

## Chapter 15. Danse de la mort d'Alice

After their encounter with Chloe and the little girl (Mireille joked about her being a psychotic version of Alice from Alice in Wonderland due to her outfit. Kirika didn't quite get the joke due to still not having read said story), Kirika and Mireille for a couple hours wound their way through the city hoping to shake off anyone else following them. When they were by the Nafrece Tower they found a suitable cyber cafe and began to contact Badgis.

"Oookay," looking around to check that nobody's looking, Mireille touched the keyboard, "let's do some magic. Let's see, an anonymizing proxy...damn, they don't even have a Fox here... ah, here it is... let's try this one, whaddya know, I'm lucky today... get a new account, download the key, merge it..." She connected a USB stick to the PC. "...like this... the password, right... and we are set."

She beamed triumphantly at Kirika.

"See, that wasn't so difficult. Now all we gotta do is compose an email and wait for a reply."

While Mireille messed with the Internet, Kirika looked at the pictures again; she paid particular attention to Margaret and Elenore's.

*"Hmm...it says she's a total ditz....I bet she doesn't have to worry about anything. I'm kind of envious. Look at her. We could almost be twins...if I were white...and rich...maybe she's what I would've become if not for Altena. Then there's Elenore...is that little girl her sister? They bear a resemblance to each other."* Kirika thought to herself.

After Mireille finished, Kirika showed her Margaret's photo. "Mireille, look at this. Don't we look kind of alike? Maybe that could've been me, if I were normal."

"Nah, I don't think so..." Mireille glanced at the picture as she typed.

"And she is not normal, either." She added matter-of-factly. Meanwhile, an email from a dummy account to a dummy message box that eventually landed at Badgis' desktop was done. A request to meet, details of payment, all in code. Encryption was there to sign it, even if someone broke the key, it wouldn't say much. She hit the send button and leaned back. "Now we wait."

"Yes...we wait..." Kirika said. She fondled the ring in her pocket and grew red. She looked down. "Um...Mireille...I know this isn't the right time, but we can't do anything but wait until he replies. ....Um...what--what do you think about...marriage?" She asked, her heart beating fast, both eagerly awaiting and dreading Mireille's reply at the same time.

"Nani o sore?" Mireille was so astonished, she blundered out Kagami's favorite expression without thinking...Mireille's eyes widened in astonishment. Come think of it, Kirika rarely saw her so surprised. After a couple of seconds, she replied: "What was that? First of all, marriage is for people with known past. And we, frankly, do not exist," she looked away, pouting, and continued quieter: "And if you mean the ceremony, we first need to find a priest who'd agree to... And how the hell are we supposed to marry with all those MIBs on our tail?!"

"Oh." Kirika said. "Never mind, then. Sorry." She looked away and stayed silent, too embarrassed to look at Mireille or talk to her.

"Look, Kirika..." Mireille obviously had trouble finding the right words.

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"Marriage is... a formality. And we two are... already bound by much more than... you know. The black thread of fate and all. You care a lot about formalities... of course, you should, just like that ID card that almost got us killed back in the Middle East... but right now, it's better for us to concentrate on staying alive, okay? We shall talk about in when we get out of this mess.

"Promise?"

A message came up that an email was received from Badgis' contact address but she disregarded that, looking expectantly at Kirika.

Kirika felt Mireille's eyes on her and reluctantly turned back around. She averted Mireille's gaze. "Um, yes. I promise. Sorry to trouble you."

A moment later, she looked at the screen and said, as if to break the pregnant pause, "Um...you better answer that."

As soon as Mireille opened the email the following brief email message appeared;

*I can help you out.*

*Meet at me at this address at 6:30PM*

*\*a map to get there is included\**

*Badgis*

"Is this guy really a pro?" Mireille wondered, looking at the map.

"Agreeing to meet us in open like that...Unless it's his liaison, of course."

