

After riding through the Lanes Between, Zephyr and his friends finally arrived at Halloween Town. Their keyblade gliders stopped in the middle of the graveyard. Hitomi had been riding with the boy as she was too young to own her glider. She jumped off before he and Glacies did and their gliders disappeared along with their armors, revealing the teens in their skeleton and ghost forms. Hitomi was in the form of a gray-haired wight with ashy skin, blank white eyes and a black cloak around her with tears at the very bottom. Glacies said, "Well here we are at Halloween Town. This is the world we met Sakura in, but she was in town the first time we saw her. I wonder if we'll meet her there again or see her along the way." Then she turned her head to Hitomi and said, "Hitomi, remember what I said about this place. You may run into things here that will spook you by surprise. I don't know if darkbladers like you would get scared of something like that, but please be careful."

Hitomi looked around with great interest, saying, "It doesn't seem scary here... It almost seems familiar."

"Familiar?" asked the ghost as she eyed the child curiously. She wondered if the small girl had been here before.

Then Jack spotted them in town and gave them a hearty hello. "Why, if it isn't Sakura's friends! It's good to see you!!! Sakura will be happy to see you!" The Pumpkin King gave them his best skeleton grin. "Her house is this way, if you want to see her!"

"Hi Jack!" Zephyr greeted. With a smile, he continued, "We just came to look for Sakura! We would appreciate it if you did take us!"

Jack nodded. "Alright then, follow me!!!" The long-legged skeleton headed towards Sakura's small house that was right next to his large abode.

"Thanks Jack," Glacies said as she and the others followed him. Sakura herself was inside her house where she was eating her worm's wort soup for lunch. Soon when they got there, Glacies knocked on the door and said, "Hi Sakura it's us, Glacies and Zephyr! May we come in?"

"Glacies?!? Zephyr!?" Sakura jumped up right out of her seat and threw the door open, practically tackling Glacies into a hug. The ghost chuckled happily in response. The demon grinned widely at them, her little monster fangs showing, "Hey, guys! Long time, no see!"

The ghost replied, "Same to you."

Jack grinned as well, "They popped up in the Town Square and they wanted to come see you, so I brought them over."

"Well, come on in!" Sakura held the door open and ushered them all inside. Her place was a bit small, and of course it looked like typically any other house in Halloween Town: all dark and spooky with old-

fashioned Victorian furniture and decorations, along with several spider webs in the corners and probably some bats in her chimney. Jack had to duck his head to fit through her low doorway and he plopped on her couch. He had some business with Sakura anyway, and he also wanted to know if this little visit would result in her leaving again.

Glacies looked around at the setting and said, "Wow, nice place and spooky too." She thought, *'Feels like I'm in a haunted house from a book, but that's Halloween Town for you.'* Then she sat on the couch and asked, "So Sakura, how have you been doing?"

The demon groaned, "Ugh, I've been so bored! There isn't much to do around here now that Halloween has passed until it comes around again, so I've either been home reading or practicing for the next time I get the chance to kick your butt."

The ghost smiled gladly as she thought, *'So she's trained herself as well. If she's really tougher than last time, then she could also be a good sparring partner like Zephyr.'*

Jack confirmed, "It's true, she's been getting better!" Hearing what the Pumpkin King said about the demon motivated Glacies to spar with her later.

Sakura appreciated, "Thanks, Jack. So what happened since we left each other? You've got to tell me everything!" She plopped down onto one of the chairs and sat cross-legged, even though it looked funny.

Zephyr answered, "Master Leohart has been swarmed with paper work the last couple of days, so he's too busy to really do anything. We had to start training ourselves, so that he could finish by the end of the week. Chase got himself an apprentice and as for LimeX, I don't really know what happened to her but they're both keeping balance between the light and dark." He looked around the creepy house and sat down next to Glacies. Hitomi sat on the other side of the ghost. She looked around, finding a house with spider webs as a wanted item being weird.

Sakura giggled, referring to Leohart, "Poor guy. Normally Jack gets swarmed like that often, so I sorta know how he feels." Then she looked to the curious child, "New to the whole other worlds thing, kid? You get used to it after a while."

Glacies looked at Hitomi and said to the demon, "Hitomi seems to have an affinity for everything dark." Then she noticed the little girl looking at some spider webs and continued, "Like these cobwebs for example and the whole world you live in."

