

Children Of the Moon: The Legacy

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She trembled as the darkness swallowed her. Nothing but a very faint yellow light slipped under the door. The young girl blinked wishing the shadows would go away so that she could see the object's silhouette around her. Yes, she was all by herself at the suite's toilet.

Mommy! – she thought to herself.

It was all so quiet she could hear her own breathing. Something wet and salty rubbed her face, dripping down to the lips. Quickly she wiped it, for almost without noticing she was weeping, and her mother had asked her not to. She was supposed to be very quiet.

A muffled rumble had cut through the air and Bianca, scared to death, leaped backwards. Somewhere in the house, perhaps downstairs, something had been removed and destroyed.

With a frightening feeling, keeping her eyes at the door, she took a step back and another one and one more. The delicate skin of her leg touched the cold toilet seat's porcelain as she trembled, gasping loudly. Immediately the girl put her hands over her mouth, silencing herself, for she could feel it on the skin: no noise should be made.

A different sound, as if something sharp was scratching the floor, once and again. Approaching.

Suddenly, a roar stormed into the room behind the door, causing her to lose balance and fall on her butt by the side of the sink. The sound of gunshots slit through the air, followed by flashes of light under the door gap, brightening the toilet tiles. Bianca bit her lips not to scream. In the moment to follow, further beastly roars, flashes, booms and shouting. She attempted to cover her ears with her hands. Her tiny little eyes fixed at the dancing shadows who slipped through the gaps. Yet another painful scream. Unfortunately, her tiny hands were not enough and it seemed impossible to stop the sound of things being ripped and torn apart. She shrank even more, crawling until she reached the cold tile wall.

Further painful noises and growling. Then the silence.

Mommy! Carlos!

The girl gently removed her hands from her ears, who were in pain after holding them so tight. The shadows under the door had stopped moving, but slowly something sticky and dark penetrated under the gap, spreading across the tiles. Bianca had to put strengths together to crawl forward, enough to have a better view of what was forming a circular puddle in front of her. She was wide-eyed when the sticky red liquid reflected through the little light there was, followed by a metallic scent which penetrated her nostrils. A scent never to be forgotten by her. Terrified, she stepped away from the blood while the light under the gap faded entirely.

She was too scared to scream. A growling, such as a quiet engine sound, shook her whole.

Bianca embraced her own legs and pressed it against her body. It came into her mind a prayer which was taught by her stepfather a while ago, when she was too afraid to sleep.

– Holy lord's angel – quietly she began, nearly whispering, as tears were being shed –, my wholehearted guardian...

The growling became louder and it appeared to have shrunk a couple of times, almost in laughter.

– If to thy, you entrusted me merc...

Bam! Something slammed so hard against the doorway that the hinges nearly burst.

– ... me... mercy...

Bam! The girl covered her ears once again.

– ... di... vine...

Something very large would hit and scratch the doorway till it began to crumble.

– Conduct and keep me al... always...

BAM! The door fell apart and its pieces spread everywhere, through the blood wet floor.

– Mom! Moommyyy! – shouted out loud, as it was the only thing to do, for fear had solidified over her. She was paralyzed, couldn't even cover her eyes and protect herself from the horrific sight of the hideous dark shadow, with huge yellow eyes, glowing such as two beacons in the dark night.

Shouted once again. Her voice could be mistaken by a shrill honk in the air.

Bianca blinked confused. Something was not right.

Out of the sudden the creature's eyes had lost its form, becoming two yellow beacons lit on top of her. She turned her sight upwards, for they were blinding her. The toilet's ceiling had vanished and, on the deep dark sky, a bright white rounded moon would watch her.

Is everything alright? A voice questioned, and she looked around, placing her arm in front of her eyes to protect herself from the beacons.

The shadows and edges of the toilet had moved away, giving room to the sidewalks, cold light lamp posts, trees, walls, gates, windows and house's balconies. Bianca felt her other hand scratch the rough and grainy asphalt floor, unlike the cold and smooth toilet tiles.

– What? – said confused, with an arid throat. – Where am I?

Feeling fuzzy she attempted to concentrate. That was no longer a 9-year-old frightened little girl in a dark toilet, but a 16-year-old teenager emerging from a nightmare somewhere unknown.

The shadows by her side took the shape of a blonde woman wearing a dark dress, exceedingly high heels and bulging eyes. Bianca found herself fallen in the middle of the street, in front of an idle car about seven feet from her. She could hear the hoarse sound, such as a growling, from the active engine. She attempted to stand up, but felt a bit dizzy. The lady walked up to her.

– Dear Lord! Are you injured? – She questioned, helping her to stand up. – João, you must've run over the girl!

