

The Crescent Moon

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Sequal to "Midnight Moon" (One-Shot) (Status: Complete) Please Comment!

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The Crescent Moon

Written By J. E. Chin

(A complete fiction)

+++++++ Prologue: The Sword that is Stolen +++++++

(50 years later)

“Goodbye... Father.” He trusted the blade downward and closed his eyes at the last second to avoid seeing the blood squirt. Though he couldn't avoid hearing it. He then took the sword out, placed it in the mount and fell to his knees sobbing.

Footsteps approached and Shiro turned around. Standing in a short distance was Chouwa in his human form. His face was expressionless, but he was sad for his young master, Shiro. Chouwa opened his arms and Shiro ran into them.

“Was it his wish?” Chouwa asked gently.

“Yes...” Shiro nodded into Chouwa's clothing.

“Then I won't question any further, Shiro-sama.”

Chouwa let go of Shiro and went to Dark's body to bury it next to Aka's.

Shiro looked up at the sky. His black tears matched it. Up above was a full moon at the very top of the sky. He knew the time and it scarred his mind for life: The Midnight Moon.

“Chichue! Chichue!”

Shiro opened his eyes, looked down and saw his son, Yoru, seven years old, running toward him. Yoru Obsidian was Shiro's offspring. He was a great swordsman for his young age. He had dark silver-ish color short hair. Yoru bore a black earring on his left ear that represented his element of darkness. He wore a white yukata and soon would be given a black haori when he grew older. Upon his forehead was

a black headband that he found when he was younger.

“What is it?” Shiro asked leaping down from the tree he was sitting in.

“Ogasa wants you back home.”

“Does she?” Shiro asked picking Yoru up. “Or is that you wanting me back home?”

“Both!” Yoru giggled.

“Alright. Go on and run home.” Shiro placed Yoru back on the ground, which then started running. “Tell her I’ll be there in a few minutes!” he called after him.

“Hai!” Yoru answered.

“Silly kid.” Shiro said. He looked back up and he narrowed his eyes. He was looking up at the mangetsu that was at the very top of the dark sky.

“Ah!” Shiro gasped holding onto his head. His brain started to pound against his skull as he heard squirting sounds in his mind.

“Now run... me through... with it.” Rang the sentence in Shiro's head.

“NO!” he said out loud.

“Shiro?” a woman's voice said in a distance.

Shiro looked up with his black tears running down his face.

His wife, Ame, was standing there with Yoru holding her hand. Her silver hair shined in the moonlight along with her matching eyes.

“Ame,” Shiro said shakily. “Go get some sake.”

“I can't.” she said walking over and helped him up.

“Why?”

“We're out. Beside, you can't drink those memories away. They always come back.”

Shiro was helped back to their hut in Midnight village. It was the very same hut he and his sister and father lived in.

“What's this?” Ame asked as she got into the hut. “Is this—?”

“Sake!” Shiro shouted. He immediately took a clay cup, poured some sake and drank deeply. Then he repeated the method.

"But, who left it?" Ame shoved Shiro aside, picked up the sake pot and looked underneath. There she saw a folded piece of scroll. She picked it up and opened it.

"To my dear son, Shiro." Ame read out loud. "Is this from your father, Shiro?"

Shiro didn't answer.

"Shi... oh! Goodness me!" Ame had turned around and found that Shiro was rubbing against her while keening. "Shiro, you're drunk again." She then sighed and said to Yoru, "Go outside. It Chichue and Hahame time. Go on."

Yoru just nodded and went outside.

The next morning Yoru came running into the hut.

"The gravesites! They've been robbed! The smell gypsies are all over!"

"What?!" Shiro got up and got dressed quickly. "Do you know what was stolen, Yoru?!"

"It was only one thing: The Crescent Moon Blade, our family heirloom! Its scabbard is gone too!"

"Damn it! Yoru come with me. Ame, go get Chouwa. Tell him to meet us at the gravesites."

"Yes, Dear." Ame quickly got dressed and went out of the hut toward Chouwa's part of the forest.

Shiro bent down so that Yoru can get on. After he did, Shiro stood up straight and leapt high into the sky. In the air he remained until he saw the gravesites.

"See? The sword is gone!"

"I can see that Yoru." Shiro descended and landed next to the gravesites.

"Shiro-sama!" a voice shouted behind Shiro.

"Ah, Chouwa. I'm sure you heard from Ame what happened."

"Yes. So, you needed me?" Chouwa asked rubbing the top of Yoru's head.

"We need your help with looking for the Crescent Moon Blade."

"Say no more. I'm on it." Chouwa then disappeared in a flash of fire.

"Good luck, Chouwa-kun." Yoru said quietly.

“__” = my point, “==” = Ryu's point, “~~” = Chouwa's point “*==*” = Dark's point, “****”= Arc's point, “zz”= Kendo's point

Author's note: Once again there will be different point of views in this story. Now, there will be chapters called, “Interruptions” they might be attached to some chapters but these chapters you can skip if you want. But, these chapters may hold important clues for later in the story or a hidden story that explains something that happened in the past. So, happy reading!

Chapter One: Chouwa-ouji-san

November, 1986

“Dark, help!”

“I am a demon. And so is Aka.”

“I never wanted to hear about them! I don't want to remember them! Not ever!”

“Dark?”

“Just admit it. You were on a killing spree!”

“Aka?”

Images and sentences from an older teenager and a young girl streamed through a young boy's three-year-old head. From what he knew so far from these images, or as he called them, dreams, the girl's name was Aka and the boy's name was Dark. Both whom are demons. But, he also sees flashes of blood and corpses.

The young boy's eyes snapped open as he saw a spurt of blood as a person was decapitated.

Tears welled up in his eyes as he got up and ran out of his room yelling, "Ogasa! Baba!"

Now, it seems strange the he would call his parents from two completely different languages, (Japanese and Chinese), in this time. But his parents were used to it because he was half and half of Chinese and Japanese after all. So, they allowed him to do so.

"Dear, Little Ryu is coming." A woman said wearily.

"Again?" a man next to her replied. "How long is he going to have dreams of two demons and blood?"

"Ogasa!!! Baba!!!" Little Ryu sobbed behind their latched sliding door. When neither made a move to open the door, he started pounding on it. "Taskete! Onegaiiii!!!"

"Alright. Alright!" His father shouted loud enough for Ryu to hear. He got up while groaning and went to the door. He unlatched it and let Ryu inside.

"Yare, yare, how long are you going to do this?" His eyes followed Ryu as he got into the futon. He then got into his side of the futon.

"Ogasa..." Ryu sobbed softly as he started to calm down.

"It's okay." His mother said stroking his neck. "Just go back to sleep."

Ryu said nothing. He just yawned cutely, buried his head in her chest and fell back asleep.

His mother smiled and too went back asleep. But Ryu's father gave a furious glare toward Ryu and also went back to sleep.

In the morning, the mother and father were sitting at their small table drinking hot tea. The morning was somewhat brisk. But it didn't bother anyone in the family. Little Ryu was still asleep in the parents' futon while they were layered with a few extra clothes.

The mother, who had taken another sip from her tea, set her clay cup down and said, "Dear? Do you think we should get Ryu a pet?"

"I'm not sure." The father said, readjusting his spectacles. "I know he's intelligent for his young age, but I don't think he's ready for a pet."

"He seems to be ready to me. So why not?"

"I've already pointed that answer out. He's not ready."

"How about we get him a pet in the future?"

"Hm...perhaps. But only if it's going to be a fish or turtles."

"Fish? Turtles? Ryu can't play with those! He'll be bored to the very last bit of himself!"

"Then what do you suggest?"

"I say any quadruped."

"Quadrupeds? Alright. A cat it is then."

"You're allergic, dear. Remember?"

"Yes. Well, we'll see what pet they have when he's ten years old."

"So, it's agreed?"

The father just nodded.

For a few moments, there was silence. But it was broken by the pitter patter of Ryu running into the room.

"Ohayo! Doko asagohan?" Ryu asked looking around with his big black eyes that noted his hunger.

"I haven't started making breakfast yet. You want to help, ne?"

"Hai, hai!"

"Alright. Dear, what do you want?" she looked toward her husband.

"Just some eggs and fruit." He answered getting out a newspaper.

"Yata! Ikosou, Ogasa!" Ryu said pulling on her kimono.

"Okay. Ryu stop. You nearly took my kimono off."

"Gomen." He answered as he left the room with her.

Ryu's Father stared after him.

“Okay, you heard what your father wanted.” Ryu's mother said.

“Hai!” Ryu answered. “Tamago... anou, kudamono?”

“Yes, that's right, eggs and fruit.” She smiled and picked Ryu up.

A few minutes later, Ryu was carrying a plate with three eggs and marching to his father's place at the table while his mother carried a fresh bowl of fruit.

“Tabemono!” Ryu said, placing the plate in front of his father.

“I can see that it is food.” His father said sternly.

Ryu frowned and ran over to his mother.

“Ogasa, Baba hidoi.”

His father raised his eyebrows behind his paper in annoyance to the comment.

“No, he's not cruel. Here,” his mother gave him a grape as he got into her lap.

Ryu popped it into his mouth and chewed it. His mother smiled and wiped some of the juice off of his cheeks. Ryu smiled back but then looked at his father with a frown.

“Ogasa,”

“Yes?”

“Baba ya—”

“Ryu, just eat your breakfast.” His father said abruptly. He then lowered his paper and glared at Ryu. Ryu's eyes widened and turned away from him.

“Dear! Now, what is it?” Ryu's mother asked.

“B-bitsuni.” Ryu said into his mother's kimono.

A rustling noise caught Ryu's ears and he looked. He saw a glint in the bush outside on the other side of the hallway. But he ignored it and went back to eating.

September, 1993

“Okay, ready?”

“Yes, Father”

“Alright, go!”

Ryu's father charged at him with a wooden sword in hand.

Ryu, who is now ten years old, was sparing against his father for future terms. He was surprisingly well with swordsmanship along with his already mentioned high intelligence for such a young age; it is so high; he's currently in junior high school! He only bothered with learning Japanese and English leaving Chinese in the dust. This, either fortunate or unfortunate gave his parents only slight disappointment.

“Gottcha!” Ryu said, leaping over his father and hit him on the lower spine. When he did so, his father suddenly turned around and the flat of the sword was up against Ryu's cheek. Ryu gasped at this and went tense.

“Never let your guard down, Ryu.” He said lowering the sword; Ryu relaxed. “I still don't know how you are able to do that.”

“Do what?” Ryu questioned touching the place where the flat of the sword used to be.

“Leap over me, that's what.”

“Oh, well I don't know. It comes natural...” Ryu looked up and saw his father's angered face. It almost felt like an interrogation if Ryu had killed or made deal with someone. “...I guess.” Ryu finished.

Then there was silence. Nothing seemed to break the long silence and it was making Ryu uncomfortable.

“Ryu,” his father finally said. “Come here....”

Ryu shook his head and held his yukata closed, knowing what his father will do. He took a step back.

“I said, come here!” His father then lunged at Ryu, causing him to yell.

For a split second, Ryu thought his father was going to land on him and pin him to the ground. Ryu's mind sent him a memory of his father with another man. At that time Ryu was only three. His father had caught him looking and told him not to tell his mother. He made a silent agreement. A few nights and mornings later, Ryu had tried to tell his mother:

“Ogasa,”

“Yes?”

“Baba ya—”

“Ryu, just eat your breakfast.”

“Dear! Now, what is it?”

“B-bitsuni.”

What Ryu was going to say was, “Baba yaoi.” Meaning ‘Father is gay’ (or something like that). Horrifying isn’t it?

“I said, come here!” His father then lunged at Ryu, causing him to yell.

But Ryu was immediately picked up and thrown onto something’s back. Ryu, who had closed his eyes, opened them and saw he was being carried on what looked like an old, (yet large) fox.

“Kaji Obsidian! What were you planning to do with Ryu?!” Ryu’s mother’s voice exclaimed in a distance.

“Nothing!” his father said getting up where he had fallen. “I was just about to... um... do some wrestling, that’s all.”

“Wrestling, huh? Well, don’t do it. Ryu is much smaller than you, thus he has a disadvantage. Ryu,” she said turning to him. “Meet your new pet. I haven’t named him yet.”

“Is it because you wanted me to name him?” Ryu asked scratching behind the foxes ears. But Ryu then noticed that its ear seemed to have been pierced.

“Yes. So what are you going to name him?”

“Now hold on a sec.” Ryu’s father said. “Is this *beast* allowed to live here?”

“Yes. I signed a permit and the rest of the paperwork.”

Ryu watched his mother and father argue about his new pet.

What a pain to see them argue. Ryu thought.

Same here, Master.

Who said that?! Ryu thought while looking around wildly.

The animal you are sitting on. Ryu looked down.

You can speak!

Yes I can. But for now, only telepathically.

Do you have a name?

Yes. Chouwa.

Okay. Can I talk with other animals?

You cannot communicate with any other animal. Chouwa answered.

Why is that?

You can only talk with foxes, nothing else.

What about—?

Your parents can't talk with me or any other animal. So, it's something not to worry.

Chouwa turned his head to look at Ryu. Ryu looked at him. In his heart, Ryu felt much safer when his was close to this animal. Ryu can easily see that Chouwa was indeed old. But he couldn't guess how old. By the look of Chouwa's slightly sullen eyes and the droopy fox whiskers along the end of his nose, and a near white look to his fur, he could be ancient! But then again he looked a bit young still. That only led to one explanation: He's a fox demon. But he didn't believe it.

Later that day, he told his parents, (after they had stopped arguing), that he named the fox Chouwa-ouji-san (*Chouwa: Why `Grandpa Chouwa'? Ryu: It's because you are old.*) His father was about to start another argument but Ryu's mother stopped him from doing so.

Ryu lied in his futon, staring at the dark ceiling with a mind full of questions. The name Chouwa rang a huge bell. But when he had seen him in his nightmarish dreams, Chouwa was a humanoid. How can he be the same Chouwa that lies next to him? Ryu turned over and looked at Chouwa beside him. He was asleep. He had his ears against the back of his head that twitched occasionally. His tail gave off a glossy glow from the moonlight outside. You could almost mistake Chouwa for a dog when he's sleeping.

Does something bother you?

Ryu jolted. He looked at Chouwa but his eyes were still shut.

“You're still awake?” Ryu asked.

Please talk telepathically. I don't want you to be in any trouble.

Right. Sorry. Ryu thought. And to answer your question; yes and no.

Yes and no?

In other words something is troubling me, yet I don't know if it should. So I shove it aside.

Odd, yet somewhat of a good explanation. Well, whatever it may be, don't let it trouble you.

Chouwa got up and went closer to Ryu and nuzzled him with his nose. Ryu raised his hand and rubbed Chouwa's nose in return for the comfort. Ryu then closed his eyes and went to sleep.

The next morning, Ryu woke up to find that Chouwa wasn't next to him. But it didn't seem to bother him since he was still half asleep. Ryu got up and dressed into his day yukata. He then fixed the futon and went into the hallway. There he took a left and down the hallway. When he reached the end he took a right. He then stopped and opened the sliding door to his left. The rushing noises of a medium sized waterfall filled Ryu's ears as he stepped out and closed the door behind him.

This was the back garden. Though it may not seem to be one, it was. Of course, there was a waterfall that Ryu could jump off of when he wanted to do some diving. Several flowers and plants surrounded the hot springs that lied dormant and untouched next to the waterfall.

"Ohayo, Ryu-sama." A voice said loudly in a distance.

Ryu jumped and his yukata opened up, falling slightly on his shoulder.

"Who said that?" Ryu asked, looking for the source of the voice.

"It is just me." Ryu looked toward the waterfall and saw that someone was sitting on one of the rocks underneath with his clothes on.

"Who are you?" Ryu asked moving closer to the figure.

When he did, his eyes narrowed. The figures feet were only three-toed. His attire, although drenched, looked like what a feudal sever or servant would wear. His hair was a silver blonde color; probably of old age. Ryu could see nothing else.

"Who am I?" the figure asked, opening his eyes and grinned. "Goodness, I'm here for a night and my master doesn't remember me." He then stood up and leaped out from his spot and landed next to Ryu. "Do you recognize me now?"

Ryu gasped and fell to the ground with surprise. The man had fox ears in place of where human ears should be and he had a tail that was the same color as his hair. But, on one of the fox ears was a silver

chain earring with a matching fireball at the end of it. His hair seemed to have two layers; the top layer was only a little longer than shoulder length and the under layer only at the back of his head was much longer.

“Are you..., Chouwa?” Ryu asked pointing at him.

He nodded. “It's not polite to point. And yes, it is I in my humanoid form.”

“But why didn't you tell me?” Ryu said putting his hand down.

