INFINITE DEVASTATION (2011)

Chapter 1

“The assignment is due next week, class.” The teacher announced. The bell began ringing just as she finished her statement. The students scrambled out of their seats and poured into the hallways. “Taylor!” exclaimed the teacher.

“Yes Ms. Ingram?” I replied.

She gave me a firm look, “Don’t let this assignment be like the rest. All you have to do is write a story, of any kind, you got it?”

“Yeah”

“Good, now go to class, and please, don’t be late.”

I turn and walk out of the door. Immediately I notice no students in the halls. Normally it would be chaotic in the halls between classes. I turn to look around, the glass doors are broken, a warm wind is in the air outside is bright and sunny. The dark blue tile floor looks really scuffed. Most of the lockers are open, some are still locked. I was just now realizing the lights were off. Hearing the sound of foot steps from behind I run quickly toward them. All I see is the silhouette of a thin figure with long hair, slightly shorter than me. Then I realized that I’m in the spotlight of the skylights above me. I take a few steps back to keep from being easily seen. Now in the shadows I see that her skin is fairly pale in color. She continues towards me; she has obviously spotted me. My heart starts ponding. Am I seeing things? Am I dreaming? I blink and just like suddenly she’s gone. I step back into the light to make sure she wasn’t behind me without me knowing it. I make a slight glance to my right and the to my left. I gasp loudly, because she was standing right next to me. She has long silky bright red hair held up with a white ribbon, wearing a dress with purple flowers.

Her pale skin is extremely smooth looking.

“Shh, don’t be afraid,” she whispers. “I have an offer to make.”

I was about to scream, but she put a finger up to my lips to silence me. I notice a fresh cut on her palm, blood dripping on the floor. She doesn’t even seem to know it is cur. “you’re bleeding.” I mutter. She looks at her palm and with the other hand she unties the ribbon. Handing it to me she starts wrapping it urging me to hold it in place

After it is ties off the says, “thank you” with a gentle smile, her voice is soft and smooth. Without realizing I look at my hand. It is covered in her blood. The cut must have been deeper than I thought. In disgust I wipe it on my jeans.

“You’re a part of it now, by getting my blood on you.”

“What are you even talking about?”

“I’m cursed to live in this surreal world, you on the other hand can move between worlds now, we are bound by blood.”

“I think you’re crazy.”

“Look at your palm.”

I look at my palm for a few moments, then back at her. “Okay let’s say you story is true, what then?

“You will have to help me get back into the real world.”

“How?” I asked puzzled

“I’m not sure.”

Frustrated I sit up against the wall and start to cry.

“There is no need to cry” she says putting her hand on my shoulder. She looks toward the dark, then back at me. My face is in my knees and my arms are crossed over them.

“Here.” she says laying something down beside me. “Hold onto this and call for me if you need to talk, my name is Lela.”

I hear the bell ring and I look up, she’s gone. I look around just as the last few students go into their classrooms. Everything is the way it should be. I look to my side to see what was lain beside me. It is a copper chain necklace with a clear glass ring (so it seemed) looped on it. I pick them up and put them in my pocket. Then I look at my hand to see if it is really stained or not. There is still a faint stain but I’m sure it will come off. Puzzled about the whole situation of what happened I head to class, so much for not being late.

Chapter 2

I get up and go to my locker to exchange books, Ms. Ingram spots me on the way there.

“Taylor! What did I tell you? What class are you going to right now?”

“I’m teacher air this hour.”

“Good, I want you to go to my room and get started on that story.”

In a mumble, “Yes ma’am”

I go to her room and sit closest to her desk. I take out a paper and a pencil and start writing down the ‘vision’ I just had.

About an hour later I have written everything down that I can recall.

When I’m finished, I show her. “Now I want you to do this every day until we turn them in, understand?”

I reluctantly nod my head.

“Good now go to class.”

The last class of the day, Algebra. I hear my name being called again, “Taylor, guess what!” it said.

I turn to see my friend, Pony, “What’s up?”

“Nutin much” holding up an Algebra test that she had clearly passed, I remember helping her study for if a few nights ago. “Awesome.” I say with a smile and thumbs up.

“Thank you for helping me study.” She says.

“No problem, I’m always happy to help a good friend.”