From behind the lady, yet another shadow appeared, the shadow of a thin tall man.

– No, Kátia! She just walked right into the street, but I didn't hit this mad girl!

Bianca stood up and hugged herself. It was freezing and she was wearing nothing but a nightgown. Her brain would still process the scenario shift. At the surrounding houses, lamps were ignited, windows opened and curious figures appeared.

– Is everything alright in there? – screamed a voice from a house's second floor.

Kátia looked at the window.

– She wasn't hit, everything is fine.

– Are you sure, girl? Do you want me to call the cops? – the woman at the window asked Bianca.

– No! – Bianca answered in a rush. – There's no need. I'm fine, it was not their fault.

The response seemed reasonable, for the woman went back inside and shut the windows. The other house's lights were also turned off.

– Are you hurt somewhere? – asked Kátia. – Do you want to go to a hospital?

– No, I'm fine. – As she noticed doubt in the lady's eyes, she continued:

– I'm so sorry if I scared you. It was not your fault.

– You were screaming so much I thought we'd hit you with the car. But what are you doing in the street like this, in a nightgown?

The girl checked herself out and then the surroundings, not being able to tell in which street she was, for she had just arrived in town. Thus, answered, feeling embarrassed.

– I'm a sleepwalker...

– A sleepwalker? – said Kátia, shocked, remaining silent for a moment, as if measuring the information. – Oh... well... Then, would you rather we call your parents to come pick you up?

– No, there's no need!

The last thing she wanted was to wake up Laura and scare her with the fact that, at the first night in Santos, her crazy little sister had been wandering around in a nightgown.

– There’s really no need – she insisted. – You didn’t hit me. I reckon I just stumbled, frightened, and shouted. I live close by – she said, looking around once more –, at least I think so...

– Where do you live? – the woman questioned.

Bianca scavenged her memory and found something. The street’s name had her stepfather’s first name.

– I believe the street is called Carlos... something.

– Carlos Gomes? – said Kátia, and pointed towards the end of the street. – It’s that one right there, isn’t it honey?

– Right... – he responded, unwillingly – Listen girl, why don’t you just get in the car and we take you there?

Bianca stared at the lady and then at the man. Even though they seemed concerned, they were complete strangers to her.

– There’s no need, I’ll walk.

The lady nodded her head restless.

– I’ll go with you then, I’m not letting you wander around at three in the morning – thus turning to João: – Could you follow me with the car, honey?

– Sure... – said impatiently – it’s your call.

They went through the sidewalk. Bianca was barefoot and had to watch her step. Right at the street corner, she recognized the drawings at a nursery school’s wall. Her home was right there making a right turn, in the middle of the block.

Moments later, they arrived at the iron arabesque gate that separated the houses where she lived. Rapidly she saw the keys left inside, at the keylock.

She thanked Kátia at the gate, promising to tell her parents about the incident. She was ok to lie. After all, the woman was a complete stranger and she didn’t feel like getting into an unfortunate conversation about not having parents and living with her sister Laura, Carlo’s daughter, her also deceased stepfather.

Bianca waved as they were leaving. After closing the gate, she walked through the backyard towards the house doorway, turned the handle and quietly moved inside the living room, locking it carefully so as not to make any noise. Cautiously, she walked through the piles of cardboard boxes and objects spread all over the house without touching a thing. The tiniest slip could drop something and make the loudest noise. She turned left towards the hallway and entered Laura’s room.

The moving must’ve been really exhausting to Laura – she figured, for usually she would’ve woken up with the door noises.

Carefully, she opened her sister's purse and dropped the keys inside. Following that she went to her room to try and get some sleep, without any success.

Before her cellphone alarm rang at 6 am, she was already in the shower. Her shredded hands due to the asphalt burned a bit in the water, as a reminder of the incident. Her mind would wander, in an attempt to understand how come she ended up outside and where would she have gone if not for the couple who woke her up, who almost ran her over.

Back into the room, she picked her old bag up. Since she and her sister moved all the time, they would always get a bag with emergency supplies ready, such as clothing, hygiene products, cell phone charges and a few other petty things, until the house would be livable again. They called it moving-bag and both of them had one. She took out of the bag a photo-frame with the only picture she had of her mother. Ágata smiling while holding Bianca, still a baby, on the lap.

From Ágata Bley, she inherited a light shade of Mediterranean skin, long wavy brown hairs and the height of almost five and a half feet. Did not inherit thy magnetic green eyes, instead, Bianca had opaque brown eyes, possibly as her biological father's whom she never met. All she knew was that he'd died around that picture's period. She removed it from the frame and flipped it to read once more the written phrase with a female handwriting "We don't love what we desire, but what we don't chose". She had wondered over and over again the reason why her mother wrote that on that picture. Most likely, it was an unwanted pregnancy, but loved Bianca nevertheless. Had died loving her.