Mireille quickly deleted everything she could on the PC they were using: cookies, cache, resident files, registry keys, everything. She would have set a timed virus, too, but they were running out of time.

"Let's move out."

At the same time Meg got home. She pulled out her cell phone and dialed a number. It rang a couple before a male voice spoke.

"What's up? Heard you had a busy day yesterday." The voice said a little cheerful.

"I need to talk you about that ASAP, plus I need a favor." Meg replied.

"You don't sound too happy Meggie."

Meg scowled. "I'm not in the mood."

"Okay, your house in an hour."

"Sure, you got the key."

"Just warm up the coffee for me..." Then the line went dead.

"Bet you all ready helped yourself..." Meg mumbled to herself as she hung up and went to the kitchen.

As they both walked to school, Margaret could notice Madlax's excitement.

She couldn't quite understand why. School was interesting at times but not particularly exciting and having someone escort her like this felt excessive. She just felt she was burdening Madlax unnecessarily.

"You ever had been to school, Madlax?" Margaret asked, out of curiosity.

"Other than the orphanage's school and what I've learned from Duvet, Three Speed and others, I never really attended a real school as a student but I've been to some on assignments but they were high schools. I heard we're going to a big university." Madlax replied.

"It's not that special." Margaret said a little sadly that Madlax had missed out on what she thought was a normal life.

"I think it will be fun." Madlax smiled, clapping her hands.

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"Is that how a bodyguard acts?" Margaret asked, with a smile on her face.

"Only when she's happy and excited." Madlax answered cheerfully.

Soon, Margaret and Madlax arrived at the school's entrance and had to get through security. Margaret just showed her student card as usual and hoped they were properly informed and wouldn't raise any problem with Madlax.

"Miss Burton a pleasure to see you. Your personal assistant called and informed us that you would have a bodyguard with you. I can understand with all that's been going on in the city of late." The Security chief said to Margaret looking over Madlax.

"I would've figured it would've been a man, but I guess a man can't enter the ladies areas. Here's your pass, just do your job quietly and try not to spook the other students okay." The Security chief said in a somewhat flirtatious and impressed tone.

"Thank you very much." Margaret replied happily at the security as she walked inside. "Well, let's go then Mad... Hmm Laetitia." She corrected in a hurry, remembering Madlax was supposed to be using a fake name.

As they moved inside they approached the building and walked directly towards the classroom. Margaret discreetly greeted back some of the students waiting outside with a timid "hi", but didn't really join them, as they were all chatting in small groups, going straight inside the room instead, and picking a seat by the window. Madlax followed and sat next to her as they awaited the class to start.

Madlax's initial joy was no longer apparent; her job was to protect Margaret even if they are bonded far stronger than guard and client. No emotion, no love or hate, a rather familiar routine for an agent of hire.

"Madlax, nobody followed me right?" Margaret asked

"Nobody yet, although those group of three students in the bottom row feel suspicious." Madlax replied professionally.

"Margaret" Madlax said softly

"Yes" Margaret responded quietly

"What class is this for?" Madlax asked with a hint of embarrassment.

"Oh, it's calculus. It involves functions and derivatives and... It's kinda like math, I guess. We'll have the final exam tomorrow. Are you any good at it? Maybe you could help me out..." Margaret replied quietly, showing her notebook to Madlax.

Madlax glanced over the book Margaret was looking at and balked. She had some schooling from Three Speed but he never taught her much math.

"I rather read the holy books than this." Madlax softly spoke to Margaret.

"What is this snake line? It looks like the page I had." Madlax whispered with a degree of surprise.

"That's an integral sign I think." Margaret giggled.

"I'll stick with shooting people thank you" Madlax joked in a black humor kind of way.

"Who's giggling at the back row?" the professor shouted.

"Uh Oh." Madlax whispered.

"Hmm... I'm sorry professor, it won't happen again." Margaret said hurriedly in a stressed out voice.