Sakura grinned, "Well, a human after my own heart! I like her already." She stretched a bit and summoned her keyblade, giving it a few playful swings. "It's been so boring without you guys around, no people to fight besides Jack when he's got free time, which is rare." After making her keyblade vanish, she continued, "So, was there any specific reason for your visit besides seeing me? The peace around

here is actually getting kind of boring." She grinned, "Seriously, I've been bored."

Jack said, "All she ever does is mope around."

Glacies answered, "Well besides coming to spend lots of time with you, we also thought we might explore Halloween Town together and see all the interesting sights here." Traveling the worlds and sightseeing in those places were two of the ghost's dreams. Then remembering her enthusiasm, Glacies asked, "Oh and if you're really that bored, then maybe we could have a spar to see how much you've improved?"

Sakura said, "Sight-seeing first. Don't want to try seeing the graveyard and the woods with a black eye, now do you?" Of course she was joking, so she laughed.

Zephyr commented back laughing along, "Or it could be you giving us a tour with a black eye!"

The goth girl asked, "Jack, do I have permission to take them to Christmas Town for the last part of the tour?"

"Of course! Sandy Claws would love to see you!"

"Yeah, it'll be great!" The demon grinned and stood up. "We can go whenever you guys are ready!"

The boy asked, "So there is a CHRISTMAS town here? Isn't this world just Halloween stuff?" Hitomi looked up, watching everyone laugh and talk. She could not see this apparent Jack person, but she could sense his presence at least. It was the same with the spiders. Over the course of the month no one still figured out that she had sight problems since she still acted as though she could see normally, except for the occasional time where she would crash into a wall or something, but those were rare.

Sakura shook her head. "Haha, good one Zephyr. Yes, but this is Halloween Town. Jack discovered in the forest lots of little doors for different holiday towns. Christmas Town is behind the tree-shaped door. You can go and meet Sandy Claws there."

Glacies murmured, "A world within a world; that sounds quite interesting."

The demon grinned at them all and clapped her hands. "So, who's ready to go explore the town?"

The ghost replied, "I am! I'll be excited to see Santa Claus when we get there."

Sakura nodded, "Off we go, then!" She was already headed out the door with Jack following, easily able to keep up with his long skeleton legs. The 3 apprentices followed after them out of the house to wherever they were going.

Meanwhile in Enchanted Dominion, Chase was watching Kumo practicing his swings with his keyblade at the thin air. Though the way the little neko boy was doing it was rather quite sloppy. The young man went over to stop his apprentice and told him, "No Kumo, you have to hold your keyblade like this." He adjusted the 4-year-old cat boy's grip and fingers on the keyblade before continuing, "And you have to get your feet into a stance like this." He moved Kumo's feet so that his right foot was on the front and the left foot, which was about 30 centimeters sideways apart from the right and behind. Chase advised, "And don't just mindlessly swing around at the air, try to picture an imaginary warrior in front of you and hit him across his neck, his torso, or his vital weak points, understand?"

Kumo nodded and replied, "Yes sir, Master Chase!" Then he went back to swinging, this time a little bit better.

A small portal opened nearby and the man sensed the presence of two people in it. Juliet stepped out, taking a few steps and LimeX followed her out of the portal. A smile slowly formed on his face as he thought, *'So we meet again, LimeX, after one full month.'*

The blonde looked over at the two lightbladers with such contempt that it was a direct mirror of LimeX before she got to know Chase. She snorted, "You surprise me, LimeX. You have so much dark about you, and yet you hang out with a lightblader?"

LimeX chuckled and said, "Well for the most part of my life, I didn't have much of a choice, Juliet."

Juliet growled, "What have I told you about using my name!?"

LimeX turned and grinned malevolently, "Remember the last time you said that? Do you want a repeat in front of the few keybladers you've ever seen?" Juliet growled, but fell silent. As they walked towards Chase and the retracting boy, Juliet grinned. "Oh go on then," LimeX chuckled, standing next to Chase and holding a hand up for him to be quiet for a moment.

Juliet grinned evilly and her blade formed before she dived for the boy absorbed in striking his imaginary foe, from the back of course. "Heehee!" She could not help, but chuckle.

LimeX smiled and leaned into Chase, "She will never be any good at stealth, but she does love to play with her food." Then turning to face him properly, the brunette embraced him quickly while her apprentice was absorbed in her task, before stepping back. She grinned, "How have you been, you stupid lightblader?" The man noticed that her hair was longer and her eyes seemed to hold a quiet knowledge, which she would delight in not telling anyone.

