

Paranormal Detective Pointless Pride

Case I: Lacrimosa

Von iamamartian

Lacrimosa

In a town called Agony, on the highest tip of the hill Torture, there stand a beautiful and old mansion carrying the name Lacrimosa. The mansion was rumoured to be haunted, the whole town was supposedly cursed. Supposedly.

If you live in this kind of era, you hardly believe in ghost stories anymore, do you? But yet, such place exists; mysterious, scary and of my interest. I, Pointless Pride, will set foot on the grounds of darkness to enter and inspect that highly bizarre house only to return as the youngest, smartest and most respected paranormal detective of the secret society.

My current destination is on flight DIE 13, approaching the city Massacre. My senses tingling, the atmosphere of a mystery approaching my yet inexperienced skin. From the Airport, I would need to take a one hour bus trip to Shame and from there, a 30 minutes walk to Agony. Once arrived, my first case would begin. But at this moment, I must be patient and calm. Solving this riddle would need my full attention and concentration. Resting on my comfortable seat, I dreamt about my victory.

Awoken by a slender woman, the flight landed on the Airport. I needed to use my navigation skills fully to find a way through the endless maze of corridors and chambers, arriving not to late at the bus station. As I entered the crowded vehicle, the atmosphere of the mystery became more intense, increasing as I walked to the town Agony. The civilians were just as I expected: mysterious. They seemed to have no life in them. Completely empty.

On the way to the mansion, I tried to communicate with them. The way they appeared on the outside was the same on the inside. The only response, if any, was "Don't go near the mansion.". But yet, I managed to get a piece of information out of them: Rumour has it, that there is someone, or at least something, occupying the house. The civilians are uncertain about his current state of life, but it has been approved that the observations of another silhouette appearing in certain dates on the mansions roof fit the truth.

Motivated by the interesting stories, I hurried up the hill Torture, which wasn't any normal hill: there weren't any trees nor grass, the clouds had a slight purple shade and even if the sun was up, it looked dark and gloomy. On the top, I literally turned to stone by the sight I was viewing. There was a garden, full of trees and creatures I had never seen in my entire life.

Plants were moving and screeching, animals were larger than a lion or smaller than a mouse. And in the middle of this spectacle, stand a wonderful, black house; its towers

reaching slanting to the sky.

Not only the towers, though, it seemed as if the whole house was tilting on every edge. I approached the magnificent, gigantic door, which was detailed with the strangest patterns and pictures. The doorknobs were as big as my head and the door itself looked extremely heavy.

I pushed my body against it and suddenly, as if it was a light as a feather, it swung open. I closed my eyes and ears awaiting a slam but... nothing. I peeked for an explanation but the next thing I saw wasn't any better: nothing, too. It was completely dark, I was even unable to see the tip of my nose. The mystery was running upon my spine, the best feeling you can ever imagine. I began to walk, fearing that I would bump into something. But there wasn't anything to bump into, not even a wall. No matter how much I walked in any direction, there wasn't any obstacle to stop me. I wondered myself if I really landed into nothingness.

But I was soon proved wrong: On the seeming endless darkness, I spotted a faint glow. And from this faint glow, appeared thousands of others. By that moment, the whole place (which appeared to be a hallway) was lightened. The ceiling was immensely high, the floor was as dark as everything else in the hall. Even the countless portraits on the walls didn't stand out. But yet, they were highly interesting.

Mostly, you could see family members, owning the strangest names: Mortifying Lagoon, Excruating Fate, Irresponsible Doom, Grave Distance, Shallow Victory, Tainted Love and many more.

Walking with a value of self-confidence, I discovered that there was a missing painting. In the middle of the wonderful collection was a disturbing empty space. I could read from the tag that the title of the missing piece was "Mahogany Death and", then it ended. Even the title was missing. My curiosity rose to its tip. Something was missing and was waiting to be found.