Ms. Ingram walks out of her classroom. “Taylor, get to class.” She scolds.

“I have to go, talk to you after school.” I tell Pony before I turn to9 leave. Sometimes I wish my locker wasn’t right next to her classroom. The bell rings just as I enter the classroom. I immediately see the substitute teacher; I don’t like him. He’s always telling us to be quiet, even when we’re not talking. I start walking over to my desk

”If you weren’t in your seat when the bell rang, you’re late.”

That means I haven’t been on time to any classes all day.

“I’m going to pass out test papers, when you hear you name, come up here and ger you paper, silently.” He tells up. “Alex, Anna, Ben, David…”

The four of them get up as quietly as possible and receive their papers from him and sit back down. I reach into my pocket and take out the chain and ring to better examine them. The copper chain appears to be a necklace but nothing more than that, but the ring is a bit stranger it looks shattered on the inside but perfectly smooth on the outside. I hold it up to the light to see how it refracts. Many refracted rainbows are reflecting through ius. I stare at it in awe for a few moments.

“Tammy, Taylor…”

I come out of my daze and stumble to the front, he gave me a look, then hands me my paper. I take a quick glance at it. It’s a 97, “sweetness.” I mutter. Back at my seat I realize he was still giving me a look of distaste. I ignore it by going back to the ring and chain. I cautiously but the chain around my neck and fasten the latch. Nothing. But the ring I’m still a bit uneasy about.

“Victor” he finishes. “Your assignment is written on the board, I don’t care if you actually do the assignment or not, but it’s due when you walk in tomorrow.” He says.

I write down the assignment and then start considering the event from this morning. Who is Lela really? Where did she go? And why did she give me the ring and necklace? The next thing I know it the bell rang to dismiss school for the day.

I go to my locker and drop off my book and get my knapsack with my other things. I head toward the maple tree out front there me and Pony first met (we always meet there not)., as soon as I open the front doors, I see her standing there waiting for me. She has her denim backpack and saddle cloth.

“Are you ready to go?” she asks.

“Yeah.” I nod.

We start off toward the field behind the school.

“So did ya pass too?” Pony asks.

“Absolutely, I got a 97%!” I exclaim.

“Awesome, hey could you hold this?” handing me the saddle cloth.

“Sure.” I reach out and grab it.

She gets a halter out of her backpack. Funny that this routine doesn’t seem strange to me anymore. About five later we get to where her horse is at and she calls it over. It is a Clydesdale mare named Millie.

“You haven’t said much.” Pony says.

“Yeah, I know. I have a bit on my mind.”

“Like what?”

I pull out the ring and show her. “Somebody named Lela gave me this.”

“Did you say Lela?”

“Yeah why?”. I asked.

She throws the saddle cloth on and boosts me up. “We’re going to my house.” Pony says.

“Alright?” is something wrong?

“Yeah.” I say showing her the ring.

“I know someone named Lela that had a similar ring. She was the best friend a friend could have, but she died about a year ago. “She leads the horse.

“What happened to her?”

Pony hesitates then says. “You wouldn’t understand. Did she give you a copper chain?” I untuck it from my shirt to show her, “Good, you wanna keep that on.”

“Why?” I ask feeling inquisitive.

“It protects you from being detected by magic.”

“You went crazy too?”

“No. I will prove it when we get home.”

For the rest of the ride there was an uneasy silence between us.

It takes us about 20 minutes for us to get through the front gate of her small ranch. Toi the right is a 10 acre and on the left there’s her two-story house. She puts her horse in the pasture.

“Let me see the ring.” I hand it to her. She takes the ring and lays it on her palm then places her other hand on it and says “be seen” then hold it up between her forefinger and thumb. I see the other would that I had been in before. I can’t see it well enough to make anything out because she is holding it. She puts the ring between her hands as before and says, “be blind”. Now it is the way it was. She goes inside without saying anything and comes back out a couple minutes later with an old-fashioned key, it looks new though.

“But is that where Lela is?” I finally ask to break the silence.

“It should be. I hope it is. I really do!” She said in the most ecstatic voice I have ever hear. Shye continues, “: I can’t wait to see her again, she’s really nice. She gave me her horse!” she exclaims. “How do I get there?” I ask.