Chase smirked and replied, "Doing good, as you see here, I've taken in that boy Kumo as my apprentice four weeks ago. He's still learning how to swing a keyblade properly, so he's not that much of an expert

fighter like you or me, LimeX. But with years of training, he'll be more than match for anyone he comes across." Then the smirk disappeared as he saw the blonde and said, "So you've taken in a sadist as a student, didn't you? You always were the crazy one, LimeX." Darkbladers like LimeX were usually either loners, rough, aloof, collected, callous, lustful, lazy, secretive, unforgiving, stoical, timid, vain, selfish or sadistic; sometimes a combination of two or more traits. But surely, she wouldn't let her apprentice go as far as to kill Kumo or bring him to near death, would she?

Kumo looked behind him and saw a startling and frightful sight of his attacker going after him. "Wah!" the neko boy screamed before he swung his keyblade to try and attack her.

LimeX laughed, "Not exactly a sadist. But she has incredible potential. Both in the kindness compartment and the blade."

Chase said, "That's a relief; I was afraid she was going to turn just like you when we both met on the first day." He recalled the brunette's first personality before her present one.

She turned and regarded her apprentice. "Though...I should probably stop her before she goes too far. But I'm sure she could use a rival, it will do her some good."

The man replied, "A competition to motivate her. Sounds like a good idea." Though a pre-school aged child would not be an ideal opponent for a teenager, giving the big difference in maturity between them.

Juliet deftly knocked back the blade and smirked, "I'm Juliet, lightblader."

She heard her mentor call, "Juliet, are you done playing around?"

The blonde sighed and jumped back; she put her keyblade away and walked back over to LimeX. "Fine, but I won't guarantee I'll be as nice next time I spar with him."

LimeX shrugged once. "Just make sure you only use the level of one month."

Juliet scowled, "But that's no fun!"

LimeX gazed at her evenly, "But that's how much I said." Turning to the man, she said "Well, I have errands to run. So I'll leave her in your care." Before anyone could object, she grinned malevolently and said, "I'm sure you've got lots of stuff to do, so I'll leave." Then she vanished into the portal before anyone could make another attempt to object.

Chase watched her leave as he said, "Bye LimeX, I I--" He stopped himself before he could accidentally let out the secret. Once the brunette was gone, the male turned to look at Kumo and Juliet and said, "Alright, since I now have two apprentices to look after, I'm going to start off with a few introductions."

He turned his head to Juliet and said, "I don't know if LimeX told you this, but my name is Master Chase." Then he looked to the neko boy and said, "And this is my apprentice, Kumo."

Kumo looked up at the girl and smiled happily as he greeted, "Hi!"

Chase looked back to Juliet and said, "I would have asked for your name, had I not heard it a minute ago, Juliet. Nice to meet you."

The girl snorted, "Master, yeah right. If you're the master then why has LimeX beaten you at every turn?" She turned her eyes to the boy and growled, "Don't get friendly with me!" She pushed him slightly. Kumo felt hurt and bewildered by the girl's hostility.

Now that was a half-truth, of course LimeX would only tell her apprentice about her successes against Chase. In fact, she was too prideful to admit her failures to anyone. She did not want to look bad in front of anyone. Chase decided to let this slide anyway as he leaned against a tree and crossed his arms behind his head. He answered with a fib, "Let's just say I went easy on her. I'm not too fond of hurting girls." Then the man looked at both of them and said, "Alright now that we all know each other, we are now going to start off with a few exercises. The first one will be to do push-ups. Kumo, you're still young and green so you'll be only doing ten. Juliet, I need you to do twenty."

Kumo, who was none-too-pleased, whined, "But I don't like to do push-ups! They make my arms hurt!"

The man replied, "I know that, Kumo. But like they say; 'no pain, means no gain'. There's no easy way to get your body stronger and healthy, Kumo. So you're going to have to do some push-ups, if you want to be a keyblade master."

Kumo groaned through sealed lips and started doing his push-ups. "One... Two..." he counted as he pushed his upper body up and down after getting down on the grass.

Juliet laughed, "20? Why not give me a challenge?" She bent down and quickly counted as she did them. She sneered at the boy, "This isn't enough of a challenge. LimeX made me do pushups while avoiding lasers. Now that was a challenge!" She grinned. Standing up, she gazed around.

