

tw / blood, violence

Lorelei was at it again: her favorite band's music is blaring from the speakers as she bangs on her drums with just as much rage her sound system was producing. Her father had just finished berating her about a house chore; she wasn't sure what it was about exactly, she wasn't paying attention. An exchange of frustrated words from father to daughter and vice versa escalated, it being the spark to what escalated into a flame for a fight.

The music was so loud - too loud, in fact - that she almost didn't hear the truck pull up on the almost deserted road in their subdivision. But alas, tires screeching was bound to compete with her instrument.

Out of curiosity, the young Lorelei peeks outside of her window. *Huh*. People are finally going to move into the newly built home on the once empty lot next to theirs.

With much expertise, she sneaks outside of her window to check on the newcomers up close. She keeps her music on, thinking that it would be a great way to make her dad think that she never left her room. If her dad catches up on the act, well... she was already good as grounded anyway. She didn't have much to lose for the day.

She watches from a distance: people going back and forth from the truck to the home, hauling boxes along with them. They're all old people, she thinks to herself. More friends for her dad, and none for her.

As if the universe heard her thoughts, a boy who looked her age gets out of a car parked behind the truck. The boy stands in the middle of the street, looking around, taking in the scene around him. Next thing Lorelei knew, his eyes landed on hers, and he shot her a wide grin while waving enthusiastically.

The boy jogs over to Lorelei, smile never disappearing.

"Hello! Do you live here?" He points towards her house. "My name is Logan Julien! If you do live there, I'm your new neighbor! I just moved from the United States of America. I used to live in New York. Mom and dad said that we're staying here for good now! Are we the same age?" he reaches his hand out for her to shake.

He talks too much, the voice in Lorelei's head says. *It's kind of annoying*.

She takes his hand and shakes it anyway.

"Yes, I live here. My name is Lorelei. Lorelei Jupiter, actually. We have the same initials."

"Woah?! You're an LJ too?! It's my first time meeting someone with the same initials as me! That's so cool! Anyway, the music's coming from your house, right? Is that Paramore? I love

Paramore! My dad lets me listen to them but my mom doesn't like it, she says they're too noisy." He stops talking to create an imaginary guitar with his hands, lip syncing word per word to the song playing without missing a beat.

It elicits a laugh from Lorelei.

Maybe he won't be so bad.

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"Hey, Logan. Logan, look at me. Stay with me," a panic-ridden Lorelei exhales as she cradles a bloodied Logan in her arms. She can feel hot tears run from inside her mask.

She takes her cover off, revealing identity to her friend. "Logan, look! It's me. C'mon, hang on for me, please? Please, Logan?" Her hand finds itself on the back of his shoulder where a shrapnel landed square on to put pressure on it. It's bleeding.

In fact, it had been bleeding too much.

"Lorie, it's you," Logan manages weakly. "You're Spider-Woman. You were the one fighting him off this whole time. That's so cool. You're so c-"

Before he could finish his sentence, he coughs up blood and groans. This earns a wince from Lorelei as well as more tears.

"I'm sorry, Logan. I'm so, so sorry. I couldn't make it to you in time. I could've... I could've-"

Logan cuts her off with a hush.

"Hey, don't blame yourself. It wasn't your fault, okay? It was on me for not being able to get out of the way. It was kind of stupid to think I could save you," he chuckles, scarlet splattering from his mouth as he does so.

"You're still so fucking stupid and annoying," Lorelei mutters through a mixture of a small laugh and a sob.

With the strength he had left, he slowly takes Lorelei's hand from his shoulder to clasp it in his own.

"Just promise me, okay? Promise me that you're going to get him for me. And that you'll keep saving people like you always do. And that we'll- we'll always be each other's LJs."

She smiles at him through tears and squeezes his hand.

"I will, I will. I promise," she nods for reassurance and intertwines her pinky with his. "All those promises are locked, as always."

His grip is weak, loose.

"Mhm. Now go get him, rockstar," he breathes out with a smile, eyes slowly closing.

His pinky slips from her, hand going limp.

"Logan. Logan, wake up," she taps his shoulder repeatedly in a panic. "Logan, wake up. C'mon! You're not fair! Get up!"

Maybe it was a shout to the universe, or to the void, she doesn't know. She doesn't care. All she wants is for Logan to get up by some miracle, and to have this to add to the list of his pranks that Lorelei was able to fall for.

Except it isn't. There are no miracles in this line of work, and Logan won't be getting up any time soon; any time ever, in fact.

The rookie hero hangs her head down in shame, guilt, and grief as she cries over her best friend's lifeless body. She could've prevented this. She could've saved her best friend just in time. She could've had her best friend with her, still.

You're too weak, Lorelei. You're too slow. Shame on you. Is that what a hero's supposed to be?

The sound of her wailing engulfs the empty hallway's atmosphere.

Her cries seem to alert the enemy on where she is, as she feels her senses tingling signaling her that it is approaching her direction.

Lorelei gives Logan one good look before placing a kiss on his forehead.

She wipes her tears, some of his blood smearing on her face. She moves his body to a safer place; clean-up would be able to find him later on. She could only hope that they'll take care of him.

Something inside of her snaps. Rage begins to flow through her veins.

She puts on her mask. She cracks her knuckles and rotates her head, earning the sound of cracking from her neck.

"Time to make a motherfucker pay."

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"Did you hear? Spider-Woman absolutely destroyed that terrorist. They couldn't even bring him in for arrest because she ended up killing him."

"Man. She doesn't pull her punches, huh?"

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The sun was setting. Everyone had already left the service. Yet Lorelei remained there, sitting in front of Logan's stone in silence.

"I got him for you, Logan. Just as I promised."

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"And for today's superhero report!" The anchor for the nightly news program bellows through the television screen, "Spider-Woman has been spotted fighting crime once again after two months of inactivity. Last sighting of her was during the terrorist attack in Quezon City's most prestigious science high school."

A clip of Lorelei swinging swiftly across city buildings in her suit flashes on screen.

"She also sports a brand new costume! With an upgrade from her old plain white suit, it now has its own accents that scream spider and, interestingly, a hood! Way to look stylish while beating up bad guys," the reporter side-comments.

"She also tells our representatives, and I quote: 'Please stop calling me Spider-Woman. From now on, it's Ghost-Spider to you all.'" The man reading the report gives the camera a bemused look, the reaction reaching the program's viewers.

"Well, folks! It looks like Spider-Wom- I mean, Ghost-Spider, gave herself a complete make-over!"