

Cade strode up to the abandoned house, cradled by dying trees. Many called it haunted, spreading wild descriptions, the kind he and his sister could exploit for fun. However he had to scope the place out to know it was fit for purpose.

There was a broken window on the top floor, where a slatted wooden shutter dangled by a hinge, the rest of the upper windows were covered by old but still functioning shutters. None of the downstairs windows had been broken, vandals hadn't come out this far then. That was good, an extra haunt that was private with no one around would allow the hyena to enact more schemes with his twin.

He tested the doors, the back and front were still securely locked despite what looked like some rough scarring at the plate around the keyhole, as if someone had scratched it with claws rather than tried to open it with a conventional lock pick.

He wandered the perimeter of the house in thought, before the ground turned from soft grassy 'piffs' and crunching leaves to a more solid thud. He kicked away the dried leaves, revealing a two-door basement entrance flat against the ground. His tugs showed it too was locked, but it was significantly more fragile and breakable than the doors.

He dropped the bag he held with him, hands dancing until he found a sturdy screwdriver and hammer. He went for the pin that held the basement door to the frame, knocking it loose with some effort. As he tried to lift the now loose door, it slipped, clattering loudly as it fell down the stairs. The other door was now unlocked by extension, but he wondered how he'd manage to put it back together right. A problem for future Cade, after all if this place was garbage, he'd not even need to bother.

He entered the cellar, clicking on his phone's light, time to check this place out.

Cade was satisfied, no doubt eventually the place would be sold and then he'd have to cover his tracks and leave, yet the odds of that happening before he'd got use out of it was low. The building seemed terrific, fitting his purposes.

As he went down the stairs, he heard the building shifting. Creaking floorboards had accompanied him everywhere so he wasn't surprised.

However, when he heard solid thuds, like someone walking, he was alerted.

The hyena grinned, stepping lightly to make it across the hall and into a cupboard below the stairs. His hand slipped into his bag, finding a skeletal mask that he plucked out and pulled over his head. It was a first for a potential scare target to run right into him during recon, but he'd be damned if he let the moment pass.

He adjusted his posture, hunching his neck forward and creeping out of the room. He had memorised the layout of the house already and approached the room from a second door,

thinking a simple jumpscare and terrorising would suffice, but carrying a roll of tape just in case it escalated. He tried to imagine what his sister Samara would do.

“Gyaaaaahhahahah!” He shouted as he sprang around the corner, channelling his thoughts of her behaviour, kicking over an end table to add to the noise. “Huh?”

The room was empty, not a single soul there. He reached up, drawing the mask off his face and dropping it in disappointment.

A chilly feeling fell on his shoulder, like a weight and he turned around, face twisted in a fearsome grimace of glee. But still nothing. The upset grew within him, so many false starts. He stepped, feeling a sudden pressure at his legs, like a string. He looked down seeing silver glittering tape? The brand of tape he used no less! Some stealthy figure had managed to avoid the scare and tried to stick tape around *his* legs?! “Oh no you don’t!” He yelled, spinning quickly. As he did, the tape seemed to be waiting for him, working round his legs, making him stumble to his front with a crash.

He growled, someone dared make a fool out of him? His hand reached to his pocket, slipping out a utility knife and extending the blade. His hand was quick to slash the tape, kicking free and standing. More tape struck him across the back and his right thigh, he turned and wheeled, looking for the perpetrator, the knife flicking in the air as he sliced through the taping lines.

That didn’t stop his assailant. His breath caught as he saw the rolls of tape he’d brought with him floating in the air, joined by the one he’d held, swiping as if alive. “There you are!” He growled as he saw a shadow, slashing with his clawed hand instead of the blade. His hand met loose cloth that fluttered away, the mask he’d been wearing was hovering, floating and staring at him like it was possessed.

Where others might feel fear or panic, Cade felt a challenge. As tape pressed in his knife kept flashing. Yet soon it proved pointless. The cut strips just found their way to stick onto him anyway.

The tape also started targeting parts of him deliberately, swiping for his hands and legs.

His head snapped to the doorway out, just in time to see the last of a tape strip close the gap around the door frame.

Even though he fought valiantly it wasn’t long before the knife was caught in his hand, taped with it, and then the invisible force moved to wrest it from his grip, throwing it so it embedded in a wall.

With the adrenaline filled rage of fighting back abandoning him as his weapon was stripped, Cade saw further proof of the supernatural; there was far more tape than he’d brought with him. He kept motion to a minimum so he didn’t fall, yet soon he had no choice but to

stumble, stuck down on one knee as the tape tangled his legs and wrapped his arms slowly but surely to his body. He tried not to think of what else was in his bag that it might use.

