

A Twisted Cinderella's Twisted Revenge

- Or so she thought...

"RHODOPIS IS DEAD???" her uncle, who had already been through enough grief yelled. "Oh, is this one of your little jokes, Miss Maryam. What about you, Mr Johnson - Mrs May - tell me they're joking?"

"We came here to give you our condolences, as close friends to your late niece, Mr Muhammad."

"It's alright. I've got NOTHING to lose." Mr Muhammad sighed, eyes watery.

"Were sorry for your loss...es. We know she was all you had. What happened to your other three nieces?"

"Not now, May. He's already in a hard position." Mr Johnson narrowed his eyebrows, signalling Mrs May.

"Sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you Mr -"

"Don't worry, it's not your fault May. My other nieces, Kipa, Maymoona and Esme don't even know me. They'll think I'm a stranger. Their mother passed away, and since then, their father had to be both a mother and father. It was really hard for him, especially because he had such bossy children. I don't even know how they are. They live back in the city of Ariamas, whilst we live in one of Ariamas' little villages."

Let's rewind a few days ago to when this all started...

Quietly. Calmly. The fresh breeze inhaled tranquillity. Under a bridge kept strong by its pride, waiting patiently for spring's sensational arrival was a frozen river that ran across a place that most call home. Who knew that a little corner of the big world could be this fortunate? Well, in Ariamas, this was the norm. Most people would find this as an unusual norm; to others, it was just the norm. Whilst warmth was felt within, a simple, white blanket hugged the ground, but making its grass *frown, freeze and fold* instead of *smiling, singing and shining*. Each and every *home-sweet-home's* hearth was lit with love that shone out *the lively villagers* windows, reflecting on the *dainty* ice, admiring their beauty. Watching the darkness dissolve into light, a lone, brick coloured bench sat, and began to sink into the sea of snow that surrounded it.

In one of their little houses, she sat, flicking through both the channels on her TV and her well-combed hair. Her slender figure paused for a moment - eyes glued to the screen, wide open, watching the always-bad-news. Three of her friend's shops, Mr Jhonson, Miss Maryam and Mrs May, had been robbed. She was more interested in how someone from the city broke out of jail - *unlike the rest of the village, who had differed from her in every unique way...*

Hanging by her earlobes were golden earrings which had cantaloupe gems in its centre. Flowing like a calm stream was her silky cream dress in which she wore to reflect her silky sweet, fragile voice. *Elegantly fluttering in the air, was her luscious, canary wavy hair.*

Some say that she reflected beauty; others say she was beauty. However, no matter what they say, deep within her heart Rhodopis felt ugly. Was it because of her lack of a mother's love and a father's hugs? Little did her gullible heart know that vengeance wouldn't be her cure, for it would only add more fuel to the fire...

The next mornings were just as casual as they *always were* - or so Rhodopis, who had woken up before the sun had, thought. She sat in the park that's fluffy snow accompanied a brick coloured bench. At least the bench appreciated it (deep down, it knew that the snow was giving it the complete opposite of comfort).

Mr Johnson, Miss Maryam and Mrs May woke up exactly at sunrise, to get each of their shops ready, and to search for a deaf and mute girl called Anna's family, whilst also being her family. Funny, the night before each of their shops had been robbed - who would have a grudge against them, the most tender people of Ariamas? Maybe their generosity was mostly seen as a weakness to thieves, rather than the strength it was to their mothers (really, their mothers agreed with the thieves' opinions).

Rhodopis' silky hair was the sun itself, so she didn't need any light in the dark at this time of the night. It seemed like she was waiting for something - wouldn't that be bizarre, for she did this every day? Rhodopis would claim that she visited the park for her love of nature, but deep down, was there a fire burning in her heart? She would never let go of her past, the lonesome little girl she was before...

Simultaneously, Rhodopis' friends were all staying at May's house, staggered about yesterday's news. In a mixture of bewilderment and shock, they hired a detective, as they even found blood on each of their marble floors - they were more worried about their blood stained floor than robbery or death. They all described a hooded man, wearing a uniform and raven, baggy trousers. However, just after hiring Detective Brown, Brown passed away. They had figured out that he had a deadly illness. An illness that's only option was to give a person one option - death. Just as late Brown was hired, death fired him.

Mr Johnson hired another detective to take Detective Brown's place - they hired Detective Dark: Fear lurked around him. But not to scare him. He brought this fear upon criminals, with his fearsomely tough figure's overshadowing shadow. In fact fear admired him. Like nothing can get past an eagle's eyes, nothing could get past his sharp, emerald precautions eyes that were their CCTV cameras - due to this, they didn't exist in Ariamas.

With golden hair like the dazzling strings that the sun span, this immaculate detective dressed neat and modern; polished, ebony shoes; a midnight, coat; and a presentable uniform.

