

Periculum

Icarus Valhalla sat outside of the classroom, wondering what he was doing there. Well, he knew why he was sent out of the classroom, he had 'accidentally' set fire to the table, but it was worth it to see Mr Night's appalled face. What was really on his mind though was a minefield of trauma, knowledge and chaos.

Trauma being the loss of his parents, who died in a car crash whilst on the way to speak to Icarus's teacher. They had been asked to see him because Icarus often showed signs of incredible intelligence. Chaos was his middle name. Literally! His middle name was Islet, the Egyptian word for chaos. His older brother Charles, who became his guardian after his parents died, had given Icarus this fitting middle name, not long before he died by drowning. Whilst all the kids in this school had traumatic upbringings, he was right up there.

"Really? Sent out again? You know what, I'm not even surprised anymore." Icarus looked up to see his childhood friend, Jason. Jason's blonde hair flopped perfectly on his forehead, whereas Icarus looked like a caramel brown hedgehog had settled on top of his head. Jason and Icarus had bonded over their trauma and their thrill for trouble. Jason's dad had left when he was 4, and his mother was a doctor, so he never really saw her much. "You can't talk, you've been sent out too dummy" joked Icarus. "Aw, you've caught me" countered Jason, "Wanna get out of here?" "Way ahead of you, blondie." grinned Icarus, who was met by a frown from Jason "Never call me that again!"

As the two troublemakers stalked the corridors, they ran into their tempestuous friend, Hera, who coincidentally, was in a fight. Hera was being encouraged by her friend, Artemis Fiddle. "Yeah! Hit 'em harder!" Artemis yelled supportively. Artemis was the more popular one in their group, and yet still decided to hang out with the 'problem kids., despite the disapproval of, well, everyone in that blasted town. Her parents were mentally abusive, although no one can tell, actually no one 'could' tell, as her twin brother died when she was 12. Hera had her own fair share of sadness; her older sister had died in a house fire. Hera caught the gaze of Icarus and Jason just as she threw the final punch and her unfortunate opponent crumpled to the floor. "Hey, you guys, we were just thinking of skipping, wanna come with?" said Hera. "Without a doubt" replied Icarus as they strode towards the exit.

They walked for a while and then saw a run-down house. Artemis asked where they were? "We're at that old scientist's house!" replied Icarus. "The one who died?!" exclaimed Jason, "That's the one! Looks pretty cool doesn't it" Icarus said as they walked blindly into the creepy house. The floorboards creaked as if they had not been stepped on in decades; dust fell onto their shoulders like a cape. The ancient door

slammed behind them, stuck fast. "What happened?" questioned Jason. Icarus tried without success to open the woodworm infested door "It's stuck fast" he said, " Oh well! Let's carry on looking, shall we?" As they ventured into the ominous gloom, all of them had the urge to turn back but felt compelled to walk further into the doomed house, as though an ice-cold hand was at their backs.

Entering the first room, they were shocked to see numerous bodies, most of them recent but a handful of others were desiccated skeletons. "That...that's not normal. I mean, sure, it's the old, creepy, dead scientist's house but I mean who would've thought this would happen" spluttered Icarus. "We gotta get out!" whispered Hera urgently. "No, we can't, the ghost owns us now, " Jason replied, not sounding like himself at all. "What ghost?" questioned Icarus. "The ghost of Exspiravit Dolor, the ghost of grief of course. He's been waiting for us" Jason said dully, his eyes glazed, "If you think you can leave, you would be dead wrong." "That does not bring me comfort pal!" countered Icarus.

The ghost/Jason's face turned into a snarl, and his/its eyes became a vivid purple, Jason's hair turned into a chalk like white. "Really? Possession? Tad cliché don't you think" taunted Hera, although fear was still present in the shadows of her sea green eyes. Her comment earned a nervous laugh from Artemis who chanted, with false bravado "Is now really the time for a makeover"? "There's always time for a makeover, Artemis." Icarus retorted.

"I'll sort this out" Icarus said as he scanned the room; there was a certain glint in his eyes, like a fire that was determined to burn anything in its path. Artemis warned "There is no way-out Icarus, don't do anything rash that will probably get you killed." "Icarus? What are you doing?" Hera exclaimed as he clambered onto the metal table. "Something rash and stupid that will probably get me killed. Make sure my corpse is on point at my funeral" he yelled as he leapt at a chain hanging from the ceiling, using his weight to pull it down and knock into Jason, leaving him sprawled on the floor. "Well, that went better than expected," Icarus said happily, turning to his friends, "Have I knocked it out of him?"

A croaky, booming voice rang across the room. "SHUT UP!" the ghost yelled as he straightened up, clearly irritated. "I sense your grief and I am here to cure it, to send you all to the afterlife." "That sure is one way to tell us you're going to kill us" Icarus challenged, eyebrows raised. "Yes, it will be fast, and your grief will come to an end. If you choose to fight, then your death will be pure and painful chaos" countered the ghost. Icarus, wearing a wolf-like grin, decided to mock the ghost one last time and replied with a daredevil glint in his eyes "Chaos is my middle name."