I was about to proceed walking when, suddenly, the lights extinguished. And out of the darkness came a pleasant voice saying, "Hello Little Girl". I could hear how it neared itself to me. When there wasn't much distance between and the voice, the lights reappeared. I could see the conjures of a long and skinny figure. Its face pale, with a thin, sharp nose, eyes glaring with nonexistent pupils and its wavy, mahogany hair combed to the left.

"Curse it!", I heard it shout. "Final, Eternal!"

"Yes, sir.", called out two screechy voices.

"How many times do I have to tell you to turn the lights down when I am approaching a Visitor?!"

"Oh forgive our lack of memory, your dreadfulness."

"Yes, please excuse us, your awfulness."

The voices sounded as if there was only one person, I could hardly tell them apart.

"Now both of you have completely ruined the atmosphere!", the monster scolded.

"And for hells sake, show yourselves when I am talking to you!"

Then, out of the ceiling emerged two small creatures and plopped right in front of him. They were wearing cloaks that were overly loose so that the hoods were almost

touching the ground. Their faces were identical and had the same features as the monster's. The only difference was that the shape of it was rounder.

"If this incident ever occurs again, I shall feed you to the scattered spiders in the garden!", with that sentence they begged like two hopeless slaves that were about to be punished. Actually, they seemed that way, too. Finishing the argument with "I forgive you this time, but on your next failure, be sure to see the depths of the hell torture!", the monster focused on me.

"I apologize for the mistake in my welcoming.", he glared back at the two, who shivered by his glance.

"But at the very least, I shall introduce myself.", he reached out his hand for me to shake. "I am Mahogany Death, the count of this wonderful castle."

I grasped his hand with a grin, things were getting really interesting.

"You may call me Pointless Pride.", I responded.

"Well then, Mrs. Pride, shall I show you around?", he proposed, smiling with his sharp teeth.

"Oh yes, please!", I blurted.

With a snap of his fingers, the whole hallway changed into a humungous chamber. We were exactly in the middle surrounded by purple and black furniture. The first thing that caught my eye were the tremendous stairs on each side of the room leading to a balcony, which filled one-fourth of the place, and the beautiful sculpture of something I couldn't identify underneath it. The windows were two-storeys high with purple curtains decorated with black laces. I came to the statement that everything was black or purple and that those colours would probably dominate the whole house.

"This is the entrance hall!", Mahogany announced.

"It's overwhelming!", I gasped.

"Indeed.", he led me in front of something I saw before. "I would like to present this magnificent door only made for this beautiful castle. Please take a closer look."

"I came across this before."

"That is wonderful!", he grinned. "But I believe you haven't inspected it fully."

"What do you mean?"

"Now, Mrs. Pride, please do as I say and take a closer look."

I finally knew what Mahogany was talking about, the doorknob was formed as a tiger-head exposing its shining, black teeth. I reached out to touch it and, suddenly, it bit my finger!

"Ouch!'", I shouted as I pulled it out.

"Normally, they would have bitten the whole finger off", he giggled. "But today they seem rather calm."

I looked at the doorknob once more which was giving me a evil grin. I pointed out my tongue.

"Mrs. Pride, would you sacrifice your precious time to look at this beautiful sculpture?", Mahogany's voice said from behind of me.

I hurried to the other end of the room.

"This is the 'el grande celiste'.", he explained.

"What language is that?"

"I haven't got the slightest idea.", he replied grinning. "I might have even made it up." The sculpture was fairly interesting; it was made out of black marble and was shaped as a dog or a cow or something else. I wasn't really sure. I wasn't even sure if it was something that actually existed. But of more interest was the Count; he seemed to

have a different logic and perspective. In fact, everything seemed different on him. His face, his teeth, his weird accent I wasn't able to identify, everything.

"Say, Count Death.", I interrupted his moment with the tiger-knob.

"Yes, what is it Mrs. Pride?"