Concurrently, Rhodopis, who hadn't been told about anything other than robbery, awaited something. A man in an exhausted uniform dashed past her, like he was afraid to be seen. His name was Mr Jones, and was found an orphan at Miss Maryam's doorstep. He grew in fear of all - even Miss Maryam, whose mother treated him as part of their family.

Confused, Rhodopis still awaited what she had awaited. Did it ever come? What did she wait for? What thoughts had formed a complete circuit in her mind? What secrets had she concealed in a sarcophagus within her that incinerated her heart in an excruciating fire? Was she still grieving over her parents' graves? It was only perceivable for Rhodopis, that a fire had penetrated her heart.

Now that another day had passed, Rhodopis was another day within an ace of death - or so Rhodopis, who once again sat waiting in the park thought. Obscuring behind snowy trees, Anna, who impishly loved to wonder around, watched as the leaves flew over Rhodopis. She knew her hearing and talking disability would make others think she was unimpeachable, though deep down she was very puckish.

That day, Johnson, May and Maryam decided that they would wake up as early as Rhodopis had. Their shops were neighbouring the park, so they thought if they got their shops ready early, they could meet Rhodopis once they were done.

Muffled up like a pig in a blanket, Rhodopis had been ignorant of her soon coming future. Anna felt a shiver run down her spine, someone's cold breath freezing her - who was there? She didn't have the voice to scream for help. All she saw was a Dark figure and Rhodopis' body on the floor beside it - stock-still...

In an exultant frame of mind, Johnson opened his shop window to the fresh smell of the breeze that suddenly had been contaminated with something that made it reek of acrid despondency. His smile turned upside down. He knew what it was. "Mr Johnson, what are you looking-" May paused for a moment, as if she had caught a virus called sadness from Johnson.

"What is it, May, did you see something? Johnson? Why aren't you responding?" Maryam bawled, looking out her window and into theirs.

"Maryam," May stopped to let a river slither her cheeks. "Rhodopis...umm, well"

"Why don't you talk, May? Tell me. What happened to our Rhodopis?"

Johnson **peered** out of his window "I think we've lost our friend... It might not be too late - we need to go up to her to be sure."

Johnson tried to spread a little hope, but Maryam knew that she didn't want to be the one to speak to Mr Muhammad, Rhodopis' uncle.

Revealing herself, out of the shadows, **blood-chilled**, she came. Anna couldn't erase the mark of being a witness of death from her mind - in fact, that mark was engraved in her soul, like a scar roaming around in her mind, imprisoning her with its atrocious memories. It would always haunt **the three friends** too. That uniformed figure that hunted down Rhodopis, had hunted down a piece of their hearts that died with her.

Anna had been right next to Rhodopis - she knew who the criminal **of the** crime was - though how could she speak without a voice, hear without hearing? Staying as silent as herself, not that there was nothing any more speechless, she began to draw pictures of the criminal. She didn't know the man, so she couldn't write down the person's name - but she could only draw him, sadly. Art was her least favourite subject. Was the burden all on her shoulders now? Did she wield the future of this case in her hands?

Back in the city of Ariamas, three sisters who lived like princesses bossed their father about, like they were the parents. Maymoona, Kipa and Esme. They thought about staying in *the village of the Ariamas*, for its beauty was recognised worldwide. Little did they know that they were about to be caught up in a knot that turned the village's fresh breeze into a reeking pungent smell that lurked through the streets.

The moment they arrived, they were suspects - suspects for their past scenarios with Rhodopis. Jealousy could ruin even the best of relationships, and had consumed the three sister's souls to make them ruin another soul to save their

own - like they were saving their soul, though they were only surrendering their soul to jealousy.

Detective Dark held an investigation in the park, and all the news he received from then **on, was bad - as always**. He brought the fear out of them. The fear in them feared him.

Johnson, who was brave enough, Told Detective Dark that the person who committed this crime was a hooded man in raven, baggy trousers and a uniform. After that, they were ready to give their condolences to Mr Muhammad...

Ping!!! PING! His alarm yelled at him. Dark HATED his alarm. His alarm HATED him. Dark had made his alarm sound most annoying, so that he would wake up - he *would* wake up, but only to turn it off. Maybe, someday, he would thank the alarm for waking him up - *someday*.

Knock! KNOCK! -Wearily, Dark wasn't sure if he had made his alarm sound MORE annoying, until he saw Anna's shadow crawling into the room ahead of her. Relieved yet annoyed, annoyed yet bewildered, Dark questioned her early sudden visit.

"Are you-" he stopped to see her taking pages out of his printer, writing something down in a scruffy handwriting. It read:

I am seven years old, and I'm an orphan who is deaf and mute. This is why I am writing instead of speaking. But, that's not why I'm here. Rhadopees - that's why. I'm not really sure how to spell her name - the one who died recently - you're that detective, right - you know her, don't you? If you mind, I'll keep spelling her name like that, until I'm corrected. Anyways, I witnessed her death. You might be thinking: so did Mr. Johnson and them. However, I was right there. Mrs May's description of the criminal was correct, but I know something more - the man looked just like a man I saw this morning, and he also went past Rhodopis. He matched the description perfectly. If you want to reply, here.