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"Hope not Burton. There's a final exam tomorrow you know? If you can't stay focused just go back to sleep as you always do." The professor said in a harsh way, as the rest of the class tried to keep from laughing themselves, not to attract further reprehension.

"Yes professor, I'll focus. I'm sorry." Margaret replied in a humbled tone, sitting back and lowering her head in embarrassment.

"My, he sure is mean today. He must be looking forward to summer break as well." Margaret complained to Madlax, as silently as she could.

For the rest of the class they tried to keep quiet and unnoticed.

"Anything yet?" Nadie asked as they wandered around.

"Nope." Ellis replied holding up the bracelet.

"We passed a couple of libraries and museums and it didn't go off. Something has to set it off." Nadie said with a bit of frustration.

"There's a graveyard up ahead. Maybe it will glow there." Ellis replied.

"Graveyard? Where?" A confused Nadie asked as she looked for the graveyard.

"Over there." Ellis pointed to graveyard in the distance. Nadie couldn't see it yet.

Nadie sighed remembering that Ellis had far better senses than her. As they walked Ellis stopped, pricked her ears.

"What's wrong?" Nadie asked wondering what Ellis was doing.

"Somebody is calling for help." Ellis replied as the bracelet gave a faint glow.

"Ellis the bracelet! Look!" Nadie cried out.

Ellis nodded as they ran to the graveyard. Though Ellis could've easily outrun Nadie she kept up a pace where Nadie could keep up.

As they approached they saw an elderly woman trying to exit it as fast she could.

"Are you all right?" Nadie asked with concern.

"I don't think anything's broken, but you have to stop her." The elderly woman replied trying to brush off some dirt off her dress.

"Stop her who?" Nadie asked as Ellis turned her head towards the interior.

"The one who's smashing gravestones" Ellis replied as she bolted inside.

"Don't worry we'll stop whoever doing this." Nadie said in a comforting tone.

"Thank you young lady." The elderly woman said before Nadie followed Ellis.

Nadie caught with Ellis as they saw a browned haired tween aged girl smashing a gravestone with a sledge hammer.

"HEY! STOP THAT!" Nadie yelled to get the girls attention. The girl stopped and turned her head to the pair.

"Why don't you mind your own fucking business?!" The girl replied a bit miffed that she was interrupted.

"You got a mouth on you." Nadie said as she grabbed the by the arm. In quick succession Nadie was punched in the stomach with the handle of the sledge hammer and then she was flung a couple feet. The girl picked up the sledge hammer and was preparing to hit Nadie with it.

Kirika and Mireille were nearing the entrance of the graveyard when the elderly woman accosted them.

"Please help them, there's someone smashing gravestones and think they help." The elderly woman pleaded.

"You should call the Police madam. That's their job." Mireille replied.

Then they heard;

"Why don't you mind your own fucking business?!"

"You got a mouth on you."

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“Mireille, it’s that girl.” Kirika said before she bolted into the graveyard.

“Kirika!” Mireille yelled and she mumbled something underneath her breath as she followed soon after followed Kirika.

Kirika and Mireille ran to where the commotion was. There they saw the little girl about ready to hit a red haired Hispanic looking woman on the ground with a sledge hammer. Just as she was swinging a petite woman with short blonde hair caught the hammer in midswing by the handle. They assumed that the elderly lady had sent them as well.

The girl turned her slightly to glance at Mireille and Kirika while struggling to get the sledge hammer of Ellis’ hand.

“Welcome to this little part of Wonder land Mireille...let go...” The girl said before turning attention back to Ellis who snapped the handle in two.

Nadie scrambled to get up before what was left of the sledge hammer hit her. Mireille wondered if the girl had followed them long enough to hear her comment.

“Wow you’re strong...” The girl said as she skipped backwards before any of them grabbed her.

“You okay Nadie?” Ellis asked Nadie as she looked at Mireille and Kirika then back at the girl.