"What is the story of this mansion?"

Suddenly he threw out his arms and shouted, "Ooh! I love telling stories!"

At that moment the whole room turned back to the hallway.

"Please follow me."

We walked to the end of the hall where there was one portrait a couple.

"This are my ancestors, Fatal Mistake and April Fool."

I nodded.

"Fatal Mistake was a jolly seaman on the eighteenth century. He sailed all around the world and enjoyed different countries but one day, he grew tired of it and went back here, on the town Agony, his birthplace and hometown. He was away for 15 years so the townspeople didn't recognize him again. He was so jolly, he would visit the local pub every single day and drink as much liquor as he could until he would faint."

He laughed loudly.

"And the funny part was, he would never faint!"

He laughed even harder.

"Why is that?"

"I don't know myself! But it was rumoured that something happened out in the sea that made him immortal."

"Immortal?"

"Yes, Indeed.", he nodded. "Since Fatal Mistake was always on the pub, eventually, the local police passed by."

Mahogany paused trying to hold back his laugh.

"He was so drunk he punched one of them in the face!"

"And then? What happened?", I was very curious about the consequences.

"Of course the police took him away to jail and it was there, where he met his beloved April Fool. She was a defence attorney, a very beautiful and smart one. You can say it was love at first sight.", he sighed. "And so, she won the case, obviously, and they both went to this hill Torture to build this beautiful castle, Lacrimosa."

"As a sign of their eternal love?", I asked sarcastically, he didn't seem to notice.

"Exactly, Fatal Mistake did the architecture all by himself.", Mahogany explained with a hint of pride in his voice. "And April Fool loved it in every single way.", he sighed again.

"What happened to them?"

"Now that you mention it, they probably are there."

"There?"

"There were everyone is."

"Where everyone is?"

"Yes, where I put everyone."

"What do you mean 'where I put everyone?'"

"In that big chamber."

"You mean you collect the corpses of your dead ancestors?!"

"No! By all means, no!", he rejected loudly. "They aren't dead! In fact, they are very much alive."

"What are you speaking of?"

"Well, You see, Mrs, Pride, It gets quite crowded in here after a few hundred of years

and I thought it would be a lot more easier for me and for them if I would lock them up and make some free space.", he explained.

"That's not the thing I was questioning."

"Then what is it, Mrs. Pride?"

I paused.

"How old are you, Count Death?"

"Me?", he fell into deep thought. "I think I have forgotten."

"You can't seriously tell me that you have forgotten your own age?"

"That is precisely what I am doing right now.", he replied with a crooked smile.

"How old were you when you have stopped counting? And why?", I pressed further.

"Probably in my 90ies, because I thought that it rather be pointless."

"Pointless? Why would it be pointless?"

The Count showed me his teeth once more.

"Since I will, most likely, never die."

The atmosphere of a mystery was so intense, I could taste it.

"So you are immortal.", I stated with a grin.

"Indirectly."

I looked at him with a questioning gaze.

"I am sure you have took a notice to the twins, Final and Eternal?", he asked.

"Those two little kids? Yes I have."

"Well, actually, they are much older than me."

"I beg your pardon? Older?", I wasn't sure if my ears were playing tricks on me.

"Yes, indeed, older.", he gave me a grin. "Would you like to here the story?"

"Of course!", I replied instantly.

The count chuckled and proceeded to walk down the hall. We passed many portraits until he stopped in front of one again. There were no people on the picture. 'Final and Eternal Judgement' was written on the tag.

"Where are they?", I asked with a slight tone of annoyance.

"Gone.", he seemed annoyed, too.

"What now?"

The Count grabbed my elbow and, simultaneously, reached out for the portrait. Suddenly, we got sucked in it and were twisting and turning in mid air until we landed abruptly.

"Now that was a turbulent flight!", Mahogany giggled.

I stood up and removed the dust from my clothes.

"Where are we?"