She handed him a pen from his pencil pot, and grabbed another paper from the printer. However, Detective Dark's face depicted the opposite of the emotions that Anna had expected: worry, confusion and, 'Oh no!' had been engraved onto his weary expression. Did he have plans for something else? But Anna just told him the answer? She had to go find out what was wrong.

Anna, who took advantage of her disability, hoped that Dark hadn't spotted her creeping along behind him. Dark, on the other hand, could still hear her munch up the remains of her breakfast, that she had still been chewing. He knew just what she was doing, especially that she had been taking forever to finish chewing one last morsel. Knock! Knock!

"So, this is the beauty of this village! People knocking on my door, when I haven't fully yet had my beauty sleep! Who cares now...it's already been *ruined!*" Kipa exclaimed, exhausted from her long journey.

Detective Dark opened the door - just like that.

"Rude." Kipa said, annoyed and annoyingly, just like the detective's alarm clock.

"I'm taking you to my office - all three of you! I don't want to waste my time!"

Dark said, still irked due to his alarm clock, in which she reminded him of.

Anna, who had thought he could read her handwriting, was confused.

Maybe he couldn't read it after all. No. Though she hoped she believed she was imagining, something she had never wished for before. Why would he still go to the sisters, even after, hopefully, understanding what I wrote to him? There was something quite suspicious about Dark - who was he? It was for him to know, and for her to find out...

Although all the evidence of Rhodopis' murder had been taken from the park, Dark had found a piece of hair - right where Rhodopis had died. It was Kipa's. There was also a button on the floor, and a tiny bead. They belonged to her sisters. Dark had declared that the murderers of Rhodopis had been the sisters, which made Mr. Muhammed grow more grief. Just as he had lost one niece, he felt like he had lost three more - he thought he knew the feeling of losing the three sisters before, but now he knew he didn't want that feeling.

Feeling more sad for him, Mr Johnson, Miss Maryam and Mrs May were ready to spill out their condolences to Mr Muhammed - *again*.

The next day, Mr Johnson went to visit Anna. He taught her a bit of sign language, like he would everyday. Then, Miss Maryam came, Johnson was surprised, when he saw her face - it was the one she made that scared him - *ALOT*.

"You've forgotten to give the poor girl breakfast! Poor girl, she doesn't even have the voice to say she's starving!" Miss Maryam squealed.

That was how Anna always got the pleasure of having the best meals ever. That day, they made a few pancakes for Breakfast, one in which Mr Johnson was too scared to eat. Some Days she would get cakes for Breakfast, spaghetti for lunch, and juicy lamb steaks for dinner; other days, they would take her to a restaurant together all

day long, and Mrs Maymoona would make Mr Johnson pay!

Mr Dark wasn't home for his alarm to wake him up. But Anna was. She wandered around his room, and found his diary. *Anna! Anna!* In her mind, it called her. She opened it up. She was the one reading now:

Dear Diary,

Tomorrow, I will leave for Canada. I booked a flight and found the perfect time to take off at. If I don't leave, all my plans will be ruined. Although I was the one who killed Detective Brown and Rhodopis, I am good. They are bad. They killed my parents. In fact, they killed many people's parents, especially Anna's. In case you don't know, Diary, she's the girl I saved when she was a baby. Surprisingly, she's here in Ariamas' famous village. She accidentally spelt Rhodopis' name as Rhadopees. Rhodopis had actually escaped from the city of Ariamas' prison, but the people hadn't known who was missing amongst the thousands of criminals there. I hadn't known she was deaf *and* mute when I saved her. I thought she was only mute. Detective Brown was the one who robbed the shops of Rhodopis' friends. Mr Johnson and them are good, though. They don't know of this. I dressed how he dressed when he had robbed, so they thought that it was the same man. I didn't want it to get too confusing, until Anna arrived. She knew that I had something to do with this. I removed the evidence in the park, to hide my traces. I then framed Kipa and her sisters for this crime, and I put them in jail. Before I leave, I'll kill someone else. It's the man that Anna said had looked just like me when I dressed like Detective brown. The one she said that had passed Miss Rhadopees. I mean Miss Rhodopis. The man I will kill is part of the death of parents too. When I do this, the people will know that the three sisters weren't the criminals, and they'll set them free. I know that Anna will come to my room and read this Diary, so hello Anna. Share this with everyone please, but not Mr Muhammed. I doubt he's ready yet.

Streams calmly flowed down Anna's pink cheeks, their particles calm and relaxed. She hastened across the street, round the corner and down the roads, which were always safe like home, to Mrs May's house, and post-hastily gave it to her. The news particles were like gas'. They spread through an instant gossip, just not to the corner Mr Muhammed lived in. When Muhammed came out of his shell, the news had been spread entirely across the village, and Muhammed was reunited with his nieces - the ones that weren't criminals after all.