon reaching the town hall, he found a note nailed to a rotting notice board. The words inked onto his arrival date sent a shiver of dread through his ethereal form: "Evacuation: Friday the 13th. The Reaper's coming."

The grim understanding of the desolated landscape settled in. The townsfolk had fled, terrified of his arrival. They had abandoned their homes, their festivity, their joy. They had run from him, leaving him to wander in an abandoned ghost town.

Sitting on the creaky steps of the town hall, the Reaper couldn't help but wonder why people seemed to run away from him. He was not a villain but rather a servant of fate, fulfilling his assigned task. Despite his peaceful intentions, the world saw him as a monstrous figure to be feared and avoided. Sitting there, he felt a profound sense of isolation and loneliness, which seemed to mirror the town's desolation. The silence was only broken by the occasional gust of wind that carried the sound of distant chimes, adding to the eerie atmosphere. The Reaper's mind was filled with conflicting emotions - he felt sadness, frustration, and even anger at the unfairness of it all.

The Grim Reaper silently read the note pinned to the town hall. As he absorbed the words, a strange and ominous chill crept through his bones, unlike anything he had ever felt before. The sensation was so intense that it cut through his very essence, causing his ethereal form to shudder. The air around him grew heavy, weighted with an otherworldly presence that filled the atmosphere with a sense of foreboding. The Reaper, accustomed to the role of the bringer of death, recognized the signs of an impending darkness that even he could not match. He could feel it - a force more terrifying and malevolent than him, an evil approaching with a power that threatened to overwhelm even the Grim Reaper himself.

Despite his disappointment at the abandoned town, a realization struck him with a bone-chilling certainty. He needed to leave, to retreat

from this place before whatever ominous entity was on its way consumed him. The note had served as a warning, a grim reminder that there were forces beyond his own that could threaten his existence.

With a heavy heart, the Reaper turned away from the desolate town, his long cloak billowing behind him. He knew that staying any longer would be an invitation to an encounter he was ill-prepared for. The portal between the realms of the living and the dead awaited him, a gateway he had always traversed with a sense of purpose. But this time, it held an urgency, a need to escape the encroaching terror.



As he stepped through the portal, the veil between the worlds closed behind him, sealing off Salem's End from his spectral presence. The Reaper could still feel the lingering presence of the unknown entity, a malevolence that had awakened in the wake of his disappointment. He knew that whatever it was, it would consume the town in a way far more terrifying than his own touch ever could.

With a mixture of melancholy and self-preservation, the Grim Reaper continued his eternal journey, his scythe gleaming ominously. He carried the memory of the abandoned town, the note, and the chilling realization that there were entities in the darkness far more formidable than himself.