

Sizable Scares

By: RaddaRaem

"I don't do haunted houses!" Ernesto wailed. The maned wolf clutched uneasily at his wrist as his friends dragged him along.

"You also don't do scary movies, creepypastas, or horror games for that matter!" Adrian shot right back as the hyena counted off the various no-gos. "Ernesto, please, it's October! It's the season to be spooked! Tell him, Dean!"

Lips pulled taut, the lanky and rust furred maned wolf violently shook his head side to side.

The Samoyed at Ernesto's side, his thick puffy hand clasped around the maned wolf's elbow, sighed. "You do this every year, man. Living like a shut-in come every October without fail. We're worried about you!"

"Don't be!" Ernesto implored. His long tail flit nervously behind him as his heels scraped against the earth. Gravel collected beneath his wrinkled soles. "I don't do any of those things for a reason! Halloween and everything involved with it just isn't my thing!"

Adrian rolled his eyes. "You'll be fine. Seriously, we're taking you to like... baby's first haunted house." The hyena gestured towards the dilapidated structure on the hill before them.

Every window, and even the well tread path leading up to it, was covered with cutesy and non-threatening Halloween decorations. A pipe organ, doling out an upbeat ditty, accompanied the thunderous and entirely unconvincing clanging of pots and pans on the otherwise clear and placid evening.

"It's a legitimate haunted house! With real dead people! The ghosts there are super nice," Dean clarified. "They love the company even! Look don't think of it as something Halloweeny and spooky. Think of it as meeting your neighbors! That happen to be see through and say 'boo' a lot."

Ernesto shivered at the thought and buried his face in his hands. The lanky maned wolf tensed up as the Samoyed and hyena tugged his dead weight up and along the winding dusty road carved into the hillside. Muted tunks sounded out as their ankles knocked against the various plastic jack-o-lanterns that lit the way.

CREEEEEAAKKKK CREAAAK CREAAAK CREAAAK CREAK – CREAAK CREAAAK

The wooden steps leading up to the haunted house's entrance noisily announced their arrival in place of a doorbell as their feet slapped against the smooth planks.

"Would you-" Grunting, Dean clamped his fingers tightly around Ernesto's scrawny arms. "Would you relax?"

Adrian harrumphed as he struggled to keep a grip on the maned wolf's squirming limbs. "I got it, I got it," the hyena mumbled as he kicked gently at the weather beaten screen door.

The crash and clang of pots and pans, a low budget attempt at thunder roaring ominously overhead, sounded out through the windows. With a creak the screen door swung open to reveal a stunted silhouette.

"Why hello, Dean! Hello, Adrian!" An ethereal and elderly raccoon exclaimed. She waved up at them gingerly.

"Hey Missus Ringtail," the hyena and Samoyed answered in unison. They shook Ernesto back and forth between them to force something approximating a wave back from the maned wolf in reply.

"We're here for the most terrifying tour you can cook up!" Adrian smirked as he leaned in. "Our buddy Ernesto here is... well... this is his first time."

"Love the shirt by the way, Missus RT," Dean snorted.

Giggling, the blue hued raccoon pat down the wrinkles in her 'I CAN'T HANDLE MY BOOS' sweater. "I'll go easy on him," she teased. With a wave of her hand she ushered the trio inside.

"No no noooooo," Ernesto moaned. Teeth chattering, the maned wolf struggled to no avail as the screen door gently swung shut behind him. His heels kicked and scuffed to no avail against the freshly vacuumed carpet. Panting, Ernesto's tall ears brushed against the decorative cobwebs spanning the length of the hallway leading deep into the bowels of the ghost's abode. There... there was no getting out of this!

"Something spooky..." Missus Ringtail hummed. Floating into her living room, she gently tapped at her couch cushions. "Oh, I know! Why... I'll regale him with the horrors of every day life!"

Adrian and Dean, with Ernesto in tow, took their seats with a whumpf. The coma inducing couch, its cushions warm and inviting, all but swallowed them up as they sank into its depths.

The ghost pointed a wrinkled old finger towards the maned wolf. "Ernesto, was it? Why have you ever heard of..."

DUN DUN DUN

Missus Ringtail made jazz hands at the maned wolf as a pipe organ continued to wail in the background. "A variable rate mortgage?"

Gasping, Ernesto clutched at his chest. Dean and Adrian chuckled at the response.

"Or perhaps I should regale you with a tale about... talk radio?"

DUN DUN DUUUUN

Frantic pleas to make it stop tumbled free from the wolf's lips as his feet kicked wildly at the coffee table before him. The coasters atop it rumbled loudly upon its surface and drowned out the concerned meeps and eeps originating from the hyena and Samoyed.

Ernesto's denim clad thighs, and petite rear, spread wide across the couch while his pointed ears brushed against the blades of the ceiling fan swiveling slowly overhead.

“Rather, I think I’ll hit you with the most terrifying topic of all! Robocalls... on your cellular phone!”

DUN DUN DUUUUUUNNNnnnnnn

Rumbles, deafening and ruinous, filled the haunted estate as Ernesto’s body swelled uncontrollably. His nerves frazzled, the spooks simply too much to contend with, sent adrenaline coursing through his body.

THOOM

Two broad paws punched through a foyer window overlooking the hill. Shards of glass and heaps of drywall caked and collected between the maned wolf’s toes. The screen door situated between them thumped forward and crashed against what remained of the porch as Ernesto twiddled his thick digits shyly.

THOOOOOM

Furry fists, attached to telephone pole sized arms, exploded out the sides of the home. Wiring, shredded furniture, and even a pipe organ sailed through the air before tumbling down the sloping hill.

THOOOOOOOOOM

The roof of Missus Ringtail’s home bulged up and up and up... until Ernesto’s head rocketed through. Shingles showered down upon him and bonked against those ears tucked against his head.

“I told you Halloween wasn’t my thing!” Ernesto moaned. He bashfully wiggled in place to roll Adrian and Dean out from beneath his bountiful behind. “I don’t have a flight or fight response like most people do. Mine is go or grow!”

“Why didn’t you just say that to begin with?” Adrian called up from the wreckage.

"Would you have honestly believed me?"

"...Probably not," Dean answered.

DUN DUN DUN DUN - DUUUUUUUUUUN

Fingers sliding across the keys, the ghostly raccoon womp womped on her guests as only a professional pipe organist could.

"Missus Ringtail, please," Adrian and Dean protested as they struggled to drag themselves out from beneath Ernesto's all-encompassing ass.