“I wanted it to be a secret. But now that you have found out, it is a secret no longer.” Chouwa said as a tear ran down his cheek and dripped off with the water.

“Are you crying?”

Chouwa looked at Ryu and gave a weak smile. “No, of course not.” He lied.

“Are you sure?” Ryu asked fixing his yukata.

“Yes, now.... You go on and bathe in the hot spring if that was your intension. I'll... I'll be waiting in your room.” He then walked away and was engulfed with flames.

“Hey, watch it!” Ryu shouted in worry.

Chouwa stopped walking with the flames still raging. Though Ryu could barely see it through the raging fire and hair, it was clear enough to know that there were ten claw marks along his back that was revealed by torn clothing.

Chouwa turned around and looked at Ryu. He was completely dry from the fire, but Ryu saw that tears were streaming down his face. They almost seem like rubies if not for the fire. Then, with a flare, he vanished along with the fire.

“Chouwa,” Ryu whispered, staring at the spot where he was. “...you were crying.” *Why were there marks on his back?*

~~~~~ **Interruption #1: Memory Retold** ~~~~~

Ryu's young face... it reminded me of Master Dark. So many things resemble him so: his hair, eyes, and his worried attitude. Just like Dark. How I miss him. His very last order. His order for me to stay astray and far from him. It pains me even to remember.

“Goodness! Are you okay?” I had asked when he had fallen from a tall tree. I was in my humanoid form at the time.

“Keep away!”

“But...why?”

“I said GO!!”

“As you wish, Dark-sama.”

I fled. But I didn't know where. All he told me was to go. To go and flee. I knew he meant well. But, I regret leaving his side, even for a moment. When I went searching for him the following morning, a strong scent of human blood washed over me. In fact, it was so strong, my nose actually bled.

After I tried to get my bleeding to stop, I continued looking for Master Dark. But it didn't take long. I found a village destroyed and unoccupied. It was occupied with corpses though, lots of them! I couldn't believe my two yellow eyes. Everywhere I looked there was a corpse or a puddle of blood.

“NO!!! IT CAN'T BE!!!”

I looked up; I was examining a young child's bloodied body for the cause of death. The voice sounded like Master Dark's. So, I walked to the source and I was astonished.

There, on the edge of the village, hunched over in a pool of blood, was my master. I cautiously walked over and knelt next to the puddle. As I did, I felt his aura; Madness, cowardice, depression and grief is all I felt from him. No anger or any satisfactory feeling came from him.

“Dark-sama?” I asked moving a bit closer to have a good look at him.

“Chouwa...” He said weakly “...help me....”

He looked up and I saw his black and white eyes flash back and forth between his demon and half demon self. I can tell that inside he was his half demon self though his eyes didn't show. But he was absolutely drenched in blood and his scent of the forest trees that he usually had was diminished.

My nose started feeling hot and I felt something warm trickle out. I place a finger in the liquid's path and looked.

“Blood!!!!” Dark shouted so loudly, my ears rang. “No more!! Please, no more!!! No more blood!! It can be!! I didn't do this!!”

I looked at my master as he whimpered. He had seen so much blood. I can only imagine what he's going

through. He shook all over despite himself kneeling on the ground.

Hating to be stained of blood, I went next Master Dark and embraced him. He didn't respond quickly, but he did. He slowly moved his bloody arms around my torso which the blood rubbed off of onto my clothing. His claws sunk into my back because of his weakened strength. I gave a gasp and my ears twitched as his claws drew down my back. No blood came from it, just marks. It tore the clothing, but I didn't take note of it. My master was weak and needed to be rehabilitated.

"Chouwa...", he mumbled into my chest. "I'm... sorry."

"For what?" I questioned gently.

"For... Aka." I felt his grip on my back go slack.

I knew it. His feelings had taken over. It was not the red moon that caused his rampage. It was his feelings of failure to help and or save Young Master Aka. If Aka had not died, all this tarnish would not have happened. But would it have made any difference?

I gathered up Master Dark and hauled him onto my back. But before I could disappear, a glint caught my eyes attention. I looked down and saw The Crescent Moon Blade in the puddle. Knowing that it was of importance, I picked it up and disappeared with a flash of fire.

Chouwa reappeared in Ryu's bedroom with tears falling down his face. He walked to the corner of the room and sat down. He reached down at the floor in front of him and picked up a loose floor board which came out with a cloud of dust. He set the board parallel to the hole and reached into it and took out a clump of dirt. He then repeated.

After a minute, a buried bamboo basket was revealed.

"Just as I left it two-hundred years ago." Chouwa whispered as he pulled the basket out. He then opened it. Inside were two sets of clothing: a black haori and a red kimono. On top of the haori were the shattered pieces of a silver dragon earring. But a little indent was in the kimono.

Chouwa used his clean hand and took the earring off. He then placed it quickly in it place. Just as he dropped it, smoke surrounded him and he transformed back into his fox form.

Chouwa dipped his head into the basket and nudged the earrings. He then reached over for the cover and took hold of it in his mouth. He covered the basket and slowly pushed it into the hole. Chouwa then reburied the basket and covered the hole with the floor board.

*Forever in my memory, my dear masters.* Chouwa thought bowing his head. But his legs began to shake violently. His eyes narrowed as he winced in pain. He then fell side- ways unconscious for unknown reasons.





## ====Chapter Two: A Whole New Life====

Those marks.... What could have caused them? Was Chouwa in a fight before? Or did he inflict them onto himself? I know he's old, but how old? He is a demon fox so he could have been living for centuries! If he's that old, he shouldn't be crying or anything like that. Should he? Even though I'm nearly a ten year old genius, I don't have the answers to everything.

I was tall and smart for my age. Someone might mistake me as a fourteen year old. But sometimes, I think it's a bad thing. Why you may ask? Well, I have my own short story.

It was only two years ago when I was eight years old. By this time, I had forgotten that my father was gay. I was running around the house doing my monthly chores. But, I was a bit careless and sometimes left the waxing cloth lying somewhere.

By the time I was done, it had gotten dark and I had to go to the storage room to put the gardening tools away. But on the way, I heard something.

I paused next to a slightly opened door. I heard my father and another person talking. I stood transfixed next to the slight opening. I did not dare to look inside.

"Are you ready?" My father said to the other person.

"Yes." The other person said. My eyes widened; it was a man's voice.

I then heard a strange sound and the man gave out a gasp. And at that moment, I remembered everything. My father was a yaoi person! I remembered that he told me, at three years old, to not tell Mother.

Before I had realized it, I had dropped the gardening tools.

"What was that?" I heard the man ask.

"I bet I know who." I heard Father say. "RYU!"

I panicked. I quickly decided not to pick the tools up and ran from my spot. My father was right behind me.

I ran around the huge maze-like house, looking for Mother. She was my only protection I had against Father. But that's when something hit me like a bolt of lightning; Mother wasn't home. She went off to spend some time with some friends for two days and two nights. She isn't home!

I was back at the hallway where I heard my father and his friend. I was about to run out of breath until Father's friend appeared at the doorway with a robe on. I skidded to a halt but I had left a waxing cloth on the floor and slipped on it and slid right into the man's arms.

“Let me go!!!” I shouted at the man. “I said: let go!!!”

“Good, you caught him.” I heard my father say.

“What are you going to do?” the man asked giving me a wicked smile.

“How about we give some... *education*?”

I went tense. What did he mean by *education*? Why did he say that word in a lustful tone? Unless he....

“Iye, iye, iye, iye!!!” I yelled at the top of my lungs.

“He knows exactly what we're going to do.” The man said.

“Take him inside.” Father said opening the door.

With all the breath I had left within me I shouted out one last Japanese word. “OGASA!!”

If I told you any details of that and the next night, this wouldn't be a PG-13 story now would it? But I can tell you this; my father and his friend did things to me that I was not to experience until I was over seventeen years old, ten years from that time. After those nights, I remained silent for eleven months, traumatized.

After Ryu had taken his bath, he got dressed in his yukata and went to the kitchen. He went to the cupboards and opened them.

“Oh no,” He said looking up at the top shelves. “Father must have moved them up there.” He stared at about ten boxes of chocolate covered pocky at the top shelf where he could not reach.

“Ogasa, can you get a box of pocky for me; I can't reach.” Ryu said trying to reach for the pocky. “Ogasa?” He walked toward the left side of the kitchen and peered inside the next room. He then looked at the clock behind him. It read 8: 55 A.M.

“Ogasa and Odosan should be up by now.” Ryu said to himself. “Oh well,” He looked at the pocky boxes and gave a sigh. There were no chairs around because his family always had the Japanese kind of life. Not to mention that they were living in a Chinese type of house up in the mountains where no one but themselves lived.

An hour later Ryu's parents were awake. But, his mother seemed worried. All three of them ate breakfast in silence. Ryu kept looking back and forth between bites at his father's strange smile behind the paper and his mother's sad face.

*What was going on? Did they have a fight and one that Father won?* Ryu thought.

“Ryu,” his mother finally said. “I have bad news.”

Ryu stayed silent. He had nothing to say at the moment.

“I'm moving out, Ryu dear.”

“WHAT?!!” Ryu yelled. “You can't! Don't leave me here with Odosan!” Ryu got up but his father yanked him back onto his cushion.

“Now, now.” He said. He looked up and Ryu saw his reflection on his glasses. “I know you are upset. But I will make you *feel* better later.”

He did it! He said “feel” in a lustful tone! He was also still holding onto my arm that was now slightly quivering. It was now or never!

“Ogasa, Odosan is ya—!”

“Don't interrupt, Ryu!”

“NO! You cannot control me any more!” I yanked my arm out of his grasp, looked toward Mother and said, “Ogasa, Odosan is yaoi!!”

The sentence hung in the air. Absolutely nothing made a single noise. I even thought that the waterfall had frozen. Nothing moved. Nothing.

“Is.... Is this true, Kaji? Well?” Mother said calmly.

Father said nothing for a moment. I looked at his face. The look he had on; he was planning something.

After a few seconds, he said, “That is just preposterous. The boy must be lying.”

Mother then looked at me.

“I'm not lying, Ogasa! He is! He is gay! Actually, he's bisexual!”

Mother then looked back at Father.

“Once again, he must be lying.”

“Ogasa...” I went next to her ear and whispered what had happened to me two year prior. “Why would I lie about this?” I said after I had finished. Just for the record, I never lied in my life.

She looked at Father and gave a sigh.

"I'm sorry. No matter what he is, you have to live with him." She turned her head sideways enough for Father to only see the right side of her face. With her left side, she gave me a wink, which meant to play along. I made no gesture of agreement, but I did agree.

"No, you can't!" I continued.

She pulled me into a hug and whispered into my right ear, "I'll have help come. The Crescent Family will come after I leave."

### **Late June, 2002, 7:40 A.M.**

Ryu sat in his hot spring staring at a pendent that hung around his neck by a leather string. The pendent was two small crescent moons back to back encased in a black frame which the leather string attached to. The pendent represented the Crescent Family.

"Mother..." Ryu mumbled. He looked at his right arm and looked at some bite marks. He then sighed and got out. He then grabbed a towel, dried himself off and then put his uniform on.

Ryu was eighteen years old. His black hair now gave off a silver gleam when in the sunlight. His right eye was blank and did not move while his left was fine and its usual obsidian color. When he was twelve he lost his sight in his right eye after he got beat up. The injuries were bad thus leading his eye to a white eye. After the incident, he decided to live a normal life and start living like any other boy would. He went through sixth grade and so on as he grew, making straight A's and winning awards and scholarships. It was nice and all, but he didn't care much for it. Ever since he lost his eye, he styled his bangs to cover it like a veil.

He was the quiet type of person that would bottle up any emotions. Even though his father was dead, he still remained pretty much silent about him. His mother's whereabouts however, was unknown. He hasn't seen her ever since she left nearly ten years ago. And his nineteenth birthday was coming at the start of December. The only thing that would make him the happiest would be to see her again. The current season was summer, the season Ryu despised. He always seemed to weaken during this time.

Ryu now lived with the Crescent Family in his household. The only people in it currently were Arcanum Kendo Crescent (or Arc), Tenshi Crescent (the mother), and the grandmother Miko Crescent. He didn't mind about being surrounded by women because he never went near a man because of what his father did.

Arc was only a month older than Ryu. She had long black hair that went down to her lower back. She wore round glasses in front of amber eyes. Her usual attire was various Chinese styled clothes: to robes, to shirts, to pants, to blouses.

“Ryu!! Come on!!” Arc shouted from down the mountain hill. “If you don't hurry, we'll be late!!”

“I'm coming!” Ryu shouted back. He finished a latch on his roller blades and grabbed his school bag and his shoes. “Bye Tenshi!” Ryu shouted behind him as he opened the sliding door.

“Good luck with the Exam!!” She answered back.

“Of course!! You know my motto: Do your best now, don't leave it until it's too late!! Sayonara!!” Ryu closed the sliding door behind him. He then chuckled a bit and shouted, “I'll meet you there Arcanum!!”

“THAT'S ARC YOU BAKA!! KISAMA!!”

Ryu laughed as he heard Arc's furious Japanese profanity die away quickly (she was also on roller blades).

“Even though she's older, I have the power.”

Ryu leaped onto the steep and he went down. He rather enjoyed using fast transportation when going down Xiaohe Mountain. The mountain wasn't that tall to Ryu. The mountain was about one third of the Himalayas and his house is located near the base where you all had to do you to hike up and roll down. Though, you had to have the knowledge in order to get through because a thick mountain forest lies in between Ryu's house and his university.

Ryu sped down the pathway, jumping over the brush and dodging the few trees he passes. But on the way Ryu saw a flash of someone's body that lied on the ground. But he ignored it.

But as he sped down, he remembered something. His mother had a scar on her right shoulder. He had once seen it before when he was younger. But Ryu didn't know why he just suddenly remembered. He shook the thought off and caught up with Arc.



### Chapter Three: Time Has Come

(Author's Note: Short, sorry!)

#### **Demon Heaven, 2002, 2: 55 P.M.**

"Dark Obsidian, report to the Kagami No Ume Office. Dark Obsidian, report to the Kagami No Ume Office." A voice echoed through Demon Heaven.

Dark looked up and behind him. He was inside his hut with his mother and Aka.

"What was that?" Dark asked giving a sniff. He was a bit sick, so it made his hearing less sensitive and gave him a bit of running nose.

"What? Do you have to go onii-san?" Aka asked climbing onto his shoulder.

"I don't know. My hearing is out. Mother?" Dark looked his mother.

"I don't know either Darconious." She responded looking out the small window.

But a sudden puff of smoke appeared and a small snow fairy wearing a frilly white dress and a white tiara came from it coughing.

"Telegram to Dark Obsidian!" she said in her squeaky voice.

"Right here." Dark whispered. He had to be quiet because of the little fairy's small ears.

"Dark," she read. "You are to report to the Kagami No Ume Office presently. Ensure to take any belongings with you, for the time has finally arrived to cross over.' That's it! I, Yukina, will guide you to the office when you are ready! I will be waiting outside." Yukina then flew out the window and left Dark to pack.

“You're going somewhere Darconious?” Dark's mother asked.

“Yes.” He answered. “I have to cross to the living world. And into my body.”

“But Dark, your body, including ours will be bones by now!” Aka said leaping off his shoulder. “How can you use it?”

“The Kagami No Ume Office has set a body for me to use. And it should look like my original body. But just the features. Nothing else.” Dark said grabbing a sword. It was just a regular Japanese blade. But near the hilt were two engraved letters: K. C.

“That one was from Kendo, right?” Dark's mother asked.

“Yeah, but I liked the Crescent Moon Blade much more. He's still trying to find it in the living world. I can't believe that he's still alive.”

“Where is he now?”

“He said some huge area called, China. He followed the scent into there. And in there is where it stopped.”

“Well, good luck then.”

Dark waved at the two and left with Yukina.

**\*===== Interruption #2: Trial of my Split Soul \*=====\***

(After Dark's death)

After my son struck me with the sword, my soul floated out of its body and went to heaven. But what I didn't know was that I was going to go on trial there. It didn't bother me though. I didn't care if I went to heaven or hell. All I wanted was to be away from my true demon self which he recently named himself, Darconious: my true name and to be with my darling sister, Aka.