The Count pulled up his shoulders.

"Never tried that before, I am not really sure."

We were viewing a part children's room, part adult's room. There were two beds with funny yellow bed sheets, which didn't fit the house scheme at all, and toys scattered all over the floor. But yet, on the other end of the room, there was a highly complicated chemical lab which was boiling, steaming and smelling really strange and beside it was a large bookshelf full of highly complicated books with highly complicated titles written with an unreadable font.

"Oh! I know this place!", Mahogany suddenly blurted. "This is the room of the twins!"

"What exactly are we doing here?"

The Count wanted to open his mouth to talk but someone came before him.

"Your evilness!"

The door was open and there were they, the two little kids. Both of them ran to the

count to aid him. Instead of getting the dust of himself, the twins did it for him. They said things like, "We are so sorry, your darkness, we should've come earlier" while coughing because of the little clouds the dust made.

"Enough! Final, Eternal", he said and pushed both of them away.

"Yes, your frightfulness"

Mahogany nodded to the two and then turned to me.

"These two are my uncles, Final and Eternal Judgement"

They bowed.

"Now both you."

"Yes, your scaryness?"

"Why don't you tell Mrs. Pride about the" -he whispered something I couldn't understand- "of the castle."

If Final and Eternal had pupils, they would have lighten up the whole room.

"Yes, of course, your hellness!", they said excitedly. "Come, come, Mrs. Pride!"

Both of them ran to me and grabbed one arm each. They leaded me to the large bookshelf I've seen before. Mahogany took a seat on the sofa beside the two beds.

"Do you know where you are right now, Mrs. Pride?", Eternal asked.

"Yes, I'm in the mansion called Lacrimosa."

"Exactly."

"Did you know that Lacrimosa is the Latin word for weeping?" Final blurted in.

"Yes, Yes correct!", Eternal searched for something in the bookshelf. "Ah! There it is!"

He picked out one tremendous book that was taller than himself and let it fall on the floor. Final turned it to the first page. Suddenly, a picture popped out of it and it wasn't like those 3d-books you could purchase in any bookstore; it was a real, two meters high picture of the mansion which you could view from any angle.

"This mansion, Lacrimosa, was built around the eighteenth century.", Final explained.

"Many generations have lived in here, well, are still living.", Eternal continued.

And with that, they both started to talk following each others statements rapidly with another one.

"And now the question is: 'Why are the generations still living?'"

"Precisely."

"I'm sure Mrs. Pride has heard of the curse?", Final asked.

I was a little surprised being asked and stuttered, "Y-yes, rumour has it that..."

"Rumours? Pah! Rumours are lies, lies I tell you!", Eternal shouted.

"What we are going to tell you is the truth."

I could feel the atmosphere of a mystery increasing with every sentence they concluded.

"The Castle was built by Fatal Mistake for April Fool."

"But that's rather irrelevant to the curse."

"The thing that counts, is where it was built."

"Where it was built? Do you mean the hill Torture?", I asked.

"Exactly."

"You see, Mrs. Pride, this hill isn't just any hill."

Eternal was completely correct, when I climbed up this hill, I noticed various things that just weren't right.

"This hill is alive."

"Alive?"

"Indeed, this hill was feared ever since many years ago."

"And when Fatal and April built the house in the hill..."

"...it became furious!"

"It made all kinds of things to shoo them away."

"Things like the animals and trees in the Guilty Garden."

"Things like the purple clouds in the sky to block the sun."

"Forever."

"And, of course, the mansion wasn't left out."

"The curse of the mansion is..."

"...the curse of Immortality."

"So it is immortality!", I stated for the second time.

"Immortality you wish you didn't have."

"What do you mean by that?"

"There are two sub-curses: The first one is..."

"...you fade"

"Fade?", I asked.

"You tend to lose your features."

"Such as your skin and eye colour."

That explained their paleness and nonexistent pupils.

"And the second?"