“I’m fine, she caught me off guard.” Nadie replied. “Talented aren’t you? You have a name?” Nadie asked the girl. Mireille kept her distance considering just a couple hours ago she had beaten Chloe silly. The girl smiled with a wicked looking smile as she hopped on top of a gravestone. “Well since this is Wonderland, then I must be Alice.”

“I need to ask...” Kirika started but Alice interrupted. “I’m not talking to you until you remember who I am.”

“Come on Kirika, let’s go. I’m not putting up her games.” Mireille said in an aggravated tone.

“Ohhh...haven’t got laid in awhile have you blondie?” Alice quipped.

Kirika was going lunge for the girl when Mireille put a hand on her shoulder. “Forget it Kirika, she’s just trying to goad us. We’ll deal with her later.”

“Geez, aren’t you the fucking buzzkill Mireille.” Alice retorted mimicking Kirika.

“You’re right. Let’s go.” Kirika said turning as if to walk away then she quickly spun and tried to grab Alice who leapt onto a nearby grave stone.

“I guess you do want to play after all. Hey strong girl you want to play too?” Alice asked as she hopped onto another gravestone.

Ellis hopped on top of a gravestone. Alice smiled in amusement. “I’ll take that as yes. Hey strong girl you have a name?” Then Alice leapt to another gravestone.

Ellis in return jumped to the gravestone next to the one Alice was standing on. “Ellis...”

Kirika knowing that she couldn’t pull off the leaps that Alice and Ellis followed them keeping one hand in her jacket pocket fingering the pistol within.

As Kirika and Ellis pursued Alice, Nadie and Mireille looked at the remains of the gravestone. “That kid did a number on this. There has to be a reason; if it was just vandalism for kicks she would’ve not done it in broad daylight.” Nadie observed.

“There’s something weird about her.”

“Seems to know you.”

“Yeah, we ran into the brat earlier. Let’s see whose stone this was.” Mireille answered without giving any details.

Nadie noticed the evasion, but decided not to pry as she tried to piece together what was left of the stone.

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After a couple minutes they pieced enough to read;

Here <word missing> lie<rest of word smashed>  
Jo<smashed>Baker  
Born Novem<hammer hole>er 12<sup>th</sup> 1937  
Died February 24<sup>th</sup> 2002  
<Fractured beyond any recognition>Grandfather  
<The rest destroyed as well>

“Look no offense, but we’ve got things to do than to go chase some little brat who’s got issues. As soon I get my friend; we’re leaving. You can deal with the brat and old lady.” Mireille said in an impatient tone.

“*Who are you running from?*” Nadie thought to herself as she noticed Mireille’s attitude.

Meanwhile Kirika was chasing Ellis and Alice as they hopped from tombstone to tombstone. Then after a few minutes she heard a beeping sound. Alice stopped, pulled something from a pocket, looked at it, and then put it back. “Awww, it looks like we have to play another time. I’m late I’m late for a very important date.” Alice said in a somewhat mocking tone.

Then she rapidly jumped a few more tombstones and then the over the wall. Ellis was going chase after then she remembered Nadie. Then there were these other people and she didn’t want to leave Nadie or the old woman with these people about.

Kirika stared at Alice as she bounded over the wall and she cursed herself for falling for this stupid ploy. She was just toying with them but seeing what she could do did make her stop and think; *not who but what?*

Then she looked at Ellis who she had seen snap a sledge hammer in two, make leaps even impossible for her to make. All this made head hurt, besides this kind thing was more Mireille’s thing than hers. So she headed back to the shattered gravestone and Mireille was heading straight for her.

“She got away.”

“I really don’t care; let’s get out of here before the police or the Soldats show up.”

Kirika nodded ascent and she followed Mireille back out to the street.

An hour earlier as Margaret and Madlax were going to class, before Mireille, Kirika, Ellis, and Nadie’s encounter; Meg was sitting in an overstuffed chair when she heard coming from the kitchen a latch unlock . She grabbed her pistol as she heard the kitchen door open.