In a decidedly calm manner he thought to himself. "So this is what it feels like." As he was made the target of a forceful, unwanted restraining. He wasn't going to plead or beg, after all he'd never let that slow him on others. The tape was up to his neck, body sealed in the many cut and plastered-on strips of tape he'd got through before the rolls smoothed over in a more uniform way.

He was on both knees a minute later, with the tape trapping him on the floor. He snapped his powerful jaws at any tape that made a move for his face, yet as the tape built up the range of his motion was diminished. Subsequent snaps of his teeth set the tape creaking in resistance as the stuck-together layers pulled to reinforce on each other around the neck and shoulders.

It was weighing him down more than it should, as though the thing that haunted the house and his mask was pushing on him, forcing him to bend forward. Tape snagged behind the back and below the knee, a coil that tightened and pulled him to bend over.

The thin layers became thicker as the hyena was overwhelmed, his fingers had disappeared inside enough tape that they lost all definition, his head was the last thing left, and wasn't going to stay that way, as his jaw was tiring. When at last he bit and the tape was merely punctured by his teeth, not severed, he knew it was over.

A quick lash around his stout and short jaw saw to the last shred of control he had, then the tape around his skull and neck pulled to that bending point. The tape had him covered and still it wasn't done.

It pressed on and on until his body was plastered against the floor, compressed until there was little definition of the hyena beyond the mercifully ignored nostrils and snout. There was a loud ripping noise that reached his ears as the many strips that had stuck him to the floor pulled up as one, then the pressure shoved him onto his side before those freed strips clamped down, hugging over the top, taping him into a ball-tied pose with no way of getting out. After which, he heard distant ripping as the tape on the doors fell away.

The presence had dealt with the intruder and seemed to fall silent. Leaving behind a squirming and annoyed ball of hyena.

"Yo, you in there bro?" Samara yelled, banging on the door. "Ugh, don't tell me I missed him going home."

She spoke out, to raise the odds of him hearing her if he was still there. "Ooo, bingo." She said, seeing the broken pane of glass. She flexed her legs before she leapt up, grabbing an old lattice of wood that groaned and cracked as if it would break under her weight, yet the impulsive

hyena just dragged herself up until she was on the tiled overhanging roof. The thick denim jacket she wore protected her arm from glass as she felt around for the window latch then just blunderingly pushed her way in, staggering and stomping on the floor. “Cade, you big dumbass, you didn’t text me!” She yelled, wandering through the house without a care. As she found the steps she thought she heard a grunt or mumble.

“Oh shit-” She whispered before holding her lips shut. That explained it, if Cade had run into a cute and bullyable target he’d easily lose track of time. Plus it wasn’t like this building had any signal to send messages from.

“Hehehe, what’s thiiiiis?” She asked as she stepped into the room where a taped up ball of bondage awaited her. “Let’s see who he got!” Samara said, kneeling at the head and poking. “Oh damn, you must have really pissed him off if he put tape right on fur, that’s gonna sting.”

“Mhmghhr...”

Samara stopped, eyes wide, she tried to hold back a laugh but it soon burst out loudly. “HOLY- Oh my god is that you bro? What the hell? Hahaha you look ridiculous.” She said, grinning as she extended a sharp claw and dragged it along the jaw.

“Stop laughing.” He demanded, once his lips were loose obviously disgruntled that she had found him before he’d escaped. “And don’t do anything rash.”

“What, like taking pics to show Fenny and Ash?” She said.

“If you dare...” He said, voice prickly with icy fury. “I meant to the house.”

“I don’t follow. Ah well.” She carefully cleared the tape over his eyes but otherwise left the head alone and worked on the more restraining mass. “You’ve gotta tell me how this happened to you.”

“A ghost.” Cade said simply, waiting for his arms to be freed and legs to be released before he stood. Tearing the tape that was on his clothing.

“Yeah right.” Samara said with a grin until she saw his eyes, that wasn’t his joking face. “Oh shit, for real?”

“Either it reached its purpose and crossed over to the other side already, or it’s waiting to ambush your belligerent ass.” He surmised. “Well, not like I know ghosts. Dunno why it hit me. Give me my mask, I’ll get this tape off at home and tell you all about it.”

“You’re taking this well.” Samara said, still obviously trying to keep from laughing.

“Of course. If this ghost is still here... if we can learn what makes it tick, then we can figure out how to have it wrap others up like that.”

Samara raised her brows. He must have been stuck for over an hour and his first thought was how to use it?

“Let’s go, I’ll tell you more on the way home...”