“Darconious Kitsune Obsidian, stands at a final decision trial to judge him from his most current behavior and his horrendous behavior thrown at innocent villagers.” Said the one of the jury demons at the jury table. Demon trial is very different in the after life, unlike human trials they call, `court' in the living world.



Shackles and gauntlets hung about my inter-locked wrist and at the bottom of my ankles. Both had spells on them so that I wouldn't break free. I wore my usual clothing and was cleaned up from my bloodshed.

"Darconious Obsidian is present at demon trial and is willing to be placed upon Kitsune Youkai Okami-sama's decision." I said loud enough for the whole trial demons to hear.

A huge ogre demon came up to me holding a small basin.

"Do you, Darconious, promise to only tell true words and only true words?" the demon asked me with his deep voice. "As answer, bite your forearm and give at least a pint of your blood. If you choose not to, you will be exorcised and you will no longer exist in the living or dead."

Behind me, a female imp demon rolled up my sleeves on my right arm that was closest to the basin. I put my arm over the basin and bit my forearm as agreement to tell only true words. After I had given a pint, my arm was immediately wrapped and I was handed a cloth to clean my mouth. I did it quickly since I had a phobia for blood.

"Now that we have your blood vow, we release your gauntlets and shackles." Okami-sama said snapping his fingers so that the gauntlets and shackles slithered away. I rubbed my wrists; those things bound me tight!

"Now, I would like to hear how you managed to slaughter a whole village in one night. And by yourself as well."

I looked toward the floor and stayed silent. I slowly sank to the floor with my whole body quivering. Okami-sama took notice of this.

"Is it cold in here?" he asked me. I shook my head. "Then is something the matter?"

"May I ask why?" I quivered and looked at him with sullen black eyes.

"Why what?" Okami-sama asked quizzically.

"Why I had to have *him*. My *other* self."

"You mean your true demon form?"

"Yes, my true demon form: Darconious." I staggered upright.

"Your name is Darconious. But you always seem to prefer the name `Dark' Why is that? Someone get him a chair."

A female fox demon came running to me with a chair at hand. When I sat down in it she then handed me a cup of water.

“Arigato gozaimasu.” I said taking the water and drank it.

“Dou itashimashoote.” She replied back. “You'll be fine.” She took the cup back and disappeared.

“I prefer the name Dark just because it's shorter and it suits me better anyway.” I replied to Okami-sama's question. “Darconious sounds like an evil person's name.”

“I see. Do you remember anything from when you slaughtered the whole village?”

“I don't. Darconious took control and my feeling of failure only strengthened him ten fold. Why did you have to create him within me?”

“Now Dark, I understand that you don't like your demon self, but you have to live through it. Without him you're just a mere human. You won't be a half demon. Besides that, everyone needs a good and bad side with them selves; like a half demon needs a demon side. And I know how much you hate being weak and defenseless.”

“I don't care about being weak anymore! I don't care about being a human! I just want him diminished and my brotherly love for Aka restored. That is all I want from you. That is all.” My black tears formed in the corners of my eyes and slowly dropped out.

“So you want to be with your sister, and you want Darconious to be out? Do you still want to remain looking like a half demon?”

I just nodded.

“All those are manageable except...”

“What? Except what?” I asked as more tears fell. I desperately wanted to be with Aka again. What problems could be interfering?

“You hated your parents, didn't you?”

I nodded.

“Well, your sister is living with your mother. Unless you don't mind we could—.”

“No, that's fine. As long as Father isn't there. I'm fine.”

“Alright then. Your other half will be taken out and sent to Hell. As for you, you can go to Heaven, remain looking like yourself and see your sister again. Demon trial augur—.”

“Let me ask one more favor.” I interrupted. “My hair, I want it released. I don't want it in a braid. I want it to be free.”

“Are you sure? Once the red dragon whisker is removed, you cannot grow your hair any longer or tie it up anymore.”

“Yes I'm sure. Besides, I cannot take it off anyway. Only you can take it off.”

“Alright. Demon trial augured.”

*We'll meet again, Dark.* I heard Darconious say in my head.

*We'll meet alright. But not until many generations have past.* I thought back at him. I smirked at myself as I slowly felt him slip out of my soul and thrown into Hell with devil horns attached to his head while I was levitated into Heaven with a gold halo hovered over mine that was now free of my braided hair.

## Chapter Four: The Fury of Heat

Ryu and Arc wrote away at their exams and the time was now 3:15 P.M. The University he and Arc goes to is called, Chang Hyang University or C.H.U. for short. When someone goes to this university, they have to be highly prepared just as Arc and Ryu are. They had to be ready for tests, lessons, and anything else that can happen.

**5:00 P.M.**

“Alright, put your pencils down. The exam is over.” The professor said stopping a stopwatch.

Ryu and Arc put their pencils down and leaned back in their chairs.

“This exam was a piece of cake.” Ryu said smiling at himself.

“Says you. My head hurts.” Arc said holding her forehead with her hand.

“Please pick up your items and have a nice vacation.”

Ryu and Arc did so. When they were back at the hill at the base of Xiaohe Mountain with the roller blades hanging on their shoulders, Ryu stopped.

“Something wrong?” Arc asked looking at him.

“A body....” He said. “I remember seeing a body coming down the hill.”

“A body? I didn't see a body. Come on, Mom's making rice cakes today.”

“Go on ahead. I'll catch up later.”

“No! What if you faint in the heat, like last year?!”

“I'll be fine. Just go.”

“Fine. But be careful. You're like a brother to me.” Arc then walked up the hill leaving Ryu behind.

Ryu looked at her as she walked.

*Her uniform looks cute on her.* Ryu thought. He was looking mostly at the dress.

“Eh?!” Ryu felt his cheek heat up as he flushed. He shook his head. “Oh god. I can't believe I was looking at her @\$\$! Geez, I hate being a pervert on occasions. Dah! *Baka!*” he whispered to himself and hit his head. “Why did I have to be a guy?! Why couldn't I been a girl?!” But he then felt warm liquid come out of his nose. He felt his nose and looked.

*Oh great! My nose is bleeding badly!*

“Damnit!” Ryu shouted.

Arc stopped walking.

“Is something the matter...Ryu?” Arc had turned around, but all she saw a raising dust. “I thought... oh well.” She turned back around and kept walking. Ryu on the other hand had hidden himself in a tree. He was covering his nose with a paper towel he had in his back pocket in case something like this would happen. Once Arc was gone, Ryu leaped from the branch into the forest.

He walked in the forest, trying to remember where the body was. As he was looking his nose had stopped bleeding. Using another paper towel, Ryu cleaned his nose and fingers off. According to Ryu's watch, he had been looking for an hour.

Heat crawled up Ryu's neck, irritating him. He loosened his tie and unbuttoned the first three buttons on his shirt. After fifteen minutes, Ryu had taken his jacket off, had rolled his sleeves up, and his tie hung very loose on his shirt.

“Damnit. Not again.” He said, wiping the sweat off of his forehead. “Where am I?” Ryu looked around with his fogging eyes. He was now completely away from the main trail that led to his house. To shorten that, he was lost. “That's just...my... luck....” Ryu then fell forward behind a bush, unconscious because of the heat.

\*=====\*

I looked at my new body. My fingers weren't clawed and my hair was shoulder length, as it was when I changed into a human. I wore strange clothing that I did not recognize. It was much different than my haori and hakama. Even though my ears and nose were human-like, I still had a strong sense of smell and hearing as I was in my half demon form.

But before I can confirm anything else, my nose picked up a sort of spicy scent. It was the same scent I had when I was in a Heat Session, the very first stage. But when it was hot like this, it was even worse. But I then heard a thud somewhere close by. So I looked.

I looked behind a bush and saw someone lying there face down. The scent was coming from him! But now I smelled a bit of blood. I looked over his body without touching him. But I saw that he was holding something white in his hand. So I took it and looked. It had blood on it, but it was dry. Despite my phobia, I sniffed it. I gasped, it was *my* family blood. I heard a moan. I looked down and saw that the person flipped over. I saw my very reflection on the person's face.

I gathered his things, picked him up, and hauled him up the hill on my back; there had to be a sheltered place somewhere up here.

As I hiked, I heard him starting to pant, so I quickened my pace. Only a minute or so later, I found a nice looking tavern. I saw steam coming from the side of it. I went to the door and knocked.

"Hello? Is anyone there?!" I asked. There was no reply or movement from what I can hear. So I let myself in. I took mine and the young man's shoes off and went down the hallway and ended up in a garden. In front of me, I saw many different types of flowers and fruits. But I ignored it for now. I went forward and found a room with two hot springs and a waterfall.

"Ogasa..." I heard the young man mutter between his panting. He then started shivering. What was wrong with him? He shouldn't feel cold during heat. But, he then began moving around and I couldn't hold him. So I set him down on the ground. But as soon as I did, he got up and went into one of the hot springs. I went next to it and looked.

But, I then heard the two doors that went to the hot spring shut and then latch. I looked and saw that the doors were glowing red. I went over to both of them and tried to open them. But neither would budge.

I looked behind me as I heard a splash. I saw a clawed hand come up and out of the hot spring that young man was in and grabbed onto the boulder in the middle of the spring. Then another clawed hand came up and did the same. But the water started turning a light pink color and then the young man's clothes floated on the surface in shreds. I then looked at the right arm that came up and saw that it was bleeding with a fresh bite.

But, then the young man's head came up and my eyes widened. In the back of his head, there was a short braid of black hair. His ears were pointed, there were two jagged, black, short marks on his cheeks that were flashing and he had short fangs. The marks went behind his ears and down his neck and end at his upper back between the shoulder blades. He panted and gasped with his eyes closed. It

looked like he was in pain.

He then opened his eyes and shouted, "OGASA!!"

"Mother, did you hear that?!" Arc asked looking back in the direction of the house.

"I did. That was Ryu!" Tenshi said.

Arc and Tenshi sprinted toward the house. They were in the forest where they had thought Ryu was.

After they made it, they quickly took their shoes off and headed toward the hot spring room.

"Ryu?!" Tenshi shouted. She ran to the door but was suddenly forced back. "Ryu! Calm down!"

"Is someone there?" Dark's voice said.

"Yes! Arc will go through the crawl space and try to calm Ryu. Just stay there!"

Arc didn't argue with Tenshi. In the garden that was next to the hot springs, there was a crawl space that was concealed behind a bush. She went through it and appeared behind another bush in the hot spring room. She saw a man next to one of the doors and saw Ryu hunched in the spring against the rock in the middle.

Dark went to her and blocked her view of Ryu.

"Don't go near him." Dark said.

"I need to look at him." She made a move to move sideways but Dark stopped her.

"Don't look at him. I'll take care of things."

"How should I believe you? I don't even know you." Arc retorted. She made another move but Dark still blocked her.

"I will reveal myself in two weeks time. But for now, I need to help the young man."

"His name is Ryu Obsidian! Call him Ryu! If I find one injury on him, I'll hurt you."

Arc then went back through the crawl space, leaving Dark alone with Ryu.





## Chapter Five: Blood Transfer & Payback?

### Two weeks later...

"Ryu seems to be calmer now." Tenshi said looking at Ryu.

Ryu was sleeping contently on Dark's lap. Dark didn't seem to mind though; every once in a while, Dark would stroke Ryu's head. Underneath the towel that covered Ryu's head, his features were normal: he didn't have claws, fangs, the marks and the extra hair that was continuously being bound into a short braid; Dark had tried to undo the braid, but it would always go back to being a braid, just like his hair would.

Dark was dressed in his haori and hakama he wore before he died.

"So, how did you calm him down?" Arc asked looking skeptically at Dark. "He would lock himself in there for two weeks and scream 'mother' in Japanese continuously."

"But why does he scream 'mother' in Japanese?" Dark asked looking from Arc to Tenshi. They looked at each other and then lowered their heads.

Tenshi raised her head first. On her face was a pitying look.

"When he was eight years old his father aroused and raped him every time he got in trouble. Whether it was breaking something, suspicion of lying or to forgetting to say 'thanks', his father would rape him."

Dark had a shocked look on his face.

"Yeah, I know. Ryu told us the whole story." Arc said adjusting her glasses. "His mother was his only protection from the rapes. But, his father was clever about his mother's plans. So every time she went out for more than a day, it was his opportunity."

I listened to Arc and Tenshi talk about me to Dark. Dark had introduced himself while he helped me in, what he called it, my period of Heat called a heat session. He explained what it was. But, how did he know all that?

I shuddered violently at the thought of how he knew. But then I felt a hand rubbing against my back. I clutched Dark's clothing and I felt my face light up a bit; I was still in heat, but it ebbing away because I'm at the very last hour of it.

"It seems like that you're his replacement father or something." I heard Arc say.

"Does it? I can't be his father. I am not a mortal after all."

What did he say? My mind is still oblivious to what was happening around me.

"What do you mean, `not a mortal'? You look human."

"He is not human." I heard a different voice say. "Ye are a demon, are ye not?"

"Oh, Grandma!" Arc said.

"Miko, Long time no see." I heard Dark say. How did he know about Miko?

"Too long perhaps, Young Dark. Too long."

"Don't call me young, Miko. I'm in no position to be called that." Dark said lifting the towel so that he can see Ryu's face.

"Is he still glazed in the eyes?" Miko asked sitting down with the rest of the group.

"Not really, but only a bit. Ryu," Dark held up two fingers. "How many fingers am I holding up?"

Ryu didn't respond.

"I don't think his conscious has come back yet." Miko said covering Ryu's eyes so that he could sleep more. "I can tell that he still is tired. His heat would've gotten much worse if Dark didn't find him."

"Heat?" Arc said.

"It just something that older teenage demons go through." Miko answered now rubbing Ryu's back.

"What about me? Do I have heat?"

"Only one way to find out. Have you had multiple guys asking you on a date and maybe an invite to their house or apartment for the past two years?"

Arc thought for a moment. She then said, "Yeah, so? What's your point?"

"Of course, you remember Yume, your cat." Miko said looking at Arc.

"Yeah. She died last month."

"Remember that we always had outside male cats coming in and looking for her."

“Yes, we fixed that problem by getting her fixed. The point please?”

“Well, animals have heat sessions, male and female. The Males go looking while the Females attract. Get it?”

Arc sat in silence. Her face was slightly contorted.

“Does that mean I have to get fixed?!” Arc exclaimed backing off.

“No, no. With male and female humanoid demons, there's nothing we can do.”

“Okay, but what does that have to do with-?”

“It has everything to do with it.” Tenshi said wrapping her arms around Arc's shoulders. “This is the very generation that the demon blood returns to both of you. Whether you are half or full, it will return this generation.”

“How did you know?” Arc looked at her mother.

“Your grandmother.” She answered. “In order for prophesy to come true-.”

“There had to be one who made them.” Arc finished. “That was what grandmother's saying meant?! She can make prophesies?!”

“Bingo, my young grand-fox kit.” Miko said. “That is why Dark is here and Master Kendo will be joining us in a bit.

“But now that you have figured it out, a ritual is called. The ritual of awakening.” Miko clapped her hands and black flames surround the five of them and a sixth person appeared in a kneeling position. The person's head was down and his body was covered with a cloak.

“Welcome Master Kendo.” Miko said lowering her head showing respect.

“The time had finally come.” Kendo said lowering his hood. He has changed.

His dark hair was now equal the size of Arc's hair length. His ears were twice as long and forked at the tips. He still had his earrings. His amber eyes gleamed a black color because of the raging flames surrounding them. He unhooked his cloak and it disappeared into the flames, revealing royal clothing upon him. His glossy and groomed tail stuck out his backside.

“I grasp the hidden blood within these two,” he chanted. Arc's eyelids went heavy and she fell unconscious (Ryu is already unconscious). “I reveal their pasts that have been forgotten,” Ryu body started to glow red while Arc's started to glow blue. “Release the demonic blood that has been sealed away and obtain the blood from their ancestors.” Dark bit into his arm; so did Kendo.

