

## A Cursed Soul – Teaser

The groan of the skeleton door caught everyone's attention. They turned, seeing it open and a black form enter. Though it appeared as a disembodied spirit, it held the translucent depiction of a grim reaper. Everyone covered their ears when it pointed a finger to the other side of the room where Rick cowered in the shadows, and released an ear piercing screech. Rick began to hyperventilate when it signaled for him to come forward, and he turned to run.

“NO! NO NO NO! THEY’RE GOING TO TAKE ME! THEY’RE—”

Rick’s screams reverberated along the walls when his feet jerked out from underneath him, and was dragged by an unseen force toward the door. Tears streamed down his dirtied cheeks as he clawed the ground, weeping for mercy.

“No! No! I don’t want to die! Please! I am innocent! Innocent!”

The reaper-figure was unresponsive to his pleas, and remained stoically stationed beside the open door once Rick was pulled through.

“No! No, please! I’m innocent! I-I-... I’m sorry! I won’t do it again! I really thought I was helping, but I understand now I was wrong! Please, forgive m—”

Rick was silenced by the sound of a blade cutting his skin open, and his organs splashing to the floor. Everyone held their breaths as they listened to him gag in shock as things noisily slurped up the mess.

“One more!” a husky voice called out.

The reaper-figure’s head slowly looked side to side, scanning the room. Its gaze rested on Chrissie.

“Nathan...” she whispered when it pointed at her, beckoning her forward. Stars blanketed her vision when something wrapped around her ankles and snapped her feet out from under her, making her head collide with the hard ground. The next thing she knew, she was being pulled toward the door.

“NO!” Nathan hollered, not thinking twice before leaping out and entwining his hands with hers. Landing on his stomach, Nathan tried to pull her back, but was instead dragged, too.

“Let them go!” Tony yelled, grabbing hold of Nathan’s shoulders and helping to brace him.

Getting back to his feet with Tony’s help, Nathan got a better bearing on Chrissie’s hands, and dug his feet into the ground. Using what little traction he had, he tried to slow whatever was pulling her, but it wasn’t enough. Little by little, she edged closer to the other room.

*Come on, come on! Work!* Angela’s mind screamed, trying to force her vampire powers to fight whatever was attacking Chrissie, but she couldn’t summon them to work. Resorting to fighting by hand, Angela ran forward, but the reaper-figure merely cocked its head, as if it were amused at her attempt. Angela gasped for air when something slammed into her, and sent her flying backward into the stone walls.

“Stop! They’re going to take you, too!” Chrissie yelled at the Nathan and Tony, but she was so scared, she couldn’t force herself to let go of them. The sound of her heart racing was the only thing she could hear as she tried kicking away whatever held her, but to no use. Whatever held her had such a tight death grip that her body became increasingly stretched to its breaking point. She screamed out, the pain of her limbs threatening to rip out from their sockets being too much for her to take.

“Oh my God! Chrissie, don’t let go! Don’t fucking let go!” Nathan hollered when they were pulled close enough to see into other room. A table had been placed at the center of the bar, and Rick’s body had been cut up on

top of it into five separate sections. Most of the pieces had already been devoured of their meat, leaving behind only exposed bone, and withered arteries that had been sucked dry.