“Just me Meggy Peggy.” A voice yelled out as Meg leapt from the chair to see a well dressed man in his early thirties. His most noticeable features were his well combed dark brown hair, his deep blue eyes and his disarming smile.

“I wish you stop doing that Walter.” Meg complained.

“Doing what?” Walter asked.

“Entering before ringing the bell. What if I thought you were an intruder?”

“No you wouldn’t. Who else would call you Meggy Peggy?” Walter asked without being serious knowing from looking in Meg’s eyes she was going to unload on him.

“You, but that’s not important; now what I want to know something; how long did you knew that Anna and Richard where dead and don’t give me the “it’s news to me” bullshit and why didn’t you tell me?!” Meg asked in a dead serious tone.

Walter’s smile faded. “Before you jump down my throat, our father before he died used what pull he had left in N.I. to make sure you never knew to the point where my family was indirectly threatened so I wouldn’t talk when I found out after he died. I guess that was his way of punishing you from beyond the grave. It took me awhile to find it was him that did it.” Walter replied in equally serious tone.

Meg sighed. “Heh, he had to get one last dig at me and just because I stuck up for you. Now that Elenore made contact with me, how are *they* going to react?”

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"They couldn't care less. You're on the retired list and Elenore is an adult. Besides anyone who would care are either dead or retired and out the picture. As long you don't spill state secrets you can spend all the time you want with her."

"Then what about the restraining orders I keep getting every Christmas Eve?"

"Wow, I thought Anna was vindictive but I didn't think she was *that* vindictive. Anyway the only one who could put a stop to the orders is Margaret and she has to wait till she's twenty before that happens."

"Hopefully Elenore can convince Margaret to do it. Speaking of Elenore; there's a favor I really need to ask." Meg asked in a pleading and serious tone.

"Sure, if it's something I can do I'll do it."

"I don't know if you know but knowing you, you probably do; but the simple facts are Elenore was pregnant and there's no record of it in St Peter's Hospital. I don't know if the child survived or not."

"So you want me to go looking for it without attracting attention?"

Meg collapsed in the chair. "Pretty much. It all still blows my mind; how could he leave a household to a twelve year old? Did he even suspect that they weren't coming back? Was he so angry with us...for God's sake Walter I couldn't protect my own daughter from..." Meg said as she began to cry.

Walter put a comforting arm around Meg and spoke in a comforting tone. "I really don't know any more than you do. I'll find out, no...we will find out. I know someone who can help."

"Thanks little brother." Meg said wiping the tears from her face.

"Hey that's what family is for. Could you please make me a coffee while a make a call?"

Meg got up. "I'm sorry, I'll go get it. Two creams, one sugar as usual?"

"Yes, thanks." Walter replied as he pulled out his cell phone and made a call.

As Meg brought out the coffee Meg's phone rang. She picked it up hoping it was Elenore.

"Hello..." Meg started with a smile then her smile faded as continued to listen.

"I see...Thank you. I'll be down there right away."

"What's up?" Walter asked before taking a sip of his coffee.

"That was Mrs. Carroll. She called to say some kid smashed father's gravestone. She has people chasing the kid but the stone is a total loss from what she says. You want to come?"

"I don't know why you should care Meg? He pretty much gave us both the heave-ho."

"Despite what he thought of both of us, he is still our father dead or alive."

"I've got things to do, one of them finding that medical record." Walter said then gulping down his coffee.

"I see...call me if you find anything." Meg said as she grabbed her purse.

"Will do..." Walter replied as he set the cup down and left.

Nadie and Ellis approached the elderly woman. "I'm sorry, I couldn't catch her." Ellis said with her head hung low.

"At least you kept her from doing any more damage." The elderly woman replied.

"The stone she did smash is pretty much a total loss. I collected most what could be salvaged."

The elderly woman smiled. "I wouldn't worry much about it. Oh, where are my manners, I'm Clair Carroll. I'm filling in for my son who's ill and grandson who's at a funeral home seminar. You see my family has tended this graveyard for generations. Oh, there I go again. I forgot to ask what your names are."