Both men sucked their blood until the wounds clotted. With their own blood in their mouths, Kendo went to Arc and Dark went to Ryu. They opened their mouths and transferred the blood into them through

their mouths, Dark filling Ryu with half demon blood and Kendo filling full demon blood into Arc. After doing so, they cleaned their mouths.

“Let the blood flow through their veins and strengthen them; for they have now reunited their heritage and soon set their fates.” Kendo and Dark laid Ryu and Arc next to each other and their auras swirled together into a purple one. Then it diminished and so did the flames surrounding them.

“Wow; that was short.” Tenshi said looking at Ryu and Arc.

“How long did that take?” Miko asked.

“Let's see, one, two, three paragraphs.” Kendo said. “Siding that, it's good to see you again in your human form Dark.”

“Same here except you are in your demon self.”

The two smiled at each other and then looked at their descendants.

### **The next morning...**

The morning was quiet. Nothing disturbed the silence except for the waterfall. Ryu laid on top of Dark on his back while Arc lay next to Kendo in his embracement.

Dark was dressed in his old yet favorite haori and hakama. He was glad they still fit them. Though he had not worn them for a few centuries.

It was sad though that Chouwa had died suddenly because he was keeping his and Aka's clothes. But Dark was glad he kept them and listened to his request.

### **Flashback...**

“Goodbye... Father.” He trusted the blade downward and closed his eyes at the last second to avoid seeing the blood squirt. Though he couldn't avoid hearing it. He then took the sword out, placed it in the mount and fell to his knees sobbing.

Footsteps approached and Shiro turned around. Standing in a short distance was Chouwa in his human form. His face was expressionless, but he was sad for his young master, Shiro. Chouwa opened his arms and Shiro ran into them.

“Was it his wish?” Chouwa asked gently.

“Yes...” Shiro nodded into Chouwa's clothing.

“Then I won't question any further, Shiro-sama.”

Chouwa let go of Shiro and went to Dark's body to bury it next to Aka's. He took out a cloth and wiped up all of the blood from Dark's body. Chouwa looked behind his back and saw that Shiro had run off.

“Chou...wa.” Dark mumbled.

“My lord!” Chouwa said in surprise.

“Shush, don't let Shiro hear.”

“He's gone my lord.” Chouwa informed.

“I ask one last request.” Dark used his remaining strength to place his hand on Chouwa's shoulder. “You do still have my old clothing, right?”

Chouwa nodded.

“Keep them for as long as you live. Keep Aka's attire too.”

“But, my lord, I do not know how long I will live.”

“Tis alright. I have arranged that you will live for at least thirteen Obsidian family generations, including this generation after me.”

“How is that my lord? That is if you are willing to share the information.”

“That marks... on...you're...back.” Dark's grip on Chouwa's shoulder slackened and his eyes closed. His soul then slipped out of his mouth and floated to the starry ocean above them.

### **End flashback**

Dark looked behind him and looked at Ryu who was sleeping on his back. How did he even get there? Dark also could've sworn to have been sleeping on his back. Dark then looked over at Kendo and smiled. To him, it looked like Kendo was holding his own child. Arc slept peacefully against his chest while Ryu practically lay curled on his back.

Dark sighed and let his head down. He then closed his eyes and went back to sleep.

Dark woke again to the sounds of snarling and growling. He looked up and saw that Arc and Ryu were fighting. He got up quickly and separated the two before they started slashing at each other. But when he did, he noticed that Ryu and Arc looked different.

Ryu's ears were pointed, the marks on his cheeks were visible and he had claws and fangs. Arc was the same except she didn't have the marks. Both of them were in their Half-demon forms.

"Let go!" Arc snarled. "Let me kill him!!"

"Why would you want to do something like that?" Dark asked.

"It's instinct, so don't worry about them, Dark" Kendo said.

"Instinct? What's—?"

"Hey, I wouldn't stay in the middle!"

"Huh?"

It was too late. Ryu and Arc has started battling as soon as Dark let go of them. And now he's caught in the middle. After a few slashes and cuts, Dark broke the fight up again and placed them in a room, attached to the opposite walls.

"There, that should keep them simmering." Dark said closing the sliding door behind him. "They sure are aggressive now."

"Well, they *do* have their demon blood now. So it's expected." Kendo got up and stood next to Dark. "You want to do anything?"

"Like what? This era isn't the same as ours." Dark stated while looking back at Kendo. "Everything is different."

"/s everything different, Dark?" Kendo embraced Dark from behind.

Dark gave a small jolt at the sudden action. "Wait a second," Dark took a deep sniff. "You're..."

"That's right.... I'm in heat." Kendo whispered.

*Oh that's just great.* Dark thought. "Damn it."

"What is it? You like this kind thing with my son, Kitsune?"

Dark flushed a deep red.

"N-n-no. It's not like that."

"Then what is it like?"

Kendo went in front of Dark with his eyes burning with desire. "Well? How is it?" Dark backed away at Kendo's desire-seeking eyes. But Kendo kept moving forward. After a few paces, Dark was backed up against one of the walls.

“Let's have one together this time.” Kendo said holding Dark's chin. “Call this payback for what you did to me centuries ago.” (Author's Note: refer back to Scroll Six in Midnight Moon) “And, let's do my method instead.” Kendo embraced Dark again and transported him and himself to a dimly lit room filled with strange looking plants. He then let go and let Dark wander.

“What in seven hells are these plants?” He put his face near one of them and sniffed it. “It even smells strange.”

The plant's leaves' edges were jagged and the veins on them were a yellow color. The whole plant was a purple color except for the veins.

But Dark started to feel strange. His whole body felt like it was going numb and heat crawled up his neck. His mouth felt dry and it felt hot all around him.

“Do you like my plants?” Kendo asked. “I bread them myself, even though I'm not much of a gardener.”

“Why... do I feel... like I'm in... heat?” Dark panted, while taking his haori off.

“It's the effect of the plants in this room. I am immune to the smell, but you are vulnerable. As long as the plants are in this room, the effect will take its place.”

Kendo went over to Dark and gave him a deep kiss. Dark returned it unwillingly.

Chapter Six: The Armlets

**Two Hours later...**

“Dark? Ryu? Arcanum? Kendo?” Tenshi shouted through the house. “Where is everyone?”

“Mulf!!” a muffled voice said.

Tenshi looked to her left and opened the sliding door to see that Ryu and Arc were in their human forms and were tied and bound to opposite walls. Tenshi went over to Arc untied her and removed the cloth in her mouth. She then went to Ryu and did the same.

“How in the world did you two end up like this?” she asked Ryu as she untied the ropes.

Ryu didn't respond. All he did (as soon as he was untied), was made her embrace him.

“Ryu? Is something wrong?”

Ryu was shaking all over. His slender hands grasped the back of Tenshi's clothing. His head was buried

into her shoulder which started to feel wet.

"Mother," Arc said moving next to Tenshi. "Ryu's crying."

"But why?"

"It was the box he was sitting next to. Look," Arc pointed at a brown box next to Ryu's sitting spot. On the top it read, "Do not open until Hell freezes over." In Ryu's ten-year-old handwriting.

"Isn't that amusing?" Arc said sarcastically.

Tenshi moved Ryu to Arc so that she can move.

"But what's in the box?" she asked. Ryu still didn't answer.

Tenshi moved the box in front of her and removed the tape on top. As if an instinct, Ryu shouted, "Don't open it!!"

His black tears rolled down his face as he yelled. "Please don't open it! Please! I don't.... Don't look, please don't look inside." Ryu hunched over while grasping his hair at the same time.

But she opened it anyway. She gasped. Inside were things not described. But there were also pictures inside facing down. She picked them up and looked at them.

"Oh my god...." Tenshi said covering her mouth with one hand.

"What is it?" Arc asked. She was next to Ryu rubbing his back.

"These pictures.... They're Ryu and his father doing.... Oh my god!"

"I told you not to look!" Ryu sobbed. He shoved Arc away and curled up into a ball with his hands holding his head. "I feel so embarrassed and ashamed!"

Both Arc and Tenshi looked at Ryu with pitying looks on their faces. Could Ryu's nightmares strengthen any worse? He's been through too much already. Why does he have to suffer more?

"Well, Kendo is out until six p.m. so there's only Dark that's left. Maybe he'll comfort you." Tenshi suggested.

"Speaking of which, where is Dark-sama?" Arc asked looking around.

"He's around somewhere. Ryu come on." Tenshi grasped Ryu's arm and pulled. But he didn't move. "Ryu?" She moved his hair out of his eyes and saw that they were closed. "He's... asleep."

"He's been crying himself to sleep lately." Arc stated to Tenshi. "If this keeps up, when we go back to C.H.U., he won't be able to concentrate."



Without another thought, Tenshi hauled Ryu (With some help from Arc) onto her back and dragged him out of the room. She then dragged Ryu down a hallway where only a single scroll the size of a door hung. On the scroll it read:

“Through a single maze, lie many secrets.”

When they past the scroll, Arc stopped.

“What's wrong?” Tenshi asked looked behind her at Arc.

“Listen,”

Both Arc and Tenshi strained their ears. They heard soft and muffled moaning coming from behind the scroll. Arc moved toward the scroll and took it off the wall. Behind the scroll was a hidden sliding door. Tenshi laid Ryu on the floor and went next to Arc.

“Hel— AH!” A voice yelled.

The sound of something squirting came after the yell.

“You're mine, you hear?” another voice said. “As long as you have the marks, you are mine.” Both voices sounded like men.

“Leave me alone.” The first voice moaned. Then the sound of something like clothing moving across the floor after the voice.

“You should look at yourself. You are dribbled with your own blood. With or with out it, you are still beautiful. Even your scars look beautiful.”

The first voice let a whimper escape his mouth by accident. “It's still hard to believe that you are still alive, Oukami. You are still strange as ever. I still don't know what your intention was when you burned the plants.”

“Well, look at you. You're also still alive, Dark. And even if you are dead or alive, you still carry these scars I gave you. So you're just as strange.”

Something flashed past Arc and Tenshi and broke down the door in front of them. The same something pounced onto the man named Oukami.

“Ryu!” Dark shouted. His shoulder was leaking fresh blood from a fresh bite and he was completely bare except for his haori covering his stomach down. Dark's face was slightly pink and he was covered in sweat. But on his arm was a spiral armband in the shape of a black dragon.

Ryu eyes were out of focus and his mouth was foaming a bit. His breath gave off deep and slow pants. But Ryu was in his half-demon form. So his appearance was different.

Oukami threw Ryu off of him and shot a sutra at him. It hit Ryu squarely in the forehead and he fell to the ground motionless.

“RYU!” Arc went over to him and tried to remove the sutra. But it shocked her instead.

“We'll meet again, Dark.” Oukami then disappeared like smoke.

“Ryu, say something! Please say something! Ryu!” Arc exclaimed with tears falling from her face.

Tenshi went over and removed the sutra. When she did, Ryu reverted back to his human form, but still didn't move.

Dark got up and dressed in his half tattered haori. He then went over to Ryu and felt his pulse.

“It's strangely low.” Dark said. “When was the last time he ate?”

“Yesterday in the afternoon while you and Kendo slept.” Tenshi said.

“So he can't be fatigued from hunger. Did anything strange happen yesterday?”

“Well....”

## **Flashback**

“I'm going to go into the hot springs.” Ryu said taking a towel from the bathroom.

“Okay. But make sure you don't fall asleep in there.” Arc said.

“Don't worry. I'm just going to meditate under the waterfall.” Ryu then left.

After an hour Tenshi went to check on Ryu.

“Ryu. I'm sorry to disturb you but I need your help.” She said standing next to the door. But there was no response. “Ryu?”

She slid the door open and gasped. Ryu was laying at the edge of the small pool that the waterfall emptied into. Blood was coming from his shoulder and there was an armband on his upper arm

## **End Flashback**

“This armband was found on his arm.” Tenshi said showing it to Dark. “I managed to get it off.”

Dark took it and examined it. The armband was in a shape of a single spiral and each end was half of the yin and yang sign.

"This was Oukami's doing." Dark said handing the armband back to Tenshi. "He has a strange interest in armbands. He even makes his own."

"But why does Ryu have one?" Arc asked.

"That's Oukami's way of showing his love for male demons. He does *it* with them first, bites them in the shoulder and then put an armband on their arm. But the armband depends on the person's symbol."

"So Ryu's symbol is a yin and yang sign?"

"Yes. But it should be also a black dragon, like mine." Dark pulled his sleeve up to show his armband of a dragon. "I could be wrong though."

"Then what would my symbol be?" Arc asked looking at Ryu's armband.

"I don't know. But, considering that you are a descendant of Kendo, it would probably be two crescent moons."

## Chapter Seven: To Find a Mother

### **Three Days later...**

Arc, Tenshi, Dark and Kendo stared at the corner of the dining room where Ryu sat with his head in his knees. He has been like that for days and he didn't even move from the spot. Nor has he even eaten anything or bathed. He hasn't spoken a word either.

“You had to put him in that room.” Arc said to break the silence.

“I said I was sorry already. I didn't know it was that room that—”

Ryu shifted and held himself to the wall even tighter.

“Shush! You want him to be like that even longer?” Tenshi whispered. “Just leave him alone for a while. He'll come around sometime.”

“The question is when, Mother.” Arc interrupted. “He's been like this for three days now. He hasn't spoken, eaten, or even bathed!”

“I said I was sorry!”

“Knock it off!” Tenshi shouted.

But everyone went silent. Ryu had gotten up and left the room. Then they heard him putting on his roller blades, take something that sounded like wood and leave out the door.

“Ryu?!” Arc stood up but Kendo stopped her.

“I'll go.” He placed his chopsticks and bowl down and took a sip from his tea. He then got up, bowed his head to everyone and left after Ryu.

Kendo leapt into one of the tree tops and looked at Ryu who was speeding down the hill. He saw that Ryu was holding a wooden sword and was hitting every tree he passed by with it. Kendo then leapt from the tree into another one, following Ryu.

“Wave of the Wounded Soul!!!” Ryu shouted. He swung the wooden sword really hard at the base of a tree and made the bark fly off. But then, the trees leaves changed color and fell off. Then the tree wilted and died. “Damnit!!!”

Kendo peered around another one of the trees and saw Ryu striking continuously at the base of trees, making bark fly and the trees wilt and die.

Ryu had stopped in the middle of the forest and ventured off into the clearing he was in. Ryu's tears of anger fell from his face.

“FATHER COME BACK TO LIFE!!!” Ryu shouted toward the sky. “COME BACK SO THAT I CAN KICK YOUR YAOI @\$\$!!!!” Ryu then swung the wooden sword so hard at a tree that it broke and he shouted so loud that birds flew away from the trees.

The broken sword piece flew right toward Kendo and he caught it.

“You know, some things are left best unsettled, Young Ryu.” Kendo said calmly coming out from behind the tree and throwing the piece of wood aside.

“Oh what do you know, you jackass!!!” Ryu retorted, his eyes flashing red. “You don't know how it was like for me to be raped at eight years old by my own father!!! None of you do!”

“I know that. We all know that. All we are trying to do is help.” Kendo said moving closer to Ryu. “It all that we can do.”

“That's all you can do?! That's a load of—”

“Now, now. Don't be like this. I know you are upset. I can't help you. But I will make you feel better.” Kendo said embracing Ryu tightly.

Ryu's eyes widened.

*“Now, now. I know you are upset. But I will make you feel better.”* Those sentences rang in Ryu's head. The feeling of fear welled up inside of him and spread throughout his whole body. He shook from head to toe and his eyes widened even more. Then without warning Ryu shoved Kendo away from him.

“NO!! LEAVE ME ALONE!!” Ryu clutched his head as his mind pounded against his skull. “NO MORE! I DON'T WANT ANY MORE!! JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!!”

His black tears rolled down his face as if they were racing each other. Everything, including Ryu himself, glowed red and Ryu's aura made his hair and attire slightly float. The trees moved in closer and blocked all the ways in by ground. Ryu then transformed into his half demon form and he fell to his knees screaming.

“Ryu! Calm down!” Kendo shouted over him. “Your father is dead! Remember?!”

Ryu didn't listen. He kept screaming so loudly that everyone down in the town looked up at the mountain.

“Damnit!” Kendo went to embrace Ryu to teleport. But before he could teleport, Ryu had stopped screaming and went limp. “Huh? Ryu?” He moved Ryu to look at his face. His eyes were blank but tears continued to fall. “Ryu, wake up.” Kendo softly slapped Ryu's cheek, but there was no response.

“Damnit. He's unconscious.” Still cursing to himself, he embraced Ryu and teleported back to the house.

### **The Next day...**

“On today's news, there have been reports of strange activity up in the thick forest of Xiaohe Mountain.” The news reporter said on the television. “The town's people say that they heard screaming up in the mountain and went to look. They found that several trees have been moved into a circle by an unknown force.