"The second sub-curse is..."

"... the house judges you by your mental age."

"It judges you on how mature you are."

I finally came to understand. But there was still one thing that was illogical: "Why are you two kids when the Count, judging by today's experience, isn't any more mature than you two are! In fact, you guys seem more intelligent"

"You are terribly mistaken, Mrs. Pride."

"His deathness is really intelligent."

"He found the ultimate solution for the biggest problem in this mansion!"

"The biggest problem?"

"The lack of space."

"What so intelligent about stuffing people inside a chamber?"

I could hear the Count chuckle from behind of me.

"But that chamber isn't any chamber!", Eternal argued.

"The chamber had a mystery."

"A mystery, which only his intelligence noticed."

"It was an invincible mystery."

"A mystery we didn't even know about."

There was an awkward pause. Both of them seemed to think about something that was disturbing them. I sensed the presence of rivalry.

"So why did the chamber have a mystery?", I said.

"Per say, the chamber wasn't any chamber."

"It could do something."

"Something like?"

"It could expand."

From the seat behind of me, the Count stood up and grabbed my elbow.

"Well, that was the story you wanted hear. Right, Mrs. Pride?"

I looked at him with a surprised expression.

"Y-yes.", I stuttered.

He dragged me out of the door, into another hallway. He seemed so concentrated because he was stomping the whole time.

"Where are we heading to?", I asked while I was trying to keep up with his speed.

Suddenly, he stopped.

"I forgot", he giggled.

"Are we lost?"

I looked around. There were only two directions to go to: front or back.

"Me? Lost in my own castle?", Mahogany laughed.

He walked slowly the way we were originally taking. It was quiet, the black walls were intimidating me.

"I always wanted to ask you something, Count Death.", I said with a somewhat shaky voice.

"What is it, Mrs Pride?"

"On the hallway, there was something rather strange."

"What would that be?"

"The whole hall was filled with magnificent portraits of your ancestors but there was one space, your space to be exact, that didn't contain one."

Mahogany had a thoughtful expression.

"Why isn't there any portrait of you?", I felt that the mystery was about to be solved.

"Simply because it never existed."

"But there was a tag!"

"And what was written on the tag?", he questioned me sceptically.

"If I recall correctly, it was 'Mahogany Death and'"

"Hah!", he suddenly blurted. "As I expected, the title is not complete!"

"That's what I noticed before, too..."

"The portrait will only appear if I will find the right person to complete the title with.", he explained.

"You haven't found this person yet, I suspect?"

He didn't answer, he was just grinning.

"Apparently, I have.", he responded after a long while.

"E-Excuse me?"

"The only person who can read, even see the tag is the very person who should be written in it!"

"Do you mean...?"

"My dearest Pointless Pride! You are a fairly interesting person!", he laughed loudly.

"You are not even part of my family and yet you could enter the mansion and read the tag!"

He continued laughing as he gripped my elbow, once more, to lead me back to the fated hallway. When we were standing right in front of the missing piece, Mahogany changed his expression to very serious one, which looked bizarre on him.

"Let us end this, Mrs. Pointless Pride."

I began to grin, unexpectedly. I never thought I would experience the Count this way.

He scoffed at my smile.

"Well?", I asked. "What are we waiting for?"

The count grinned again.

"This.", he answered while he leaned to me.

Suddenly, there was a great flash and before I could understand what was happening, there was a portrait right in front of me and not the slightest track of the Count. On the tag the title "Mahogany Death and Pointless Pride" was written with a golden and beautiful handwriting. I chuckled.

"I know that you know that I solved the mystery of Lacrimosa, Count Mahogany

Death!", I shouted against the walls of the empty hallway.
And with that, I found myself outside, in the middle of the Guilty Garden, smiling because of my success on solving my first case. Out of the mansion, I heard a screeching laugh. It might have been my imagination, but who knows? That's another mystery.

The End