

Marc

It had been three years since Claire disappeared. No one knew where she'd gone. Her room had been empty, and the window shut. But the candle was out and all the matches were used. The darkness had taken her. That was for sure.

And now Marc was determined to find out what exactly had happened. The darkness was ending and when the light would come the things lost in the darkness would be lost forever. So Marc prepared. He took his tinderbox, three dragonwax candles and four boxes of matches. He went to the room where Claire had disappeared. It still looked like three years ago. The house had been abandoned, but the room was untouched.

Marc sat down on the bed, which was dustcovered, but still intact, and drew his legs under him. In one hand he held a candle and in the other a knife. Marc had put everything he needed next to him. One last time Marc looked around the room. No one was there. Marc blew out the candle.

The darkness took over.

At first nothing happened. But then the darkness went darker, and the temperature dropped. Marc held his breath. He could hear the key turning in the old lock on the window. He dared not move, but needed a match. As quietly as he could he fumbled a match out of the box. When he sensed a presence, he dropped his knife and struck the match. In the flare he saw a grin, a fanged grin.

"Soooo, not afraid of the dark, are we now?"

Marc stared at the grin. In awe, he forgot all about the match and burned his finger.

"Outch!"

Marc threw away the match. The dark took over. Panic took over.

"Here you go."

A freezing cold box of matches was put in Marc's hand.

"Here are your matches."

Quickly Marc struck a match. The grin was back.

"See what happens when the dark comes."

The grin showed his fangs.

"Soooo, you're the friend of girly whirly, are you not?"

Marc knotted slowly.

"She was not afraid of the dark. She was brave."

The grin dropped and showed his sad side.

"Now she's gone."

Marc slowly reached for his knife, his gaze still locked on the grin.

The grin came back.

"She tasted soooo good!"

The grin faded. Marc held up his knife.

"And you, you'll taste burned."

The match, which Marc had thrown away, had smoldered on the bed and the tinder had been knocked over when Marc had searched for the matches. From one moment to the next the whole bed flared up. The dry fabric, the four boxes of matches, the contents of the tinderbox and the three dragonwax candles together were enough to make an inferno. Marc

yelled in agony. For a second the whole body, which contained the grin, was visible before it vanished.

“And I don’t like burned boys.”