“It has to be aliens!’ one man said. ‘Maybe it was an undiscovered animal.’ A woman suggests. Whatever it may have been, locals must be on the look out for anything as strange as this occurrence. Now today's weather. Pheng?”

Tenshi turned the television off and looked at Kendo.

“So what did happen?” She asked placing the remote on the table. “How did Ryu end up changing into his half demon form when you brought him home?”

“I don't know myself. All I said was, `Now, now. Don't be like this. I know you are upset. I can't help you. But I can make you feel better.' That's all.”

“Wait. Say those sentences again, this time leaving out the second one and the fourth one.” Arc said.

“Now, now. I know you are upset. But I will make you feel better'?” Kendo repeated.

“You should not have said those sentences in the same paragraph.” Miko said taking a sip of hot tea. “Those are the one that Kaji said before we came here.”

“Kaji? Oh, you mean his father.” Kendo looked at his cup of tea. “I didn't know that.”

“First, Dark puts Ryu into the room where his father raped him and sat him next to the box that was sealed. Second, Mother opens the box and makes Ryu tremble with terror. Then lastly, Kendo says the wrong sentences and makes Ryu go crazy with fear. What next? His father coming back to life and rape him again?” Arc counted on her fingers. “Only if his Mother would come back.”

“His mother?” Dark asked.

“Remember? She was his only protection against his father.” Arc revised.

“She's still alive but we don't know where.” Tenshi said. “She was, and still is, a great friend of mine.”

“So why don't we find her?” Dark asked looking at Tenshi. “It would make Ryu feel better right?”

“It easier said than done, Dark.” Miko answered. “Who knows how far she went. She probably regrets leaving Ryu here though.”

“I've got an idea.” Tenshi said. “I'll be right back.” Tenshi got up and went out of sight.

A half hour later, she came back holding a small poster.

“If we put up these posters, it's likely that nearly all the women would come here.” Tenshi placed the poster on the table and everyone looked. At the top of it, it had Ryu's picture from the university's school photos. Then at the bottom, it gave a description of Ryu and his background in school. Then there was a small message that said: “The young man is looking for his mother. If you are she, then please come to the Obsidian Tavern at the base of Xiaohe Mountain. Reward may be involved.”

“All we have to do is make copies of this and post them up tomorrow in the town.” She continued.

“But what of Ryu?” Arc asked. “He's still not awake from the last incident.”

"Don't worry. Leave that to me." Miko said giving a small smile.

"But how are they going to know how to get here?" Dark asked. "The only ones who know are all of us here at the house."

Tenshi and Arc looked at each other and then looked at Dark with a wicked smile.

### **Two days later...**

"I had to open my mouth." Dark stood at the bottom of the mountain where many groups of women were waiting to be taken up to the house. He was wearing a brown cape and he was getting hot wearing it. "Ladies, I, Dark, shall take you to the Obsidian Tavern. If you are rejected by Ryu Obsidian, then Kendo will show you the way back down."

"Are you his father?" one of the women asked.

A sweat drop appeared on the back of his head. "Um.... Yes I am." Dark answered. "Now this way." He then started walking up the hill and the women followed.

"Wow! He looks so handsome, doesn't he?" one women said.

"Yeah I know. I really hope to be picked by Ryu. That's the boy's name, right?"

"Yes it is. Didn't you read the poster?"

*Oh great. Why didn't I say I was his grandfather?* Dark thought.

### **Back at the house...**

"Why do I have to wear this? This is my university uniform!" Ryu exclaimed.

"Oh stop it. You want to find your mother don't you?" Arc said fixing Ryu's tie.

"Hey it wasn't my idea. It was your mother's."

"Hey turn around once." Arc said.

"If I do that, I'll feel like a model and you'll laugh."



“Just do it.”

Ryu groaned and he turned around once. But Arc then started laughing.

“See?! I told you.” Ryu said, turning a bit red.

“I'm so sorry!” Arc said through her laughter. “You looked like a women when you did that.” She fell back onto the floor and continued laughing.

“Arc, stop it already. The ladies are here.” Dark whispered.

“Okay. Send only ten at a time.” Arc instructed.

“Right this was ladies.”

Ryu sat on his cushion as the women came into the room. All of them looked beautiful and looked like all of them wore kimonos and robes. Ryu looked at all of them carefully. His black eyes scanned every detail.

“Oh he's also handsome!” one of the ten women whispered.

“I know.” another responded.

“Ladies,” Ryu said. The women went silent. “I'm not a pervert or anything, but let me see your right shoulders.”

None of them moved.

“It's all right; my mother had a scar on her right shoulder, so if you have it, show it now.”

They still didn't move.

“Then it's none of you.” Ryu said. “I'm sorry ladies.”

The ten women groaned and moved out to where Kendo was.

“Send in the next ten.” Ryu shouted.

So the day went on: ten women were sent in and Ryu asked to look at their right shoulders. But none made a single move. Then he would say that it was none of them and then send them off. Ryu was starting to lose hope in seeing his mother after the fourth group of women.

**6:45 P.M.**

“Ryu, there's only eleven women left.” Dark informed.

“Alright. Send all of them in.”

The last group of women came in and Ryu looked at them. Once again he looked over them for details that indicated his mother. But none was visible. All of them stood in silence.

“I have one request.” Ryu finally said. “If you have a scar on your right shoulder, please reveal it.”

None of them moved, as expected. But, before Ryu could say anything. The woman in the middle untied her kimono and moved the sleeve on her right shoulder. There, on her shoulder was a jagged line that was a scar.

“Um.... Thank you ladies.” Ryu said. “You all may leave except for you.” Ryu looked at the woman in the middle who remained in her place as the other women were lead out by Kendo.

Ryu got up and went to the woman. Ryu was only a few centimeters shorter than her. Then again, Ryu is shorter than Arc, even if he is a boy.

“To truly see if you are my mother,” Ryu said in a near soft voice. “What's my father's name and what did he do to me when I was eight years old?”

The woman covered her shoulder and closed her kimono. She then placed a hand onto Ryu's jaw and said, “Your father's name is Kaji Obsidian who used to be my husband. When you were eight, he raped you and I never found out until you told me when you were ten.”

Ryu gave a weak smile and embraced the woman. “Ogasa, you're finally back.” Tears of happiness came out of his eyes for the first time. But they were as clear as crystal instead as black as the night. Never before has Ryu felt any happier. His mother embraced Ryu with tears also coming from her eyes.

“I think we should leave them alone.” Tenshi whispered looking at the happy twosome.

“Yes, we should.” Kendo agreed. “Give them some `mother and son' time.”

The rest of the group left the room, leaving Ryu and his mother alone.

But was the two truly alone? Outside the window of the same room, Oukami stared inside at Ryu and his mother with a wicked grin on his face.

Ryu's mother, Hotaru, sat on the floor stroking Ryu's head. Ryu was sleeping peacefully on her lap. When he was younger Ryu would always sleep with his head on her lap when she wasn't busy. As the years went by, the habit grew. Even now at the age of eighteen years old, he still slept on her lap.

"So, tell me." Hotaru said softly. "How's has Ryu been?"

"Well," Arc started. "I can tell that he's been through phases."

"Oh, my poor little one." Hotaru moved her hand to his neck and started stroking it. Ryu gave out a small moan and nudged her a bit. Hotaru just smiled and looked back up at Arc. "What kind of phases?"

"Rage, deep sorrow and silence." Arc answered. "But the silence one is the worst. He would just sit in one corner and stay there for days without any food. He was so broken once; he didn't touch his food for two weeks."

"Well, that answers why he's so skinny." Hotaru looked at him in awe. But she then looked back up. "What about his tears? Every time I saw him cry, the tears are black."

"That is the curse of the Obsidian Family." Dark said. He entered the room with a dark look on his face. "And all the blame goes to, my father for stealing the Sacred Obsidian Gem."

"You mean the one that went missing and was never found, right?" Kendo asked entering the room.

"Yes. It was my father's fault. His mind is filled with greed and pure blood that he wanted to be kept clean. And it is the same blood that runs through my veins." Dark sat down with his legs and arms folded. His eyes were hidden under the brown cape he still wore.

"What did his father do? Rape him also?" Hotaru and Arc asked Kendo; both of them noted the tone in his voice.

"No. He, his father, tried to kill Dark and his little sister. But his sister ended up dying anyway." Kendo heard Dark cracking his fingers in his sleeve. "Urm... and I feel sorry for her and for Dark." Dark relaxed his fingers and Kendo let out a relieved sigh.

"I wish," Hotaru whispered to Ryu even though he was still asleep. "That you were young again so that I can see you grow up to what you are now."

"Hotaru, you know he's asleep right?"

"Yes, but people can still hear things even if they are asleep." Hotaru looked at Ryu again. His face was cute in a way. Yet you can still see that he has fear dancing around him.

"Kendo," Hotaru asked reaching into her bag. "Do you remember these?" she took out a deck of tarot cards and placed them on the floor.



She didn't answer. She looked at the house I just fixed. Her eyes glittered at the site. Everything was absolutely perfect on the outside.

"Did you build this house?" she asked me and came closer.

"No, I just fixed it."

"Oh, so someone lives here." She lowered her head. "Oh well," She turned to leave.

"No, wait!" She turned back around. "I was... um... just fixing it because it's my house. I was going to sell it off anyway." I said a bit quick.

"Oh, really! How much is it?"

"Actually, you can just have it. You can even move in today if you want." I told her with a smile. "I just finished yesterday so you can go ahead and move in."

"Really? Oh that's too generous. I can't."

"No! Go right ahead. Really!"

"Thank you kind sir. And just in time too."

"May I ask in time for what?"

"I just got married and so I went looking for a house."

"Ah I see. Who's the husband?"

"His name is Kaji Obsidian. He's so serious and focused."

Obsidian?! Did she say Obsidian?!

"I've been looking for you." I said. "I need to tell you something."

"What?" she looked at me with inquiry.

"I foresaw that your son will be a half demon."

"My son?" she asked. "Please tell me more."

"But he is also cursed by his ancestral blood and their curse."

I reached into my pocket and took out a deck of tarot cards. "Keep these with you as your son grows. Then you will see what he has become when you return to him." I handed them to her and stood back.

Swirling water surrounded Kendo.

“Wait! What do you mean when I return to him?” she asked.

“I cannot tell you; any more than that, then I would reveal too much.” Kendo bowed his head and he disappeared within the swirling water.

“My... son?” She looked at the bottom of the deck which the card, “The High Priestess” faced upward.

*“Ruled by the Moon. With the mark of Isis on her forehead and a crucifix around her neck—symbols of spirituality—she is balanced between the pillars of peace and severity. Signifies a mystical quietness; something remains hidden, so don't rush. Remain in state of balance. With patience and intuition, all will be revealed.”* Kendo's voice said within the woman's head. She looked up and a mysterious wind blew and Hotaru's memory was invisible to her forever more for the time being.

## Chapter Eight, Part 2: Oukami's Nightmarish Creation, Kaji

“According to the card at the bottom of the deck, you were supposed to tell me what's going on, so out with it.”

“Well, as I said years ago, I foresaw that Ryu would be a half demon, and he is.” Kendo started. “But he doesn't know exactly what's going on. Of course, he has the Obsidian Family curse: The Black tears of sorrow and hatred.”

“Go on.” Hotaru said as Dark got up and left the room.

“Well.... Sooner or later, Ryu *and* Arc will have to fight off demons that are somehow getting into this time era.”

“Ungh....” Ryu mumbled and he got up from Hotaru's lap. He then rubbed his eyes and looked at Kendo. “What's going on?” he said sheepishly.

“Nothing, Ryu.” Hotaru said rubbing his back.

“Where's Dark-sensei?”

“He left earlier. But don't worry, he'll be back.” Kendo said pointing behind him where Dark had left. “If you want to find Arc, she's in the garden.”

“Thanks.” Ryu got on his feet and left.

“Why would Ryu want to know where Arc was?”

“They like to spar against each other.”

“Anyways, was there any more you were going to say?”

“No, that's all I saw. But Ryu's fear of his father will interfere with his battling.”

But then, a hard thud was heard.

“What was that?” Hotaru asked getting up.

“Kendo-sensei!!!” Arc shouted from a distance.

“Wait here!” Kendo got up and ran to the garden. When he got there he saw that Arc was on the ground staring at the horror before her. Ryu, who was in his half demon form, was being held by someone behind him. Ryu's arms were being bent backwards and pushed upwards and tears of pain formed in his shut eyes.

“Well, what do we have here?” the man behind said. The man wore similar clothing as Ryu was wearing. But his face.... His face looked like Dark's when he was in his full demon form.

“I thought you were dead!” Ryu shouted but the man behind him moved Ryu's arms upward more, causing him to scream.

“Yes, scream as loud as you can! I actually missed hearing you scream in pain.” The man said. “But now, I can make you scream even more now that my true blood had come back.”

“That means... you are his father!” Arc shouted.

“Correct.” Kaji said glaring at Arc. “I can finally relive to Ryu on who is the dominant one in this household.”

Ryu's eyes widened and his heart raced against his mind. “NO!” he cried out. “No more!!” He tried to get away from Kaji but it only gave him more pain.

Hotaru came into the room and gasped.

Kaji looked at her and gave her a wicked smile. “My wife, now you can see what I can do.” Kaji then looked at Ryu and bit down into his shoulder. Ryu yelled loudly and the marks on his cheeks flashed and grew longer.

“What?!” Dark entered the room and saw what had happened. “How did—?”

“Ryu is unique.” Kaji answered. “His whole body is unique. His body knows who is in control. And it has known for eleven years.

“If you want him back, wait for him on his birthday and then you'll get him back. Only then, you'll see

what he truly is.” Kaji then disappeared within a cloud of smoke leaving the others stunned.

### **December 1st, 12:10 A.M., Oukami's Shrine**

Ryu lied bare on the floor, panting hard as his heat grew more. Chains were bound to his neck, wrists and ankles that shifted with every move. But this was what he dreaded the most. Ryu was like this for a week and a half and he was dying; his body twitched with every move he made. He couldn't relieve himself if he even wanted to because of the chains.

The door behind him creaked open and Kaji entered wearing only a robe.

“Look at you.” He said with a strange look in his eyes. “You look pathetic.” He kneeled down and traced the marks on Ryu's face that now nearly touched the sides of his nose. “You are coming close to your adult hood because of my doing; and all if it shows just because of these marks.”

His hand grasped Ryu's hair and pulled him up to his face. “Do you know what happens when these two marks touch?” Kaji looked straight into Ryu's flushed face and his completely glazed eyes. “You'll become your true form. Then your sign that rotates inside of you turns upside down and it stays there until dawn. And by then, *she* will be dead.” He then threw the robe off, revealing that he was also bare.

Kaji slashed at the chains that bound Ryu's ankles and settled in between his legs.

“Happy Birthday, Ryu.” Kaji then thrust forward his hips and Ryu's eyes widened greatly and he gave out a very loud yell. The marks on his face flashed red and connect on his nose. His legs shook violently at the intrusion.



## Chapter Nine: 19th Birthday Blues

**12:30 A.M.**

"Dark?! What's the matter?!" Hotaru said, kneeling over Dark who had suddenly collapsed.

"It nothing; just a bit of an ache." Dark said in a raspy voice.

"Don't lie, Dark. What's the matter?" Kendo knelt next to him also to hold him up.

"It's Ryu." He said in the same voice. "He's in pain."

"What kind of pain?! Answer me, Dark!" Hotaru demanded; she was on the verge of tears just hearing about Ryu's pain.

"He's.... He's was being...raped again."

"WHAT?!" the whole group exclaimed.

"I can hear his screams and feel his heart beat. His heart beat is fast, *really* fast. And his tears are seeping out of his eyes. No, *streaming* out is more accurate.

"But there's something else. Something powerful. His blood feels hot and burning, like full demon blood."

But before Dark could continue, smoke appeared and it deposited Ryu on the floor. It then disappeared and Kaji and Oukami stood before them; both were smirking.

"Now you'll see what he truly is." Kaji said grinning even wider.

"In this form, he is your enemy." Oukami continued. "In this form, he is our ally. And someone will die tonight, I guarantee it."

Then both of them disappeared, leaving Ryu laying on the floor.

Ryu was not in his usual attire; it was probably provided by Oukami and Kaji. He was wearing a black cape over a black Haori and Hakama similar to Dark's clothing. But something like a blue scabbard stuck out of the cape.

"Ryu?" Arc moved closer to his body and tried to turn him over. But before she could, Ryu had gotten up and leapt backwards away from the group covering his face.

"Don't... come... near... me." He said in a deep voice.