One of Chase's eyes glinted with danger and he said in a morbid tone, "A challenge, huh? Well then, I'll happily apply to that. Okay change of plans; you're going to be doing one hundred push-ups while I attack you with everything I got. Sound satisfying enough?" Remembering LimeX's words about darkbladers loving to have a little 'dark' fun, He considered this exercise for Juliet to be one. When the man goes to attack her, he'll be doing it with the newly enhanced speed and strength he got from training himself. Ever since his loss to Xander in his god form and ChameX's heart getting possessed by his darkness, Chase had been bettering himself for a whole month to get even stronger to avoid having to go through this ordeal again. So if Etutu were to somehow come back and start wreaking havoc, Chase will definitely show him that he's not the same guy he beat before. The keyblade master

thought, *'Better watch what you wish for, girl. I think you might find this 'challenge' to be no piece of cake.'*

Juliet grinned, "You're on." She began to do pushups. She was pleasantly surprised. "You're not bad, lightblader; you might actually make it worth coming here."

Chase started his first move by whipping up his keyblade in a blink of an eye and shouted, "Magnera!" A huge silver orb appeared above the girl and tried to draw her into it with a stronger magnetic force than its previous form, Magnet. Juliet formed her keyblade and used it to keep her from being taken into the magnet by embedding it in the ground. Then he leapt at her with fast speed and tried to swing his keyblade at her in a swift speed with as much force he put into his attack.

The girl rolled her body, still not touching the ground, out of the way of his blade. "15," she said, doing another pushup. She was going fast with her exercise, trying to do all of them before she could take too much damage.

Chase ducked low spun himself around with his keyblade as he attempted a Round Blitz attack on Juliet. But the girl grinned and used her blade to blocked the attack before did another pushup. "Nine... Ten..." Kumo said as he did each push-up before he got up with tired arms. He called, "Master Chase, I'm finished!"

Chase told him, "Good, now take a short break while I try to intercept Juliet." He tried a second combo by swinging his keyblade upwards to knock Juliet into the air with Rising Strike. The girl got out of the way before she continued her push-ups. The keyblade master kept on trying to attack her as she continued to dodge and guard herself from him. Sometimes the man would manage to get a successful hit on her. Such as when a few of the fireballs of his Flame Salvo shotlock managed to fly themselves into her after she evaded the other fireballs. The girl winced in pain before Chase reassured her, "Don't worry, this won't reset the count. Just keep going." Juliet scowled at him, like he was a rival of some sort, with a huff before she continued her push-ups.

They continued like this before a portal opened and LimeX popped out. The brunette growled and looked to her apprentice, "Juliet?"

The blonde swore and hopped up. "Ahh...100, hey lookathetime. I better go." She jumped up and made a portal to attempt her escape, but her mentor quickly grabbed her. The portal vanished.

"Juliet," LimeX said in a low and dangerous voice. "Did you set the teacher on fire before we left?"

The blonde turned and said, "No, I set a magic bomb up so it would go off the day beforehand."

LimeX blinked and said, "Well I've got one thing to say." She paused for dramatic effect and grinned. "You have got to teach me that. I used matches, how did you do it?"

"With a dragon."

"You kidding? Where did you get it?"

"Now that's my secret."

LimeX grinned, "Fine fine, then I won't tell you of the time I dragged Chase out and framed him for a robbery."

Juliet's mouth flopped open, "You kidding? You mean that light teacher?"

LimeX noted her apprentice did not call him light scum. "That's right. It was so much fun wasn't it, Chase?" She turned and grinned evilly.

Kumo looked at his master and asked, "Master, you didn't lose all the time to this lady, did you?"

Chase crossed his arms and leaned against a tree before he said, "Nope! Sure I got framed for a crime I didn't do, but after finding the right evidence to show the police, the public realized who the real culprit was and tried to arrest LimeX. They would have caught her if she didn't have her portal magic with her."

The brunette asked, "Speaking of which, may I borrow you and your student for....assessment?" She grinned and Juliet chuckled.

The neko boy felt a uneasy with the way the darkbladers were looking at him, seeing some kind of malicious intent from them. He asked his master, "Master, you're not going to send me away to them, are you?"

Chase was unperturbed by the seemingly menacing darkbladers and said, "Don't worry, knowing her, you're going to be fine. Right, LimeX?"

LimeX smiled too innocently, "Of course not, I wouldn't do anything to your star, and only pupil. The fact of the matter is I need a lightblader for Juliet to pass the assessment. And I can't use someone that has already been used like you, Chase. It's about showing we can work along or some sort of junk like that." She waved her hand, dismissing the talk. "Basically she and....Kumo, wasn't it? She and Kumo are going to deliver a package to the one in Halloween Town called 'mayor'. They have to not look inside and not be seen."

Juliet nodded once, looked over to Kumo and said, "Well lighty light, looks like you're coming with me."

"Uh, okay," the boy replied hesitantly. Then the girl made a wobbly portal.