She put the picture back on the frame and left it at the desk by the bed's side. Afterwards, she dressed up in jeans, a cotton shirt and went towards the kitchen.

Reaching there, she found Laura standing, still in pajamas, cooking fried buttered bread while watching some video on her laptop over the sink's marble. Up on the table there were some jelly and biscuits.

– Good morning, Bia – said, without diverting her eyes from the screen.

– Hi... – answered.

Laura touched the screen and the video stopped, then she turned to Bianca and straightened her lilac frame glasses. Her brown hair were tied in a ponytail.

– Did you sleep well at the new house?

– Yes, I did – lied as she sat down. – Do you need some help with the breakfast?
– asked, to divert from the subject.

– There's no need – said Laura with a smile while fetching the plate with bread and milk to bring to the table.

Bianca knew she was obsessed with the breakfast and didn't want anyone to get in the way.

– Here, your milk – said, putting the cup in front of her. – I knew you'd enjoy the new house.

– Yes, it's a great place – agreed Bianca, before drinking her milk. Immediately she put the cup away pulling a face in the end.

– What is it? – questioned Laura.

– It's just that, the milk tastes weird.

Laura showed indifference and went back looking at her laptop.

– It's probably because I increased your vitamin dose in it.

– Really? But it's the second time this year you do this.

– I know, it's not my fault, you are always so pale and nearly anemic... – said, without looking at her.

Despite being countered, Bianca drank the rest of the milk, as Laura watched the video.

– I have to finish this research today – mentioned Laura – My new job is on a refurbishment project of an old church at Santo's historical center. Therefore, I need to fill in about the local history and I had no time with the moving...

Bianca only nodded while eating bread.

– And is it a cool project?

– It seems so... Santos was one of the oldest villages established in Brasil. There's one other city in the island called São Vicente, and it was the first village of the country. This island is filled with ancient history and buildings to be refurbished. Some are still from the colonization era. There's plenty of interesting work around here.

– Humm... – said Bianca, getting her attention. – Laura, we should definitely go for a stroll in São Paulo. What do you say? It's less than an hour from here.

Bianca noticed Laura slightly gathering her eyebrows. She was aware that she wasn't very fond of São Paulo, for it was there where Carlos Fernandes, her dad, and Bianca's mom died. They had never set foot in there ever since, and coming to Santos was the closest they got. Bianca knows it was difficult for her to take this job. And figured that the decision to take the job was mostly related to sleepwalking getting worse than the job itself. Laura was sure that moving to another town would help her sleep better. Go figure...

Thus, Bianca would not say a word about last night. Laura could think that another moving would be good for them, and truth is she was exhausted and would appreciate to someday be part of somewhere.

Although, the only thing concerning her about last night was the fact that she had never gone this far from home. She'd usually wake up in other rooms, in building's hallways, but never in the middle of the street and surrounded by strangers. But today Laura would hire someone to install the security system.

They had a box with all sorts of key locks and latches for the doorway.

However, even with all this caution, Laura had already woken up with the door wide open and Bianca leaving the house, that's why they thought of placing a bell over the door, to ring every time someone would open or close it.

Keeping Bianca's sleepwalking under control was a constant struggle.

– I'm not sure it's a good idea to go to the capital. I have much work to do here – disguised Laura. – Well, today I'll clean up this mess.

Bianca nodded, agreeing.

– And I'll face once again my first day at school.

Laura bit her lips.

– It's okay... – said Bianca. She knew it wasn't with bad intentions that her sister would make them move. – Don't worry. I'll make new friends here.

In the last city they were there for only ten months, and the truth is she couldn't make any friends. She would usually arrive in the middle of the semester, like now, and this is why it wasn't easy to make friends.

She checked the watch and it was ten minutes to seven am, she stood up and grabbed her bag on the ground.

– I have to go.

Laura went to the doorway to say goodbye to her and leaned against the doorframe, watching as Bianca walked up to the gate with her bag on her back and her wavy brown hair kindly swinging as she moved.

She felt a frightening feeling, Laura was afraid. She knew that, even though Bianca was far past the dangerous age of thirteen-years-old and now with sixteen, they were not safe yet. She wasn't feeling ready to deal with the nightmares and sleepwalking crises all by herself. The therapeutic treatments were necessary, but they were of little use, for she was aware that the reason behind these disorders was far beyond ordinary science.