Now that they can see the front of him, they saw that he was wearing gauntlets with a yin-yang sign on each one on his wrists and the armband that Oukami had given him. But something surprised Dark and Kendo: the sword that was sheathed at Ryu's waist was, The Crescent Moon Blade.

"How did you, Ryu, find the sword?!" Dark asked urgently.

Ryu didn't answer. He just stood up and unsheathed the blade, which glinted in the moonlight shining behind him. It pulsed in Ryu's hand that drove his demon blood mad. He raised it above him and the blade's magnificent steel gleamed like a beacon.

"Get... away...." He mumbled. His head raised and all of them saw it. But before it was even described, Ryu had lunged forward, swinging the sword madly.

The others spread a part and ran for it.

But Dark and Kendo came back at him and started launching attacks. They slashed upwards, downwards, left and right; but all of them missed. Ryu had got faster! It was now Ryu's turn to launch attacks. He swung the blade left and right; up and down. Only a few of the swings hit Kendo and Dark; causing them to have wounds on their shoulders and faces. The blood that now slightly stained the blade was absorbed into its core and it pulsed once again. After several hours of combat both Kendo and Dark were nearly exhausted.

"Ryu stop, now!" Dark shouted.

"Ryu doesn't exist in this vessel." A deep voice said that was not like Ryu's. "Only Ryuko exists now. And I'll kill anyone I please."

Ryuko slashed at Dark and a huge gash appeared on him. Dark fell back with his front covered with dark blood.

"Finally, an actual blood tip. Thanks." Ryuko licked the blood from the blade as if it was honey from an uninhabited hive. Ryuko's smile widened into a wicked one. He then lunged forward again, this time going past Dark and Kendo and toward Hotaru with Arc in front of her, who was down at the end of the hallway.

"No! Get out of the way! Run!" Dark shouted at the women.

None of them moved. They were too afraid and transfixed at the scene before them. Arc then narrowed her eyes and she quickly transformed into her demon self. But before she could complete it, the sound of blood gushing out was heard. Arc stumbled back into the corner and slid down, cancelled the change and then she looked up. The sword was thrust through Hotaru's chest right where her heart was. Behind her, Arc can see the bloody blade, sticking out of Hotaru's back. It was not a pretty sight. Hotaru tried to protect Arc and it cost her, her life.

Hotaru fell backwards and Arc got out of the way. The sword remained in Hotaru's chest as she fell with

Ryu right behind her. As Ryu fell, his features changed back to normal. Only his face and demon characteristics changed; nothing else changed. Ryu fell next to his mother with a cloud of dust rising.

“It's morning.” Arc said looking through one of the windows. The sun was shining faintly over the top of the trees. The brisk fall air made the trees sway gently against the wind. Everything was quiet, that is, for a while.

**December 1st, 10:20 A.M.**

Everyone kept a close eye on Ryu even though he's unconscious. Arc was the only one that was asleep in the watchful group. But they hoped that Ryu would wake up soon so that they can move the deceased Hotaru away. None of them even dared to go near for fear of what might happen.

“Ungh...”Ryu started to shift in his sleep. He sat up slowly; his body was aching all over. The sunlight shined right into his eyes, so he covered them with his arm. He placed his hand on the floor and felt something thick like tomato sauce. He lifted his hand up from the puddle and looked. “AHHHHH!!!!” It was blood.

He backed up and his side hit something. With his body shuddering, he looked down and saw his ultimate nightmare.

“O... Ogasa?” he stuttered.

He looked at her with shaking eyes. She was covered in blood and The Crescent Moon Blade stuck out of her chest. Ryu took the blade out and threw it across the hall where it flew out through a doorway (the others moved their head quickly so that they won't get hit by the sword).

“Ogasa... who did this to you?!” Ryu asked in a worried voice. “Ogasa!”

Ryu took Hotaru's body and shook it gently. “Open your eyes please, Ogasa.” Ryu embrace her body and his black tears fell from his face and into his mother. Ryu placed her back on the ground and stood up. But when he did, he felt the extra weight on his shoulders of the black cape. He looked at it and saw that it was torn and covered with blood. He then looked at the rest of himself. He was covered in blood also.

“No....” Ryu whispered. “No.... It.... It can't be....” He stared at his bloody hands that started shaking.

Dark walked into the hallway with Kendo whispering, “What are you doing?”

“You didn't do this to me, so I will do this to him.” Dark answered back.

"No! It can't—!" Ryu was about to finish but his mouth was covered by Dark's hand.

"Don't say that." Dark said quietly. Dark's other arm wrapped around Ryu's torso and changed into a hug from behind. "Don't say those words. I did, and it broke my already split soul for life. Don't say a word. It's better to stay silent."

Ryu didn't say anything. He just fell to his knees out of Dark's grasp and continued crying. Dark just looked at him. He then looked at himself and saw the blood had stopped spilling from his wound as it started healing on its own

Without asking, Dark took the cape and gauntlets off. He then took the haori off and left the hakama on. He also took the scabbard at his waist and placed it on the ground. He then lifted Ryu and carried him in his arms into his bedroom. There, he placed Ryu in his futon and then left to wet a cloth. After he did, Dark came back, folded the cloth and placed it over Ryu's eyes and forehead.

"Sleep, or else you'll end up having a nervous break down in the afternoon." Dark then left the room.

"What was the cloth for?" Kendo asked as Dark came through the door.

"It was to prevent him from getting a fever. That's all." Dark looked coldly at Kendo. "I, on the other hand, ended up getting a fever that lasted for a month and placed me in a coma for two weeks. It all happened because you left me lying in that puddle of blood. And I still haven't forgiven you from that time." Dark scoffed and went through the hallway into the door that led to the Hot Springs.

"Dark?" Arc said looking at where he had left. "What's he talking about, Kendo-sensei?"

Kendo didn't answer. Kendo just looked at the door that was now shut. His eyes started to shed his own tears. But not tears of anger, but of sadness. His mouth opened and said something wordlessly, "Forgive me..."

#### **Interruption #4: A Second Look at Things**

(Continuation of Interruption #1)

Chouwa reappeared in the mountains next to the lake where Kitsune lived and then placed Dark on the ground and took the sword to the lake. There he rinsed the blood off of the arc and the scabbard.

"Chouwa?"

Chouwa turned around and saw his old masters, Kitsune and Kitsune-Shounen.

"What happened to Dark?" Kitsune Shounen asked running next to Dark. "He's covered in blood!"

"I assure that it's not his blood." Chouwa said with his back turned. He then stood up and swung the blade and made the water fly off the arc. "I checked for wounds and there were none on him."

"Then... that means... he... killed many people!" Kitsune-Shounen back off and hid behind Kitsune.

"What happened?" Kitsune asked. "Why did Dark just suddenly start attacking people? And I can smell that he's covered in human blood."

"It wasn't his fault." Chouwa informed. "His demon blood took over and he went on a killing spree."

"Kendo, I still don't think that it was a good idea to leave Dark there." Sahara said to Kendo.

"He'll learn from his own mistakes." Kendo answered with no expression in his voice. "He can't rely on others to find his own lessons for him. It's childish."

"You don't have to be so cruel to him. He's already suffered enough when he was younger."

"His father should have taught him otherwise."

"That's the problem." Sahara stopped walking and turned to face Kendo. "His so called father tried to kill him and his sister. And they weren't even teenagers yet! At least cut him some slack. He's in pain for all gods of demons and human know!"

"What?"

Kendo also stopped walking. It was almost like a staring contest between the couple and Sahara was winning.

"Look, I met Dark five years ago and he told me his story. The whole thing." Sahara moved closer to Kendo in a threatening way. "He's been on his own for most of his life, and raising a younger sibling too. How often do you think he killed, no, *slaughtered* that many villagers at once?! Oh, I know, let's have a second look shall we? I believe the answer is none! Because he has to set somewhat a good example for Aka and take care of her and watch her at all times necessary!" And the list went on. Sahara's own fury was all let out on Kendo. Even if Kendo was a full fledged demon, Sahara had no worries what so ever.

Then Kendo realized of what he had done. He just left Dark, who was unconsciously asking for help. Even now, Dark would be asking for help. And Kendo wasn't there to answer. The feeling of shame and guilt filled him, so he sank to his knees with tears slowly running down his face. It was the first time he ever cried. And now, Dark is going to have a hidden grudge against him, though it may not even show.



## Chapter Ten: Split in Two

“WHAT?!” Oukami shouted with immense disappointment. “What do you mean you didn't plant the seed inside of him?!”

“I'm sorry, Master Oukami.” Kaji apologized. Kaji, in his human form, went on his knees and bowed his head low enough to touch the wooden floor. “I had become too lenient lately.”

“You were supposed to give him the seed after he had come! Is that such a hard task?” Oukami stomped over to Kaji, grasped his long hair, and pulled him upward. “Why didn't you?”

“Ah... I was... being too lenient!” Kaji answered looking away.

“Look at your master when you speak! Why didn't you?!” Oukami's grip tightened and Kaji gave a raspy gasp. “ANSWER ME!”

“Master Oukami,” a young girl's voice spoke in an emotionless tone.

Oukami looked behind him and saw a young girl, no older than ten, wearing a white kimono and holding a large, dusty, crystal ball. Her eyes were blank and a dirty white color that dully looked into nothingness. Her ears were rounded and she wore a head dress that looked like a small group of three feathers.

“What is it, Kori?”

“The demons that are now at the entrance of the Demon Door are ready to conquer.” Kori said in the same tone.

“Excellent.” Oukami let Kaji go and turned. “What of Ryu and my Dark?”

“Look for yourself,” Kori held the crystal ball in front of her and Oukami and Kaji peered into it. Inside was a reflection of Ryu and Dark. Ryu laid still in his bed and Dark was relaxing in the hot spring with his head held back. Oukami smiled at this.

“Let's proceed with the plan.” Oukami said. “Kori, send Ryu here.”

“Yes, my lord.” Kori held the crystal against her chest and closed her eyes. “*By the power of ice that*

*hides deep within, come to the lord's aid and lead the demons anew."* Her eyes opened and were now the color of Ryu's eyes.

### **Ryu's room...**

Ryu eyes snapped open and gleamed white; His eyes turned into Kori's dirty white ones. He sat up and put on his clothes. He also put on the cape and gauntlets. Then without a word said, he froze up and disappeared when the ice shattered.

Kendo, Dark and Arc jumped up and ran to Ryu's room. When they entered, they saw that the floor was littered with ice. But it spelled something. It said: "War has been declared, and you have no choice but to accept..."

### **At Oukami's Shrine...**

Ryu reappeared in a block of ice that shattered and spread across the ground. Ryu fell onto his side with his cape covering his body.

"Arise, Ryu." Oukami commanded.

Ryu did so. Kori closed her eyes again and opened then once more to reveal that she had her eyes back. Ryu opened his eyes and he also had them back.

"Where...? Where am I?" Ryu looked around and saw Oukami, Kaji and Kori. "What am I doing here?!"

Kaji smiled. He ran behind Ryu and held him in the same position like before.

"We need your other half." Kaji said pulling upward; Ryu yelled in pain.

"Kaji!" Oukami shouted.

Kaji narrowed his eyes and lowered Ryu's arms. Oukami walked over to Ryu and caressed his chin. "We want, Ryuko."

"Who's Ryuko?" Ryu grunted.

"He's your other half. The half the killed... your dear mother."

Ryu's eyes widened. But then narrowed. On his own instinct, his jaw lunged forward and bit hard onto



Oukami's hand. Ryu had quickly turned into his half demon form on his anger.

Kaji raised Ryu's arms again and caused Ryu to let go. Oukami leapt back and stood next to Kori, shaking his hand. On it was Ryu's bite mark.

Kori threw her crystal ball and it changed into three white shackles that attached themselves onto Ryu's neck and wrists and then disappeared. But the chains that they were attached to stuck out and snaked themselves to Kori, who pick them up and held them firmly.

"Don't be so stubborn now." Oukami said in a low tone. "Then again you can't help it. It must have been horrible to see your mother's bloody body."

At the exact moment. Kori started pulling on the chains and Ryu started screaming; Kaji smiled in delight. Ryu threw his head up with wide eyes that flashed black and white like the rest of him did. A ghostly figure was pulled out of Ryu. The shackles were attached to him. When the figure was pulled out, Ryu, along with his attire, hair and eyes turned a brilliant white while the figure was a deep black. Ryu's dark half was taken from his soul which is now split in two.

Kaji let go of Ryu and Ryu fell to the floor.

"How do you feel, Ryuko?" Oukami asked grinning widely. The shackles that were on Ryuko snapped off returned to Kori and changed back into her crystal ball.

"Much better." Ryuko answered. "Now that I don't have that pathetic human half with me, I feel like killing some of his race."

"Excellent. Kori, you can send Ryu back with a note of what we have done." Oukami commanded.

"Yes, my lord." Kori closed her eyes again and she sent away Ryu the same way she had brought him.

"Now, Ryuko. Let's start training you." Kaji smiled and led Ryuko to the Demon Door.

### **Back at the house...**

Ryu reappeared in front of the group who were still in the room.

"Ryu!" Arc ran to Ryu and shook him. "Are you okay?! Say something!"

Ryu didn't respond. But a paper fell from Ryu's hand and landed in front of Dark. Dark picked it up and read it to himself. As he finished the short note his eyes widened and he gasped.

"What is it?" Kendo asked.

"Read this." Dark handed the note to Kendo. It read:

*The yin has been removed from yang. The colors separated are of their own stature: the strong and the weak. We had declared Demon War against you. For soon, this world will be ours.*

"What does it mean?" Kendo asked.

"You do remember," Dark started. "That Ryu's sign is a yin and yang sign."

Kendo nodded.

"His soul had two parts; one dark, one light. Together they are balanced. Apart, they are against each other. His soul is now split in two, and what remains of Ryu, is weakness and light."

"So that means, Ryu is only half of himself; his good half. But what happened to his evil half?"

"I don't know." Dark answered shaking his head slightly.

"Ungh...." Ryu moaned.

"Ryu! You awake!" Arc exclaimed.

"Where...? What am I wearing?" Ryu sat up and looked at his clothes.

"Welcome back, Ryu." Dark said warmly. "How do you feel?"

Ryu looked up as if he didn't recognize the voice. When he did, his eyes widened. He saw Kendo and Dark smiling at him; Ryu's heart pick up a very fast pace. And it kept going faster until...

"Ahhhhhhhh!!!!" Ryu back up so far that he slammed himself against the wall. "KEEP AWAY FROM ME!!!!"

"Ryu?" Arc went over to him. "What are you talking about?"

"What am I talking about?! What are men doing here?!" Ryu pointed at Dark and Kendo. "Did you forget that I was afraid of men ever since my father raped me?!"

Arc looked over at Dark and gave him a worried look. Dark sighed and stood up.

"I suggest that you two should leave." Dark said to Arc and Kendo. "I have something to heal." Dark indicated what he meant by taking his haori off.

"But why *that way*?" Kendo asked helping Arc up.

“I need to show him that this sort of thing can't be all pain. Besides,” Dark looked at Kendo with a slightly flushed face. “I've been in heat for four days.”

Kendo nodded and moved outside with Arc right behind him. He then shut the door and left Dark alone with Ryu.

## Chapter Eleven: "Forget..."

Ryu was backed into a corner with Kaji looming over him. Ryu's body shook with terror and he held himself against the wall as tight as he could. A man stood next to Kaji, glaring at Ryu with a strange look in his eyes. Ryu looked up and quickly withdrew his sight as his father reached for his arm.

"No!" Ryu shout as Kaji pulled him up. Ryu tried to remove his arm from Kaji's grip but the other man grabbed Ryu's other arm, forcing him to come out of the corner. Ryu moved his feet backwards, resisting the force, but to no avail. Kaji yanked on Ryu's arm which caused Ryu to stumble and fall into his arms. Kaji's friend let go of Ryu's other arm and whispered something to Kaji.

Ryu struggled against Kaji's grasp but he couldn't even move. But then, Kaji picked Ryu up and threw him across the room. Ryu's back hit the opposite wall along with his head. He slid down the wall with all of his breath knocked out of him. Kaji went over to Ryu and pinned him to the ground and opened his yukata.

"No! Get off me!" Ryu shouted.

"Not until you learn..." Kaji answered. He flipped Ryu over onto his stomach roughly and took his yukata off, leaving Ryu bare skinned.

"Even at this age, he looks marvelous, Kaji." The man said.

"Just you wait," Kaji said turning to the man. "Just you wait until he's older. He'll be even more of a delight to you, Oukami."

Ryu's eyes widened and he turned to look at the man. Ryu saw the strange wolf like eyes that shined in the moon's light and the face that he has forgotten.

Ryu jolted up and looked around. The sun's light flittered in the room by the slightly open door. His breath came with slow heaves, as if he has ran for mile. Ryu looked down and saw that his cape was covering his bare body. He brought it up to his chest and noticed that he was alone. Well, that's what he thought.