Ellis smiled as this woman reminded her of the old corn reader she lived with before she met Nadie.

"I'm Nadie Oliveira<sup>1</sup> and this is my friend Ellis Schneider." Nadie replied with a warm smile and Ellis waved her hand in greeting.

Clair cupped Nadie's hands and smiled. "Thank you for your help. I'm sorry I can't give any you reward."

"It's okay; we didn't do it for any reward." Nadie replied as a small car pulled in and came to a stop. The driver a brown haired woman in her late thirties or early forties came out of the driver's side. Nadie

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noticed the resemblance to Alice she had. The woman approached them then in a concerned tone asked. "Mrs. Carroll are you all right?"

Claire smiled. "I'm all right thanks to these young ladies here." She said gesturing to Nadie and Ellis. The woman turned to Nadie and Ellis. "Thank you for your assistance." The woman said in a polite tone. "You're welcome." Nadie replied looking over the woman. "*She's handled a gun before.*" Nadie thought to herself noticing the woman was doing the same.

"Miss Oliveira and Miss Schneider this is Miss Baker; daughter of whose tombstone was destroyed." Claire introduced them to each other.

"You can just call me Nadie, makes for friendlier conversation."

Meg nodded in understanding. "I'm Meg by the way." Meg said trying to defuse the unintentional tension in the air.

"I'm Ellis." Ellis said shyly.

"Well Nadie and Ellis, after I see the gravestone, would you give me a description of the girl who did this?"

"Sure no problem." Nadie agreed.

"I can take it from here Mrs. Carroll and thank again for calling me."

"You're welcome child, if you excuse me. I'll get someone to clean the mess." Claire said before walking slowly off towards the grounds keepers shed.

Once Claire had gotten out earshot; "No offence Meg but that kid bears a resemblance or at least a relation to you."

"Really? Let me get my sketch pad and then you two can describe her to me." Meg went to her car and soon came back with a sketch pad on a clipboard. For the next few minutes Nadie and Ellis gave Meg a description of Alice including what she had said.

As Meg drew it became more and more evident that "Alice" was in fact Elenore. "*She's the missing piece of her soul.*" She thought, and then she flipped over the page. "You said two other women had run into Alice earlier. Could you give their descriptions as well?" Meg asked.

Nadie gave the best description of Mireille and Kirika she could.

"Thank you both, now let's see how bad the stone is." Then Nadie and Meg went to the stone. Meg sadly looked at remains. "*Are you that angry with your grandfather...to do something like this?*" Meg silently asked herself. Nadie noticed that Ellis had wandered off but was relieved when came back, but pushing a wheelbarrow and Claire in tow.

"She was pushing it all by herself." Ellis said in her usual tone. All of them filled the wheel barrow. Ellis asked where to take the remains which Claire in turn pointed out. Ellis wheeled the stone off.

"Thank you again ladies. I'm grateful for your help." Claire said in a grateful tone.

"You're welcome, but you should go home Mrs. Carroll." Meg said in a kindheartedly tone.

"I'm too old to worry about such things...you're beginning to sound like my son. He worries when I'm out here. Keeps about talking rapists running, the way he talks sometimes you swear he thinks there's one behind every tombstone." Claire noticed Meg's drawing. "Oh is that the little girl? Could you show that picture to my son so he can keep an eye out for her in case she comes back?"

Meg's ears pricked on hearing the word "rapists". "Of course Mrs. Carroll. Why don't we go now?" Meg agreed then she turned to Nadie and Ellis. "Would you like to come? I'll treat you two to lunch afterwards. It's the least I can do for all your help."

Nadie was about to answer when Ellis piped up. "Sure, we'll come."

"Of course thanks." Nadie chimed in as well. "*I bet you know more to this story than you let on Meg.*"

Nadie thought to herself noticing Meg's attitude.

The trio escorted Claire back to her home where an elderly man stood in the doorway.