Her master told her, "Focus Juliet, you should be able to do portals properly by now."

The portal became more concrete and the blonde walked over and grabbed Kumo on his arm, gently. "Come on... It'll be fun... Sure not the fun you lighters are used to, but still fun."

The young neko boy cried in enthusiasm, "Yay! Fun! I like having fun!" Then he ran into the portal to Halloween Town.

LimeX walked over to Chase and grinned, "I wonder if they'll be able to hold out and not look. Juliet is a definite no, but Kumo?"

The man replied, "Well if he stays out of trouble and not get hurt, then he'll be alright." Having a big brother/fatherly tie to his apprentice, he would be upset if something bad happened to him.

The group stopped at the fountain in the Town Square. The water inside it looked eerily green as if it was acid or something. It might not be, but Glacies did not want to risk finding out. Sakura began, "Okay, so obviously this is the Town Square. Jack's house is right there and the mayor's house is right there." She pointed to each place as she spoke of them. "Next we can go to the graveyard and the pumpkin patch."

Zephyr glanced over at the guillotine again. He did not really want to go anywhere near it, especially when the blade moved on its own. He said sarcastically, "A graveyard, fun. Knowing this place people will be coming out of the graves to say hello." Glacies giggled at his comment.

Sakura glanced over at him, "Not really, Zephyr. The zombies do like to hang out at the graveyard, but the place is actually empty of actual bodies. It's kind of hard to die when you're already dead. Mostly the graveyard's full of secret passages, some even to the Human World. Right, Jack?"

Jack nodded, "You betcha!"

Glacies asked, "So these passages can like take you to other worlds?"

Sakura shook her head. "No, that's the doors in the forest. These ones are just shortcuts to the Human World. A different dimension, if you call it, that's connected to this world." Like the other holidays, the Human World was a world within a world. The shortcuts did not go to any other foreign nations like Radiant Garden or Twilight Town.

When they reached the graveyard, Sakura and Jack walked right up to the old iron gates and they opened automatically. Lots of rundown and old icky graves were practically everywhere. A loud barking sound came from behind one of the graves. Jack smiled, "Oh, Zero! That's where you've been hiding, old

boy!" A ghost dog with a shiny red nose came up and licked his master's face and then demon girl's.

Sakura told him, "Down, Zero! Come on, behave! I don't think you guys have met Zero yet. This is Jack's ghost dog, Zero." Zero barked repeatedly.

"Hi Zero!" Glacies greeted and waved.

The demon patted the little ghost dog on the head. She exclaimed, "Now, off to Jack's favorite place: the Pumpkin Patch!!! He is the Pumpkin King after all." She scampered off with everyone else and stopped at a large field of pumpkins with the funny-shaped hill that moved when you reach the top. Sakura was already climbing up the hill, but she stopped around the top. "So, this is the Pumpkin Patch! All of the jack-o-lanterns in Halloween Town started from these pumpkins right here."

The apprentices looked at what was around them, noting that all the pumpkins were picked as Halloween was over. Glacies noticed a jack-o-lantern sitting at the corner. She looked at Hitomi and explained to her in a gentle smile, "Pumpkins are big hard fruits with lines between surfaces. Here, feel one so that you can know what they're like." She took Hitomi's hand and went with her over to the jack-o-lantern, placing it on the hollowed fruit for a bit.

Looking at the curly hill curiously, Zephyr asked, "How did that hill form like that?"

Sakura answered, "I dunno, it just is that way." She continued up the hill, so when she reached a certain point, it unraveled from the funny swirl shape and the tip stretched to the ground. She walked down and got off, the hill turning back to its original form. "Well, that's pretty much it for the pumpkin patch. The last thing is the forest, we're we'll go see Sandy Claws!" She grinned and skipped out of the little field, Jack following quickly behind.

Glacies smiled excitedly and said, "Oh boy, I can hardly wait. You hear that, Zephyr, Hitomi! We're going to see the jolly big man in red!"

Once they got into the forest, they stopped at a large circle of trees. Each tree had a door for a different holiday, such as a turkey for Thanksgiving, an egg for Easter, and of course, a Christmas tree for Christmas. Sakura told, "Okay, everybody be careful! It'll be a long way down, and it's a bit cold in Christmas Town, so bundle up!" She and Jack went up to the small door and took the tree ornament handle, turning it. The door swung open like magic and they could see magical snowflakes coming out of the door. "Follow us!"

The Pumpkin King beamed, "Won't Sandy Claws be happy to see us!" Then they all went through the door to Christmas Town.