Ryu looked around for a change of clothes. His white eyes spotted a dresser in the corner nearest to him. He got up and went to the dresser. He opened it, and found a black yukata. He picked it up and dressed into it. It felt like a fine silk that was freshly woven and cleaned. After adjusting the sash, and walked to the door and opened it.

Nothing stirred when he did. But faint noises were heard and they were coming from outside. Ryu walked through the house to find the source. But in between the shoulder blades on his back gave off a slight stinging sensation and it irritated him. It almost felt like a small weak fire trying to grow on a log.

Ryu found the doorway to go out and opened it. When he did, he looked up and his eyes widened. A cluster of demons were flying above him. But blood seemed to be spilling from it. Ryu narrowed his eye and saw that three people were slashing away at the cluster; two of them were Kendo and Dark, and the other was Arc.

“ARC!!” Ryu shouted as loud as he could. “WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!!”

Arc withdrew from her attack and looked down and saw Ryu.

“GET BACK INTO THE HOUSE! NOW!” Arc shouted back. She leapt from the demon she stood upon and landed next to Ryu. She was in her half demon form and her claws were covered with blood.

“What happened to you?!” Ryu asked in surprise.

“No time to explain. You have to—!” but before she could finish, she was shoved aside by Ryuko. Ryu gasped and took off running. But he didn't get too far; Ryuko lunged at Ryu and pinned him to the ground.

“Let me go!” Ryu shouted while struggling. “Who are you?! And what do you want from me?!”

“It was a mistake to let you go back.” Ryuko said in his deep demonic voice. “I am weak without you. So I'm coming back in.”

“No you won't!!” Arc lunged at Ryuko and knocked him off of Ryu. “Ryu, run now!”

Ryu just lied there for a second and then got up and ran.

“Damnit!” Ryuko kicked Arc off and ran after Ryu. But Arc got up again and shoved him to the ground again. “Why are you stopping me?!”

“I don't want you hurting Ryu again!” Arc answered angrily.

“Yes that's true, but don't you want the Ryu you truly love back?”

Arc fell silent.

“Ha, don't even try to lie.” Ryuko smirked. “I can read your mind. You love Ryu as a half demon, like

yourself.”

“That’s... that’s a lie!” Arc exclaimed.

“Is it?” Ryuko inquired. “Then why does your mind say that you love him deeply.”

“SAKENDA!! I DO NOT LOVE RYU!!”

At that moment, Ryuko disappeared and Ryu had stopped running.

*Arc doesn't love me?* Ryu thought with his head looking at the ground. *She doesn't love me?*

“That’s right.” Ryuko reappeared in front of Ryu. “She doesn’t love you.”

Ryu looked up and saw Ryuko. But this time, he didn’t run. Ryuko moved closer to Ryu and embraced him.

“Forget. Forget that you ever saw me now.” Ryuko whispered in Ryu’s ear. “Forget about Dark. Forget about Kendo. Forget about Arc. Forget about everyone who loved you, from the beginning to now. Only remember the hate toward them. Only remember your father’s name, and Master Oukami’s name. Become my vessel once again. Then, and only then, will you be free.”

Ryuko’s body sunk into Ryu’s without another word. Ryu’s hair and eye became their natural obsidian color again. Ryu’s body reverted to its half demon form. But before a single move was made, Ryu was frozen in ice once again, and disappeared when it shattered.

## Chapter Twelve: Snowy Memories

“Damnit! He got away with Ryu again!” Dark barked. He threw his curled fist to the ground, making a crater the size of it. “The demons were just a diversion!”

“Dark, calm down.” Kendo said. “At least they didn't do anything to him.”

“How do you know?!”

“If he did, you would have felt the pain.” Kendo helped Dark up.

“What do you want with Ryu?!” Dark shouted at the black sky. Snow, started to drift onto the mountain side. None of the trio found it beautiful in anyway because to the guilt of letting Ryu be captive once again for who knows how long. Arc went on her knees and sobbed. Her guilt seemed to be greater than the other two.

“Hey! We're back!” Tenshi shouted from below. “We finally got the groceries!”

Tenshi and Miko came stamping up the lightly littered ground holding a few bags of fruits, vegetables, drinks (including sake), and some other things.

“Why didn't you come back yesterday?” Kendo asked.

“It was too windy; the groceries wouldn't survive in that weather. So we stayed the night at a hotel.” Tenshi answered.

“Where is Ryu?” Miko asked looking around. “I don't see him here with you. Is he inside?”

Dark and Kendo exchanged looks.

"It's a long story...." Arc choked.

Ryu floated in a large orb that was twice his size. Inside, he wore nothing. Air bubbles came from his mouth and nose and his hair was floating as if his was in water. On his back, in white kanji, said, "Tsubasa No Ryu" or "Wings of the Dragon" But above it, between his shoulder blades, something like two black needles with membranes attached to them stuck out.

"Excellent, Kori." Oukami praised coming out of the shadows. "All we need to do now, is wait."

"What of the demons?" Kori asked with the same voice. "They cannot wait for their leader to ripen."

"That's true. But if they dare go out of bounds and try to get through the Demon Door, let them know that I will kill them."

"Yes, my lord." Kori turned away from Ryu and disappeared.

"How long must we wait?" Kaji asked, also coming out of the shadows.

"Until the snow stops falling in the spring."

"That long? Ryuko would already be able to fight by then, my lord."

"Think again." Oukami moved closer to the Orb and said, "Ryuko, come out!"

Ryu's eyes opened but they were flashing in between black and white. Ryu started screaming at the top of his lungs and thrashed about in the orb.

"Enough!" Oukami shouted. Ryu had stopped screaming and thrashing. Ryu's breathing was now a bit labored. "Do you see the reason why that long?"

"Ryu's was resisting."

"Correct. But I assure that this will stop when the spring comes." Oukami turned to Kaji. "Once Ryuko ripens, the Wings of the Dragon will be at full length. Right now, they have only sprouted."



**February 2, 2003**

*“Forget about Dark. Forget about Kendo. Forget about Arc. Forget about everyone who loved you, from the beginning to now. Only remember the hate toward them. Only remember your father's name, and Master Oukami's name.”*

Ryu's body slipped out of the orb, covered in thick liquid like a newborn. Black dragon-like wings had lengthened through the few months that have passed. Ryu's eyes were blank and full of emptiness. His hair had grown to be long enough to touch his stomach. White claws formed on his fingers and fangs grew in his mouth.

Ryu was still slender and his body still seemed like a feminine shape. But he indeed was a male. Claw marks littered his arms from Ryuko's attempts to break free of Ryu's subconscious mind. Ryu had finally given up and let Ryuko slip through without any sign of pain uttered.

Ryu twitched at the sudden coldness that blew in from the open doors of the shrine. He lifted his head and the liquid trailed from it. He gingerly sat because of his weak body that had been lying dormant for two months.

“Earlier than I expected,” Oukami said in surprise. He walked up to stand about ten feet away from Ryu. “Kaji was right, your body is special.”

Ryu's wings twitched.

“What's the matter?” Oukami asked moving closer to Ryu. “Not used to be called special?”

Ryu didn't answer. But, his face started to flush and his breathing became pants. Strong dizziness overcame Ryu and he fell backwards.

“Too... much....” Ryu moaned.

“Oh that's right.” Oukami said. “You missed two heat sessions. Don't worry. Kaji will take care of that, since he likes that sort of thing.” Oukami disappeared and was replaced with Kaji.

“Well, I told Oukami you were special.” He said. “And I was right.” He walked over to Ryu and straddled him.

“Aishooteru... Odosan....” Ryu panted. His arm reached over to Kaji and went over his shoulders.

“I know.” Kaji leaned forward and they kissed each other very deeply.

Now Arc was sitting in the corner of the dining room. She was wearing a second layer of clothing over her first layer clothes.

Kendo and Dark were the only ones sitting at the table. Miko and Tenshi were making lunch. In the middle of the table laid the Crescent Moon Blade, its scabbard glinting from the lit candles around the room. Outside, a snow storm raged, making the doors shutter quite often. There was no heat that was artificially being made for they didn't have very much electricity for one in the mountains. Every time they exhaled, you could see their breath for a second and it would disappear.

Tenshi came into the room holding two bowls of hot soup with Miko behind her with also two bowls.

"Why do you two need to keep a constant watch on that old sword?" Miko asked placing the bowls on the table.

"We don't know what powers it possesses now. So we need to look for any signs." Dark said still staring at the sword.

"Arc, come over here and eat." Tenshi said to her.

But Arc shook her head and tightened her position against the wall. "I'm not hungry." She mumbled.

"Arc, don't build this habit." Kendo got up and sat next to Arc. "Why are you even doing this?"

Arc didn't answer.

"Answer me."

But before she could, a loud thump sounded from above them.

"What was that?"

All of them except Arc looked up as dust fell from the ceiling; Miko and Tenshi covered the soup. All of them were so occupied, they didn't notice a small light had come out of the sword's scabbard and disappeared through the wall.

"I'll go look." Dark went to the door and opened it. He went through quickly and closed it again.

The wind blew more harshly than he thought. Dark raised his arm in front of his eyes to block the wind. He looked around and then faced behind him looking at the door. He then leapt onto the roof.

The roof was covered with snow that continued to build as the blizzard blew. Dark walked forward, having difficulty seeing properly. But from what he can see no one was there.

*Must have been a branch hitting the roof.* Dark concluded. He turned back around and started off the roof. But a figure dressed in white moved as Dark did. He moved with as much noise as a mouse running in sand. But the snow cringed under his covered feet which alerted Dark.

Dark stopped and turned around. But he saw nothing. But he still was suspicious. He turned back around to face dark eyes and hair facing his direction.

The figure lunged at Dark and pinned him against the cold snow; Dark shivered.

"I can finally torture you." The figure said tightening his grip on Dark's shoulders.

"Ryu?" Dark asked in surprise.

The blizzard died down and was now just snowing. Ryu's face was pale almost like the touched snow. His black eyes and hair were only visible through his all white attire.

"I have been waiting for the perfect time to do this." Ryu said. "And that time is now." Ryu's claws dug deep with Dark's shoulders and then released. Blood trickled from his claws and he brought one of them to his mouth and licked the blood off.

"Delicious." Ryu said licking his lips. "I guess half demon blood *does* tastes better."

Dark, who was watching, started trembling with fear. It was near the breaking point of his fear of blood. But he then remembered the village he had slaughtered before centuries ago. He saw lots of blood, gleaming a bright crimson in the sunlight.

*No!* Dark exclaimed in his head. He shut his eyes tight, trying to prevent his black tears that he had not shed for a long time from coming out. *I don't want to remember!*

Ryu smiled at this.

"What's the matter?" Ryu asked still smiling. "Afraid of blood?"

"Dark?!" Kendo's voice shouted from down below. Ryu dropped his smile; his fun torturing Dark was disrupted.

Ryu looked down and saw the top of Kendo's head. Ryu smiled again.

"I'm done with you." Ryu stood up and looked at Dark, who curled up in the snow, black tears running down his face and froze. Ryu disappeared and the blizzard started blowing again.

"Damn it." Kendo raised his arm like Dark did and looked around. "Dark?!" he shouted. Kendo started walking left, still shielding his eyes. Ryu followed him silently.

"Dark, where are you?!" the blizzard blew harder and Kendo fell forward by the force of the wind. *Damn it....* "Huh?"

Kendo felt something heavy sitting on his back.

"Do you remember, Kitsune, your son?" Ryu said behind Kendo's ear.

“Ryu?” Kendo tried to get up, but Ryu prevented him from doing so by putting his hands on Kendo's shoulder blades; they were Kendo's paralyzing spots.

Once again, the blizzard calmed and Ryu was visible.

“I know what happened to Kitsune. I have the memory.”

If there was one thing that Kendo *did* fear was bad or even horrible news about his eldest son, especially if he, Kendo, hasn't seen Kitsune for a long time. Ryu leaned forward close enough for his forehead to touch the back of Kendo's head. A small glint shined and then disappeared.

Kendo's eyes widened as he saw what had happened to Kitsune. He saw blood spurt and spatter about the memory and Kitsune lying face down in his mountain home. The grass was stained with his blood and Kitsune-Shounen's blood. Kitsune's eyes were wide, as if he was attacked by someone from behind and with one slash of a claw or swing of a sword, he and Kitsune-Shounen was dead.

The memory faded and left Kendo silent. Ryu slowly got off. When he was completely standing, Kendo still lied in the snow. Ryu smirked at his success with mentally torturing the two and only men in the household. Dark stilled lied curled on the roof top while Kendo lied here, in front of Ryu, in complete shock of his son's death.

Ryu turned back to go into the house. There was the place where he had to go to in order to succeed his task.

Ryu went to the door and cleaned his fingers off. He then straightened his clothes and opened the door.

“Ryu! You're back!” Tenshi exclaimed getting up.

Arc looked up. Her eyes were slightly red because of the crying she has just started.

“Ryu?” Arc muttered. She got up and looked at him.

“Arc,” he said. “I finally escaped from that horrid place.”

Arc started to cry more. She ran over to him and embraced his neck while kissing his lips at the same time. Ryu's face lit up from embarrassment. He and Arc were like that for five seconds and then Arc broke the kiss, but not their embrace.

“It finally good to see you, Ryu.” She said in a watery voice.

“It's good to see you too, Arc.”

Arc looked at him and then shoved another kiss onto his lips. She forced it so hard that Ryu stumbled backwards and fell, taking Arc with him.

“Let's leave then alone.” Miko said taking Tenshi's arm.

Miko and Tenshi started to leave the room.

“Hold on....” Arc said suddenly.

Miko and Tenshi turned to see that Arc had turned into her half demon form.

“Ryu,” Arc said with a suspicious look in her eyes.

“Yes?”

“Why do I taste and smell blood coming from your mouth?” Arc inquired.

“You caught me.” Ryu disappeared from beneath Arc and reappeared on the other side of the table. “I was going to be lenient about this, but I changed my mind.”

Ryu's black dragon wings extended out from under his white cape; all the women gasped.

Ryu took the Crescent Moon Blade and tied it to his side.

“If you want to find Dark and Kendo, they're outside, freezing like a human popsicle sticks. Dark's on the roof and Kendo is on the ground of the outside hallway.” Ryu leapt up and flew through the roof, smashing it into many pieces.

“We'll meet again. I assure you, two of you are going to die.” Ryu then flew away into the snowy sky.

## Chapter Thirteen: Disappearing Hate

Ryu floated through the frozen sky above a city covered with frost and snow. From above, the buildings looked like ice sculptures laden with ice shavings. He looked down and saw the city. He imagined it destroyed and uninhabited. He then turned around to Xiaohe Mountain. There, he speed up and curved around the mountain, heading to the other side. He went so fast that he heard whistling noises in ears.

But he started to slow down slightly. His forehead felt hot and his cheeks were spray painted with pink and a bit of red. His lungs were on fire and Ryu had a hard time with breathing. His eyes glazed over slightly, weakening his sight.

“shoot!” Ryu rubbed his eyes, trying to clear his vision. But he then started coughing horribly. He sped up and crash landed in the snow in front of Oukami's shrine. The sun started to come from under the clouds, brightness enveloped the shrine.

Kori floated into the snow and stopped beside Ryu.

"Do you have the blade?" she asked.

"Yes.... Here." Ryu flipped over and untied the sword from his waist and held it up to Kori.

"You are to deliver to sword in person, Ryu." Kori froze Ryu in a block of ice and then he disappeared when it shattered. She then turned and disappeared into the shrine.

Ryu reappeared in a block of ice, which shattered and spread across the floor. Ryu fell on his back and flipped over to face Oukami's dirt ridden human feet. Ryu looked up and stood, straightening his clothes. But once he did, he stumbled, but regained his posture.

"Here's... the sword...." Ryu panted. He fell forward and the sword dropped from his grasp. Oukami walked over to Ryu and picked him up by his hair.

"What's the matter? Too weak after a simple task? Or are you in heat again?"

Ryu didn't answer. His panting started to become more labored.

"Excuse me my lord." Kori said walking over to look at Ryu. "He is neither of your suggestions." Kori held her Ice Crystal Ball in front of Ryu which allowed her to see Ryu's body heat. She then lowered it and said, "He is sick."

"Sick? Demon's do not get sick!"

"Must I remind you that Ryu is half human?" Kori asked. "Humans get sick and he is half human. So he will get sick from time to time."

"Damn it." Oukami let Ryu's hair go and Ryu fell to the floor with a thud. "Worthless half-breed."

"Do you want him inside the orb?" Kori asked holding her crystal ball up again.

"No, not this time." Oukami picked up the sword, but it shocked him with blue electricity. "What the hell?!" Oukami withdrew his hand and saw that blue flames diminished from it.

"There is a blood barrier around the sword." Kori said.

"A blood barrier?! Damn it, I was so close to using this sword." Oukami said angered by the new information. "Whose blood barrier is around it?"