“With this key.” She says turning toward her house door. She unlocks her door with the key and opens it, the inside of the house is trashed wood floors are rotting, most windows are broke and the ones that aren’t are moldy. The table and chairs are scattered everywhere. She takes a step in and motions for me to follow. I cautiously take a step in and she shuts the door and locks it with the key, bouts the key in her pocket and unlatches is with her hand and reopens the door.

Chapter 3

The grass outside is all dead and in the field is mostly burned, some trees are still smoking from the fire. Ash is floating in the air. The porch had been broken and has holed in the top. The white fence that kept the horses in was broken and scattered everywhere. While they were taking in all the information of this world a large gray reptilian demon creature crawls out from beside the house. It is about three feet in length, has bat-like wings and sharp teeth, and spines all over its body, standing up right. It runs across the yard to the girls and tries to bite at Pony, Taylor screams. Pony gets mad at it and stomps its head with her boot. It squirms in pain; Taylor is covering her eyes with her hands. The creature gets us quickly and runs off. Pony starts off walking into the field ash blowing up as she sleeps. I stand there for a moment in fear before realizing she is leaving me behind. I gather my courage in hopes that it is a one-time event and call out “Hey wait up!” and I make a small dash up next to her.

I look to her in disbelief, “Where are we.”

“Lela calls it the Gray Area. There’s not supposed to be any life here, something must have gone wrong when we entered. Hopefully there is nothing else here, if there is it has to be removed.”

“Where exactly are we going?” I ask.

“We have to go back to the school.”

“But we don’t usually have to have to go through the field to get to the school. So why are we going this way?” I ask inquisitively.

“To many questions will ruin anything.” She replies.

I stop asking questions and start observing the ruined landscape. After awhile I begin to realize that there really are no animals of any kind here. The air is thick with ash now from us walking in the field. A few moments later Pony’s boot strikes a single plank with a keyhole, she takes her old key and “unlocks” the plank. A door reveals a passage leading to a small room underground. The fold already has a lantern inside, but I can’t tell what’s in there. She hops in, I just wait on the outside, occasionally looking around to see if anything was around. Clank. Pony tosses out an old rusted steel sword. The sudden notice spooked me, now my heart is pounding. Pony climbs out of the hole and picks up the old sword. I look at her in disbelief, if there’s nothing else here then why does she need that? “Has that place always been there?”

“Kinda.” She says trying to avoid the question, she’s obviously hiding something. I look around, an extremely thick fog seems to be on its way, Pony notices it too. Pony looks at it for a moment before saying, “Lets get down there.” Pointing underground.

Then she goes in the underground shelter again. “Careful getting down here.” Slowly I go down the steps of the ladder. After I’m down I look around and notice there are many more weapons of various sorts. Now I couldn’t help myself, “Why would you need one of these if there’s nothing here to hurt us?” I asked.

“There should be no creatures, but there will be more people that aren’t friendly, especially toward women.” She replied.

“I guess that makes sense. Should I get one?”

“If you want.” She answers in a chocked voice. She had been playing with the lantern, trying to get more oil in it. She walks over to the wall and starts examining a cmal hole that is there. I’m looking at the various weapons that are on a bench. Pony takes out her key and puts it in the hold, and unlocks it.

“What exactly is that key for?” I ask.

“It unlocks secrets.” She says grinning.

After awhile of eyeing her I bluntly asked, “How much do you really know?”

“About what?”

“All of… THIS!”

“The truth is that I came on a mission with Lela last year.”

“What was the mission?” I say as I pick up a unique blade off the table. It had a strong glow about it.

“It’s a picknife, it was used for disarming.” She says opening the ‘door’ she unlocked.

I look back at it, the blade is abnormally wide and thick and the handle is thin and long (about 6” handle with a 2” blade)

“Stop avoiding the question!” I snaped.

“I won’t tell you, it’s for your own good!” she snaps back.

Tears starts to fill my eyes, “Why not, what was so special about the mission?” I shout as a tear rolls down my cheek.

“It was a year ago, it doesn’t matter anymore!” she yells back.

“I have to know.” I say trying to hold back the tears as another falls to the ground.

“You will find out soon enough.” She assures me. “We have to get going.” She walks down into the tunnel that is varved out of the earth.

Chapter 4

The air is stale and smells lightly