"Mama, you shouldn't be out in the graveyard alone. Thank you for bringing my mother home."

Claire scowled. "Don't you scold me young man."



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"But mama, he could be out there..."

"Enough Louis! He hasn't been back in years; he's probably in jail by now. There was some little girl smashing stones today and Miss Baker and her friends were nice enough to draw a picture of her to show you. Now get inside before I turn you over my knee." Claire said in angry tone.

"Yes yes mama. Please come inside." Louis said sighing under his breath.

After they went and made themselves comfortable Louis asked to see the picture. When he did his face turned pale.

"Louis what's wrong? Tell me now." Claire asked concerned.

"I've seen that face before, but it was years ago. Maybe that girl you saw today was her ghost..."

"Louis what are you talking about you're not making any sense?"

"How long ago Mr. Carroll?" Meg asked.

"Eight or nine years ago. It was nearing sundown, so I went to close the gate as I always do. Then I saw her." Louis pointed to the picture.

"Then what happened?" Meg asked her face grew concerned.

"Her clothes were dirty and torn and had a black eye. She was crying as she ran toward the gate. I wondered what happened...then I saw *him*. He was trying to pull his pants back up as he was trying to chase the little girl. He stopped and ran the other way before I got a good look at his face. I was worried about the little girl but she had disappeared. I called the police after that, but they couldn't find him or the girl. Part of me fears that he found her and silenced her. Every few years another woman gets attacked in that graveyard and always when me or my boy isn't around. That is why I worry when my mama goes out there alone." Louie related he could see Meg trying to hold back the tears. "I'm sorry if it saddens you."

"It's all right Mr. Carroll. Thank you for your time but I must leave now." Meg said as she went to the door.

"It was nice meeting you." Ellis said as they followed Meg out the door.

They followed all the way to her car. She was leaning against the roof and crying.

"Are you okay Meg?" Nadie asked with concern.

"I'm sorry about that, thank you anyways."

"It was nice meeting you Meg." Nadie said as she began to back away.

"Wait, I still owe you two lunch. I'm sorry if I seem vague but there's a lot going on and a good chunk it pretty unbelievable."

"Don't sweat it, Ellis and I have had our share of unbelievable stuff."

"You probably have, but I doubt you believe it."

"Oh, on the contrary Miss Baker. My bearer and her companion would find your story quite believable indeed..." Ellis said with her eyes and the bracelet glowing and speaking with a British accent...

Jodie stood outside the café Train D'abeille. She couldn't help feeling some sense of dread. But at the same time she was curious...on how he managed to survive...why did he ask to see her of all people? Was he still working for the C.I.A or someone else?

"I'm not going to get any answers sitting out here." She said to herself as she entered the café. The café was definitely high-class and there were people here, that last part put her mind at ease. "*At least he wouldn't pull something so blatant in here.*" Jodie thought to herself as she approached the maître.

"Do you have a reservation Miss?" The maître asked.

"Haywood." Jodie replied and the maître scanned down the list. "Ah here you are Miss Haywood. Mr. R called that he would be arriving shortly." The maître summoned a waiter to escort Jodie to her table.

For what seemed an eternity she waited until the waiter brought him to the table. Jodie was floored, it was actually him; Douglas Rosenberg!

"Hello Miss Haywood..."

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Across town Laetitia sat in her usual spot as she ate her lunch alone as usual. For none of the other children sat nowhere near "Creepy Girl" as tended to call her.

She still couldn't shake the feeling of dread she was feeling. As she finished her sandwich she felt a presence coming up from behind her. Laetitia turned her head to see who was behind her, she wasn't surprised on who she saw.

The last thing Laetitia heard before struck unconscious by the first fist was;  
"Hello Laetitia..."

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<sup>i</sup> There's no official last name given for Nadie or for Ellis in the series. So for the purpose of this fanfic they've been given the surnames as shown in the text. And Nadie's last name is a more or less a shout out...\*wink\*