"The Obsidian and Crescent, my lord." Kori answered. "But enough of this, what of Ryu?"

"What about him?" Oukami asked.

"He is the leader of the demons and he is not well. What do we do?"

"Leave him. He'll get over the sickness tomorrow."

“Do you plan to keep sending him on tasks, my lord?”

“Yes. It'll be good for him.” Oukami turned and disappeared in a puff of smoke.

Kori looked down at Ryu and kneeled next to him. She placed a purple rose next to him and said, “I pity you.” She then disappeared.

Ryu looked up and saw the rose. A sweet aroma was being given off of it and filled Ryu's nose. Ryu gave a weak smile and his eyes went blank. His head fell onto the floor, his eyes shut, and mouth ajar.

Kaji then appeared with a flash of fire next to Ryu. He took Ryu and dragged him up some wooden steps, next to a statue that resembles a black dragon. There, he sat down and placed Ryu against his warm chest that a fire burned inside. Ryu's back was against it, but it felt no heart beat.

“I am a homunculus.” Kaji said softly to Ryu's sleeping form. “You only feel warmth. There is no beat.” Kaji leaned back against the statue with Ryu still against his chest. “My only wish is to feel your heart beat, as mine does not. My only wish is to merge with you, and take your power. But I cannot do so; not now anyway. Oukami needs you. And I need you. Which side will you take? Will you take power; Oukami? Or will you take living within: me?”

Kaji's right hand unpinned Ryu's cloak and unhooked the first two tassels under his vest. His hand then slipped under the silky clothing and rested over Ryu's chest where his heart beat slowly. But Ryu's face went red and he moaned. Ryu's hand weakly went to his chest on the outside of his clothing and rested it over Kaji's hand.

“I have no intension, none at all, to claim you again.” Kaji whispered again to Ryu. “For you are not well, and if I do so, I will get sick too. If both of us are sick, then Oukami will be furious.”

Kaji threw his head back and closed his eyes slowly, looking at the mighty dragon's long fangs. “Soon *you* will be resurrected, Tsuki No Kuroi Ryu Okami-sama.” He then fell asleep resting against the dragon statue, which its eyes glowed red and then returned to normal.

### **Minutes Earlier at the Tavern...**

Dark collapsed onto the outside hallway where the Kendo laid, with the snow still falling.

He got up slowly and crawled to Kendo.

“Kendo,” he muttered. “Mahou No Taiyo....”

The snow stopped falling and the sun crept from behind the clouds. The sun's rays shined upon the white land and warmed it up ever so slightly. But it did not reach Dark and Kendo's frozen bodies.

Dark crawled under one of Kendo's arms and curled there, trying to get warmth. He coughed and his face went red. Sweat covered his palms and forehead. Inside, he felt like he was on fire. Yet he felt very cold; abnormally cold.

"Dark! Kendo! Are you okay?" Arc came running up wiping her eyes from her tears.

Neither Dark nor Kendo responded to her. They were both too cold make a verbal response. All that they could do was lay there and freeze.

"Mother! Help me!" Arc took hold of Kendo as Tenshi took hold of Dark.

Kendo's tail shook, making the snow fall off of it. Kendo got to his feet with Arc's help. He turned around and looked at Arc. His eyes widened and they shook in his sockets.

"Arc..." he said, looking into her eyes. "Take you spectacles off."

"Why?"

"Just do it, please. For me." Kendo responded in a desperate tone.

Without an answer, Arc took her glasses off with one hand; the other was supporting Kendo. Kendo stared into her eyes and saw Kitsune's eyes within them.

"Kendo-sensei?" Arc said looking at him with glossy sheen in her eyes.

He didn't say anything. He just moved closer to Arc and embraced her, shaking and digging his claws into her back.

"Ah! Kendo-sensei, it hurts!"

Behind the couple, Tenshi was shaking Dark.

"Dark, Dark, wake up! Say something!" Tenshi exclaimed. She shook Dark's shoulders harder. "Wake up!"

Worrying, she placed her hand on his forehead but quickly drew it back.

"He has a terrible fever!" She picked Dark up and dragged him inside. "Oh, how can this be?"

"He was outside long enough to catch a cold. What do you think?!" Arc said angrily. "Kendo isn't sick though, I wonder why?" Arc, who dragged in an unconscious Kendo in, felt his forehead for any signs of sickness. But there were none.

"Kendo is a full demon." Miko said. She was still at the table. "It's known that demons don't get sick. But demons of a lower class, half demons, and humans *do* get sick. Since Dark is a half demon, he will get sick."



“Long, yet short explanation, Mother.” Tenshi set Dark onto the tatami mat and went to get some cold water, with Arc and Miko right behind her, leaving Kendo and Dark alone.

Kendo opened his eyes slowly and looked at Dark. Kendo's eyes were glazed. He moved over to lay next to Dark behind him.

“Dark...” Kendo muttered. He turned Dark and went closer, his chest against Dark's back. “Aishooteru....” His legs locked with Dark's legs and Kendo embraced Dark tightly.

Dark opened his eyes and they too were glazed over. “Kendo... yamita....”

“Ne? Why should I?” Kendo's moved his hand over and into Dark's clothing, massaging his chest; Dark moaned.

“Stop...!” Dark exclaimed as loud as a whisper. “Dame...”

Arc, who had come into the room, saw the scene and backed away from it with a flushed face.

“I don't think we should intrude.” She said covering her face with her palms.

“Why?” Tenshi peeked into the room and then withdrew her head. “Oh....”

“Do you think they're lovers?”

“Don't know.” Tenshi peered into the room again. “But I think they are.... Yep they are!” she added quickly withdrawing her head again.

“Who has dominance?” Arc asked.

“Kendo does.” Miko said; she had also peered into the room.

Arc sat down onto the floor still covering her face. All three of the women heard Kendo and Dark's moans and shouts of love to each other; it made Arc fell uneasy. After ten minutes, a silence rang through the room. All they heard was pants.

Tenshi was the first to go in. But when she did, Arc and Miko heard her gasp.

“What's the—?” Arc ran into the room but she paused in front of Dark and Kendo's bodies. On both of their foreheads, flashed in white kanji, “YAOI” But also, red lines flashed on Dark body in the exact places where his scars laid, making his body nearly a beacon. But aside that, Dark's right eyes was visible now that his bangs are out of the way. His right eye was deep white with black lines going through it.

“What the hell?” Arc said kneeling down. “What happened to his eye?”

“I will tell you another time.” Miko said shutting Dark and Kendo's glazed eyes; they fell unconscious

with their eyes open.

“So you know what happened?”

“Yes, but it is not important. What concerns me now is Dark's sickness.” She started to pull Dark from under Kendo. But before she made it half way, Kendo eyes glowed red and grabbed Dark's forearms tightly. He growled deeply in his throat and bared his teeth. When Miko let go of Dark, Kendo ceased and fell unconscious once again. The kanji disappeared from his and Dark's forehead; so did the glowing marks.

Kaji laid on top of Ryu with a blanket over him. His head rested on Ryu's shoulder blade, panting hard and sweat dripping off of him. Kaji opened his eyes slowly and propped himself on his arms. He looked at Ryu's jagged marks that went down on each side of his spine. He smiled and traced the marks. Ryu gave a small moan and his back started arched.

Ryu's wings were gone, but Kaji wasn't surprised. Every time Ryu was exhausted or tired, his dragon wings would retract into his back to give him an easier time sleeping. Kaji rubbed Ryu's back lightly and the wings crept out slowly, making Ryu grunt.

Kaji got off of Ryu and quickly got dressed. As he did, Ryu's wings started coming out faster, making Ryu yell in pain. Kori then appeared, with her crystal ball that felt warm in her hands.

“Move, Kaji.” Kori commanded. Kaji quickly got out of the way and Kori drenched Ryu with warm water that came out of her crystal ball like a fire hose with less pressure. It washed Ryu off but mixed with the water that is now in the floor, was blood. Blood was spilling from the base of Ryu's wings, who is still yelling in pain.

Kaji gasped and Oukami appeared.

“What's going on?” Oukami asked strictly to Kaji.

“My lord...I... well um...” Kaji stammered.

Oukami walked up to Kaji and sniffed him.

“You disobeyed me!” Oukami slapped Kaji hard sending him to the ground with a bright red slap mark on his face. Oukami had smelled the truth on Kaji. “I told you not to touch him unless I gave permission!” Oukami swung a fierce kick to Kaji's stomach, causing Kaji to spit up blood. He then held a hand up to Kori, signaling her to stop; she did so. Oukami walked over to Ryu who whimpered on the floor, blood still spilling from his back.

Oukami bent down and placed his hand over the bleeding spots. He closed his eyes and his hand glowed white. The bleeding started to cease and so did Ryu's whimpers. After it had completely stopped

bleeding Oukami opened his eyes and looked at Ryu and Ryu looked back.

Ryu got onto his knees and leaned to Oukami. He gripped his clothes and black tears fell from his face.

“Oukami-sama...” Ryu mumbled. He buried his face into Oukami's clothes and cried there.

Oukami was a bit stunned; he slowly wrapped his arms around Ryu's head. Oukami closed his eyes again and Ryu white attire appeared on him. Ryu's wings were folded on his back under his white cape. His gauntlets and armllet gleamed dully in the dim light. His tears gave off a silver sheen that glimmered faintly.

“Oukami-sama,” Ryu mumbled. He looked up with his black eye on Oukami's silver ones. “Am...am I really...worthless?” More tears fell and Ryu's mouth fell into a long frown. “Am I?” he asked again, his voice cracking.

Oukami's eyes widened and he shoved Ryu off of him. He then stood, towering over Ryu, his shadow covering him.

“You *are* Worthless.” Oukami turned his back on Ryu. “Hmph,” he then disappeared leaving Ryu's eyes gazing into nothing out of the extreme mental shock he had just received.

“Worthless?” He repeated.

The wind blew, brushing Ryu's bangs aside, revealing his white eye. The word, “worthless” rang through his ears, making its mark in his head.

“*You are Worthless.*” Yami Obsidian's voice said in Ryu's head.

“Dark was also called Worthless...” Kori said moving closer to Ryu.

Ryu looked at her with red eyes; not of anger, but of sadness. His black tears now streamed out of his eyes. Ryu saw his face reflected in her crystal ball. He saw how pathetic he looked. Ryu crawled over to Kori and took a closer look into the ball.

“Tama ni utsutta kiseki no asa...” Ryu whispered. He then took the crystal ball and ran from the room. Kori floated after him with an angry expression on her face.

“Give that back!”

Ryu flew into the morning light holding the crystal ball above him.

“In the miraculous morning reflected in the orb, take my soul, for my true name is...” Ryu shouted to the sky.

“NO!” Kori shouted. Kaji ran out and flew into the sky with white dragon wings coming from his back covered with blood.

“Don't Ryu!” Kaji flew faster and took the crystal ball from him. He then turned around and looked at Ryu with fury. “Don't even think about it!”

Ryu looked at his father with fear in his eyes. As Kaji flew down to Kori, Ryu's eyes followed. Ryu saw Kaji give the crystal ball to Kori and tell her something. Kori nodded her head and she disappeared. Kaji then looked at Ryu with the same angry look.

Ryu's heart pounded faster. The hate he had against Dark, Kendo and the women disappeared in a rush of the cold wind. A blizzard started blowing, causing Ryu to shiver. Ryu floated down to the ground, his feet crunching the snow.

“I remember...” Ryu muttered to himself. “I don't hate Kendo, Dark, Tenshi, Miko and Arc. I...” But before he could finish, his eyes widened and he fell forward. When he did, Kaji was revealed to be behind him.

Kaji's wings had retracted, leaving blood stains on his attire. His eyes narrowed greatly as he picked Ryu up by the back of his vest. But, after thinking silently to himself, his eyes returned to its normality. The usual cruelty that reflected upon his eyes was replaced with gentleness. He embraced Ryu like a fragile doll, his hands caressing his back.

“Cancel the kills...” Kaji whispered in Ryu's ear. “We've done enough killing. Kori,”

“Yes, Kaji,” Kori said floating over to him. “What is it?”

“Send Ryu back and get rid of me.” Kaji said in a stern voice.

Kori tightened her grip on her crystal ball. “May I ask why?”

“I cannot take this any longer.” Kaji answered. “By the time Ryu is back with the others, I will be dead.” Kaji placed Ryu on the ground. “But I want to be able to come back, come back in a real body.”

“Only the Kagami No Ume can arrange that. I have no power over it.” Kori held her crystal ball toward Ryu and froze him. Ryu then disappeared when it shattered. She then pointed the ball to Kaji.

“Make a slow kill; I deserve to suffer.” Kaji said with slight anger in his voice.

Kori didn't say a word and her crystal ball gleamed blue. Kaji fell to the ground on his knees, clutching his chest where his heart was. His breath came in raspy gasps, his eyes shrinking. His heart pumped hard against its icy concealment along with his lungs that was also concealed in ice. Every exhale he made he drew down lower to the ground. Then finally, after his last breath, he buried his face into the snow, dead.

## The Last Chapter: To Fight Once More

Ryu felt like he was floating on an endless sea of darkness; his eyes saw nothing. He twisted his head from side to side trying to see what was happening. Was he dead? Or was he in a room of darkness? But he felt cold, and felt some sort of weight on him. He wondered what it was.

“Ryu, wake up. Please wake up.” A girl's voice sobbed. He then felt an invisible fist pounding on his arm. “Wake up, Ryu! Don't play any games. I'm not playing. Come back! Come back to me!”

“He won't come back.” A man's voice said. “His heart doesn't beat anymore.”

“It can't! It just can't! It has to beat! It has to!” Ryu felt more pounds of a fist on him. Why didn't he open his eyes?

“Are you sure that his heart—?”

“Yes, I made.... Wait! I heard a beat!”

Who was talking? All the voices are mixed. Where was he? Where is everyone?

Ryu's eyes opened, his first glances blurry. He saw two men and a woman looming over him. He blinked trying to clear his vision.

“Ryu! Thank goodness!”

The next thing he knew, Ryu was being hugged by Arc.

“Arc?” Ryu questioned. “What happened?”

Arc didn't answer. She tightened her grip on Ryu into a crushing hug.

“I'm glad that you are alive.”

“I see that. Can you let go?” Ryu choked.

“I'm sorry,” Arc said, letting Ryu go. “I was so happy seeing you again.”

“I noticed.”

“How do you feel Ryu?” Dark asked, helping Ryu up.

“I'm fine.” Ryu cracked his neck and rotated his shoulders. “I'm just stiff.”

“Well, that's only temporary. We're glad your back, Ryu.” Kendo said patting Ryu's back.

Ryu smiled and looked at Arc. In his eye he asked one silent question: “Do you want to?”

In Arc's eyes, she understood what Ryu meant. He silently responded, “Yes.”

Ryu offered his hand and Arc took it blushing. Ryu lead Arc to his room with Dark and Kendo following. Ryu shut the sliding door behind him and latched it, preventing Dark and Kendo from coming in.

“You won't hurt me right?” Kendo and Dark heard Arc ask.

“Don't worry,” Ryu responded. “I'll be gentle.”

“You don't think they—?”

Dark and Kendo heard clothing drop to the floor.

“Oh yes. This will take me back when I was with Ai.” Dark said sitting on one side to the door.

“Really? I didn't know you had a mate.”

“How rude. Of course I did.”

“Well, I assume you had a half demon wife. While I had a human wife.”

“Human? What's her name?”

Kendo smiled. “Sahara...”

“Sahara?! But I...! She...! Why you!”

“Whoa! Someone is definitely angry.” Kendo laughed.

Ryu and Arc stared at the latched door. Ryu's cape lay on the floor and he and Arc were still fully dressed.

“Well, we got them to fight.” Arc said smiling at the noise beyond the door.

“I told you it would work.” Ryu said also smiling. “Now do you really want to do it, now that Kendo and Dark are distracted?”

“Sure, why not?”

Both Arc and Ryu chuckled and kissed each other, deepening the kiss.

## **At Oukami's Shrine that night...**

The dragon statue's eyes glowed blood red and started to shake. Roars were heard and a shattering sound was made. The statue had burst open, revealing a real black dragon. It swerved around the room and spotted Kaji's body.

“YOU HAVE FAILED ME, KAJI OBSIDIAN!!!” the dragon said. “YOUR BODY IS NOW MINE!!” The dragon gave another roar and flew to Kaji's body and entered it. Kaji's body glowed red and then stopped.

His eyelids shook slightly. They then shot open, showing that they were red. Outside the Crescent Moon glowed and eerie glow. Sending the dragon mighty waves of recovering strength. The dragon stood up using Kaji's body and looked outside where the Crescent Moon shined. The Crescent Moon.

**End of Story**





“The Crimson Moonlight”

“War had been declared,

And you have accepted it.”

**More memories haunt Ryu, but now something else intervenes: War. Oukami has declared an unspecified war and the group had agreed upon it silently. Cities may be destroyed and movement is abound and definite. Mizu reappears and helps the group get things straight. But will it help?**

**Upon the battle, it is moved to Japan where Dark used to live. Now his memories haunt him, causing him to weaken. Ryu, Arc, Kendo, and Dark are the only ones there. Is it enough to fight? Is it enough to defeat Oukami? Ryu is taken back and forth between the groups for his power is still wanted.**

**But what is this? In between the sidelines of war, Yaoi love is infecting both groups. But all couples have Ryu as the “submitter”. Is this but a coincidence or is there something else on Ryu's mind? A surprise waits inside Ryu to burst. Actually many surprises open in the FINAL segment of “The Obsidians' Moon” series. Will it all settle? Or will it all end in tragedy?**

**Read to find out**

**(Story in Progress)**

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